

Phase I, Shropshire Strategic Sites and Employment Areas Assessment

Shropshire Council



PHASE I - FINAL REPORT

March 2014

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Appendix 1 – Shrewsbury Employment Areas Proformas and Plans

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides a review of Strategic Sites and Employment Areas in Shrewsbury. It has been carried out on behalf of Shropshire Council (the Council).
- 1.2 The study seeks to ensure that (as stated in Core Strategy Policy CS14) *“The [Shropshire] portfolio of employment land and premises will be supported by protecting existing strategic employment land and premises to secure these sites for employment uses.”*
- 1.3 The report represents Phase I of a larger study into Strategic Sites and Employment Areas across Shropshire, commissioned to inform the preparation of the Shropshire Site Allocations and Management of Development, Development Plan Document (the SAMDev Plan). In particular, this Study will assist in the preparation of the strategies for Market Towns and Key Centres in the Shropshire Place Plan areas, the Proposals Map and the Development Management Policies.
- 1.4 The Phase I research provides an opportunity to test the methodology which will subsequently be applied to Strategic Sites and Employment Areas county-wide.
- 1.5 BE Group, economic development and property consultants based in Warrington, have compiled this report.

Objectives

- 1.6 There are three main elements to the study:
- Provide a robust evidence base enabling Shropshire Council to identify existing strategic employment sites and areas to be protected in the SAMDev Plan by assessing:
 - Role and function of each employment area and strategic site,
 - Market demands and opportunities for regeneration and expansion,
 - Value of the existing employment areas and strategic sites to the delivery of a balanced portfolio of employment land and premises in the Local Plan.
 - Provide justification and guidance with regard to the safeguarding of existing employment land and premises, having regard to the tests of soundness, consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework, viability of Local

Plans and the development of SAMDev Development Management Policies and the Proposals Map.

- Ensure the methodology used to identify and assess the existing employment areas and strategic sites can be applied to the Market Towns, Key Centres and rural areas of Shropshire to provide a consistent county-wide methodology.

Study Area

- 1.7 This Phase 1 report looks at Strategic Sites and Employment Areas in Shrewsbury. Shrewsbury is the county town and largest settlement of Shropshire. It contains about a quarter of Shropshire's population. It is the main commercial, cultural and administrative centre, with a catchment which extends into Wales.
- 1.8 Shrewsbury is also the county's main growth point, with two new Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) proposed – Shrewsbury South and Shrewsbury West. Together these SUEs will provide up to 1,600 new homes, 35-38 ha of employment land, new retail development, community facilities and new road infrastructure.

Employment Areas/Strategic Sites

- 1.9 Shropshire Council required the 22 Strategic Sites and Employment Areas shown in Table 1, to be considered in this report. These 22 sites comprise existing areas of B1, B2, B8 employment and commercial development and other sites of commercial opportunity some of which were previously identified in planning policy. These sites were identified in consultation with BE Group, with reference to past research undertaken by BE Group in Shrewsbury. These 22 sites include all of the industrial estates and business parks of the town, urban office/industrial locations and several mixed-use areas which include an element of employment use. It also includes one standalone industrial site which houses a major local employer (Doncasters Airmotive).
- 1.10 The details of the Sites/Areas are described in Area Proformas with plans of the sites and their boundaries at Appendix 1.

Table 1 – Strategic Sites and Employment Areas to be Reviewed

Industrial Estates/Business Parks	Urban Office/Industrial Locations	Mixed-Use Areas	Standalone Industrial Sites
Battlefield Enterprise Park	Abbey Lawns, Abbey Foregate	Former Cattle Market Area	Doncasters, Whitchurch Road
Centurion Park, Whitchurch Road	Cambrian House, Chester Street	St Michael's Street	
Lancaster Road Industrial Estate Industrial Estate	Castle Foregate (West)*	Sundorne Retail Park	
Longden Road Industrial Estate	Castle Foregate (East)*		
Monkmoor Industrial Estate	Ditherington Flax Mill		
Old Potts Way Business Park, Belle Vue	Frankwell Quay		
Oxon Business Park	New Zealand House, Abbey Foregate		
Shrewsbury Business Park, Emstrey	Prospect House, Belle Vue		
	Whitehall Buildings, Monkmoor Road		
	William A Lewis and BT Complex, Harlescott Lane		

Source: Shropshire Council/BE Group 2014

*For the purposes of analysis this area has been divided in two, considering the differing employment uses located east and west of Castle Foregate.

Methodology

- 1.11 A number of research methods have been used in the compilation of data for this study. They include site visits to assess Strategic Sites and Employment Areas, along with face-to-face and telephone interviews with key land/property owners, occupiers, developers and their agents. Desktop analysis of existing reports and documents has also set the context for the research and informed the overall findings of the study.
- 1.12 Site descriptions and plans are provided in Proformas for each Site/Area at Appendix 1. The Proformas for the site descriptions assist the presentation and interpretation of

the data for each site. The Proformas have the following format shown in Table 2.

Table 2 – Proforma Template

Address		Category to link LA policy description	
Description		Total Grade:	
		Characteristics Critical mass: Accessibility: Prominence: Environment:	
Total Number of Units	Vacant	Occupancy Rate, percent	
Predominant Use Class (B1, B2, B8)			
Buildings Age			
Pre 1945	1945-90	90-2000	New 2000+
Buildings Quality			
Nos – Derelict	Poor	Average	Good
Area Size, ha			
Key Companies / Employers			
Development Opportunities			
Regeneration Opportunities (size, ha)			
Recommendations:			
Policy Guidance:			
Remodelling Guidance:			
Future Role			

Source: BE Group 2014

1.13 The 'Address' contains the local authority's designated title for the Site/Area, including where necessary the main street and town. The local authority's planning policy descriptor is provided which links the site to the policies of both the Shropshire Core Strategy and the SAMDev Plan. A brief 'Description' is provided in the form of BE Group's comment on the area. Area boundaries are based on GIS plans provided by Shropshire Council and amended by the study recommendations from BE Group.

- 1.14 'Characteristics' refers to BE Group's professional opinion on conditions in individual Site/Areas. The factors considered are the critical mass of the area and whether companies like to cluster; the accessibility of the area and proximity to arterial roads; the prominence of the area along main roads, and the environment – the setting of the location, servicing, parking and landscaping treatment. For each element, an assessment is made as to whether the characteristics of the Site/Area are Poor, Average or Good.
- 1.15 Where feasible the 'Total Number of Units' within the area has been identified from the physical site survey. This should be treated as an estimate only, particularly in Sites/Areas with multi-occupier industrial or office buildings. 'Vacant or Derelict Units' have been identified from a combination of the site surveys and review of vacant property presently on the market. The proportion between these two equates to the 'Occupancy Rate'. The 'Vacant or Derelict Units' numbers reflect the situation at September 2012.
- 1.16 'Predominant Use Class' identifies whether buildings in the area are mainly in office (B1(a)), light industrial (B1(c)), general industrial (B2) or warehouse (B8) use.
- 1.17 An indication is provided of the age of properties in four categories which are assessed in 'Buildings Age' as pre-1945; 1945-1990; 1990-2000; 2000+(new).
- 1.18 'Buildings' Quality' is also broken down into four category assessments. 'Derelict' is self evident. 'Poor' represents low quality design, external appearance, and condition. 'Good' equates to modern design, building condition, parking and external area provision. The remaining category is 'Average', covering properties that do not fit any of the other three headings.
- 1.19 'Area Size' is the hectareage calculated from GIS software using the site boundary polygons provided by Shropshire Council.
- 1.20 The key companies/major employers within each Site/Area are identified.
- 1.21 The proformas identify 'Development Opportunities', i.e. identified employment sites

which have yet to be developed within the existing Sites/Areas.

1.22 The proformas identify Regeneration Opportunities (shown on the plans accompanying the proformas) including other vacant land in the Site/Area or where there is scope for remodelling properties or sites and where relevant, expansion possibilities are also identified including greenfield development opportunities.

1.23 Combining all this data leads to an overall hierarchical assessment banded A* to E. The grading of Sites/Areas links to a categorisation of each Site/Area, intended to inform future planning policy in Shropshire. Both planning policy guidance and remodelling guidance, linked to this grading, is provided on each proforma. Policy guidance includes:

- Guidance on any key employers who need to be supported and/or have their sites protected
- Guidance on maintaining the environmental and economic quality of the Site/Area.
- The acceptable range of uses on each Site/Area (and those which are unacceptable) to protect the Site/Area for employment use.
- The circumstances (if any) when changes of use, redevelopment or refurbishments, may be acceptable
- Views on any parcels of land which are no longer in (B1, B2, B8) employment use, and which may be considered for other uses

1.24 The grading categories and the policy guidance appropriate for each grade are considered in Section 5.0.

1.25 Finally the future role of the area is set out. This incorporates both BE Group's recommendations and principal employment property market segments, as set out in ODPM Guidance on Employment Land Reviews (2004). The future role of each Site/Area is drawn from the following market segment options:

- Established or Potential Office Locations
- High Quality Business Parks
- Research and Technology/Science Parks
- Warehouse/Distribution Parks
- General Business/Industrial Areas
- Heavy/Specialist Industrial Sites

- Incubator/SME Cluster Sites
- Specialist Freight Terminals
- Sites for Specific Occupiers
- Recycling/Environmental Industries Sites.

1.26 It should be noted some areas reflect more than one of these market segment classifications.

2.0 STRATEGY CONTEXT

2.1 This chapter focuses on national, sub-regional and local reports and strategies that have a relevance to Shrewsbury's Strategic Sites and Employment Areas. An understanding of the strategies and reports contained in this review is needed to show strategic alignment and an holistic approach to promote sustainable development. It summarises the most relevant points in them. BE Group's recommendations follow the general principles set by them.

National

National Planning Policy Framework – Department of Communities and Local Government (2012)

2.2 As part of ongoing reforms of planning policy, the Department of Communities and Local Government has published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies for England, articulating the Government's vision of sustainable development. It provides a framework for the production of local and neighbourhood plans and has replaced all the previous Planning Policy Statements and Guidance Notes.

2.3 In terms of business and economic development, the NPPF argues that *“Investment in business should not be over-burdened by the combined requirements of planning policy expectations. Planning policies should recognise and seek to address potential barriers to investment, including poor environment or any lack of infrastructure, services or housing.”* Local planning authorities should:

- *“Set out a clear economic vision and strategy for their area which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth*
- *Set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated requirements over the plan period*
- *Support existing business sectors, taking account of whether they are expanding or contracting and, where possible, identify and plan for new or emerging sectors likely to locate in their area. Policies should be flexible enough to accommodate requirements not anticipated in the plan and to allow a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances*
- *Plan positively for the location, promotion and expansion of clusters or networks of knowledge driven, creative or high technology industries*

- *Identify priority areas for economic regeneration, infrastructure provision and environmental enhancement*
 - *Facilitate flexible working practices such as the integration of residential and commercial used within the same unit.”*
- 2.4 Planning policies should also *“avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Land allocations should be regularly reviewed. Where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities.”*
- 2.5 In addition to this, paragraph 51 indicates that local planning authorities: *“should normally approve planning applications for change to residential use and any associated development from commercial buildings (currently in the B use Classes) where there is an identified need for additional housing in that area, provided that there are not strong economic reasons why such development would be inappropriate.”*
- 2.6 In town centres, local planning authorities should *“allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail, leisure, commercial, community services and residential development needed.”*
- 2.7 The NPPF re-introduces district-wide local plans, replacing the Local Development Framework system. The Local Plan should be a single strategic document, with supplementary planning documents only created if they can help to bring forward sustainable development at an accelerated rate.
- 2.8 It is proposed that Local Plans will address the spatial implications of economic, social and environmental change, setting out the opportunities for development and providing clear guidance on what will, or will not, be permitted and where. The Local Plan should outline the Local Planning Authority’s strategic priorities. This should include strategic policies to deliver *“the homes and jobs needed in the area”* as well as *“the provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development”*.

2.9 Crucially, Local Plans should:

- *“Plan positively for the development and infrastructure required in the area to meet the objectives, principles and policies of this Framework*
- *Be drawn up over an appropriate time scale, preferably a 15 year time horizon, take account of longer term requirements, and be kept up to date*
- *Be based on cooperation with neighbouring authorities, public, voluntary and private sector organisations*
- *Indicate broad locations for strategic development on a key diagram and land-use designations on a proposals map*
- *Allocate sites to promote development and flexible use of land, bringing forward new land where necessary, and provide detail on form, scale, access and quantum of development where appropriate*
- *Identify areas where it may be necessary to limit freedom to change the uses of buildings, and support such restrictions with a clear explanation*
- *Identify land where development would be inappropriate, for instance because of its environmental or historic value; and*
- *Contain a clear strategy for enhancing the natural, built and historic environment, and supporting Nature Improvement Areas where they have been identified.”*

2.10 Local planning authorities need to prepare and maintain a robust evidence base to understand business need within their area. This can be achieved by working with neighbouring authorities, LEPs and the local business community. This evidence base should be used to assess:

- *“the needs for land or floorspace for economic development, including both the quantitative and qualitative need for all foreseeable types of economic activity over the plan period*
- *the existing and future supply of land available for economic development and its sufficiency and suitability to meet identified needs. Reviews of land available for economic development should be undertaken at the same time, or combined with Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments and should include a reappraisal of the suitability of previously allocated land*
- *the role and function of town centres and the relationship between them, including any trends in the performance of centres*
- *the capacity of existing centres to accommodate new town centre development*

- *locations of deprivation which may benefit from planned remedial action*
- *the needs of the food production industry and any barriers to investment that planning can resolve.”*

2.11 Finally, Annex 2 (Glossary) of the NPPF defines ‘economic development’ as *“Development, including those within the B Use Classes, public and community uses and main town centre uses (but excluding housing development).”*

Viability Testing Local Plans: Advice for Planning Practitioners – Local Housing Delivery Group (2012)

2.12 The NPPF (discussed above) calls for balance between ensuring developments are sustainable and ensuring commercial viability. This report seeks to support that policy by outlining the importance of viability and deliverability as part of Local Plan development.

2.13 The report provides the following definition of viability: *“An individual development can be said to be viable if, after taking account of all costs, including central and local government policy and regulatory costs and the cost and availability of development finance, the scheme provides a competitive return to the developer to ensure that development takes place and generates a land value sufficient to persuade the land owner to sell the land for the development proposed. If these conditions are not met, a scheme will not be delivered.”*

2.14 Viability testing of Local Plans does not require a detailed viability appraisal of every site anticipated to come forward over the plan period. Because of the potentially widely different economic profiles, and proposed uses, of sites within a local authority area the study suggests that local authorities test a range of site typologies, reflecting the mix of Local Plan sites. The key principles to consider when assessing viability are that:

- *“Consideration needs to be given to the cumulative impact of the plan policies, rather than treating policies in isolation or overlooking the potential impact of policies on the delivery of planned development*
- *Planning authorities will need to strike a balance between the policy requirements necessary to provide for sustainable development and the realities of economic viability. There should be a clear local justification for the adoption of local standards and policies*

- *This local choice should be supported by a collaborative approach to the policy making process*
- *The advice and input of local partners, particularly those with knowledge of the local market and development economics, and those who will be involved in delivering the plan, should be sought at each stage*
- *Viability assessments of Local Plans should be seen as part of the wider collaborative approach to planning and a tool that can assist with the development of plan policies, rather than a separate exercise*
- *The approach to assessing plan viability should recognise that it can only provide high level assurance that the policies within the plan are compatible with economic viability*
- *The assessment process should be iterative. Draft policies can be tested based on the assumptions agreed with local partners, and in turn those assumptions may need to be revised if the assessment suggests too much development is unviable.*
- *A demonstration of viability across time and local geography will be of much more value to local decision making and will help develop a local shared understanding of deliverability.”*

2.15 Table 3 summarises the viability testing process.

Table 3 – The Viability Testing Process

Stage	Description	Comments
1	Review existing evidence and consider scope for alignment of assessments	Assessments may have been carried out on affordable housing viability, a CIL charge, infrastructure requirements, Strategic Housing Market Assessments and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments, which may provide evidence of the deliverability of a range of sites.
2	Agree the appraisal methodology, assumptions and information to be used	<p>To secure buy-in to the outputs of a Local Plan viability assessment, it is vital to discuss with stakeholders the basis on which a viability assessment is to be carried out and the assumptions that will feed into it.</p> <p>This collaborative approach allows landowners to demonstrate that their land is available for development and for the local authority's assumptions to be tested against the development sector's understanding of current market conditions and development economics.</p> <p>The study recommends that the residual land value approach is taken when assessing the viability of plan-level policies. An assessment of costs and values will</p>

Stage	Description	Comments
		consider site viability from the first five years. After the first five year period (6-15 years) a more flexible approach may be required, recognising the impact of economic cycles and policy changes over time.
3	Information gathering and viability modelling	Up to date information will be required on likely development revenue, to be measured against build costs; external works, infrastructure and site abnormal; acquisition costs; specific mitigation measures required; professional fees; land values; sales and marketing costs and likely developer profit.
4	Viability appraisal and tests	The appraisal should be able to provide a profile of viability across a geographical range and/or range of different types of sites.
5	Review outputs, refine and revise the modelling	Once the outputs from the viability modelling have been produced, the planning authority should share these with its local partners to discuss and review the results.

Source: Local Housing Delivery Group 2014

Sub-regional/Local

Shropshire Core Strategy – Shropshire Council (2011)

2.16 The Adopted Core Strategy is the principal document making up the Shropshire Local Development Framework (now Local Plan). The Core Strategy sets out the Council’s vision, objectives and broad spatial strategy to guide development to 2026. One of the three priorities of Shropshire’s Sustainable Community Strategy (2010-2020) is *“enterprise and growth, with strong market towns and rebalanced rural settlements:*

- *A dynamic and modern economy, with an enterprise culture that attracts investors and skilled workers*
- *Shrewsbury and Shropshire’s market towns will have a distinct identity, and be vibrant and accessible*
- *Rural settlements will be strengthened as hubs of activity and development either individually or as networked clusters, providing community benefit leading to more sustainable places and a rebalancing of the countryside.”*

2.17 The Core Strategy Spatial Vision for Shropshire is made up of a number of elements. Those relevant to this study are:

- *“By 2026, quality of life will have been significantly improved and it will have become a better place in which to live and work*

- *Shrewsbury will continue to be recognised as a County Town of the highest quality, enabled to develop as a strong sub-regional centre within the West Midlands and as the main commercial, cultural and administrative centre for Shropshire*
- *Shropshire will have a thriving, diversified economy with a growing enterprises culture, and will have raised its profile as a business location*
- *Inward investment, local enterprises and indigenous business growth will have helped to generate better employment opportunities.”*

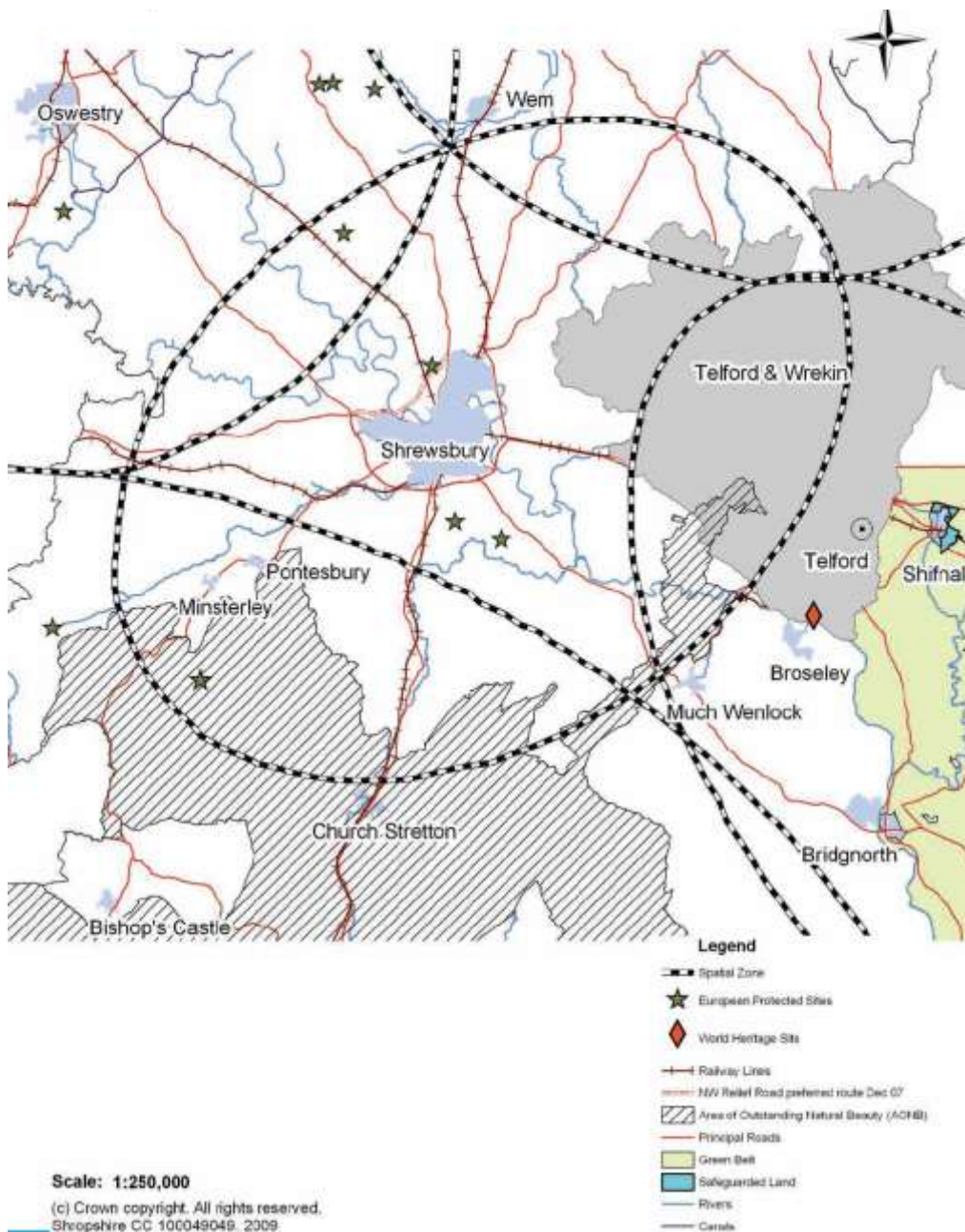
2.18 Derived from the Spatial Vision, the Core Strategy also contains a series of 12 strategic objectives, which provide broad direction for the strategic approach to development and growth, as well as the individual policies. The following objectives are most relevant to this study:

- *“Objective 1 – support the development of sustainable communities which are thriving, inclusive and safe, ensuring that people in all areas of Shropshire have access to decent affordable homes, jobs, education and training, multifunctional open space and the countryside, healthcare, leisure, cultural, shopping and other facilities and services, and the provision of infrastructure, to meet their needs*
- *Objective 2 – develop the roles of Shrewsbury as a sub-regional centre, and Shropshire’s market towns and key centres as more sustainable and self-sufficient settlements, providing the main focus for new housing, employment and infrastructure development and the preferred location for a range of services and facilities to serve the wider needs of their respective hinterlands*
- *Objective 6 – promote sustainable economic development and growth by providing a flexible and responsive supply of employment land and premises, and the development of further/higher education and training opportunities, to support business development, satisfy the changing needs and demands of the Shropshire economy, promote inward investment, and help generate skilled, well paid employment opportunities*

2.19 Responding to the Strategic Objectives, the Core Strategy directs the majority of development to places that already have good infrastructure, services and facilities. Policy CS1 states that Shrewsbury will be the main focus for employment and will strengthen its role as a regional centre and Shropshire’s growth point.

2.20 Policy CS1 also outlines land requirements relevant to the preparation of the Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Development Plan Document, and states that up to 290 ha of employment land should be provided across Shropshire. In the Central Spatial Zone (Shrewsbury and Minsterley/Pontesbury, see Figure 1), some 95-105 ha is required, of which 85-95 ha will be in Shrewsbury. In the Eastern Zone (which includes Bridgnorth and Shifnal) 30-40 ha is needed.

Figure 1 – Central Spatial Zone

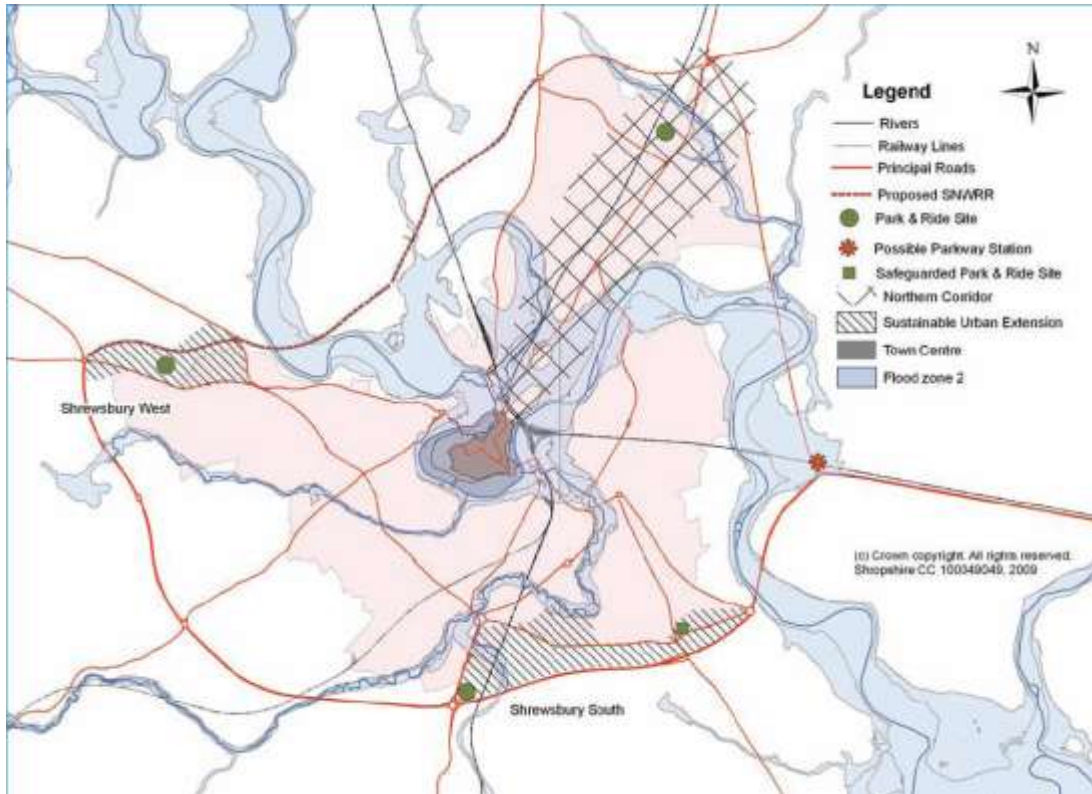


Source: Shropshire Council 2011

2.21 Policy CS2 sets out a development strategy for Shrewsbury (see Figure 2). In summary this states:

- Shrewsbury will be the primary focus for development, providing up to 90 hectares of employment land
- It will develop its role as Shropshire's primary office and commercial centre, with the Riverside and West End as town centre redevelopment priorities
- The Northern Corridor will be improved in accordance with the aims of the Northern Corridor Regeneration Framework, with the restoration and redevelopment of the Ditherington Flax Mill and the enhancement of major existing commercial, employment and mixed-use areas as a priority
- The continuing need for the development of high quality business parks on the edge and periphery of the town will be recognised
- Allocation/release of development land will make the best use of brownfield land and buildings in the built-up area, and bring forward two phased, sustainable urban extensions providing 50 percent of the employment growth.
- In Shrewsbury South land off Thieves Lane/Oteley Road/Hereford Road will incorporate the expansion of Shrewsbury Business Park (approx. 4 ha in size) and a new strategic employment site adjoining Shrewsbury Town Football Club (around 22 ha).
- In Shrewsbury West an additional 9-12 ha of employment land will be developed at Bicton Heath and off Welshpool Road.

Figure 2 – Shrewsbury Key Diagram



Source: Shropshire Council 2011

- 2.22 Policy CS3 states that Shropshire’s market towns and key centres will maintain and enhance their roles in providing services and facilities to their rural hinterlands, and providing foci for economic development and regeneration, with balanced housing and employment development of an appropriate scale, supported by improvements in infrastructure. Policy CS3 sets out a settlement hierarchy to support these objectives. This includes principal centres, which will act as a focus for development, and district centres, including Shifnal, which will see development at a more local level.
- 2.23 The Core Strategy contains three policies specifically relevant to employment land provision, which support the development and diversification of Shropshire’s economy. Policy CS13 supports enterprise and encourages sustainable growth. It places particular emphasis on:
- *“Promoting Shropshire as a business investment location and a place for a range of business types to start up, invest and grow, recognising the economic benefits of Shropshire’s environment and quality of life as unique selling points which need to be valued, conserved and enhanced*

- *Raising the profile of Shrewsbury, developing its role as the county town, growth point and the main business, service and visitor centre for the Shropshire sub-region, in accordance with Policy CS2*
- *Supporting the revitalisation of Shropshire's Market Towns, developing their role as key service centres, providing employment and a range of facilities and services accessible to their rural hinterlands, in accordance with Policy CS3*
- *Supporting the development and growth of Shropshire's key business sectors and clusters, in particular: environmental technologies; creative and cultural industries; tourism; and the land based sector, particularly food and drink production and processing*
- *Planning and managing a responsive and flexible supply of employment land and premises comprising a range and choice of sites in appropriate locations to meet the needs of business, with investment in infrastructure to aid their development or to help revitalise them*
- *Supporting the development of sustainable transport and ICT/broadband infrastructure, to improve accessibility/connectivity to employment, education and training opportunities, key facilities and services*
- *Encouraging home based enterprise, the development of business hubs, live-work schemes and appropriate use of residential properties for home working."*

2.24 Policy CS14 states that a portfolio of employment land will be identified to provide a range and choice of opportunities. 290 ha of employment land will be delivered between 2006 and 2026, distributed in accordance with Policies CS1 to CS5.

2.25 This portfolio of land and premises will be identified and maintained to provide a range and choice of sites in terms of their quality, accessibility, type and size. The portfolio will include:

- *"Sites above 0.1ha as the threshold for the strategic land supply*
- *Developable land currently committed for employment use*
- *Employment land and premises allocated to meet the longer term employment land requirement including sites of sub-regional significance*
- *Dedicating land and premises for the use of key local employers*
- *Appropriate allowances for local economic development opportunities."*

- 2.26 The portfolio will also be supported by *“protecting existing strategic employment land and premises to secure these sites for employment uses.”*
- 2.27 The portfolio will include a rolling five year forward supply (72 ha) of readily available land. This ‘reservoir’ of land will largely comprise the developable supply of committed land and premises (to be reviewed annually through the Annual Monitoring Report) but, will also allow *“other land and premises to come forward to support the Core Strategy objectives.”*
- 2.28 In addition to the development of B1, B2, B8 employment uses, Policy CS14 seeks to safeguard sufficient land to facilitate:
- *“Other strategic development objectives including town centre uses in Policies CS2 and CS15 and waste infrastructure (Policy CS19), subject to relevant policy tests including the protection of town centre vitality and viability*
 - *Other land uses which contribute to the creation and maintenance of sustainable communities*
 - *Ancillary facilities, services or uses which support enterprise and economic growth especially in employment developments.”*
- 2.29 The Core Strategy states that there has been 44.4 ha of development between 2006 and 2009. Over half of this (23.49 ha) was in the Central Spatial Zone.
- 2.30 The Core Strategy also identifies 132.8 ha of committed development – 30 percent (39.39 ha) of which is in the Central Spatial Zone. A further 113 ha of new land must therefore be delivered by 2026 in order to meet Shropshire’s land supply target.
- 2.31 Policy CS15 highlights that town centres will be the preferred location for office development, with large-scale office development being centred in Shrewsbury, which is expected to deliver 20,000 sqm of offices between 2006 and 2026.
- 2.32 Finally, Policy CS19 highlights the need for sustainable waste management facilities which will *“help to deliver greater resource efficiency for communities and businesses.”* The delivery of such infrastructure will be achieved by:
- Encouraging proposals for additional capacity to divert waste away from landfill in a way consistent with the waste hierarchy and the principles and targets of national, regional and local policies and strategies

- Identifying specific sites to deliver additional waste transfer, recycling and recovery facilities to address the capacity gap of about 150,000 tonnes/year identified in regional policy. Sites will be allocated as part of the SAMDev Plan in accessible locations close to the main urban areas, including Shrewsbury. Outside such locations, Shropshire Council will support applications for smaller scale waste facilities capable of meeting local needs in locations which are consistent with the principles and site identification criteria set out in national and regional policy
- Supporting the co-location of waste facilities and the integration of new waste facilities or space in the design of new development;
- Ensuring that the continued operation of existing waste management facilities (in locations which are consistent with the site identification criteria for new sites) is protected, including against the encroachment of incompatible uses, in a way consistent with local, regional and national guidance.

SAMDev Development Plan Documents (DPDs)

2.33 The purpose of the SAMDev Plan document (as stated on the Shropshire Council website) is to:

- *“Identify sustainable growth targets for Shropshire's market towns*
- *Identify Community Hubs and Community Clusters in the rural area where some further development will happen*
- *Identify appropriate sites for future housing and employment development in market towns, community hubs and community clusters*
- *Provide additional development management policies which can be used in the consideration of planning applications.”*

2.34 Three SAMDev Plan documents are reviewed here, the 2012 Preferred Policy Directions DPD, the 2013 Draft Development Management Policies DPD and the 2014 Pre-Submission Draft (Final Plan).

Preferred Policy Directions – Shropshire Council (2012)

2.35 Preferred Policy Direction MD1 highlights that the SAMDev Plan will set out all of the settlements where development (of a scale and type appropriate to their size, role and function) may be permitted in accordance with Core Strategy policies. Sites for development in the named settlements will either be allocated directly (and identified on the Proposals Map) or be brought forward, by developers, on other suitable sites

within the settlement.

2.36 Preferred Policy Direction MD3 aimed to:

- *“Show how the proposed employment land supply for each of the Spatial Zones (Core Strategy Policy CS14) has been distributed between:*
 - *Shrewsbury and the market towns (Policies CS2 and CS3)*
 - *Settlements within the ‘rural rebalance’ (Policies CS4 and CS5).*
- *Identify those reallocated employment sites located in Shrewsbury and the market towns and other settlements*
- *Identify how new site allocations located in Shrewsbury and the market towns and other settlements complete the distribution, type, size and quality of the employment portfolio to 2026*
- *Show which readily available sites will form the Reservoir of land to deliver at least 72 ha of employment development in each five year period and those sites to be reserved to replenish the Reservoir (e.g. the Reservoir is likely to contain a 10 year supply at the outset with a further 5 year supply reserved to replenish the Reservoir):*
 - *Explain the timing and processes to bring forward the SUE’s in Shrewsbury and Oswestry through the Reservoir*
 - *Reserve those sites which will accommodate the expansion of key local employers*
- *Explain the processes by which the Reservoir can be refreshed annually and the circumstances which trigger a review of the employment land supply*
- *Show how the requirement to deliver adequate waste management infrastructure capacity to meet Shropshire’s needs over the period to 2026 (Core Strategy Policy CS19) can be met from:*
 - *The sites identified in this Policy*
 - *Existing employment locations to be protected in proposed Policy MD11 and/or*
 - *Appropriate alternative sites, where justified.*
- *Explain that employment land will be brought forward and developed in accordance with proposed Policy MD11.”*

2.37 Preferred Policy Direction MD11, notes that within the County’s most sustainable and valued employment areas:

- *“Planning applications for B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution) uses and compatible waste management uses will normally be permitted*
- *Non Class B/quasi-retail uses such as car showrooms, tyre and exhaust centres, and builders’ merchants will generally be considered acceptable. Trade Counters will only be permitted where the trade counter use is clearly ancillary to the main employment use*
- *Ancillary facilities and services such as cafes, sandwich bars, and day care nurseries will also be permitted where they would support enterprise and improve the functionality of an employment area*
- *In exceptional cases, other non Class B employment uses may be permitted where they would be of substantial community benefit and their development in this location would be in the best interests of the town*
- *Class A1 retail uses will not normally be permitted.”*

2.38 The extension of existing employment areas for B1, B2, B8 uses will (in exceptional circumstances) be permitted on suitable, adjoining sites, providing there is no adverse impact on neighbouring uses, the environment, local highway network or other infrastructure. Policy will also favour the retention of employment uses on established employment sites outside settlements.

2.39 Proposals by an established business to expand its operation in a rural location will be supported *“where this is judged to be the most sustainable option and relocation to an existing or allocated employment site within a settlement would not be more appropriate.”*

2.40 Proposals to redevelop employment sites outside settlements for alternative uses are unlikely to be granted *“unless it can be demonstrated that future employment use would be unviable, and the proposal would bring substantial community benefit and be in the best interests of the local community.”*

2.41 Finally, Preferred Policy Direction MD15 seeks to *“support the development of recycling, recovery and waste transfer facilities in appropriate locations including those identified in Policy Directions MD3 or MD11 where impacts on the local community and Shropshire’s natural and historic environment can be satisfactorily controlled.”*

Draft Development Management Policies – Shropshire Council (2013)

2.42 The Draft Development Management Policies DPD sets out the 16 draft Development Management policies (alongside those already adopted in the Core Strategy) along with examples of potential settlement strategies for the County’s market towns and key centres.

2.43 Proposed Policy MD1 states that *“overall, sufficient land will be made available during the remainder of the plan period up to 2026 to enable the targets for development set out to be achieved, including those for housing and for employment land in Policies CS1 and CS2.”* As Table 6 shows, excluding 2006-2013 completions and 2013 commitments, as of April 2013, there was a net requirement for a further 40 ha of employment land in Shrewsbury, to 2026.

Table 6 – Shropshire Employment Land Supply Summary

Area	Built 2006-2013	Committed* 2013	Planned 2006- 2026 (Approximate)	Remaining to deliver to 2026
<i>Shrewsbury</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>90</i>	<i>40</i>
Market Towns/Key Centres	14	91	130	25
Rural Areas	26	19	70	25
Total	67	133	290	90

* *Committed* = those with planning permission at 01/04/2013

Source: *Shropshire Council, 2013*

2.44 Proposed Policy MD4 (previously Policy Direction MD3) notes that Shropshire’s strategic supply of employment land will be supported by *“the redevelopment of land and regeneration opportunities on existing strategic sites and employment areas...”* Proposals for development on identified employment portfolio sites, or on other sites considered suitable for employment use, will be *“good enough to approve”* where the proposals:

- *“Satisfy Local Plan policies and the requirements of the Place Plans*
- *Meet the needs of the community for employment opportunities*
- *Do not cause harm to or conflict with adjoining uses.”*

2.45 Proposals for the development of alternative uses (other than B1, B2, B8 employment) on employment sites will also be expected to:

- *“Consider other suitable sites for the proposed development*

- *Justify the loss of new employment land from the strategic supply.”*
- 2.46 Shropshire will maintain a reservoir of employment land, ensuring that a minimum supply of 72 ha is readily available throughout the Local Plan period to 2026 (over three 5 year periods). This reservoir of employment land will be reviewed annually.
- 2.47 Finally, when an applicant seeks to renew a planning consent *“evidence will be required that the development will be delivered within three years or that the renewal of planning consent will not prejudice other sites from coming forward from the Reservoir or the strategic supply of employment land.”*
- 2.48 Proposed Policy MD9 (previously Policy Direction MD11) states that Shropshire’s Strategic Sites and Employment Areas (identified on the Local Plan Proposals Map) will be:
- *“Safeguarded with committed development and regeneration opportunities which support the strategic employment land supply*
 - *Safeguarded for Class B uses and other related employment uses*
 - *Promoted for improvements to their infrastructure, floorspace, built fabric, visual character and appearance and their operation and management.”*
- 2.49 The degree of protection afforded to Strategic Sites and Employment Areas will be *“proportionate to the presence of regeneration opportunities, the uses and employers on the site, and their significance in the local economy.”*
- 2.50 Existing Strategic Sites and Employment Areas will support the strategic employment land supply, providing other development options where a settlement’s requirements for new employment development are unlikely to be met within the Local Plan period, on existing allocated employment land. Proposals for redevelopment on protected sites will be considered *“good enough to approve”* where the proposals:
- *“Provide Class B or related employment uses*
 - *Satisfy Local Plan policies and supporting evidence in the SAMDev Plan*
 - *Meet the requirements of the Place Plans*
 - *Would not cause harm or conflict with adjoining uses.”*
- 2.51 Proposals to remove the protection of existing employment areas will require *“the support of the local community and evidence of three marketing campaigns in a*

period not less than 12 months showing the site is no longer commercially viable for employment use.” Conversely, planning consent will be renewed for Class B or related employment uses which contribute to the Local Plan objectives.

SAMDev Final Plan – Shropshire Council (2014)

- 2.52 The SAMDev Final Plan was approved for consultation on 27th March 2014 setting out the proposed policy framework for Development Management and Settlement Policies for Shrewsbury, Market Towns and Key Centres with further policies for Hubs and Clusters within each of the Place Plan areas identified around the principal settlements.

Shropshire Employment Land Review and Sites Assessment – Shropshire Council (2011)

- 2.53 BE Group completed an Employment Land Review for Shropshire Council in 2011. This indicates that the Central Zone of Shropshire has 39.54 ha of employment land made up of 32 sites. 25 of those sites, totalling 31.71 ha (80 percent of the Central supply) are in Shrewsbury.
- 2.54 13 of the Shrewsbury sites (totalling 21.49 ha) are at Battlefield Enterprise Park. This includes 9.15 ha, off Battlefield Road, which is reserved for development of Shropshire Food Enterprise Park (marketed as Greenhills Enterprise Park). A further four sites (totalling 6.21 ha) are located east and west of Shrewsbury Business Park, providing a Phase II extension to that employment area. Other Shrewsbury Employment Areas/Strategic Sites with identified employment land include:
- Abbey Lawns – One site (0.23 ha)
 - Castle Foregate – One site (0.37 ha)
 - Centurion Park – One site (0.54 ha)
 - Former Cattle Market Area – One site (totalling 0.68 ha)
 - Longden Road Industrial Estate – Two sites (totalling 0.69 ha)
 - Sundorne Retail Park – Two sites (totalling 0.50 ha).
- 2.55 Most of Shrewsbury’s employment sites are small (1 ha, or less) and suitable for general industrial/business uses (mixed office and industrial). The bulk of the supply is considered to be available within the next three years, while only one site (Adjacent to GI Motors, Sundorne Retail Park, Shrewsbury – 0.19 ha) is unlikely to ever come forward. Individual employment sites, which remain available, are

discussed further in the Employment Area/Strategic Site Proformas (see Appendix 1).

- 2.56 The Employment Land Review identifies that (at the time of writing) there was reasonable demand for industrial sites and premises across Shropshire, although in Shrewsbury (as well as in Whitchurch and Oswestry) this was caused by a lack of supply – limited industrial land, freehold properties and modern premises (particularly 100-200 sqm units). Industrial demand was for units up to 500 sqm, with larger requirements more prevalent in Shrewsbury. There was limited demand for large distribution warehousing units. The bulk of office demand was for units up to 100 sqm, mostly in Shrewsbury.
- 2.57 Based on past take-up rates (and following Core Strategy guidance) a further 37.16 ha of employment land is required in the Central Zone, to 2026. 35 ha of this should be in Shrewsbury. Five additional sites (totalling 36 ha) were identified to meet this shortfall. They comprise land around the A49/A53 junction in north Shrewsbury along with a 6 ha site south of Shrewsbury Business Park. A further 34 ha of employment land is also proposed within Shrewsbury's SUEs.
- 2.58 The Review considers that there is a short-to-medium term need to allocate additional industrial employment land in Shrewsbury. The lack of industrial land was, at the time of writing, constraining the market and limiting the development of new industrial premises to meet local business needs. In the longer term a successor to Shrewsbury Business Park will also be needed, but there is currently plenty of office development land remaining there. The Review also questioned if use limitations at Shrewsbury Food Enterprise Park remain viable in the recession. Its restricted use class, at least in the short term, is considered to be constraining the industrial market in the town.

Shrewsbury and Atcham Employment Sites Assessment – Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council/Shropshire County Council (2007)

- 2.59 This report appraises the potential of various parts of the former local authority area of Shrewsbury and Atcham for new employment allocations. It was commissioned by the former Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council (along with Shropshire County Council) to underpin and inform the (then) Local Development Framework and develop clear and realistic planning policies to 2026.

- 2.60 From an initial long list of suggested areas to be considered, the report identifies eight preferred development sites which score highly against a range of criteria including transport, ground conditions, accessibility and market attractiveness. As Table 5 shows, the preferred sites could provide some 67 ha of additional employment land, split evenly between office and industrial uses (mainly B1c, but some B2 and small-scale B8).
- 2.61 Of this total, 6 ha, (9 percent), are in the rural areas, the remainder is within the Shrewsbury urban area. None of the sites are significantly constrained; the initial assessment of ground conditions of the sites has highlighted a number of potential geo-environmental concerns. However, suitable mitigation measures can be employed to enable their development.
- 2.62 If for whatever reason, any of this land is not viable, the next best options would be further expanding the Oxon Business Park Extension to incorporate areas to the west (providing the North West Relief Road is built). The last choice would be to open up a new business park in the west – around Hanwood Roundabout North and South or Mytton Oak Roundabout North and South.

Table 5 – Preferred Sites Summary Matrix

Site	Total Approx. Size, ha	Indicative Employment Size, ha	Office Area, ha	Industrial Area, ha	Urban/Rural	Sustainable (inc Transport Assessment)	Other Major Constraints	Score (out of 60)	Reinforces Existing Employment Area
Oteley Road	63.5	20	10	10	Urban	Yes	No	57	No
Shrewsbury Business Park South	10.0	10	10	0	Urban	Yes	No	55	Yes
Ellesmere Road*	46.8	10	5	5	Urban	Yes	Dependant on North West Relief Road RAMSAR site	48	Partially
West of Battlefield Road	7.8	7	0	7	Urban	Yes	No	46	Yes
Oxon Business Park Extension	38.9 (part)	12	6	6	Urban	Yes	Dependant on North West Relief Road	32	Yes
Meole Brace	5.8	2	2	0	Urban	Yes	No	39	Yes
Atcham Industrial Estate	5.0	5	0	5	Rural	Yes	No	-	Yes
Leebotwood	1.0	1	0.5	0.5	Rural	Yes	No	-	Partially
Total	178.8	67	33.5	33.5					

Source: Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council/ Shropshire County Council, 2007

*A subsequent, more detailed, Transport Strategy Report discounted the Ellesmere Road site for employment/mix-use development.

Shrewsbury Offices Study – Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council, et al (2007)

- 2.63 This report was commissioned by the former Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council (along with Shropshire County Council, Morris Property and Alaska Group) to assess the office market (use Class B1a) in Shrewsbury.
- 2.64 In terms of supply, as of early 2007, there was approximately 121,124 sqm of offices in Shrewsbury comprising 596 properties. This floorspace is split 40:40:20 between the town centre, mid-town and out-of-town areas. Key out-of-town locations include Shrewsbury Business Park (11,420 sqm of office floorspace in 45 properties), Oxon Business Park (7,649 sqm in 27 properties), Battlefield Enterprise Park (4,487 sqm in 25 properties), Longden Road (1,463 sqm in 8 properties) and Monkmoor Road (637 sqm in three properties). The town centre accounts for 65 percent of the premises.
- 2.65 Local property experts, consulted for the study, confirmed the small nature of most office enquiries (up to 186 sqm), the lack of quality accommodation in the town centre (which suffers from poor accessibility and car parking) and increasing demand for mid-town and out-of-town locations. They also reported demand for small serviced accommodation, modern, purpose-built space and freehold options. Demand was reasonable and many developments were fully occupied.
- 2.66 Economic forecasts (which predate the recession) suggested an increasing need for offices in Shrewsbury over the next 15 years. Another 20,000 sqm will be required in the town centre, and a further 40,000 sqm in the rest of Shrewsbury.
- 2.67 The town centre lacks quality, purpose built offices and developing new ones remains problematical due to a lack of space, conservation area issues and difficulties in assembling multi-owned sites. This is resulting in pent-up demand for premises there. Mid-town locations have proved to be very popular, e.g. Abbey Lawns, as they combine the accessibility and car parking of an out-of-town location with the facilities offered by a town centre within reasonable walking distance.
- 2.68 Opportunities in mid-town locations should therefore be promoted as well as expanding out-of-town business parks. This will lead to more businesses and more demand in all three sub-areas of Shrewsbury. The growth in numbers of businesses and employment will outweigh any marginal effect of business loss from the town

centre to more peripheral locations.

2.69 The study's key policy recommendations were:

- To remove the 372 sqm restriction at Shrewsbury Business Park. It hampers free market operation, reducing the marketability of the buildings and the ability of occupiers to secure funding to purchase them
- Protect Cambrian House as a key element of Shrewsbury's office portfolio
- Continue to plan for further office development in all three sub-areas of Shrewsbury
- Allocate further employment land in out-of-town locations
- Recognise the differing needs of businesses – therefore range and choice must be provided, by location, size, tenure, quality
- Intensify office development in the town centre and mid-town areas to make the best use of scarce land resources
- Apply the sequential approach to major office development in mid-town, encouraging edge-of-town centre locations
- Retain existing town centre offices where possible, especially if they are reasonably modern, purpose-built or fit-for-purpose
- Help promote new development areas in the town centre for mixed-use purposes, but with a substantial office component.

'My Shropshire: Building Strong Communities', Shropshire Council Plan 2011-2013 – Shropshire Council (2011)

2.70 The Plan is a roadmap, setting out how Shropshire Council intends to work in the future. It has the vision *"To improve significantly the quality of life for Shropshire people by working together"*.

2.71 The vision is made up of six priorities. Under the priority 'economic growth and prosperity' Shropshire Council seeks to *"work with our partners to ensure that Shropshire's economy is sustainable and businesses are competitive and resilient. This will be supported by sustainable infrastructure, such as appropriate housing, good broadband coverage, good integrated transport network and a workforce that has access to better-paid and more secure and satisfying employment."*

Spotlight on the Shropshire Economy (Shropshire Local Economic Assessment) – Shropshire Council (2011)

2.72 This study provides an in-depth understanding of Shropshire's local economy in order to:

- *“Provide a sound understanding of the economic conditions in the area and how they affect residents and businesses*
- *Identify the comparative strengths and weaknesses of the local economy and the nature and form of local economic challenges and opportunities*
- *Identify the local economic geography, including the economic linkages between the area being assessed and the wider economy*
- *Identify the local constraints to economic growth and employment and the risks to delivering sustainable economic growth.”*

2.73 The study will inform a range of future strategies and policies. It will also determine future priorities for local economic development and underpin the three Community Strategy priorities:

- *“Enterprise and growth, with strong market towns and rebalanced rural settlements*
- *Responding to climate change and enhancing our natural and built environment*
- *Healthy, safe and confident people and communities.”*

2.74 With a population of 291,800 at mid-year 2008, Shropshire is a predominantly rural and sparsely populated county (with only 0.91 persons/ha) with a traditional reliance on farming and associated industries. More than a third of Shropshire's population live in villages, hamlets and the countryside. However, 28 percent (67,142) live in the county town of Shrewsbury.

2.75 Shrewsbury is a key employment, cultural and shopping centre for Shropshire and Mid-Wales. It ranked amongst the top ten retail centres in the West Midlands, generating comparison retail spend of £399 million in 2007. The town is the preferred location for all major retail, office and other employment related development in Shropshire. The town's status as a Growth Point and Impact Investment Location means that Shrewsbury will be the focus of considerable investment in the short and medium term. Such investment will result in the development of 6,500 new homes, up to 90 ha of employment land, 20,000 sqm of gross office space and 80,000 sqm of gross comparison retail space by 2026.

- 2.76 In terms of commuting, Shrewsbury has strong links with Telford and Wrekin. The 2001 Census indicated that some 17,868 people travelled between Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin for work purposes. However, the study also notes that Shrewsbury is the most self-contained town in Shropshire. As of 2001, 70 percent of the economically active resident population worked in the town.
- 2.77 Although Shropshire is a relatively affluent county, there are pockets of deprivation where a high proportion of the population is out of work, in low paid employment or suffering from other forms of economic and social exclusion. Such areas of deprivation include parts of the former wards of Harlescott, Meole Brace and Monkmoor in Shrewsbury. Harlescott in particular is ranked amongst the top 10 percent most deprived areas nationally. In addition, long term unemployment is seen to be a particular concern in parts of Harlescott (where 28 percent of the population are out of work), Meole Brace (where over a quarter of the population are out of work) and Sundorne (where 21 percent of the population are out of work).
- 2.78 In terms of utilities, the study highlights that Shrewsbury's electricity grid is approaching capacity and needs reinforcing.

Shrewsbury Vision Regeneration Framework – Shropshire Council (2011)

- 2.79 The Regeneration Framework's vision is that Shrewsbury will be: *“A distinctive and progressive riverside and County Town, evolving and extending its role and influence with new uses, infrastructure, activities, neighbourhoods and relationships, building on its special attributes, character, history and quality of life”.*
- 2.80 The proposed themes are:
- **“Raising the Profile:** *Fulfilling Shrewsbury's role as regional centre and a national asset by enhancing existing strengths and assets in heritage, environment and culture. Increasing the profile and understanding of the town as an investment and visitor location.*
 - **Enterprise and Learning:** *Growing a balanced, diverse and sustainable economy and workforce and ensuring a high quality coherent learning offer at all ages and levels.*
 - **Sustainable Communities:** *A town with balanced, safe and healthy communities supported by infrastructure and housing, delivering an excellent*

quality of life, an enhanced natural environment and a clear response to climate change.

- **Accessibility:** *Ensuring good access whilst reducing the negative impacts of traffic, tackling congestion and promoting sustainable forms of transport.*
- **Heart of Shrewsbury:** *A sustainable town with a vibrant, high quality growing town centre with a balance of uses that reflects its historic environment and is supported by edge of centre sites and a welcoming Northern Corridor.”*

2.81 The Framework includes a thematic ‘Key Strategy’ on economic development. This identifies that Shrewsbury’s economy is overly dependant on the public sector. The local economy would benefit from diversification, focusing on several key growth sectors:

- *“Creative and digital industries*
- *Energy and environmental sectors*
- *Artisan industries*
- *Retail*
- *Tourism*
- *Food and drink industries.”*

2.82 Shrewsbury has a number of assets that make a good location for these types of business. It provides low cost land, a high quality living environment and excellent local infrastructure which can attract office and technology based firms. However, Shrewsbury could struggle to create a critical mass of media industries due to the nature of the environment and a lack of the ‘urban intensity’ which would be found in a larger settlement.

2.83 There are a number of existing property schemes which support these sectors, including the Shropshire Food Enterprise Sector. The Pump House offers flexible office space in town supporting environmental industries; it is supported by the Marches Environmental Technologies Network. Growing creative and digital industries provides a longer term opportunity for younger people and can be linked with skills and training for Shrewsbury’s young people.

2.84 In response to consistently low levels of inward investment, Shrewsbury has looked to develop indigenous micro, small and medium sized businesses (including home based businesses). Aiding the growth of the local firms sector will entail:

- *“Investment in high speed fibre-optic broadband*
- *Ongoing support for existing and development of virtual business networks*
- *Ongoing support for local enterprise centres (the Food Enterprise Centre, the Pump House and the Enterprise Hub at Battlefield Enterprise Park).*
- *Development of a network of further enterprise and managed workspace to compliment and grow the existing offer subject to levels of demand. This should include sites in or adjoining the town centre, and could particularly focus on the creative and digital and tourism sectors linked to college courses.*
- *Explore links to and extension of the Wolverhampton-Telford Hi-Tech corridor through the development of start-ups and spin out companies, capitalising on the excellent links with the University of Wolverhampton*
- *Developing links between businesses and local or regional skills providers.”*

2.85 Under the ‘Heart of Shrewsbury’ theme, the Framework discusses a number of spatial projects for central Shrewsbury. Relevant proposals include:

- Options for the partial redevelopment of the Abbey Foregate for around 5,600 sqm of office space
- Investment in the public space in front of the Guildhall, Frankwell, to enhance this riverfront location. In the long term, the wharf and boatyard could be enhanced by the development of new leisure uses. Shropshire Council should also consider disposing of the Guildhall for residential or hotel uses
- Improving the existing buildings opposite the station and Royal Mail sorting office, on Castle Foregate. Should the Royal Mail Sorting Office relocate, the site should be considered for a new high quality office development
- The Council should consider relocating the occupants of Castle Business Park to other premises on Castle Foregate or locations in the Northern Corridor. The Business Park could then be released for housing.

Shrewsbury Northern Corridor Regeneration Framework – Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council, et al (2007)

2.86 This study, commissioned by the former public sector organisations of Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council, Shropshire County Council and Advantage West Midlands looks at the A5112/A5191 area of Shrewsbury. The vision of the study is: *“To create a sustainable, vibrant and distinctive corridor, capable of fulfilling its role as the prime northern gateway to Shrewsbury, whilst also meeting the needs and*

aspirations of businesses and the local community.” Relevant study objectives include:

- *Providing “a coherent spatial strategy for the corridor that seeks to provide a sustainable and complementary mix of retail, community, employment and residential uses within the current boundaries of Shrewsbury town*
- *Strengthening and further diversifying the local economy, with a range of measures geared to supporting existing local businesses and promoting clusters to be formed relating to the food, environmental technology and creative media sectors*
- *Improving efficiency of access to businesses*
- *Maximising new build on brownfield sites and ensure that new development contributes to meeting the other objectives.”*

2.87 A key strand of this strategy is the Northern Enterprise Quarter that encompasses Battlefield Enterprise Park (including the Food Enterprise Park, now Greenhills Enterprise Park), Sundorne Retail Park, Park and Ride and a number of nearby greenfield sites (including West of Battlefield Road and A53/A49 Junction). This looks to consolidate employment uses and maximise the potential for public transport uses linked to further employment and residential development in this area. Complimentary environmental and access improvements are proposed, both for the Northern Enterprise Quarter and at adjacent Lancaster Road Industrial Estate. The two sites (mentioned above) are recommended for consideration as greenfield sites advocating a sequential approach to their possible development for housing in the future.

2.88 In the Lancaster Road Industrial Estate Employment Area, the strategy prioritises the protection of key employment land. When employment uses/buildings become obsolete there should be a presumption for continuing employment use on the site. If the current employment use is shown to be unviable, then the local authority should work with the developer to agree a development brief for that site that will not weaken the wider estate’s long term future as an employment designation.

2.89 At the southern end of the corridor, in the Castlefields Conservation Area and the Greenfields area (west of Castle Foregate), a rebranded ‘Castle Foregate Urban Village’ is proposed which would redevelop a range of sites to deliver a mixed-use scheme of housing, employment workspaces and services. Environmental technology and media sector companies would be encouraged to relocate to this

location. Finally, Ditherington Flax Mill will be refurbished to deliver a mix of workshops, homes and community facilities.

Shropshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, Final 2009 Update Report – Shropshire Council (2010)

- 2.90 The aim of the Shropshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is *“to set out information on land that offers potential for accommodating housing to inform the choices that are to be made within the plan-making process.”*
- 2.91 The SHLAA indicates that, in Shrewsbury, a total of 2,049 dwellings have planning permission for development (or are under construction) as at 1st April 2009. In total, 69 possible housing sites were identified with the capacity to provide 1,917 dwellings by 2026.
- 2.92 A number of the sites identified are presently in employment use. As Table 6 shows, there are eight housing opportunity sites, identified by the SHLAA, on Shrewsbury’s Strategic Sites and Employment Areas. These total 16.15 ha (with the potential to deliver some 480 dwellings) and include land and property at Abbey Foregate, Castle Foregate, Ditherington Flax Mill, Doncasters and St Michaels Street.
- 2.93 Generally, the areas with the strongest potential for housing in Shrewsbury are the southern edge, south of Oteley Road and Thieves Lane; from the A5112 and stretching east across to London Road. This area also includes a smaller area of land north of the Meole Brace Park and Ride site. There is also good potential for housing in the North East of the town, on land to the west of the A49, east of Battlefield Road and north of Shillingstone Drive and Hallam Drive. Finally, there is a potential area south of Sundorne Road adjoining the existing housing.

Table 6 – Housing Opportunity Sites Identified on Shrewsbury’s Strategic Sites and Employment Areas

Site	Employment Area	Description and SHLAA Conclusions	Size (ha)	Suggested Density (Dwellings per ha)	Suggested Housing Yield (Dwellings)
SHREW080: Site at St Michaels Gate/ St Michaels Street	Castle Foregate	<p>Site comprises a mature brick built warehouse type building. Site has recently been bought by Morris Lubricants for future use as storage and parking. Within a Conservation Area.</p> <p>Given the continued use of the site for a strong local business, it is unlikely to come forward within the first 5 years.</p>	0.88	22.80	20
SHREW087: Site at New Zealand House, Abbey Foregate	Abbey Foregate	<p>The site is 800 metres east of the town centre and is in use for a variety of commercial activities, including post office, offices, pub, garage and a large area of car parking and storage space. Within a Conservation Area.</p> <p>Vacant office space in New Zealand House is on the market. Discussions with the agents, undertaken for the SHLAA, also suggest short/medium term availability for housing. It is therefore possible that this site could come forward within the next few years. However, due to the nature of the site and the work required to bring it forward (including the relocation of existing uses) a medium term time frame is more likely.</p>	1.49	50.37	75
SHREW134: Land at Old Coleham	Castle Foregate	<p>The site comprises a series of sheds/ warehouses and some associated storage and parking, adjacent to the railway line.</p> <p>The SHLAA considers the site to be a suitable location for development. The site has been actively promoted for housing and it is thought possible this site could come forward within the next 5 year time frame, dependant on any remediation required.</p>	3.30	40.00	132

Site	Employment Area	Description and SHLAA Conclusions	Size (ha)	Suggested Density (Dwellings per ha)	Suggested Housing Yield (Dwellings)
SHREW162/R: The Sentinel Works, Whitchurch Road	Doncasters	<p>The site is occupied by a manufacturing plant (with associated car parking and turning area) for Doncasters, Shrewsbury.</p> <p>Site is a protected employment site however Shrewsbury Northern Corridor Study highlights opportunity for mixed-use development. Agents acting on behalf of the landowner have confirmed, to the SHLAA, that the site is available and could be brought forward within the next 5 years.</p>	3.41	20.55	70
SHREW198: Ditherington Flax Mill	Ditherington Flax Mill	<p>Ditherington Flax Mill is the worlds first iron framed building. It fell into disrepair in 1987 and has been declared a building at risk by English Heritage. Surrounding uses comprise a mix including the Bus Depot, residential and commercial units. A public footpath runs to the rear of the site.</p> <p>The building complex is suitable for sensitive repair and conversion to accommodate a mix of uses, including residential. The conservation element and English Heritage's involvement makes this site likely to come forward within the medium term.</p>	2.42	41.32	100
SHREW206: Salop Music Centre, St Michaels Street	St Michaels Street	<p>The site comprises a retail unit currently occupied by Salop Music Centre and associated car park. Surrounding uses include commercial and retail units.</p> <p>The site is considered suitable, by the SHLAA, for medium to high density residential or mixed-use development. Due to the nature of the site and that it has been actively promoted in the past, it is thought possible this site could come forward within the next 5 years.</p>	0.49	38.58	19

Site	Employment Area	Description and SHLAA Conclusions	Size (ha)	Suggested Density (Dwellings per ha)	Suggested Housing Yield (Dwellings)
SHREW004: St Michaels House, St Michaels Street	St Michaels Street	<p>In 2008/09 the site comprised the Council offices (Community Services Department). Surrounding uses include 2/3 storey residential, commercial uses, recreational facilities and car parking.</p> <p>The SHLAA considered the building suitable for conversion for residential uses (subject to respecting its heritage value) with development anticipated within 5 years.</p>	0.26	54.20	14
SHREW040: S.C.R. Retail Systems, Kendal Road	Centurion Park	<p>Ex-military depot currently occupied by a MAFF depot, small business units, 24 houses, community dentist and Sure Start dentist.</p> <p>The site is considered suitable (by the SHLAA) for redevelopment for a mix of uses (subject to not undermining emerging plan policy) with development in the short to medium term.</p>	3.90	12.83	50

Source: Shropshire Council 2010

Summary

- 2.94 The NPPF requires local authorities to “*set criteria, or identify strategic sites*” which can meet local and inward investment needs over the plan period. However, local planning authorities should avoid the long term protection of employment land “*where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose.*”
- 2.95 Shropshire’s Core Strategy highlights that Shrewsbury will be the primary focus for development, and Shropshire’s main office and commercial centre. The Northern Corridor will be a focus for regeneration and improvement, with the restoration of Ditherington Flax Mill a priority project. Two SUEs are proposed for Shrewsbury – Shrewsbury South (which will incorporate the expansion of Shrewsbury Business Park and a new strategic employment site adjoining Shrewsbury Town Football Club) and Shrewsbury West (providing an additional 9-12 ha of employment land).
- 2.96 Core Strategy policy states that a portfolio of employment land will be identified to provide a range and choice of opportunities. That portfolio will also be supported by “*protecting existing strategic employment land and premises to secure these sites for employment uses.*”
- 2.97 The emerging SAMDev seeks to protect the County’s key employment areas and sites for B1, B2, B8 occupiers, along with compatible waste management uses. Non Class B/quasi-retail uses (car showrooms, tyre and exhaust centres, and builders’ merchants) are also generally acceptable, as are ancillary food and day care facilities. Other non Class B employment uses may be permitted where they could provide community benefits.
- 2.98 The 2011 Employment Land Review identified an employment land supply of 25 sites (totalling 31.71 ha) in Shrewsbury. That supply is focused at Battlefield Enterprise Park.
- 2.99 There are eight housing opportunity sites, identified by the SHLAA, on Shrewsbury’s Strategic Sites and Employment Areas. These total 16.15 ha, with the potential to deliver some 480 dwellings.

3.0 MARKET APPRAISAL

3.1 This section considers the market performance of each location. This is based on discussions with property market professionals (developers, scheme managers and agents) about the present demand for land and property in each Site/Area, and any gaps in supply. The views of key landowners and occupiers are considered separately in Section 4.0.

3.2 The section is also informed by an assessment of each Strategic Site and Employment Area against four market criteria – critical mass, accessibility, prominence and environment. Against each of these criteria the Site/Area is rated 'good, average or poor'.

Market Appraisal

3.3 Table 7 details the market assessment of Strategic Sites and Employment Areas of Shrewsbury. The assessment indicates the total employment land provision within Shrewsbury's Sites/Areas to be 212.95 ha.

Table 7 – Assessment of Existing Employment Areas

Site	Site Area, ha	Predominant Use Class	Occupancy Rate, percent	Characteristics: G - Good / A - Average / P - Poor				Comments
				Environment	Mass	Accessibility	Prominence	
Oxon Business Park Welshpool Road Shrewsbury	16.84	B1/B2/B8 business park (Plus D1 crèche, dentists and veterinary surgery)	95	G	G	G	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful, established business park with little scope for further growth within the established Business Park (although further employment land will be provided in the nearby SUE as part of the SAMDev Plan) • Along with Shrewsbury Business Park and Battlefield Enterprise Park, Oxon is a key source of moderate and good quality office accommodation in Shrewsbury • An important employment area for Shrewsbury, however, Oxon lacks the regional profile of Shrewsbury Business Park and Battlefield Enterprise Park • Oxon draws occupiers from across west/north west Shropshire, notably Oswestry. The Business Park's catchment area also extends across the Welsh border.
Battlefield Enterprise Park Harlescott Lane Harlescott Shrewsbury	73.43	B1 (a ,b, c)/B2/B8 Business Park (Plus sui generis car showrooms)	83	G	G	G	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified as the primary employment location for north Shrewsbury, also the primary source of development land in the town • Along with Shrewsbury Business Park and Oxon Business Park, Battlefield Enterprise Park is a key source of moderate and good quality office accommodation in Shrewsbury • Battlefield attracts the bulk of its occupiers from northern Shropshire, along with some regional requirements • General demand is for storage and distribution units of 500-1,000 sqm (and

Site	Site Area, ha	Predominant Use Class	Occupancy Rate, percent	Characteristics: G - Good / A - Average / P - Poor				Comments
				Environment	Mass	Accessibility	Prominence	
								<p>not exceeding 2,000 sqm), along with offices of 0-200 sqm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average office rents are £108-150/sqm, average industrial rents are £38/sqm • Some demand for freehold accommodation • Managers of the two main business centres (Shropshire Food Enterprise Centre and The Rural Enterprise Centre) report reasonable demand and occupancy rates of 75-95 percent • The Rural Enterprise Centre is an important local source of incubation and grow-on space for local micro businesses, particularly those expanding from homeworking • The Food Enterprise Centre attracts food production firms from across England, although the majority of the present occupiers are Shropshire based businesses • Vanguard Trade Park is popular with local trade occupiers, but has attracted little interest from outside of Shropshire. The scheme has an occupancy rate of 96 percent • Vanguard has achieved rents of £76/sqm, maintaining that rental level throughout the recession • Development land in the north, at Shropshire Food Enterprise Park (marketed as Greenhills Enterprise Park) is earmarked for food related businesses. However, both developers and agents report no interest from this sector for new build development

Site	Site Area, ha	Predominant Use Class	Occupancy Rate, percent	Characteristics: G - Good / A - Average / P - Poor				Comments
				Environment	Mass	Accessibility	Prominence	
								<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future development at Greenhills Enterprise Park is likely to be limited to design and build developments for specific occupiers. Speculative development is not considered commercially viable in the present market • At Battlefield Enterprise Park, and across Shrewsbury, low land values (down to £300,000-320,000/ha after construction costs) are discouraging developers from pursuing office and industrial developments. At present, only trade/retail schemes (such as Vanguard) are judged to be commercially viable.
Sundorne Retail Park Sundorne Shrewsbury	18.39	B8 trade park (plus A1 retail and sui generis car showrooms)	74	G	G	G	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No market comments.
Shrewsbury Business Park Emstrey Shrewsbury	7.60	B1(a) high quality office park (Plus C1 hotel and D1 clinic and crèche)	72	G	G	G	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified as the primary employment location for south Shrewsbury • Along with Battlefield Enterprise Park and Oxon Business Park, Shrewsbury Business Park is a key source of moderate and good quality office accommodation in Shrewsbury • Agents identify improving demand for the available office units, both from existing occupiers looking to expand or downsize and office businesses from elsewhere in Shropshire and Telford (particularly ICT and financial services firms) • Some demand from regional firms, mostly from the medical sector. This

Site	Site Area, ha	Predominant Use Class	Occupancy Rate, percent	Characteristics: G - Good / A - Average / P - Poor				Comments
				Environment	Mass	Accessibility	Prominence	
								<p>includes requirements for clinics and dental surgeries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupiers want suites of 0-150 sqm • Some demand for freehold accommodation • Average rents are £96-108/sqm • Undeveloped land in the west of the Business Park is being marketed for design and build development. Limited interest for such new build options given the existing, good quality office space that remains available • A sharp drop in office rents (by £30 to £40/sqm) since 2007, combined with rising construction costs, has discouraged developers from delivering new office accommodation at Shrewsbury Business Park (and elsewhere in the town) • A key feature of Shrewsbury Business Park's market attractiveness is its position off the A5 • This location also allows existing occupiers to import a large part of their workforce from Telford.
Ditherington Flax Mill Spring Gardens Ditherington Shrewsbury	2.7	Former B2 grade 1 listed mill complex and ancillary buildings	0	G	G	G	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No market comments.
Brassey Close Old Potts Way Shrewsbury	2.07	B1(a)/B8 Employment Area	79	G	A	G	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No market comments.

Site	Site Area, ha	Predominant Use Class	Occupancy Rate, percent	Characteristics: G - Good / A - Average / P - Poor				Comments
				Environment	Mass	Accessibility	Prominence	
		(Plus sui Generis veterinary clinic)						
Prospect House Belle View Road Shrewsbury	0.47	B1(a) business centre	69	G	A	P	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful local business centre in a primarily residential area.
Abbey Lawn Abbey Foregate Shrewsbury	1.82	B1(a) Urban office area	67	G	A	P	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established and successful urban office area Reasonable demand despite the scheme's backland location Popular with Shropshire businesses who wish to be centrally located in Shrewsbury The scheme is usually fully let although recently several occupiers have vacated (or are in the process of vacating) Rents are around £123/sqm, reduced from £135/sqm in 2007. However, rents at Abbey Lawn remain above Shrewsbury averages (£96-118/sqm).
New Zealand House Abbey Foregate Shrewsbury	1.27	B1 (a and c) Urban office area	67	G	P	A	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previously on the market, agents are now in the process of securing a new tenant for New Zealand House, on a 15 year lease Viewed as a desirable office location due to its main road location and extensive off-street parking
Frankwell Quay Frankwell Shrewsbury	0.96	B1(a and c) riverside employment area	50	G	P	A	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established urban employment area, no available premises.
Doncasters Whitchurch Road Harlescott	3.37	B8 solus manufacturing facility	100	A	G	G	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standalone manufacturing site for a major local employer.

Site	Site Area, ha	Predominant Use Class	Occupancy Rate, percent	Characteristics: G - Good / A - Average / P - Poor				Comments
				Environment	Mass	Accessibility	Prominence	
Shrewsbury								
Lancaster Road Industrial Estate Harlescott Shrewsbury	38.73	B1(a and c)/B2/B8 industrial estate (Plus A1 retail and Sui Generis Ten Pin Bowling Centre)	81	A	G	A	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substantial, established estate of older industrial accommodation Most premises north of Ennerdale Road are now in A1 retail or trade uses. However, the consensus amongst agents is that the encroachment of non-employment uses into Lancaster Road Industrial Estate is now coming to an end. Trade and retail occupiers are increasingly being drawn to the more prominently located, new build units of Vanguard Trade Park while industrial occupiers now view Lancaster Road Industrial Estate as a good source of secondary accommodation. Greenwood Court continues to perform reasonably well, despite its backland location, providing moderate quality industrial space to local firms.
Centurion Park Whitchurch Road Harlescott Shrewsbury	4.94	B2/B8 industrial estate	76	A	G	A	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Former MoD site comprising around 10,000 sqm of budget quality industrial premises Popular with local start-ups and micro businesses, the key attractions of the scheme are considered to be the competitive rents (£44/sqm), easy-in, easy-out terms, accessibility and location (off Whitchurch Road) Demand is for units of 100-200 sqm Also includes several areas of hardstanding (one an employment site) which are now let to tenants within the estate.
Former Cattle	14.22	B2/B8 mixed employment area	100	A	A	G	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No market comments.

Site	Site Area, ha	Predominant Use Class	Occupancy Rate, percent	Characteristics: G - Good / A - Average / P - Poor				Comments
				Environment	Mass	Accessibility	Prominence	
Market Battlefield Road Harlescott Shrewsbury		(Plus sui generis motor retail)						
Monkmoor Industrial Estate Monkmoor Road Shrewsbury	5.78	B1(a and c)/B8 industrial estate (Plus A1 retail and C2 nursing home)	94	A	A	A	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No market comments.
Longden Road Industrial Estate Longden Road Shrewsbury	7.44	B1 (a and c) /B2/B8 industrial estate	78	A	A	A	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified as a successful local industrial estate, serving western Shrewsbury Most demand is from local firms, but Sweetlake Business Park does attract some occupiers from across the Welsh border.
William A Lewis and BT Complex, Harlescott Lane Shrewsbury	3.29	B1(a)/B2 urban employment area	80	A	P	G	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The BT Complex (Communications House - 6,928 sqm) is on the market, to let The agents report limited interest in the property, in part because of internal building constraints. BT intends to retain a 'Switch Room' in the centre of the building, plus space for several staff to maintain the switch room. BT indicates that relocating this facility would be too expensive Also the extensive supply of good quality office space at Shrewsbury/Oxon Business Parks and Battlefield Enterprise Park is discouraging occupiers from looking at secondary locations such as this However, the building is the largest available office property in Shrewsbury.

Site	Site Area, ha	Predominant Use Class	Occupancy Rate, percent	Characteristics: G - Good / A - Average / P - Poor				Comments
				Environment	Mass	Accessibility	Prominence	
								<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The owners have indicated they are willing to spilt the building to create a multi-let scheme (the space could be divided in a variety of ways, but individual floors range from 639 sqm to 4,358 sqm in size) If the constraint of the Switch Room could be overcome, they would also consider redevelopment options
Cambrian House Chester Street Shrewsbury	0.17	B1(a) office building	25	A	P	A	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previously a business centre, the building is now largely vacant and on the market, for sale, after the previous owner went into receivership Until recently there was limited interest in the property, but the marketing agents feel this was due to an unrealistic sale price (£709/sqm) set by the receiver, rather than a lack of demand Cambrian House is now under offer to a confidential purchaser for £164/sqm. It is understood that the purchaser intends to bring the building back into use as a business centre.
Castle Foregate (East) Shrewsbury	3.61	B1(a)/B2/B8 Larger industrial and storage premises	100	A	P	A	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dominated by large, established local employers.
Whitehall Buildings Monkmoor Road Shrewsbury	0.90	B1(a) office building	65	A	P	P	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substantial office building in a backland location, surrounded by housing.
St Michael's Street	1.58	B1(a), B8 Urban employment area	89	P	P	A	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No market comments.

Site	Site Area, ha	Predominant Use Class	Occupancy Rate, percent	Characteristics: G - Good / A - Average / P - Poor				Comments
				Environment	Mass	Accessibility	Prominence	
Shrewsbury		(Some units in A1 retail use)						
Castle Foregate (West) Shrewsbury	3.70	B1(c)/B8 Area of low density, low quality industrial premises	67	P	P	P	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes Castle Business Park which comprises 12 units (including five rail arches), 90-140 sqm in size and attracting rents of 38-53/sqm • This budget quality space has been largely vacant over the recessionary period but has seen improving demand in 2012 • Recent demand has been from a range of local firms including bakers, storage companies and local engineering firms.
Total	212.95							

Source: BE Group 2014

Environment

- 3.4 Measured against this assessment characteristic (and indeed, against all four characteristics) the best performing Sites and Areas Oxon Business Park, Sundorne Retail Park, Battlefield Enterprise Park and Shrewsbury Business Park. All are large, established business/trade parks, in attractive edge of settlement locations, with no significant areas of vacancy/dereliction and few businesses undertaking 'bad neighbour' activities such as waste recycling. Most of the business accommodation was built within the last 20 years and is of a high quality.
- 3.5 All but two of the Sites and Areas have an overall environmental quality that can be described as good or average. The poor quality locations are St Michael's Street and Castle Foregate (West). Both are secondary industrial locations within the inner urban area, providing mostly older, budget quality space to a small number of local businesses. Castle Foregate (West) includes large areas of underused land while St Michael's Street includes significant land in non B-Class employment use.

Critical Mass

- 3.6 Over a third of Shrewsbury's Sites and Areas have a 'good' level of critical mass. These are large (and in the case of Battlefield Enterprise Park and Lancaster Road Industrial Estate very large) established industrial estates and business parks which accommodate a large proportion of Shrewsbury's B1(c)/B2/B8 industrial and warehouse businesses. Areas with a poor critical mass include the William A Lewis and BT Complex (a reflection of the fact that the BT Complex is vacant), New Zealand House (again, at the time of writing, the largest property in this small employment area was vacant), Frankwell Quay (the Guild Hall is occupied but other properties are vacant and land is in use for parking) and Castle Foregate (West) where land around the railway is underused).

Access and Prominence

- 3.7 Access and prominence are not issues as most of the Strategic Sites and Employment Areas sit on, or close to, the main transport corridors of Shrewsbury. Key corridors include (in the north) the A5112 Whitchurch Road/Battlefield Road which supports Battlefield Enterprise Park, Sundorne Retail Park, the Former Cattle Market, Doncasters and (indirectly) Lancaster Road Industrial Estate and the William A Lewis and BT Complex. Further south, as the A5191, it also accommodates the St Michaels Street and Castle Foregate Sites/Areas. In the south Shrewsbury Business

Park has direct A5 access while Oxon Business Park sits on the A458 heading west out of the town.

- 3.8 Centurion Park, while it has reasonable access to the A5112, is mostly located in the backlands and so lacks prominence. Abbey Lawn is a high quality business location but situated in a mostly residential area, away from the main roads, as is Prospect House (which also has a narrow access point).
- 3.9 Only one location scores poorly for all four criteria. Castle Foregate (West) lacks critical mass, while the Site/Area sits behind railway arches which constrain both prominence and access. The environment, which comprises budget quality industrial units, railway arches and a coal yard is uniformly poor.

Occupancy

- 3.10 Despite the recession, most of the Sites/Areas are well occupied. Excluding Cambrian House (which is on the market in its entirety) and Ditherington Flax Mill (which is undergoing refurbishment), all but one of the locations have occupancy rates of 65 percent or more. The exception is Frankwell Quay, where the older warehouse properties near the entrance appear to be largely/wholly vacant.
- 3.11 Four Sites/Areas are fully occupied (Castle Foregate (East), St Michael's Street, Doncasters and the Former Cattle Market), although these are generally smaller employment locations occupied by one, or more, large employers.
- 3.12 Shrewsbury's main industrial estates and business parks are all well occupied, with occupancy rates ranging from 72 percent at Shrewsbury Business Park to 95 percent at Oxon Business Park.

Property Market Stakeholder Comments

- 3.13 Property market professionals highlight Battlefield Enterprise Park and Shrewsbury Business Park as the prime employment locations of Shrewsbury. Along with Oxon Business Park, these are the only locations which attract sub-regional/regional occupiers on a regular basis. Battlefield Enterprise Park is attractive to occupiers from northern Shropshire and the wider West Midlands region while Shrewsbury Business Park's position on the A5 attracts demand from Telford and southern Shropshire. A reasonable portion of those who presently work at Shrewsbury

Business Park are understood to also commute from Telford.

- 3.14 Although Battlefield Enterprise Park has a strong industrial and warehouse offer, it is the strength of the office supply at Battlefield Enterprise Park and Shrewsbury Business Park that was regularly highlighted by stakeholders. Both offer high quality, self-contained offices at rental levels which are competitive with secondary schemes elsewhere in Shrewsbury. The scale and quality of available office space at both locations means that other office schemes in the town, and the wider town centre, struggle to compete.
- 3.15 Battlefield Enterprise Park and Shrewsbury Business Park are also the only two Sites/Areas in Shrewsbury with available employment land which could meet the needs of developers and inward investors. However, at the time of writing, low land values (down to £300,000-320,000/ha after construction costs) and weak rental levels, across Shrewsbury, are discouraging developers from bringing forward further office and industrial schemes.
- 3.16 In addition to being a key office location, Battlefield Enterprise Park is also home to Shropshire Food Enterprise Centre which is achieving national prominence as a specialist facility for food industry businesses (although the land around the Enterprise Centre known as Greenhills Enterprise Park, has not attracted interest from larger food industry firms for new build development). The Rural Enterprise Centre is also now established as an important local source of incubation and grow-on space for local micro businesses, particularly those expanding from homeworking. It is the only such facility in Shrewsbury.
- 3.17 Finally, a recent development of trade units (Vanguard Park) has proved extremely successful, establishing Battlefield Enterprise Park as the primary trade location of Shrewsbury. Vanguard Park is increasingly drawing trade occupiers away from other Sites/Areas in the town, notably Lancaster Road Industrial Estate located immediately to the south.
- 3.18 Oxon Business Park is another key employment Site/Area in Shrewsbury. Although it lacks the regional profile of Battlefield Enterprise Park and Shrewsbury Business Park, Oxon does attract occupiers from across western Shropshire, including Oswestry. Its catchment area also extends across the Welsh border. Again it is the

Business Park's supply of good quality, self contained office properties which is most commonly highlighted as its main strength. However, as Oxon has, at present, little available property, and no available land, there is limited scope to capitalise on these strengths.

- 3.19 Longden Road, Centurion Park and Lancaster Road Industrial Estate are identified as the main 'local' industrial estates of Shrewsbury. They are established schemes which provide moderate quality industrial and warehouse premises to local businesses. However, they have only a limited profile outside of Shrewsbury and the Central Zone of Shropshire. There has been a significant encroachment of retail and trade uses into the northern portion of Lancaster Road Industrial Estate. But, with the completion of Vanguard Park, stakeholders expect that further trade occupiers will be drawn further north, again into Battlefield Enterprise Park rather than accept less prominently located sites at Lancaster Road Industrial Estate.
- 3.20 Abbey Lawn is the prime office location for inner Shrewsbury, attracting occupiers who wish to be centrally located in the town. Despite its backland location, the scheme attracts a reasonable level of (mostly local) demand, and rents are above Shrewsbury averages.
- 3.21 Other Sites/Areas in Shrewsbury are (in market terms) secondary and any demand for land or property will only come from local businesses. Comments made by stakeholders on these locations include:
- William A Lewis and BT Complex: On the market, to let, the BT Complex (Communications House) is the largest office property on the market in Shrewsbury (6,928 sqm). The constraints of the building may make it unattractive to a single large occupier, but the scale of space available could allow the creation of a substantial multi-let scheme, prominently located on Harlescott Lane in north Shrewsbury
 - New Zealand House: Now under offer to single occupier, on a 15 year lease, the future of this property is considered secure
 - Castle Foregate (West): Improving demand for budget quality accommodation at Castle Business Park, from local firms
 - Cambrian House: Now under offer to a freehold purchaser who has expressed an interest in bringing the property back into use as a business centre.

3.22 Property professionals had no comments to make on a number of Sites/Areas in Shrewsbury. Generally, these are established employment locations, with little land or premises on the market, which have seen little change in recent years. They also include Sites/Areas such as Doncasters and Castle Foregate (East) which are dominated by large occupiers with no identified property requirements or plans for change (the aspirations of landowners and major occupiers are discussed in Section 4.0). Stakeholders also had little to say on Ditherington Flax Mill. Although refurbishment proposals at the Mill will include a significant element of offices, stakeholders remain unwilling to judge the market viability of this scheme until the scale and nature of the new accommodation becomes clear.

Summary

3.23 Shrewsbury's Strategic Sites and Employment Areas total 212.95 ha. With some exceptions they are well occupied, particularly the main industrial estates and business parks. Measured against the four market assessment criteria the best performing Sites/Areas are Oxon Business Park, Sundorne Retail Park, Battlefield Enterprise Park and Shrewsbury Business Park. Only Castle Foregate (West) scores poorly for all four criteria.

3.24 Property market professionals highlight Battlefield Enterprise Park and Shrewsbury Business Park as the prime employment locations of Shrewsbury. This is primarily because of their office premises although Battlefield Enterprise Park has a much broader scheme which includes successful business centre schemes and a strong trade offer. Oxon Business Park is also a key scheme for Shrewsbury, although the lack of available land or property limits its present influence.

3.25 Successful local schemes include Abbey Lawn, Longden Road, Centurion Park and Lancaster Road Industrial Estate.

4.0 PHYSICAL AND OWNER/OCCUPIERS APPRAISAL

4.1 Section 3.0 provided a market assessment of the 22 existing Strategic Sites and Employment Areas. This section considers the relevant physical elements of each Site/Area. In particular, the land remaining to be developed, and BE Group's considered regeneration opportunities are discussed, together with the views of key landowners and occupiers. It should be noted that the comments made by owners and occupiers are their perception of the situation, and may well reflect their role and involvement, rather than being the complete picture. Table 8 summarises the findings for each Site/Area.

Physical Appraisal

4.2 Premises within Shrewsbury's Strategic Sites and Employment Areas are generally of average or good quality. With the exception of Ditherington Flax Mill (which is under refurbishment) there are no large areas of vacant and/or derelict premises. Even at Castle Foregate (West) and the eastern portion of Monkmoor Industrial Estate, where the units are of a generally poor quality, most space is in use. The network of established employment areas in Shrewsbury do not therefore have a significant issue of dereliction.

4.3 The town has a strong and diverse property offer. Modern, self contained, office, industrial/warehouse and trade premises, are available at a number of edge of centre employment areas including Battlefield Enterprise Park, Sundorne Retail Park, Oxon Business Park and for office use only at Shrewsbury Business Park. Abbey Lawns also provides good quality offices at a more central location and so, can meet both local requirements and the needs of small and mid-sized companies from outside Shrewsbury. There are no large industrial/warehouse properties available (to meet demand from larger inward investors), but office suites of more than 600 sqm are on the market at Communications House on Harlescott Lane in north Shrewsbury and within the Whitehall Buildings at Monkmoor to the east of the town centre.

4.4 The employment areas at Lancaster Road, Castle Foregate (west), Longden Road and Monkmoor Industrial Estate offer a range of older (1945 – 1990), mostly industrial, warehousing and trade accommodation but at Longden Road in particular, contemporary investment is improving the floorspace offer. Prospect House in the

residential suburb of Belle Vue in south Shrewsbury offers smaller, serviced office floorspace which remains attractive despite the lack of prominence of the site.

Table 8 – Summary of Existing Employment Areas

Site	Buildings Age	Buildings Quality	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, ha	Other Physical Comments	Landowner/Occupier Comments*
Castle Foregate (East) Shrewsbury	Pre-1945- New	Average	3.61	-	0.98	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Royal Mail Depot will close as sorting facility in 2014, with operations transferring to either Chester or Wolverhampton. Only local mail deliveries will remain at Castle Foregate. The adjoining Prison complex will be vacated very soon and complex surrendered for redevelopment.
St Michael's Street Shrewsbury	1945-1990 (Plus new facility for Shropshire Fire and Rescue)	Mixed average (56 percent)/ good (44 percent)	1.58	-	-	Units in the southern portion of the area are in non-employment use (including HSS Hire Shop, ARC car wash, textiles and music retailers).	-
Doncasters Whitchurch Road Harlescott Shrewsbury	1945-1990	Average	3.37	-	-	If Doncasters was to vacate then finding an alternative occupier for this substantial industrial property would be difficult. The costs of refurbishing and sub-dividing this large, older building would also make delivery of a viable multi-let business scheme difficult.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doncasters Aerospace highlighted its intention to remain on the Whitchurch Road site (which is leased from Bovale) and the importance of the facility to its national operation. The site contains a range of specialist manufacturing technologies and further investment is proposed to meet the needs of new contracts. Relocation of the facility would be a significant financial burden on the company. In a submission to the Draft SamDev, Doncasters emphasised the importance of the Whitchurch Road site to the local economy and Doncasters' status as one of the main employers of Shrewsbury. Doncasters is seeking greater protection of their site in local planning policy.

Site	Buildings Age	Buildings Quality	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, ha	Other Physical Comments	Landowner/Occupier Comments*
Former Cattle Market Battlefield Road Harlescott Shrewsbury	Pre 1945, 1990-New	Primarily good	14.22	1.68	-	Frontage is dominated by motor retail occupiers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABP operate a beef abattoir at the Former Cattle Market, employing around 500 staff. ABP has no expansion plans and no additional concerns with its site regarding access, security, etc.
Oxon Business Park Welshpool Road Shrewsbury	1990-New	Mixed average (60 percent)/ good (40 percent)	16.84	-	0.45	-	-
Monkmoor Industrial Estate Monkmoor Road Shrewsbury	Pre 1945-2000	Primarily average	5.78	-	-	Despite the low quality of the premises, the small area of workshops in the east appears well occupied. The west of the industrial estate (close to Conway Drive) is in non-employment use, with occupiers including United Carpets and Beds, Magnet and Abbots Wood Residential Care Home.	-
Battlefield Enterprise Park Harlescott Lane Harlescott Shrewsbury	1945-New	Primarily good	73.43	20.40	-	The north east of the Enterprise Park (off Vanguard Way) is increasingly dominated by trade uses (Vanguard Park).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment site SY2006/00916: Plot 3.1 – 0.43 ha), is in use as a storage facility by Lock Stock Storage. Lock Stock has indicated it intends to retain this land in storage use and has recently completed a phase II development of storage units. Stadco (a tier 1 automotive parts supplier)

Site	Buildings Age	Buildings Quality	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, ha	Other Physical Comments	Landowner/Occupier Comments*
							<p>employs 400 staff at its stamping/manufacturing plant. The 1.76 ha of expansion land to the rear (Employment Site: LY2001/00016, Rear of Stadco, Harlescott Lane) has now been sold to Suma Developments. Land on the frontage of the Stadco facility, including offices, has been sold to JT Hughes, who are putting the land/property on the market. Stadco have a short term lease on the offices, and will look to retain the rear third of the building. However, the present intention is that Stadco will move its HQ office to Telford. This will not affect the manufacturing plant to the rear.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PXP (a joint venture between the Homes and Communities Agency and private developer Langtree) own 9 ha of development land at Greenhills Enterprise Park. The land is being offered as design and build plots of 0.8-2 ha (speculative development is not viable in the present market). At present, there is little demand for new build development given the plentiful supply of existing properties in Shrewsbury. Although, there is an aspiration to create a food industry cluster at Greenhills, PXP has no obligation to limit occupancy to food sector businesses. Since 2007, PXP has received no land enquiries from the food industry. • Morris Developments have recently completed Phase II of Vanguard Park (2,137 sqm). Both phases of the Park (which total 6,039 sqm) have proved popular with local trade businesses, attracting some occupiers from nearby

Site	Buildings Age	Buildings Quality	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, ha	Other Physical Comments	Landowner/Occupier Comments*
							<p>Lancaster Road Industrial Estate. Rents are £76/sqm and this rental level has been maintained throughout the recession. Both phases of Vanguard Park were developed speculatively, the only speculative development completed in Shrewsbury in recent years. 4 ha remain undeveloped.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Morris Developments also own a 1.4 ha site, east of the Food Enterprise Centre (recently purchased from Shropshire Council). The land will be marketed for design and build options. Morris is presently bidding for Local Enterprise Partnership funding to service the site.
Lancaster Road Industrial Estate Harlescott Shrewsbury	Pre 1945-2000	Average	38.73	-	-	Property north of Ennerdale Drive is in non-employment (mostly retail) use, notably at Arrow Point.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caterpillar operate from a 12 ha site in the south of the Lancaster Road Industrial Estate Employment Area (employing around 350 staff). Only half of the site is in active use, while the remaining 6 ha will be held for future expansion. Caterpillar has no additional concerns with its site regarding access, security, etc. although there are occasional cases of trespassing as individuals cross the footbridge from Morrisons supermarket.
William A Lewis and BT Complex, Harlescott Lane Shrewsbury	1945-90	Average	3.29	-	0.93	-	-
Brassey Close Old Potts Way Shrewsbury	1990-New	Good	2.07	-	-	Most of the industrial units are now in trade use. However, the north	-

Site	Buildings Age	Buildings Quality	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, ha	Other Physical Comments	Landowner/Occupier Comments*
						of the area includes several good quality, multi-let office properties which appear well occupied. Tenants include Severnside Housing.	
Longden Road Industrial Estate Longden Road Shrewsbury	1945-New	Primarily average	7.44	0.51	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrow County Supplies own a 0.6 ha site fronting Longden Road. Having investing heavily in the site (including 3,066 sqm of warehouse and office accommodation) Arrow have no further plans for expansion or relocation. Shropshire Council has confirmed there are no plans for change at its Longden Road highways depot.
Centurion Park Whitchurch Road Harlescote Shrewsbury	Pre 1945-New	Primarily average	4.94	0.54	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This former MoD facility is owned by Morris Developments. Morris let the 10,000 sqm of budget premises to a range local industrial and trade occupiers. Morris has a clawback option, in 2017, which they intend to exercise to pursue a redevelopment scheme. The redevelopment proposal is likely to be housing led, but could include offices. There is insufficient local demand for an industrial development. Morris do not feel that the existing buildings can be viably refurbished.
Sundorne Retail Park Sundorne Shrewsbury	1990-New	Primarily good	18.39	0.31	-	Most land and property north and west of Arlington Way (including the Battlefield Road Frontage), is in A1	-

Site	Buildings Age	Buildings Quality	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, ha	Other Physical Comments	Landowner/Occupier Comments*
						retail use.	
Shrewsbury Business Park Emstrey Shrewsbury	1990-New	Good	7.60	5.89 (plus 6.33 ha SUE Expansion Site)	-	-	-
Prospect House Belle View Road Shrewsbury	Pre 1945	Good	0.47	-	-	-	-
New Zealand House Abbey Foregate Shrewsbury	Pre1945 - 1990	Primarily average	1.27	-	-	The frontage is fully developed. Land to the rear of Kwick Fit, adjacent to two older industrial units, is in use for vehicle parking and open storage. Access to this backland is constrained, making a viable redevelopment difficult.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owned by Morris Developments. As was discussed in Section 3.0, the property is under offer to a business for a 15-year lease.
Abbey Lawn Abbey Foregate Shrewsbury	New	Good	1.82	0.23	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owned by Morris Developments, this established and successful office scheme has historically been fully let. Rents are around £123/sqm. Although reduced from a peak of £135/sqm in 2007, rents at Abbey Lawn remain above Shrewsbury averages (£96-£119/sqm). Morris also own the adjacent Horsefair site (Employment Site SY2008/00732: Former Builders Merchants, Horsefair – 0.23 ha). There is

Site	Buildings Age	Buildings Quality	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, ha	Other Physical Comments	Landowner/Occupier Comments*
							an outstanding consent on the land for 883 sqm of offices, which Morris intend to implement when market demand improves.
Castle Foregate (West) Shrewsbury	Pre1945 - 1990	Poor	3.70	0.37	2.04	Generally a low quality employment area, with constrained access through railway arches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both Castle Business Park and Crewe Bank Yard are owned by Network Rail. Network Rail intends to retain both schemes in their present use, with no plans for further investment. Crewe Bank Yard includes five yards/workshops, let to local firms, and a coal yard on a long lease to EWS freight. Employment site LY2001/00004 (Off Ellesmere Road (East) – 0.37 ha), is in use as a storage facility by Lock Stock Storage. Lock Stock has indicated it intends to retain this land in storage use. Lock Stock is also applying for planning permission to develop a small (40 sqm) office on the Castle Foregate frontage. Likely to be used as sales office.
Whitehall Buildings Monkmoor Road Shrewsbury	Primarily 1945-1990	Primarily average	0.90	-	-	Area is constrained by surrounding uses and a narrow access road. However, this is one of the largest office buildings in Shrewsbury, providing open plan office space which could meet the needs of larger employers.	-
Frankwell Quay Frankwell	Pre-1945 workshops	Half poor/half good	0.96	-	0.07	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shropshire Council has confirmed there are no plans for change at the Frankwell Quay

Site	Buildings Age	Buildings Quality	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, ha	Other Physical Comments	Landowner/Occupier Comments*
Shrewsbury	plus new office building						offices, which are presently occupied by Shropshire Council and Shrewsbury Town Council.
Cambrian House Chester Street Shrewsbury	Primarily 1945-90	Average	0.17	-	-	-	-
Ditherington Flax Mill Spring Gardens Ditherington Shrewsbury	Pre 1945	Derelict (but under refurbishment)	2.7	-	2.7	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is Outline Planning Permission for the entire site 10/03237/OUT which will bring forward 20,000 sqm. 6,000 sqm of this is identified for office, community space and retail/ commercial uses. 12,300 sqm will be housing. • Planning Permission has been granted for Phase 1 of the development 10/03230/FUL: Repair and re-use of the Main Mill, Warehouse, Malt Kiln and Cross Mill for Business Use (B1) and Non-Residential Institutions (D1), landscaping of areas around the Mill, provision of a temporary car park, demolition of north silo and demolition of all non-listed buildings on the Spring Gardens sites. • Listed Building Consent 10/03233/LBC has been granted. • The Planning Permission for the Dye and Stove house is under consideration: 12/04435/FUL as is the Listed Building Consent: 12/04436/LBC • The Phase 1 development covers the repair and refurbishment of the Main Mill, Kiln, Dye & Stove House, Stables and Offices and will produce 5,142 sqm (of which 2,898 sqm will be employment space, the balance will be public/community space).

Site	Buildings Age	Buildings Quality	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, ha	Other Physical Comments	Landowner/Occupier Comments*
							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 2 of the scheme includes re-instating the canal as a water feature, opening up the back of the site by creating a road into the site at the junction of Sultan Road, creating a new Broughton Square, potential improvements to the entire Spring Gardens frontage and moving the car park to its permanent place at the back of the complex. This phase will make the wider site more attractive to private investment. This will enable Phase 3 which is essentially a new build phase (but may include the refurbishment of the Cross Mill and Warehouse if demand exists).
Total			212.95	29.93	6.46		

Source: BE Group 2014

*As discussed, each organisation's comments are their perception of the situation, and may well reflect their role and involvement, rather than being the complete picture.

4.5 Non-Class B employment uses (mostly retail and trade) have encroached into several Sites/Areas:

- Battlefield Enterprise Park – The south east of the Enterprise Park (Vanguard Park) is becoming increasingly dominated by trade uses but these are located within modern light industrial units
- Former Cattle Market Area, Battlefield Road – Primarily an A1 retail location accommodating a Tesco Extra store with a range of service uses to the north. The Battlefield Road frontage is occupied by motor retailers but forms part of an area with an industrial character dominated by the ABP abattoir
- Lancaster Road Industrial Estate – area around Brixton Way is in non-Class B employment uses (mostly retail), most notably at Arrow Point Trade Park.
- Sundorne Retail Park – Most land and property to the north and contained within the circular route of Arlington Way (including the Battlefield Road Frontage), is in A1 retail use.
- Monkmoor Industrial Estate – area on west of industrial estate adjoins the residential area of Conway Drive and accommodates A1 retail and C2 residential care uses
- St Michael's Street – Occupiers in the southern portion of the area include HSS Hire Shop, ARC car wash, textile and music retailers with other service uses located in the former St Michael Street school building to the north
- Castle Foregate (West) – land to north of Castle Business Park has now passed into C3 residential use as an open space buffer to this mixed commercial area.

4.6 Shrewsbury's existing supply of employment land and premises is generally of a good or higher quality and so, there are only a few realistic opportunities for remodelling or redevelopment. The findings of the physical appraisal of the 22 sites in the study has identified Regeneration Opportunities totalling 6.46 ha (see Appendix 1) which comprises:

- Oxon Business Park – area of hardstanding off Clayton Road, north of WMS/Oxon Joiners (0.45 ha) could accommodate a further commercial unit within this successful employment area
- Frankwell Quay – two older industrial properties (The Stew – 0.03 ha and Wharfage Buildings – 0.04 ha) at either side of the Frankwell entrance are fully vacant, with evidence of internal dereliction offering redevelopment opportunities in this edge of centre commercial area

- Castle Foregate (West) – Crewe Bank Rail Yard (Site A – 2.04 ha) is in use for open storage and builders' yards. The Rail Yard could provide a significant redevelopment opportunity in the Shrewsbury urban area. However, it is on a long lease to EWS Freight (who, in turn, let most of the yard to local coal merchants). Access and proximity to the railway are also constraints.
- Castle Foregate (East) – The Royal Mail Depot (0.98 ha) will close as the main sorting facility in 2014, with operations transferring to either Chester or Wolverhampton. Only local mail deliveries will remain at Castle Foregate. The adjoining Prison complex is also vacant and will be surrendered for redevelopment. The combined site provides a major mixed-use redevelopment opportunity.
- Ditherington Flax Mill – The whole mill (2.7 ha) is being refurbished with significant areas of open, brownfield land around the mill complex to provide an office-led, mixed use regeneration opportunity offering 20,000 sqm of commercial floorspace and 12,300 sqm of housing within the redevelopment.
- William A Lewis and BT Complex – The 6,928 sqm (0.93 ha), former BT office is on the market, to let. The building (known as Communications House) is the largest available office property in Shrewsbury. The owners have indicated they are willing to sub-divide the property to create a multi-let scheme. The owners will consider redevelopment options, where the constraints within the building can be overcome particularly the retention of the BT 'Switch Room' (see Table 8). This opportunity would deliver new employment premises in a prominent location on Harlescote Lane in north Shrewsbury
- St Michael Street – the extensive car park to Salop Music Centre forms a frontage with St Michael Street and could accommodate a small scale commercial development if surplus to requirements.

4.7 Alongside these opportunities, there is 29.93 ha of undeveloped employment land (Development Opportunities) within Shrewsbury's Sites/Areas. More than two thirds of this land supply (20.40 ha) is within Battlefield Enterprise Park while another 5.89 ha (19.6 percent) is at Shrewsbury Business Park (in addition to the potential 6.33 ha site for Phase III of the Business Park identified as an Expansion Site for Shrewsbury's Southern Sustainable Urban Extension). Other locations with development opportunities are Abbey Lawns, Centurion Park, Former Cattlemarket, Longden Road Industrial Estate and Sundorne Retail Park.

Landowner/Occupier Consultations

- 4.8 Discussions with a number of the major occupiers of Shrewsbury suggest they are satisfied with their present accommodation, with no plans for change. Doncasters Aerospace particularly highlighted its desire to remain on the Whitchurch Road site and the importance of the facility to its national operation. In a submission to the Draft SAMDev, Doncasters further emphasised the importance of the Whitchurch Road site to the local economy.
- 4.9 The only (partial) exception is Stadco. Stadco has sold the office frontage of its Battlefield Enterprise Park facility and is temporarily leasing the space back. The company has indicated that it intends to move the bulk of its HQ office functions to Telford to benefit from the more direct Motorway access there. The manufacturing facility to the rear would not be relocated.
- 4.10 Morris Developments are a major commercial developer in Shrewsbury. At Battlefield Enterprise Park, Morris highlighted the success of Vanguard Park (Phase II of which has now been completed) which has proved popular with local trade businesses. The developer agreed with the comments of property agents, who argued that the presence of a high quality trade scheme at Battlefield Enterprise Park has drawn (and will continue to draw) trade occupiers from Lancaster Road Industrial Estate and other Sites/Areas in northern Shrewsbury. This will reduce any further encroachment of trade uses into established B1/B2/B8 employment areas which will help to facilitate the efficacy of safeguarding policies for these employment areas.
- 4.11 Morris Developments also own Centurion Park and highlighted that, after 2017, it would wish to redevelop the employment area. Morris Developments would propose housing led, mixed use redevelopment which could include an office scheme. Morris argue that by 2017 the existing buildings will have degraded to a point where they cannot be viably refurbished.
- 4.12 Morris also claim that there is insufficient local demand for an industrial redevelopment. It is not clear if they have undertaken any market research to evidence this assertion but it broadly accords with comments made by PXP (below) and property agents (see Section 3.0) who indicate that rental and value levels do not currently support new employment development at key development sites such

as Greenhills Enterprise Park. It would appear to follow that, new employment development is unlikely to be viable in secondary locations such as Centurion Park.

- 4.13 Joint venture developers PXP own Greenhills Enterprise Park (also known as the Shropshire Food Enterprise Park). At 9 ha, this is the largest available development site in Shrewsbury. The land is being offered for design and build plots, as speculative development is not viable in the present market. There is little general demand for new build development as there is a plentiful supply of good quality premises at both Battlefield Enterprise Park and Shrewsbury Business Park. Although, there is an aspiration to create a food industry cluster at Greenhills, PXP states that it has no obligation to limit occupancy to food sector businesses. Since 2007, PXP has received no land enquiries from the food industry.
- 4.14 Ditherington Flax Mill is owned by Shropshire Council. Following refurbishment for which the redevelopment partnership now have £20m of identified funding including a £12.8m Heritage Lottery Fund grant. The Flax Mill Masterplan proposes a three phase redevelopment to deliver 24,000 sqm of refurbished/redeveloped accommodation. 11,000 sqm of this is identified for office, community space and retail/commercial uses. A further 13,000 sqm of the floorspace to be provided will be housing.
- 4.15 Business engagement work is being undertaken to identify companies who are interested in the circa 2,600 sqm of commercial (predominately office) space available within the Main Mill. This work will involve a local, regional, national and international focus and is supported by the approval of second stage Heritage Lottery Funding.
- 4.16 Council officers emphasise that they have received market interest for the Flax Mill. This includes one (confidential) enquiry, which could provide an anchor tenant for the site.
- 4.17 The Flax Mill regeneration project is still in its early stages, and it is perhaps, still too early to judge the success of this restoration programme. However, Shropshire Council highlight that Ditherington Flax Mill represents a rare investment opportunity to provide commercial, community and residential floorspace within the buildings and surrounding setting of this unique complex of historic buildings.

Summary

- 4.18 The physical appraisal confirms that Shrewsbury's Strategic Sites and Employment Areas are generally of good or average quality. There are no large areas of vacant or derelict property, with the exception of Ditherington Flax Mill – though this is now the subject of refurbishment.
- 4.19 Shrewsbury's strong and diverse property offer includes modern self-contained offices, industrial/warehousing and trade counter premises within a number of locations. There are also good quality edge of centre offices at Abbey Lawns, Old Potts Way and Frankwell Quay. However, Shrewsbury does lack large industrial/warehouse properties.
- 4.20 A handful of locations have seen the introduction of non-employment uses in the form of retail and trade counter operations. These include Battlefield Enterprise Park and the former Cattle Market Area at Battlefield Road.
- 4.21 There are only limited Regeneration Opportunities within the Shrewsbury sites due to the generally high quality of existing stock. In all BE Group has identified 6.46 ha, with two thirds of this represented by just two locations – Ditherington Flax Mill (which also has additional brownfield development opportunities) and Crewe Bank Rail Yard at Castle Foregate. In addition 29.93 ha of employment land commitments remain undeveloped. The bulk (20.40 ha) is at Battlefield Enterprise Park. Most of the rest is at Shrewsbury Business Park, which also has a 6.33 ha SUE expansion proposal.
- 4.22 Developers consider new speculative development within Shrewsbury is not viable in the present market. This is due to a combination of economics and the existing available supply level of good quality property. Only at Ditherington Flax Mill is activity taking place, through public sector driven refurbishment, which will bring large high quality office space to the market.

5.0 AREA/SITE GRADING AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Sections 3.0 and 4.0 provided market and physical assessments of the 22 existing Strategic Sites and Employment Areas. This section combines the results of these two analyses to give each Site/Area a grading, indicating its position in the hierarchy of Shrewsbury's employment locations. The section then considers the implications of each grade and the level of planning protection that should be afforded to each grade of Sites/Area. Planning policy guidance, tailored to each Site and Area, is also provided in the Site/Area Proformas in Appendix 1.
- 5.2 Finally, this section looks at any portions of Sites/Areas which are no longer in employment use, and which need to be reallocated for non-employment uses.
- 5.3 The grades used in this study are defined in Table 9.

Table 9 – Grades A* to E Definitions

Category	Grade	Definition
Regional Sites	A*	An area of regional and potentially national significance. The unique quality, scale and setting of the location make it a focus for inward investment and a means for raising the economic profile of Shropshire generally.
Sub-Regional Sites	A	High quality, prestigious, flagship business areas due to their scale, location and setting. Capable of competing for investment from across the county's (and the region's) market place. These are prime sites for marketing to a cross section of users including new inward investors. They can also meet the needs of image-conscious, aspirational companies already in the local authority area.
Key Shropshire Sites	B	Good employment sites due to their scale, location and setting. Capable of competing for investment in the sub-regional market place. These are prime sites for marketing to a cross section of users.
	B/C	
Key Local Sites	C	Key employment sites with an influence over the whole local authority area, but primarily geared towards local businesses and B1 light industrial, B2 and B8 uses.
	C/D	
Mixed Commercial Sites	D	Lower quality locations in residential areas suffering from poor accessibility and massing. Also areas where large portions of land have now been lost to non-employment use and the future viability of the remaining employment land/premises is uncertain.

Category	Grade	Definition
Reallocation Sites	D/E	Very poor quality areas. Widespread vacancy and dereliction and located in poor quality environments. Alternatively, reasonable quality areas where almost all land is now in non-employment use and there is no longer a critical mass of employment premises.

Source: BE Group/Shropshire Council, 2014

5.4 Table 10 shows the grading applied to each Site/Area and provides a justification for that grading.

Table 10 – Employment Area/Site Grading

Site/Area	Grade	Justification
Shrewsbury		
Regional Sites		
Ditherington Flax Mill Spring Gardens Ditherington Shrewsbury	A*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grading is intended to emphasise the future potential of the Flax Mill rather than its present market position This internationally significant group of Grade 1 and 2 listed mill buildings is undergoing a comprehensive programme of demolition, renovation and development in a major mixed use regeneration scheme Business Engagement work is being undertaken to identify companies who are interested in the commercial space available within the Main Mill. Marketing will have a local, regional, national and international focus The goal is to deliver a unique product which will attract significant inward investment into Shrewsbury and raise the economic profile of Shropshire.
Sub-Regional Sites		
Battlefield Enterprise Park Harlescott Lane Harlescott Shrewsbury	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strategic business park for both Shrewsbury and the whole of Shropshire The area's property offer is capable of meeting both local needs for good quality space and competing for investment in the regional market place The Shropshire Food Enterprise Centre in particular is a scheme of regional and national significance The Enterprise Park is home to several employers of county, and regional, significance, most notably Stadco Battlefield Enterprise Park is also Shrewsbury's main source of unconstrained employment land, and is likely to remain so until the SUE sites are brought forward Vanguard Park is now established as the premier trade park of Shrewsbury
Shrewsbury	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shrewsbury Business Park (rather than the Town

Site/Area	Grade	Justification
Business Park Emstrey Shrewsbury		<p>Centre) is identified by most stakeholders as the principal office location of Shrewsbury</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It attracts occupiers and staff from across Shropshire, Telford and the wider region • It is one of the few Shrewsbury sites which can compete in the regional marketplace. • Existing occupiers include a range of national and international firms • It has significant expansion land available which could accommodate businesses of all sizes, including large inward investors.
Key Shropshire Sites		
Doncasters Whitchurch Road Harlescott Shrewsbury	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home to a very significant employer in Shropshire (Doncasters Aerospace Components/Doncasters Airmotive) • The grading of this site is linked to the presence of that employer, rather than the property itself (which comprises a budget/moderate quality factory complex) • If the occupier relocated (and an equivalent occupier could not be found), then a lower grading would be appropriate.
Oxon Business Park Welshpool Road Shrewsbury	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantial, established business park in western Shrewsbury • Along with Shrewsbury Business Park and Battlefield Enterprise Park, Oxon is identified as one of the main sources of modern office and industrial accommodation in Shrewsbury (particularly space for larger employers) • Oxon is home to a large number of the county's major employers, notably Severn Trent Water, Environment Agency and West Mercia Supplies • Oxon draws occupiers from across west/north west Shropshire, notably Oswestry. The catchment area also extends across the Welsh border. • However, while an important employment area for Shrewsbury, Oxon lacks the regional profile of Shrewsbury Business Park and Battlefield Enterprise Park.
Castle Foregate (East) Shrewsbury	B/C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grading relates to two elements • Firstly the presence of one of the county's largest employers (Morris Lubricants) • Secondly, the Royal Mail Depot is likely to become available post 2014, alongside the adjacent prison complex. The combined site provides a major mixed-use redevelopment opportunity for Shrewsbury, possibly including an office development and retail/leisure space on the Castle Foregate frontage.
Former Cattle Market	B/C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed use area with of manufacturing, cold storage warehousing and motor retail uses

Site/Area	Grade	Justification
Battlefield Road Harlescott Shrewsbury		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides accommodation for several of the county's major employers, notably Anglo Beef Products and Arriva The area also offers substantial development opportunities The frontage is in use by motor retail occupiers and should be deallocated.
Lancaster Road Industrial Estate Harlescott Shrewsbury	B/C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The largest secondary industrial area in Shrewsbury and a major source of budget/moderate quality industrial space in Shropshire Occupiers include some heavy industrial firms and bad neighbour uses who would struggle to find appropriate space elsewhere in the town The estate is also home to several of the county's major employers, notably Caterpillar Remanufacturing Although land has been lost to non-employment uses, the bulk of the estate remains intact.
William A Lewis and BT Complex, Harlescott Lane Shrewsbury	B/C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A small employment area, providing space for a key employer The area also includes Communications House, the largest available office property in Shrewsbury. This could provide a significant inward investment opportunity in the town Alternatively the property could be split to create a multi-let scheme or redeveloped to deliver new employment premises in a prominent location.
Longden Road Industrial Estate Longden Road Shrewsbury	B/C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mid sized industrial estate serving Shrewsbury and adjacent western areas of Shropshire (extending to the Welsh Border) Although most occupiers are local micro/small businesses, the estate is also home to several of the county's major employers, including Mercian Developments, Arrow County Supplies and Shropshire Council.
Centurion Park Whitchurch Road Harlescott Shrewsbury	B/C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful local industrial estate and a key source of smaller workshop and storage premises in Shrewsbury and the Central Zone of Shropshire Although most occupiers are local micro/small businesses, the estate also provides space for some of the county's larger employers including Sunlight Clinical Solutions and Salop Textiles.
Sundorne Retail Park Sundorne Shrewsbury	B/C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A prime location for trade/motor retail businesses in Shrewsbury (alongside Vanguard Park), and one of the largest trade parks in Shropshire The park has attracted several major B8 occupiers, including Booker Wholesale, and the Park (along with land on the opposite side of Battlefield Road) is home to a wide range of motor retailers Parts of the Retail Park are in non-employment use

Site/Area	Grade	Justification
		and this should be recognised in planning policy.
Prospect House Belle View Road Shrewsbury	B/C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prospect House is an active and successful business centre, providing accommodation to a range of micro businesses and some larger public sector occupiers The scheme's property offer is relatively unique in Shrewsbury (the only other general small business scheme is the Rural Enterprise Centre, Battlefield Enterprise Park) and the Central Zone of Shropshire.
Abbey Lawn Abbey Foregate Shrewsbury	B/C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established and successful urban office area, the only significant source of high quality office suites in central Shrewsbury Abbey Lawn attracts occupiers from across Shropshire Provides office/administrative space for several of the counties larger employers and public sector organisations such as the Driving Standards Agency However, dense residential location will limit future growth and the ability to meet larger regional requirements.
Key Local Sites		
Monkmoor Industrial Estate Monkmoor Road Shrewsbury	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An important local industrial estate The estate offers both budget workshop units and larger industrial/trade units to (primarily) local businesses While the industrial estate as a whole functions well and has ongoing economic value for Shrewsbury, portions are in non-employment use and require reallocation.
New Zealand House Abbey Foregate Shrewsbury	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grading primarily relates to New Zealand House and 163 Abbey Foregate, which are a key source of larger office suites in central Shrewsbury Stakeholder consultations suggest ongoing occupier interest in these properties from established businesses Backland units (to the rear of Kwik Fit) are of lower value. It is not clear if this constrained land is a viable redevelopment opportunity, however, but, if they are, the loss of this secondary accommodation would not have a significant impact on Shrewsbury's supply of employment properties.
Whitehall Buildings Monkmoor Road Shrewsbury	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of the largest office buildings in Shrewsbury, providing open plan office space which could meet the needs of larger employers The property provides space for a range of local public sector occupiers.
Frankwell Quay Frankwell Shrewsbury	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Guild Hall is an important civic facility, providing space for a range of local public sector occupiers However, Frankwell Quay's value also comes from its regeneration potential. The area offers several

Site/Area	Grade	Justification
		riverside redevelopment opportunities for office accommodation or uses in relation to the adjoining Theatre Severn and the growing café/entertainment economy.
St Michael's Street Shrewsbury	C/D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grading primarily relates to the presence Shropshire Fire and Rescue, a key public sector occupier in a new build complex Units in the southern portion of the area are in non-employment use. Shropshire Council should consider de-allocating these properties from employment use. The loss of this secondary accommodation would not have a significant impact on Shrewsbury's supply of employment properties.
Brassey Close Old Potts Way Shrewsbury	C/D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small local employment area, offering a mix of office, industrial and trade property Of particular value are the larger office buildings in the north of the area, these good quality properties are home to several major employers, including Severnside Housing Association.
Cambrian House Chester Street Shrewsbury	C/D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of the largest office buildings in Shrewsbury and one with short/medium term potential to deliver new serviced business centre accommodation for the town (at present there is little serviced office space available in central Shrewsbury, and nothing of a good quality) The property offers useable office space of a reasonable standard despite the age and appearance of the building. However, after a period of (effective) vacancy, some refurbishment/remodelling may be required to achieve this.
Mixed Commercial Sites		
Castle Foregate (West) Shrewsbury	D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A lower quality industrial area adjacent to housing Access is constrained by the railway viaduct Much of the land, notably Crewe Bank Yard, appears poorly occupied and (in the long term) may provide a redevelopment opportunity However, Castle Foregate Business Park and Lock Stock Storage continue to serve an important local function providing budget workshop accommodation (and storage space) to local firms. For this reason complete reallocation of the area (i.e. a D/E Grade) is not appropriate.

Source: BE Group 2014

Policy Guidance

Regional Sites

- 5.5 Within this assessment of Shrewsbury's Employment Areas/Sites, the Ditherington Flax Mill is unique, both in terms of the historic quality of the properties and the scope, and aspiration of the proposed redevelopment scheme. When successfully completed, the regenerated Flax Mill will become a flagship employment area for Shropshire, of regional and potentially national significance, providing a key focus for inward investment. The historic character and investment potential of this area should be protected for these reasons.
- 5.6 The success of the Flax Mill refurbishment project is dependant on delivering a high quality, unique property scheme which will attract a range of higher profile occupiers to a new location within Shrewsbury. For this reason, all further applications should be required to show how they will maintain (and enhance) the high quality architectural, environmental and historic character of the Ditherington Flax Mill complex and improve its setting. They must also show how they will deliver a strong economic benefit to Shrewsbury and Shropshire, enhancing the regional/national status of this scheme. Proposals for the economic enhancement of this locality should have regard to issues such as wage rates, job numbers, achievement of higher level skills and the presence of key industry sectors which are all important considerations in the Shropshire economy.
- 5.7 Proposals to increase the B1(a) office component of the scheme should be particularly encouraged. These proposals should seek to target office space towards inward investment opportunities to increase the regional/national profile of the Flax Mill.
- 5.8 Further provision of non-employment uses (beyond that already allowed for in the outline planning permission) may be necessary to generate development value within the mixed-use scheme. However, any additional development proposed must be of a type and quality appropriate to these historic properties. It should also show how it will increase the economic benefit of the whole proposal or how it will support the needs of local communities or the role of Shrewsbury as the County town. It is expected that this further development would be for Class C and Class D uses which recognise the wider significance of the Flax Mill restoration and the redevelopment

and improvement of its setting, in the context of the strategic objectives for north Shrewsbury.

- 5.9 Uses, including B2 and B8 industrial/warehouse uses along with most Sui Generis options, which could detract from the physical quality and economic benefits of the scheme should be resisted.

Sub-Regional Sites

- 5.10 This study has identified two 'Sub-Regional Sites', considered to significantly contribute to Shropshire's employment land supply for B Class uses, comprising Shrewsbury Business Park and Battlefield Enterprise Park. These are the existing 'prestige' employment areas of Shrewsbury. Both are capable of competing for investment from across the County (and regional) market place. These are prime sites for marketing to a cross section of users including new inward investors.
- 5.11 These sites should be rigorously protected for B Class uses, and should deliver economic enhancement without causing any detrimental impacts on either the character of the employment area or the wider locality. In considering the potential for 'economic enhancement', regard should be given to issues such as wage rates, job numbers, achievement of higher level skills and the promotion of key industry sectors which are important considerations in the Shropshire economy.
- 5.12 The development of these employment areas for purposes other than B Class uses may be appropriate. It will be necessary to show that, the use provides on-site support facilities or demonstrates an economic enhancement over and above that derived from B Class development within Shropshire's predominantly service based economy. Such development should not prejudice the efficient and effective use of any remaining land or demand for floorspace in these important locations.
- 5.13 Retail uses should not be supported unless there is clear and compelling evidence of a substantial community benefit and that, on balance, the proposed location offers the most sustainable pattern of development for the town. Other uses that do not provide direct, on-going local employment opportunities or significant community benefits should also not be permitted on these 'Sub-Regional Employment Sites'.
- 5.14 Shrewsbury Business Park already contains a number of ancillary uses, with further, Class A1 and A3 accommodation proposed. Beyond these current proposals,

additional non-employment uses may begin to change the character of the area, from a high quality office park to a mixed use location, as well as impacting on Shrewsbury's employment land supply. For this reason, policy should specifically deter further non employment uses on Business Park. To maintain the quality of the local environment, and the integrity of the Business Park as an office location it is recommended that industrial and warehouse (B1(c), B2, B8) uses and any further ancillary Class A uses (beyond those already proposed) should not be supported.

- 5.15 Applicants seeking to test this policy position should be required to demonstrate evidence of their attempts to secure (B1(a)) employment uses for the land/property, due consideration of current market trends and the high environmental quality of the Park and recognition of future demand for floorspace in these significant employment areas. Policy to be applied to both the existing Business Park and the identified Phase II and Phase III expansion sites, should ensure the quality and integrity of the Park is maintained now and into the future. This policy should be applied to all types development, redevelopment and change of use at the Business Park.

Key Shropshire Sites

- 5.16 Eleven Sites/Areas are considered to be 'key' to the Shropshire economy. These Sites/Areas are all active and successful employment locations, with influence across Shropshire, and into adjoining local authority areas. These are prime sites for marketing to a cross section of users. However, they may lack the regional profile of Grade A*/A locations to attract major inward investment into Shropshire.
- 5.17 Most of these Sites/Areas receive a B or B/C Grade (at least in part) because they are home to some of the county's larger employers. The key companies/employers of each Site/Area are highlighted on the Proformas (e.g. Arrow County Supplies – Longden Road Industrial Estate, Severn Trent Water – Oxon Business Park , AMEC – Abbey Lawns, Morris Lubricants – Castle Foregate West). Major employers can also be found in the 'Sub-Regional' and, to a lesser extent, in the 'Key Local Sites'.
- 5.18 Where possible, planning policy should protect and retain these companies within Shrewsbury and Shropshire. Of course, policy cannot interfere with the internal operations of any business, particularly if that business is relocating or downsizing in response to external market forces. However, Shropshire Council should look critically on planning applications by third parties (i.e. other than the business in

question) which could result in the loss of a major employer. An example of such an application would be a proposal for housing development on an employment area, the delivery of which would require one, or more, large businesses to leave Shrewsbury (so endangering significant local employment opportunities).

- 5.19 Economic impact is a material consideration in assessing such planning applications. Therefore, where an application would result in the permanent loss of a key employer, Shropshire Council should require the applicant to provide a full description of the economic impacts of their proposal (job losses, impacts on supply chain companies, etc.) and showing how the clearly evidenced economic or social benefits of the proposal (jobs protected, new jobs created) would outweigh the impacts of the development.
- 5.20 Conversely, applications (made by the businesses themselves) which would allow key employers to expand, or make a necessary relocation to another employment area within Shrewsbury or Shropshire, should (subject to other planning considerations) be supported. When such a relocation would secure the longer term prospects of a key employer, regard may be had to the redevelopment potential of the existing employment area to facilitate the relocation and to secure the existing and future employment provided by the company.
- 5.21 More generally, within these 'Key Shropshire Sites' applications for B Class use should be permitted subject to the proposals not having a significant adverse impact on surrounding local uses. Retail uses should not generally be supported in these locations due to the impact on the character and significance of the Site/Area. Exceptionally, uses which have trade links with employment uses or are un-neighbourly in character (such as car showrooms, tyre and exhaust centres, or trade counters) may be permitted where the land has good access to a range of transport options. This includes Sundorne Retail Park, an established location for such uses. Other uses that do not provide direct, on-going local employment opportunities should not be considered in these locations.
- 5.22 Abbey Lawns is a key office park in Shrewsbury, and the only source of high quality office suites in the inner urban area of the town. For this reason Abbey Lawns, like Shrewsbury Business Park, should be protected primarily for B1(a) uses whilst industrial/warehouse development should be avoided. Non-B Class uses should only

be considered where they are of a limited scale and would be ancillary to the principal use of the area. These uses may provide on-site support facilities (e.g. a café serving the businesses) or should demonstrate an economic enhancement over and above B Class uses. Such development would need to be of scale appropriate to this comparatively small employment area.

Key Local Sites

- 5.23 Seven Sites/Areas are considered to be 'Key Local Sites'. In this case 'local' generally means the entire settlement of Shrewsbury and its hinterland (i.e. the Central Zone of Shropshire). Key Local Sites are generally of moderate quality. Although they may provide accommodation for some key employers, space will primarily be geared towards local businesses.
- 5.24 Most premises in the Key Local Sites are in B1(c) light industrial, B2 and B8 uses. However, four of the Sites/Areas also contain large office properties – New Zealand House, Whitehall Buildings, The Guildhall (Frankwell Quay) and Cambrian House (Chester Street) which is located close to Shrewsbury Town Centre. The limited office supply in central Shrewsbury means that Shropshire Council should seek to retain existing office buildings wherever possible. Particularly, if those buildings are large enough to meet the needs of major employers who wish to be in a sustainable location, close to the town centre with its facilities and range of transport options.
- 5.25 Proposals which would lead to the loss of a large office property, or its conversion from B1(a) use should not be supported. Any such applications must prove that (after significant market testing) there is no current/likely occupier interest in the property, that the building no longer meets modern office occupier needs and that a refurbishment to address the deficiencies of the property is not economically viable.
- 5.26 Elsewhere, these Key Local Sites are frequently in a mix of uses. Land within Key Local Sites which has been lost to uses other than Class B and needs to be reallocated, is identified in Table 11 below. The remaining land and property should be protected for B1(a, b, c), B2, B8 employment uses. Exceptionally, uses which have trade links along with employment uses or are un-neighbourly in character (such as car showrooms, tyre and exhaust centres, or trade counters) may be permitted on Key Local Sites which have good access to a range of transport options.

5.27 Given that areas of land within some Key Local Sites are already in retail use, further A1 development should not generally be supported due to the potential impacts on the character and significance of these Sites/Areas. Other uses that do not provide direct, on-going local employment opportunities should also not be considered in these locations.

Mixed Commercial Sites

5.28 Castle Foregate (West) is a lower quality industrial area adjacent to housing. Access is constrained and much of the land, notably Crewe Bank Yard, appears poorly occupied. In this case the size, location and characteristics of the area is significant in relation to the strategic objectives for north Shrewsbury. It is necessary to consider, whether a more intensive, mixed-use development could provide greater benefit to the local community, and better address local needs, than if the land was retained solely in employment use.

5.29 However, Shropshire Council should look to ensure that any proposal for mixed-use redevelopment (incorporating both employment and non-employment uses) retains an equivalent amount of jobs within this employment area. Where land is vacant or underused consideration should be given to its potential for job creation and should consider whether the Castle Foregate (West) area may offset the limited opportunities for industrial, warehousing and un-neighbourly uses elsewhere in Shrewsbury and Shropshire.

5.30 In reviewing any mixed-use proposals (incorporating both employment and non-employment uses), Shropshire Council should require the applicants to provide the following:

- A description of the community and regeneration benefits to be delivered including any local employment or other needs addressed by the proposal
- A description of the economic benefits:
 - Scale and type of employment development to be both retained and provided
 - Existing job numbers (full and part time) compared with the expected job numbers (full and part time) by job type.

5.31 Although not of a high visual quality, Castle Foregate Business Park and Lock Stock Storage continue to serve an important local function providing budget workshop

accommodation (and storage space) to local firms. Shropshire Council should therefore seek the retention of these properties in B1(c)/B8 use if a redevelopment scheme is proposed at Castle Foregate (West).

- 5.32 The above planning advice is offered without consideration of other planning, traffic/highways issues, etc. which might render some uses or mixed use developments inappropriate on particular employment sites. It is clearly for Shropshire Council to judge proposals on their merits taking account of these factors.

Permitted Development Rights (change of use from commercial to residential)

- 5.33 In September 2012 the Government announced that, as part of a package of measures to support economic growth, permitted development rights would be introduced to 'better enable change from commercial to residential purposes'. This guidance is intended to build on national policy in para 51 of the NPPF (discussed in Section 2.0).

- 5.34 These new permitted development rights will be limited to change of use from B1(a) office to C3 residential. They will also be limited to a three year period, after which period the Government will consider if the rights should be extended in perpetuity. The amended rights came into force in spring 2013, and will only cover changes of use which do not require any associated physical development.

- 5.35 As is discussed above, it is the view of this report that there are no office facilities, within Shrewsbury's Employment Sites/Areas, which are suitable for such a change of use. It is therefore recommended that (based solely on the evidence of Shrewsbury, and without prejudice to the rest of the county) that Shropshire Council seek an exemption from this proposal.

- 5.36 Government guidance suggests that requests for exemptions will be considered for one of two reasons:
- The loss of a nationally significant area of economic activity
 - Substantial adverse economic consequences at the local level which are not offset by the positive benefits the new rights may bring.

- 5.37 None of Shrewsbury's Sites/Areas are of 'national significance' (although Shrewsbury Business Park has a sub-regional/regional profile, and Ditherington Flax Mill may

have such a profile in the future). The second point, however, is of relevance to the town given Shrewsbury's relative shortage of good quality office properties, particularly in, and around, the town centre.

5.38 Requests under the second criteria must consider the:

- scale of the impact in absolute terms
- significance of the adverse impact at the level of the local authority or wider
- degree to which there is likely to be a strategic and long-term adverse economic impact
- Whether the proposed area of exemption is the smallest area necessary to address the potential adverse economic impact.

Potential Land Re-Allocations

5.39 None of Shrewsbury's Employment Areas/Sites are considered to be of such a poor quality they require a complete reallocation to other uses (i.e. a Grade of D/E). However, in some cases portions of land have been lost to other uses and planning policy needs to recognise this, adjusting the boundaries of Areas/Sites accordingly. Conversely, the expansion plans of some major occupiers may bring other land into B1/B2/B8 employment use that is presently allocated for other uses. Again this needs to be recognised in planning policy. Table 11 sets out the spatial policy changes recommended in this study as well as showing the broader Future Role of the Site and Area defined by this study.

Table 11 – Potential Land Re-Allocations

Site and Employment Area	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
Sub-Regional Sites		
<p>Battlefield Enterprise Park Harlescott Lane Harlescott Shrewsbury</p>	<p><i>Vanguard Park</i></p> <p>The north east of the Enterprise Park (off Vanguard Way) is increasingly dominated by trade uses (Vanguard Park).</p> <p>Vanguard Park is now established as the premier trade park of Shrewsbury. It functions as a distinct economic unit, offering a different type of property to a different type of occupier, than the rest of Battlefield Enterprise Park.</p> <p>However, there are now a range of trade schemes in the Battlefield Road area (Sundorne Retail Park, Lancaster Road) the remaining undeveloped employment land off Vanguard Way/Battlefield Road should be protected for B1, B2, B8 office, industrial and warehouse uses. This is necessary to maintain a full range of new development opportunities in Shrewsbury.</p>	<p>High Quality Business Park Sites for Specific Occupiers</p> <p>Strategic business park for both Shrewsbury and the whole of Shropshire. The area's property offer is capable of meeting both local needs for good quality space and competing for investment in the regional market place. Battlefield Enterprise Park is also Shrewsbury's main source of unconstrained employment land, and is likely to remain so until the SUE sites are brought forward. The area should therefore be protected as a priority.</p>
Key Shropshire Sites		
<p>Former Cattle Market Battlefield Road Harlescott Shrewsbury</p>	<p><i>Entrance Plots – Tesco Extra Campus</i></p> <p>Land located to the north of the Tesco Extra campus has been consented for a range of uses including the following:</p> <p><i>Gunn JCB Ltd, Earthmover House, 1 Battlefield Road – site 13/02343/FUL under construction for Class A3 restaurant uses providing roadside services within the retail campus</i></p> <p><i>Plot 3 (part) Battlefield Road – site 13/00392/FUL under construction for Class A3, A4, A5 restaurant, public house and</i></p>	<p>General Industrial/Business Area Sites for Specific Occupiers.</p> <p>Land under construction for road side and hospitality service uses proposed to be re-allocated from protected employment status. This will reflect and enforce the distinct division between the employment area 9(north) and the retail redevelopment (south) of the former Cattlemarket area.</p> <p>The northern area remains an important employment location accommodating a key local employer and</p>

Site and Employment Area	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
	<p>hot food takeaway with a Class C1 Hotel to extend the roadside and hospitality services in this locality</p> <p><i>Former Cattlemarket, Battlefield Road – site 13/00388/FUL with consent for Class B1 and B8 employment uses with ancillary hot food takeaway reflecting the employment uses which dominate the northern part of the former Cattlemarket area including the existing Anglo Beef Products abattoir.</i></p>	<p>investor in the Shropshire economy and this important residual area should be protected as a priority.</p>
<p>Lancaster Road Industrial Estate Harlescott Shrewsbury</p>	<p><i>Land North of Ennerdale Drive (including Arrow Point Trade Park)</i></p> <p>Property north of Ennerdale Drive is in non-employment (mostly retail) use, notably at Arrow Point. This area should be reallocated to retail use.</p> <p>The remainder of the employment area (focused around Ennerdale Road) continues to function as an established industrial estate, offering moderate quality, older industrial property to a range of existing small and mid-sized occupiers. This area should be retained and protected.</p> <p>There has been some encroachment of trade uses into the Ennerdale Road area. However, discussions with stakeholders indicate that premises in the south of Lancaster Road Industrial Estate are less desirable to trade/retail occupiers because of this lack of prominence. The development of new trade properties on Vanguard Way, Battlefield Industrial Estate offers a preferable alternative that is expected to draw trade-based businesses away from Lancaster Road Industrial Estate.</p>	<p>General Industrial/Business Area Sites for Specific Occupiers.</p> <p>Land and property around Brixton Way at the northern end of the Industrial Estate is almost exclusively in A1 retail use (with ancillary B8 trade uses and a D2 Bowling Centre). This should be recognised in planning policy as indicated in the Proforma and plan (Appendix 1) by removing the Brixton Way area from the protected employment area.</p> <p>The remaining (larger) area of the Industrial Estate is an important employment location accommodating a number of key local employers and offering a range of premises in terms of size, type and quality. The area should therefore be protected as a priority.</p>
<p>Sundorne Retail Park Sundorne</p>	<p><i>Land around Arlington Way</i></p>	<p>General Industrial/Business Area.</p>

Site and Employment Area	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
Shrewsbury	<p><i>Land fronting Battlefield Road and North of Arlington Way -</i> Land and property fronting Battlefield Road, and north of Arlington Way is almost exclusively in A1 retail use (with ancillary Sui Generis motor trade uses and an A3 restaurant). This should be recognised in planning policy as indicated in the Proforma and plan (Appendix 1) with the land being re-allocated fro retail uses.</p> <p><i>Land South of Arlington Way -</i>The remaining trade park, including the Featherbed Way frontage, is in B8 trade and Sui Generis car showroom use and should continue to the protected for employment uses. Applications for further B8 trade/Sui Generis motor retail may be permitted subject to the proposals not having a significant adverse impact on surrounding local uses</p> <p>Non- B class uses should only be considered if it can be shown that they provide on-site support facilities (e.g. a café serving the businesses) or demonstrates an economic enhancement over and above B class uses. However, this portion of Sundorne Retail Park performs an important role in meeting the needs of local trade/motor trade businesses (who would otherwise take space on Shrewsbury’s B class employment areas) and developments which would inhibit this area from fulfilling that role should be resisted.</p>	Most land and property north of Arlington Way (including the Battlefield Road Frontage), is in A1 retail use. This land should be reallocated, while the remaining area should be protected as Shrewsbury’s prime trade location.
Key Local Sites		
Monkmoor Industrial Estate Monkmoor Road Shrewsbury	<p><i>Land in the West</i></p> <p>The west of the industrial estate (adjoining Conway Drive) is in non-employment use, with occupiers including United Carpets and Beds, Magnet and Abbots Wood Residential Care Home (Shropshire Council owned). This area should be reallocated</p>	<p>General Industrial/Business Area.</p> <p>The west of the industrial estate (Close to Conway Drive) is in non-employment use, with occupiers including United Carpets and Beds, Magnet and Abbots Wood Residential Care Home (Shropshire Council</p>

Site and Employment Area	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
	<p>for other uses.</p> <p>The remainder of the estate (notably Hartley Business Centre) functions as a moderately successful industrial estate and trade park and should be retained and protected.</p> <p>Despite the low quality of the premises, the small area of workshops in the east appears well occupied. The properties continue to serve a function, providing budget workshop/lock-up space to local engineering firms and sole traders.</p> <p>Shropshire Council should consider if these units can be refurbished and the access road (Monkmoor Road, east of the water treatment works) widened.</p>	<p>owned). This should be recognised in planning policy as indicated in the Proforma and plan (Appendix 1) be reallocated, while the remaining area should be protected as an important trade park and location for budget floorspace.</p>
<p>St Michael's Street Shrewsbury</p>	<p><i>Land and Property other than the Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service Buildings</i></p> <p>Units in the southern portion of the area are in non-employment use (including HSS Hire Shop, ARC car wash, textile and music retailers). Shropshire Council should consider reallocating these properties to non-employment use.</p> <p>Further non-employment development would be appropriate, particularly if the proposals would enhance Castle Foregate/St Michael Street as a retail destination in the town. Acceptable uses could include A1 retail, A3-A5 food, C1 hotels, D1 non-employment uses and D2 assembly and leisure. Proposals would need to be of a high built/environmental quality, of a scale appropriate to these comparatively small sites, aware of the local access/transport limitations and any issues of sequential testing.</p> <p>Although, Class B1(a) office accommodation would be</p>	<p>Sites for Specific Employers.</p> <p>Most land at St Michael Street is in a mix of uses, including A1 retail and a D1 clinic.</p> <p>This diffused employment area is located in the Key Area of Change in north Shrewsbury and accommodates a range of uses in a predominanatly residential location.</p> <p>In the light of the strategic objectives for north Shrewsbury, the proximity to the Ditherington Flax Mill and the neutral effect of removing protection for employment uses in this locality, it is recommended that protection for employment uses be removed from St Michael Street to encourage mixed use or residential redevelopment along this important regeneration corridor.</p>

Site and Employment Area	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
	acceptable, the loss of this secondary accommodation would not have a significant impact on Shrewsbury's supply of employment properties.	

Source: BE Group 2014

Regeneration Opportunities

- 5.40 The Study Brief (created in August 2012) requires that the study should identify “*where opportunities exist within the employment areas to remodel or regenerate individual sites or groupings then these should be identified indicating potential options to recycle land or intensify employment uses...*”. This study has accordingly identified areas of underused or vacant land (possibly including derelict properties) which have scope for remodelling and/or redevelopment. Where possible, consultations have been undertaken with key site owners to identify the position of underused land and the aspirations of owners for change. Referred to as ‘Regeneration Opportunities’, sites which are felt to present the most realistic opportunities for delivering further (B Class) employment uses, subject to other planning considerations, are set out in Table 12.

Table 12 – Regeneration Opportunities

Site and Employment Area	Regeneration Opportunities (size, ha)	Remodelling Guidance	Future Role
<i>Regional Sites</i>			
Ditherington Flax Mill Spring Gardens Ditherington Shrewsbury	2.7	<p>The historic buildings within the Flax Mill Maltings, in north Shrewsbury are currently within the ownership of English Heritage and are the subject of a major refurbishment project (with ongoing bids to the Heritage Lottery Fund and European Regional Development Fund and proposed match funding from English Heritage). If the funding bids are successful over the next 2 -3 years this will be the single most significant heritage regeneration project in the Midlands, if not the country.</p> <p>This study recognises that the Flax Mill is an opportunity to deliver high quality office accommodation, in a historic setting, as part of a mixed-use scheme which will also offer community and residential floorspace (around 13,00sqm). The Flax Mill, Shrewsbury is a new and ambitious regeneration programme and Shropshire Council and its partners are seeking demand for 11,000sqm of proposed new office / commercial accommodation in this largely residential neighbourhood on the northern edge of Shrewsbury Town Centre.</p>	<p>Established or Potential Office Location</p> <p>Refurbishment of historic floorspace in a Grade 1 listed former Flax Mill (AD 1797) to provide good quality office / commercial floorspace as part of a mixed-use scheme with residential and other uses in a scheme of regional / national significance.</p>
<i>Key Shropshire Sites</i>			
Oxon Business Park Welshpool Road Shrewsbury	0.45	<p>Established business park, with most land in use. Further development options are limited to one backland site (Site A – 0.45 ha shown on the Proforma and plan (Appendix 1)), which comprises an area of hard standing off Clayton Road, north of WMS/Oxon Joiners.</p>	<p>General Industrial/Business Area High Quality Business Park Established/Potential Office Location</p> <p>Strategic business park serving Shrewsbury and Shropshire. Also</p>

Site and Employment Area	Regeneration Opportunities (size, ha)	Remodelling Guidance	Future Role
		<p>Most other vacant land is within the secure Severn Trent site and only available for the expansion of that occupier.</p>	<p>attracts some occupiers from Wales. Offers a good mix of office and industrial/logistics property and also accommodates some major occupiers.</p>
<p>Castle Foregate (East) Shrewsbury</p>	<p>0.98</p>	<p>The Royal Mail Depot (Site A – 0.98 ha in the Proforma and plan (Appendix 1)) will close as sorting facility in 2014, with operations transferring to either Chester or Wolverhampton. Only local mail deliveries will remain at Castle Foregate.</p> <p>The combined site provides a major mixed-use redevelopment opportunity which could include a new office development, providing good quality accommodation in a central location in Shrewsbury (addressing the present lack of high grade space in, and around, the Town Centre). The Castle Foregate frontage also provides an opportunity to deliver high quality retail/leisure space, improving the shopping offer of this (presently) secondary retail location.</p> <p>The adjoining Prison complex is now vacated and the complex is being surrendered for redevelopment.</p>	<p>Sites for Specific Employers Premises for one of Shrewsbury's major employers, along with a major regeneration opportunity site at the former prison complex.</p>
<p>William A Lewis and BT Complex, Harlescott Lane Shrewsbury</p>	<p>0.93</p>	<p>The 6,928 sqm (Site A – 0.93 ha in the Proforma and plan (Appendix 1)), former BT office (which is still owned by BT) is on the market, to let. BT intends to retain a 'Switch Room' in the centre of the building, plus space for several staff to maintain it. BT indicates that relocating this facility would be too expensive. Despite this limitation the building (known as Communications House) is the largest available office property in Shrewsbury.</p> <p>The owners have indicated they are willing to split the property to create a multi-let scheme (the space could be</p>	<p>General Industrial/Business Area Established/Potential Office Location Sites for Specific Occupiers. A small employment area, providing space for a key local employer and office space for local firms. If a single large occupier cannot be found for Communications House, it should be considered for sub-division as a multi-let office scheme.</p>

Site and Employment Area	Regeneration Opportunities (size, ha)	Remodelling Guidance	Future Role
		divided a variety of ways, but individual floors range from 639 sqm to 4,358 sqm in size), although at present, agents report that limited interest is, in part, related to the internal layout of the building. If the constraint of the Switch Room could be overcome, they would also consider redevelopment options, providing the opportunity to deliver new employment premises in a prominent location on Harlescott Lane	
Key Local Sites			
Frankwell Quay Frankwell Shrewsbury	0.07	<p>Area includes two older industrial properties (Site A: The Stew – 0.03 ha and Site B: Wharfage Buildings – 0.04 ha in the Proforma and plan (Appendix 1)) at either side of the Frankwell entrance. The properties appear fully vacant, with evidence of internal dereliction.</p> <p>These sites provide opportunities for remodelling/development, potentially for office accommodation or uses in relation to the adjoining Theatre Severn and the growing café / entertainment economy.</p>	<p>Established or Potential Office Location</p> <p>Retain the Guidhall building for B1(a) uses, but look to regenerate the low quality industrial properties of The Stew and The Wharfage at the entrance to Frankwell Quay from the Welsh Bridge.</p>
St Michael's Street Shrewsbury	0.11	The car park fronting the Salop Music Centre (Site A – 0.11 ha the Proforma and plan (Appendix 1)) could, if surplus to requirements, provide a small retail/commercial development site, taking advantage of the St Michael Street frontage. The vacant Derfald House (to the rear of the HSS Hire Shop) sits outside of the boundaries this area, but could provide a residential refurbishment opportunity.	<p>Sites for Specific Employers.</p> <p>Units in the southern portion of the area are in non-employment use (including HSS Hire Shop, ARC car wash, textile and music retailers). Shropshire Council should consider reallocating these properties to non-employment use. The loss of this secondary accommodation would not have a significant impact on Shrewsbury's supply of employment properties.</p>

Site and Employment Area	Regeneration Opportunities (size, ha)	Remodelling Guidance	Future Role
Mixed Commercial Sites			
Castle Foregate (West) Shrewsbury	2.04	The north of the employment area comprises the former Crewe Bank Rail Yard (Site A – 2.04 ha the Proforma and plan (Appendix 1)). This site is in use for open storage and for builders' yards. The Yard could provide a significant redevelopment opportunity in the Shrewsbury urban area. However, Network Rail indicates that the yard is on a long lease to EWS Freight (who, in turn, let most of the yard to local coal merchants). Both Network Rail and EWS are happy with this arrangement and have no plans to release the site for other uses. Access and proximity to the railway are also constraints.	General Industrial/Business Area. At present a low quality employment area, contributing little to Shrewsbury's property offer, and with risk of further dereliction and decline. However, the land also provides options for future regeneration, if site constraints can be overcome.

Source: BE Group 2014

Summary

5.41 The market and physical assessments have been combined to provide gradings for each Strategic Site and Employment Area. This has established a hierarchy of employment locations for Shrewsbury. Table 13 summarises this hierarchy.

Table 13 – Strategic Sites and Employment Areas Summary

Grade	Designation	Sites/Areas
A*	Regional Site	Ditherington Flax Mill
A	Sub-Regional Site	Battlefield Enterprise Park Shrewsbury Business Park
B	Key Shropshire Site	Doncasters Oxon Business Park
B/C	Key Shropshire Site	Abbey Lawn Castle Foregate (East) Centurion Park Former Cattle Market Area Battlefield Road Lancaster Road Industrial Estate Longden Road Prospect House Sundorne Retail Park William A Lewis & BT Complex
C	Key Local Site	Frankwell Quay New Zealand House Monkmoor Industrial Estate Whitehall
C/D	Key Local Site	Brassey Close Cambrian House St Michael's Street
D	Mixed Commercial	Castle Foregate (West)

Source: BE Group 2014

5.42 As Table 11 illustrates one regional and two sub-regional sites have been identified within Shrewsbury. These sites should be protected for B Class uses which achieve economic enhancement without detrimental impact to either the site or the wider area. A further eleven Sites/Areas are considered to be key sites at the county level. Some are home to Shropshire's largest employers and where possible planning policy should work to protect and retain these companies, requiring economic impact

assessments to be part of any application that could result in the permanent loss of a key employer.

- 5.43 None of Shrewsbury's Strategic Sites and Employment Areas are considered to be of such poor quality that they justify reallocation to an alternative use. However, in some areas, there have been significant losses of B Class land to other uses and planning policy needs to recognise this through appropriate boundary adjustments to the protected land within existing employment areas/sites. This applies to St Michael's Street; Monkmoor Industrial Estate; Lancaster Road Industrial Estate; the former Cattle Market; Sundorne Retail Park and Battlefield Enterprise Park. Policy reallocations may also be required at Castle Foregate (East) and Frankwell Quay if non-employment uses are pursued on the redevelopment sites.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

- 6.1 This report provides the evidence base to enable Shropshire Council to identify the existing strategic employment sites and areas within Shrewsbury that should be protected for employment use. Underpinning this is the requirement of the NPPF for local authorities to set criteria or identify strategic sites which can meet local and inward investment needs during the Local Plan period.
- 6.2 This Phase 1 study has concentrated upon Shrewsbury in recognition that the Shropshire Core Strategy highlights that the town will be the primary focus for development and be the main office and commercial centre. The report sets out the justification and policy guidance and establishes a methodology that can be applied to the county's market towns and key service centres in order to provide a consistent Shropshire-wide evidence base.
- 6.3 This final section draws together all the information for each Site/Area including market, physical and ownership/occupiers appraisals, and incorporates our policy recommendations.

Conclusions and Recommendations Matrix

- 6.4 Shrewsbury's 22 Strategic Sites and Employment Areas total 212.95 ha. Most are well occupied, particularly the main industrial estates and business parks. 29.93 Ha (14.0 percent) of the total land allocations remain undeveloped, most of which is concentrated at Battlefield Enterprise Park (20.4 ha) and Shrewsbury Business Park (5.89 ha). There are only limited Regeneration Opportunities amounting to 6.46 ha (3.1 percent of the total supply) and two thirds of this is represented by Ditherington Flax Mill and Crewe Bank Rail Yard at Castle Foregate.
- 6.5 Table 14 provides a summary of the findings of this study, giving a final policy recommendation for each Site/Area. None of the Sites/Areas are considered to be of such poor quality that they justify reallocation to an alternative use. However several have already lost areas to other uses and it is recommended planning policy recognises this by appropriate boundary adjustments to the area to be protected. This applies to the following – St Michael's Street; Monkmoor Industrial Estate; Lancaster Road Industrial Estate; the former Cattle Market; Battlefield Enterprise

Park and Sundorne Retail Park. Policy reallocations may also be required at Castle Foregate (East) and Frankwell Quay should non-employment uses be pursued for the redevelopment sites.

- 6.6 Elsewhere, land should be protected for B1 (a, b, c), B2, B8 employment uses. In particular, Shrewsbury's limited supply of larger office properties should be protected from inappropriate change of use/redevelopment proposals. To support this it is recommended that (based solely on the evidence of Shrewsbury, and without prejudice to the rest of the county) that Shropshire Council seek an exemption from the new permitted development rights which will permit (limited) changes of use from B1(a) office to C3 residential.

Table 14 – Study Conclusions and Recommendations

Site/Area	Grade	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, Size (ha)	Regeneration Opportunities	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
Regional Sites							
Ditherington Flax Mill Spring Gardens Ditherington Shrewsbury	A*	2.7	-	2.7	There is Outline Planning Permission for the entire site which will bring forward 24,000 sqm in total. Of this 11,000 sqm is identified for office development, community space and retail/commercial uses. 13,000 sqm for residential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All further applications should show how they will maintain and enhance the high built/environmental and historic quality of the Mill, and deliver economic value. B2, B8 and Sui Generis uses, which may detract from the physical quality and economic benefits of the scheme should be resisted Further non-employment and office provision would be acceptable, if of a high environmental/ economic quality. 	Established or Potential Office Location Refurbishment of historic floorspace in a Grade 1 listed former Flax Mill (AD 1797) to provide good quality office / commercial floorspace as part of a mixed-use scheme with residential and other uses in a scheme of regional / national significance.

Site/Area	Grade	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, Size (ha)	Regeneration Opportunities	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
Sub-Regional Sites							
Battlefield Enterprise Park Harlescott Lane Harlescott Shrewsbury	A	73.43	20.40	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reallocate Vanguard Park and protect for trade uses • Greenhills Enterprise Park protected for inward investment, but smaller employment development may also be appropriate if there is a market need • Permit B Class uses (B1 (a, b, c), B2, B8) • Exclude all other uses barring exceptional circumstances • Maintain and enhance the high built/environmental quality and economic activities • Protect key employers from third party 	<p>High Quality Business Park Sites for Specific Occupiers</p> <p>Strategic business park for both Shrewsbury and the whole of Shropshire. The area's property offer is capable of meeting both local needs for good quality space and competing for investment in the regional market place. Battlefield Enterprise Park is also Shrewsbury's main source of unconstrained employment land, and is likely to remain so until the SUE sites are brought forward. The area should therefore be protected as a priority.</p>

Site/Area	Grade	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, Size (ha)	Regeneration Opportunities	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
						applications.	
Shrewsbury Business Park Emstrey Shrewsbury	A	7.60	12.22	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect for B1(a) offices • Exclude all other uses barring exceptional circumstances • Maintain and enhance the high built/environmental quality and economic activities • Protect key employers from third party applications. 	<p>High Quality Business Park.</p> <p>Strategic employment area for B1(a) offices. Provides self-contained units and headquarter offices, serving both Shrewsbury and the whole of Shropshire.</p>
Key Shropshire Sites							
Doncasters Whitchurch Road Harlescott Shrewsbury	B	3.37	-	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect key employers from third party applications 	<p>Site for Specific Occupiers</p> <p>A strategic site, on a main road location in northern Shrewsbury, the area is occupied by one of Shrewsbury's key employers.</p> <p>It is important that Shropshire Council retain Doncasters as a strategic employer to protect the</p>

Site/Area	Grade	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, Size (ha)	Regeneration Opportunities	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
							<p>future role of this employment site and its functional links to the adjacent Lancaster Road Industrial Estate Industrial Estate.</p> <p>If Doncasters were to vacate their site on Whitchurch Road then the loss of this strategic employer may then lead to the subsequent loss of this important, single user employment site from the continuous employment area around Whitchurch Road / Lancaster Road Industrial Estate Industrial Estate.</p>
Oxon Business Park Welshpool Road Shrewsbury	B	16.84	-	0.45	Area of hardstanding off Clayton Road, north of WMS/Oxon Joiners. Suitable for a small B use development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permit B Class uses (B1 (a, b, c), B2, B8) Resist retail and other non-employment uses, unless ancillary Protect key employers from third party applications 	<p>General Industrial/Business Area</p> <p>High Quality Business Park</p> <p>Established/Potential Office Location</p> <p>Strategic business park serving Shrewsbury and Shropshire. Also attracts some occupiers from</p>

Site/Area	Grade	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, Size (ha)	Regeneration Opportunities	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and enhance the high built/environmental quality and economic activities • Work to include any surplus Severn Trent Water land into the Park 	Wales. Offers a good mix of office and industrial/logistics property and also houses some major occupiers.
Castle Foregate (East) Shrewsbury	B/C	3.61	-	0.98	The Royal Mail Depot and adjoining Prison complex are a mixed-use redevelopment opportunity which could include a new office development, and frontage retail/leisure space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect key employers from third party applications • Look at Royal Mail Depot as a mixed use redevelopment opportunity. 	<p>Sites for Specific Employers</p> <p>Premises for one of Shrewsbury's major employers, along with a major regeneration opportunity site.</p>
Former Cattle Market Battlefield Road Harlescott Shrewsbury	B/C	14.22	1.68	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reallocate land fronting Battlefield Road • Protect key employers from third party applications 	<p>General Industrial/Business Area Sites for Specific Occupiers</p> <p>Frontage is in use by motor retail occupiers and should be reallocated. Rear</p>

Site/Area	Grade	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, Size (ha)	Regeneration Opportunities	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
							remains in employment use and offers development options.
Lancaster Road Industrial Estate Harlescott Shrewsbury	B/C	38.73	-	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reallocate land North of Ennerdale Drive • Permit B Class uses (B1 (a, b, c), B2, B8) • Resist retail and other non-employment uses • Protect key employers from third party applications. 	<p>General Industrial/Business Area Sites for Specific Occupiers.</p> <p>Property north of Ennerdale Drive is in non-employment (mostly retail) use, notably at Arrow Point. This area should be reallocated to retail use.</p> <p>The remainder of the employment area (focused around Ennerdale Road) continues to function as an established industrial estate, offering moderate quality, older industrial property to a range of existing small and mid-sized occupiers. This area should be retained and protected.</p>
William A Lewis and BT Complex, Harlescott Lane	B/C	3.29	0.93	0.93	The 6,928 sqm former BT office (Communications House) is on the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect Communications House for B1(a) offices, if possible. 	General Industrial/Business Area Established/Potential

Site/Area	Grade	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, Size (ha)	Regeneration Opportunities	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
Shrewsbury					market. The owners have indicated they are willing to spilt the property to create a multi-let scheme. They would also consider redevelopment options.	<p>Redevelopment proposals must prove that the property is not viable in its present use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage refurbishment of Communications House for business centre, allowing some B1(c) workshops if appropriate • Discourage the redevelopment of Communications House for non-employment uses • Protect key employers from third party applications. 	<p>Office Location Sites for Specific Occupiers.</p> <p>A small employment area, providing space for a key local employer and office space for local firms. If a single large occupier cannot be found for Communications House, it should be considered for sub-division as a multi-let office scheme.</p>
Longden Road Industrial Estate Longden Road Shrewsbury	B/C	7.44	0.51	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permit B Class uses (B1 (a, b, c), B2, B8) • Permit trade/motor trade uses if appropriate • Resist retail and other non- 	<p>General Industrial/Business Area</p> <p>Key local employment area serving western Shrewsbury.</p>

Site/Area	Grade	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, Size (ha)	Regeneration Opportunities	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
						employment uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect key employers from third party applications. 	
Centurion Park Whitchurch Road Harlescott Shrewsbury	B/C	4.94	0.54	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permit B Class uses (B1 (a, b, c), B2, B8) • Permit trade/motor trade uses if appropriate • Redevelopment applications for non-employment uses should only be considered if the applicants can demonstrate why the Park can no longer function in its present role • If a mixed-use is put forward 50 percent (or more) of the site should be retained for employment. 	General Industrial/Business Area. Centurion Park is a substantial employment area within northern Shrewsbury and if the owner does pursue a redevelopment proposal (and refurbishment options are not viable), then the Council should ensure that the bulk of the area is retained for employment uses.
Sundorne Retail Park Sundorne	B/C	18.39	0.31	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reallocate Land fronting Battlefield Road and north of 	General Industrial/Business Area

Site/Area	Grade	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, Size (ha)	Regeneration Opportunities	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
Shrewsbury						<p>Arlington Way</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land south of Arlington Way is appropriate for B8 trade/Sui Generis motor retail • Resist retail and other non-employment uses. 	Most land and property north of Arlington Way (including the Battlefield Road Frontage), is in A1 retail use. This land should be reallocated, while the remaining area is protected as Shrewsbury's prime trade location.
Prospect House Belle View Road Shrewsbury	B/C	0.47	-	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect Prospect House for B1(a) offices. Change of use proposals must prove that the property is not viable in its present use • Proposals for an element of B1(c) workshop use, which could form part of a business centre scheme, may be acceptable • B2, B8 uses unlikely to be appropriate in urban location • Permit trade/motor trade uses if 	<p>Established or Potential Office Location</p> <p>Retain as a reasonably successful local business centre.</p>

Site/Area	Grade	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, Size (ha)	Regeneration Opportunities	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
						appropriate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resist retail and other non-employment uses 	
Abbey Lawn Abbey Foregate Shrewsbury	B/C	1.82	0.23	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect for B1(a) offices Exclude all other uses barring exceptional circumstances Maintain and enhance the high built/environmental quality and economic activities Protect key employers from third party applications. 	Established or Potential Office Location Retain as high quality office site.
Key Local Sites							
Monkmoor Industrial Estate Monkmoor Road Shrewsbury	C	5.78	-	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reallocate the west of the industrial estate Permit B Class uses (B1 (a, b, c), B2, B8) Permit trade/motor trade uses if 	General Industrial/Business Area The west of the industrial estate (Close to Conway Drive) is in non-employment use. This area should be reallocated for

Site/Area	Grade	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, Size (ha)	Regeneration Opportunities	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
						<p>appropriate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resist retail and other non-employment uses Encourage refurbishment of eastern workshops 	<p>other uses.</p> <p>The remainder of the estate functions as a moderately successful industrial estate and trade park and should be retained and protected.</p> <p>Despite the low quality of the premises, the small area of workshops in the east appears well occupied. Shropshire Council should consider if these units can be refurbished and the access road (Monkmoor Road, east of the water treatment works) widened.</p>
New Zealand House Abbey Foregate Shrewsbury	C	1.27	-	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect New Zealand House/163 Abbey Foregate for B1(a) offices. Change of use proposals must prove that the property is not viable in its present use Elsewhere, permit B1 (a, b, c) use B2, B8 uses 	<p>Established/Potential Office Location</p> <p>The core of this area is two multi-storey office properties which are a key source of larger office suites in central Shrewsbury. Both also have substantial rear parking. These properties should be protected as a priority, permitting (if</p>

Site/Area	Grade	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, Size (ha)	Regeneration Opportunities	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
						<p>unlikely to be appropriate in urban location</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permit trade/motor trade uses if appropriate • Resist retail and other non-employment uses. 	<p>required) internal remodelling/refurbishment to allow the buildings to meet modern occupier needs.</p> <p>Stakeholders have indicated that the owner of the backland industrial units has aspirations for housing. The loss of this secondary accommodation would not have a significant impact on Shrewsbury's supply of employment properties.</p>
Whitehall Buildings Monkmoor Road Shrewsbury	C	0.90	-	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the Whitehall Buildings for B1(a) offices. Change of use proposals must prove that the property is not viable in its present use. • Protect key employers from third party applications. 	<p>Established or Potential Office Location</p> <p>Area is constrained by surrounding uses and a narrow access road. However, this is one of the largest office buildings in Shrewsbury, providing open plan office space which could meet the needs of larger employers. The property should be protected, permitting (if required) internal</p>

Site/Area	Grade	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, Size (ha)	Regeneration Opportunities	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
							remodelling/refurbishment to allow the buildings to meet modern occupier needs.
Frankwell Quay Frankwell Shrewsbury	C	0.96	-	0.07	<p>Area includes two vacant industrial properties. The River Severn frontage also includes 0.10 ha of undeveloped land, presently used for boat storage.</p> <p>These sites provide opportunities for remodelling/development, potentially for offices or uses in relation to the adjoining Theatre Severn and the growing café/entertainment economy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect the Guildhall for B1(a) offices. Change of use proposals must prove that the property is not viable in its present use. Protect key employers from third party applications. The Regeneration Opportunities would be appropriate for a mix of uses. 	<p>Established or Potential Office Location</p> <p>Retain for B1(a) uses, but look to regenerate the low quality industrial properties at the entrance to Frankwell Quay from the Welsh Bridge gateway into Shrewsbury town centre.</p>
St Michael's Street Shrewsbury	C/D	1.58	-	0.11	The car park fronting the Salop Music Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect Shropshire Fire and Rescue 	Sites for Specific Employers.

Site/Area	Grade	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, Size (ha)	Regeneration Opportunities	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
					could provide a small retail/commercial development site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reallocate other land 	Units in the southern portion of the area are in non-employment use. Shropshire Council should reallocate these properties to non-employment use. The loss of this secondary accommodation would not have a significant impact on Shrewsbury's supply of employment properties.
Brassey Close Old Potts Way Shrewsbury	C/D	2.07	-	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permit B Class uses (B1 (a, b, c), B2, B8) • Permit trade/motor trade uses if appropriate • Resist retail and other non-employment uses 	<p>General Industrial/Business Area Established or Potential Office Location</p> <p>Most of the industrial units are now in trade use. However, the north of the area includes several good quality, multi-let office properties which appear well occupied, with tenants including Severnside Housing Association. These are a good source of larger (100-400 sqm) office suites, suitable for expanding businesses, and should be protected as a priority.</p>
Cambrian House	C/D	0.17	-	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect Cambrian 	Established or Potential

Site/Area	Grade	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, Size (ha)	Regeneration Opportunities	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
Chester Street Shrewsbury						<p>House for B1(a) offices. Change of use proposals must prove that the property is not viable in its present use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage refurbishment for business centre, allowing some B1(c) workshops if appropriate. 	<p>Office Location</p> <p>Presently under offer to a confidential buyer. It is understood that the buyer intends to refurbish the building and return it to use as a multi-let business scheme.</p> <p>Shropshire Council needs to monitor changing conditions on this property and endeavour to keep it in employment use. If the new owner does intend to refurbish the premises as a businesses centre, this aspiration should be supported.</p>
Mixed Commercial Sites							
Castle Foregate (West) Shrewsbury	D	3.70	0.37	2.04	Appropriate for a mixed-use redevelopment acceptable non-employment uses may include residential and D1 non-residential institutions. A1-A2 retail, A3-A4 hot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect Castle Foregate Business Park/Lock Stock Storage for B1(c)/B8 uses • The Regeneration Opportunities would be appropriate for a 	<p>General Industrial/Business Area</p> <p>At present a low quality employment area, contributing little to Shrewsbury's property offer, and with risk of further dereliction and decline.</p>

Site/Area	Grade	Site Area	Development Opportunities, ha (Available Employment Sites)	Regeneration Opportunities, Size (ha)	Regeneration Opportunities	Key Policy Recommendations	Future Role
					food and D2 assembly and leisure may also be acceptable, if access constraints can be overcome.	mix of uses.	However, the land also provides options for future regeneration, if site constraints can be overcome.

Source: BE Group 2014

