CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL

CABINET

19 JUNE 2008

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO LEADER - ENVIRONMENT

CANNOCK CHASE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

CORE STRATEGY ISSUES AND OPTIONS - CONSULTATION

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To present the Cannock Chase Local Development Framework Core Strategy Issues and Options consultation document for approval and to advise on the consultation strategy being employed.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That Cabinet:

i. approve the Cannock Chase Local Development Framework Core Strategy Issues and Options document for consultation and authorise the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Leader to make minor changes prior to consultation.

ii. approve the consultation strategy to be employed, give authority to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Leader to amend the strategy if considered appropriate and to approve the presentation of the consultation material.

3. Key Issues

3.1 The aim of the Cannock Chase Local Development Framework (LDF) is to guide the development and growth of the District up to 2026 and to achieve sustainable development via a proper balance between economic, environmental and social considerations. The LDF is the spatial delivery mechanism for the corporate plan, sustainable community strategy and Local area Agreement. The LDF replaces the former Local Plan process.

3.2 The Core Strategy will set out the guiding principles for development over the plan period. It will also provide generic policies for Development Control. The main purpose of the Issues and Options stage is to generate debate with both residents and stakeholders on the options available for achieving sustainable development in the district. The document itself is attached as Annex 1.

3.3 The debate will be generated through a series of exhibitions, publicity events and
carefully managed media coverage. In particular use will be made of the July edition of Chase Matters with a Core Strategy consultation special occupying the central pages. This will explain the Core Strategy process in a much simplified manner and encourage responses via a questionnaire. The Proposed LDF Consultation Strategy is attached as Annex 2.

3.4 The vision, objectives and four strategic options have all been reviewed by the LDF Working Group on 12 February 2008 and were considered appropriate for Council’s Cabinet consideration. The timetable for the LDF, the Local Development Scheme, agreed with GOWM shows the Core Strategy Issues and Options report being available for public consultation from July 2008.
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Section 1

Background

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a new forward planning system. A ‘Local Development Framework’ comprising a suite of documents was to be phased in to replace the former Local Plan process. Whereas the Local Plan purely provided policy for controlling how land is used, the LDF must be designed to deliver a wider range of strategies and plans, not least the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), Local Area Agreement (LAA) and Corporate Plan, on the ground. It must also be consistent with the planning policies of National Government, the Regional Spatial Strategy and neighbouring authorities interests.

The Core Strategy is the central policy document of a Local Development Framework and will provide the strategic policy direction for the district over the plan period (2006 – 2026). It also contains more specific policies for controlling development.

The suite of documents being prepared by Cannock Chase Council under the LDF is:

- Programme (Local Development Scheme)
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Development Plan Documents (statutory)
  - Core Strategy (this document)
  - Rugeley Town Centre Area Action Plan
  - Site Specific Allocations
- Supplementary Planning Documents
- Annual Monitoring Report

Section 2

Details of Matters to be Considered

This is the third issues and options report to have been presented for consultation. It builds on GOWM advice for consultation following the experience of the Lichfield and Stafford Core Strategies being found unsound together with more recent national LDF experience.

The full process through which the Core Strategy must pass is:

- Issues and Options – to generate debate on the full range of strategic development options for the district. (the current stage)
- Preferred Options – to further develop the options identified through consultation as preferred.
- Submission - to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination
- Examination
- Adoption – The Planning Inspectors decision is binding on the Council.

The Issues and Options consultation is aimed at generating community debate on future development options across a wide range of planning topic areas. It explains:

- How we are consulting
- Background to the new planning system
• Tests the process must pass in order to be ‘sound’ at examination (a key concern)
• Spatial portrait of the District as it is now (State of Cannock Chase)
• Spatial Vision for the District as it might be in 2026
• Objectives on how to achieve the future vision (reflecting CHASE, the SCS priorities and LAA targets)
• Questions on the issues and options for meeting each objective
• Strategic options on where most development should be focussed in the district
• Options for more detailed development control policies

The suggested objectives for achieving the future vision of the district are guided by the Council’s corporate aims (CHASE), the Sustainable Community Strategy priorities and Local Area Agreement targets. The eight objectives are:

- Promote pride in attractive safe local communities
- Create healthy living opportunities across the district
- Provide for housing choice
- Encourage a vibrant local economy and workforce
- Encourage sustainable transport infrastructure
- Create attractive town centres
- Provide well managed and appreciated environments
- Support a greener future

The main strategic options being offered in the core strategy are as identified below. The issues and Options stage is expected to test and identify a wide range of potential options for development of the District some of which may be a radical departure from current policy.

Option 1. Concentrated development in Cannock, Hednesford and Heath Hayes
Option 2. Dispersed development across all urban communities
Option 3. Norton Canes expansion and reduced dispersed development across all other urban communities
Option 4. New sustainable communities at urban edges

The implications of following each option are outlined in the report.

The vision, objectives and four strategic options have all been reviewed by the LDF Working Group on 12 February 2008 and were considered appropriate for Council’s Cabinet consideration.

The timetable for the LDF, the Local Development Scheme, agreed with GOWM shows the Core Strategy Issues and Options report being available for public consultation from July 2008.

In order to help ensure an effective consultation process, consultants have been appointed to help manage media contact, reach all sections of the community (including ‘hard to reach’ groups) and ensure a significant response (in the order of 1,000 responses would be considered a good result). The consultants will devise the media strategy and ensure corporate style via close liaison with the Council’s PR and media section. It is recommended that this strategy and the format of the consultation documents are signed off by the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Leader.
The implications within the LDF Core Strategy for the future of the District are significant and as such it is important that the Council actively encourages and promotes engagement by stakeholders and the public in the consultation process. Stakeholder and public engagement is very important as the LDF Core Strategy will shape and define the District in the medium to long term. Accordingly, there is clear merit in actively encouraging effective participation in its formulation.

The Issues and Options phase is an early opportunity for stakeholders and the public to be involved in the future planning process; and strong early engagement will help strengthen the eventual direction chosen through Preferred Options. The provision of a monetary incentive to the public (for example, providing a chance to win £500 in a prize draw - a 'tool' that has been successfully used by other local authorities, will help encourage public participation in the consultation process. Clearly, the Council will want to avoid the need to undertake further consultation with the public like neighbouring authorities of Stafford Borough Council and Lichfield District Council, should the public's response be poor.

Encouraging early effective public involvement through offering an incentive is more cost effective in comparison to adopting alternative methods, such as undertaking further consultation or employing consultants to undertake public surveys and the like. Accordingly, the use of a financial incentive assists in reducing the risk to the Council of needing to undertaking more costly and time consuming consultation methods/procedures.

Section 3

Contribution to CHASE

The LDF Core Strategy gives spatial representation to the Corporate Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy and therefore helps deliver all aspects of CHASE.

Section 4

Section 17 Implications

Issues and options are included to help reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

Section 5

Human Rights Act Implications

There are no identified Human Rights Act implications identified in the report.

Section 6

Data Protection Act Implications

There are no identified implications in respect of the Data Protection Act arising from this report.
Risk Management Implications

Production of the Core Strategy is a statutory process. Penalties for not meeting the programme set out in the Local Development Scheme are likely to include:

- Performance indicators not met
- Possible loss of Housing and Planning delivery grant income
- Closer scrutiny by Government Office for the West Midlands

Of paramount importance is the need for the process to be found to meet ‘tests of soundness’ at examination. There is a high risk of having to commence the three year process again if the Core Strategy is not found sound. This has already occurred in the neighbouring local planning authorities at Lichfield and Stafford.

In addition the document is prepared to take account of and manage the risks identified in the Local Development Scheme.

Legal Implications

The Council has a statutory duty to prepare a Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy is the central document of the framework.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications for the Council as a result of this report; all costs in respect of Local Development Framework are contained within existing approved budgets.

Human Resource Implications

There are no identified implications.

Conclusions

The Local Development Framework Core Strategy will set out the guiding principles for development over the plan period 2006 - 2026. It will also provide generic policies for Development Control. The main purpose of the Issues and Options stage is to generate debate with both residents and stakeholders on the options available for achieving sustainable development in the district.
Members are being recommended to both approve the Cannock Chase Local Development Framework Core Strategy Issues Options document for consultation and the consultation strategy being employed.

**Background Papers**

The document contains a summary table of the background evidence that has been used to produce the Core Strategy.
1. What is the consultation about?

The Local Development Framework

The Local Development Framework (LDF) replaces the Local Plan as the Development Plan for future development of Cannock Chase District. This is in accordance with legislation set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Throughout this new planning process, and throughout the document, the term ‘spatial’ is used. In a nutshell, this means that we need to consider what development will go where, and why this should be the case, taking into account a wide range of information which will help us make those decisions.

The Local Development Framework is the name for a set of documents. A Local Development Scheme sets out the documents we will be preparing and provides a three year timetable for producing them. Alongside this a Statement of Community Involvement sets out how we intend to consult. Both these documents can be viewed at the Council’s website www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/planningpolicy

Local Development Documents (LDD) provide the more detailed content on how the District’s development will be guided over the coming 15-20 years. These are in two parts. Development Plan Documents (DPD) are a legal requirement which state planning policy. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are not statutory and may only elaborate policy.

To ensure full consultation and participation in setting policy, DPD must go through a series of stages:

- Evidence gathering: To provide factual information informing policy development;
- Issues and Options: A consultation phase to gain agreement on the way forward
- Preferred Options: A further consultation seeking consolidation into a preferred approach;
- Submission for Examination: A further consultation opportunity for comment when a DPD is sent to the Planning Inspectorate for examination
- Examination: When issues are considered by a planning inspector in the context of a round table discussion
- Adoption: An inspector’s decision is binding and if found ‘sound’ the Council must then adopt the DPD.

The Core Strategy

The central, most important DPD is the Core Strategy which will set out policies and proposals to help shape the way in which the District will change in its physical, economic, social and environmental characteristics between now and 2026. This document, the Core Strategy Issues and Options 2008 Consultation means we are finalising the second stage shown above. It now also incorporates issues and options which will lead to the formation of generic policies for Development Control (the process by which Planning Applications are considered).
2. How are we consulting?

The Core Strategy Issues and Options 2008 Consultation provides another opportunity for you to provide your views on the issues facing the district and options for how these might be addressed before moving to preferred options. We have taken your comments on the earlier consultations into account and have now refined these into what we believe to be an appropriate and sufficiently broad range of issues and options facing the district. Earlier responses were received mainly from the development industry rather than local residents and before proceeding further we wish to achieve a much wider response to help ensure we have a sound basis for making decisions.

Please let us know if, in your view, we are getting it right.

In order to make responding as easy as possible we are offering different ways for your views to be heard in accordance with our Statement of Community Involvement.

a. Reply via our on-line consultation facility hosted by a company called ‘Limehouse’. It is easy to register and you can do this by visiting our website www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/planningpolicy or http://consultation.limehouse.co.uk/cannockchasedc This is our preferred method for receiving your responses to this report as they are automatically collated and more easily analysed.

b. If you prefer, paper copies of the document are available and you may read these and respond by completing and returning the enclosed prepaid questionnaire.

c. You can also read our summary leaflet and reply to a questionnaire using the on-line link.

d. Alternatively read our summary leaflet and complete and return the enclosed prepaid questionnaire.

The document, summary leaflet and questionnaire may all be viewed in the following public libraries:

- Cannock - Manor Avenue, WS11 1AA
- Rugeley - Anson Street, WS15 2BB
- Hednesford - Market Street, WS12 1AD
- Norton Canes - Burntwood Road, WS11 9RF
- Brereton - Talbot Road, WS15 1AU
- Heath Hayes - Hednesford Road, WS12 3EA

Or by visiting the Council offices at:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cannock Chase District Council</th>
<th>The Rugeley Area Office</th>
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<tr>
<td>Civic Centre</td>
<td>Anson Street</td>
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<td>Beecroft Road</td>
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You may obtain a paper copy free of charge by contacting us as follows:

- Write to ‘Planning Policy’ at the address shown above
- email planningpolicy@cannockchasedc.gov.uk
- Phone 01543 462621 and ask for Planning Policy

The consultation period will run during July, August and September 2008.

To help in making sure as many people as possible have a chance to hear about what we are doing, Council officers will be distributing leaflets and be available to hear some of your views at the following locations:

**Train stations**
- Cannock
- Hednesford
- Rugeley Town

**Supermarkets**
- Cannock – Sainsbury
- Rugeley – Morrisons
- Heath Hayes - Tesco

**Other venues**
- Cannock – Civic Centre/Library/Market/Leisure Centre
- Rugeley – Market Hall/Leisure Centre
- Hednesford – Library
- Brereton – Library
- Cannock Wood – Village Hall

We will also making presentations on the following occasions and all are welcome to attend:

**Community venues**
- Cannock Civic Centre, Ballroom – Public Council Meeting/Job Fair/etc.
- Hednesford, Aquarius Ballroom – Tea Dance
- Rugeley, Rose Theatre – Public meeting/Performances

We recognise that some groups and individuals will not get involved as easily as others and we therefore will be holding more targeted events as follows:

- Young persons debate/school project
- Business Club/Chamber debate
- Chase CVS event

We will be present at various events over the summer and these will be publicised in the press and on the Council’s website. Whether you are a resident, a developer, a worker in the District, a frequent visitor or other person or group with an interest in the future of Cannock Chase District we look forward to hearing from you.

A glossary of terms used in the document can be found in Appendix A
3. What have you told us so far?

We undertook earlier consultation on Issues and Options in May 2006 and May 2007. It is not our intention to respond directly to comments made at this stage, but we will do so on completion of the Issues and Options process. Points already made do therefore not need to be resubmitted in this consultation. The responses made so far are summarised in Appendix B.
4. What must be considered?

Tests of Soundness

The Government requires all local planning authorities to prepare their Local Development Documents to meet ‘tests of soundness’ which will be tested by an inspector at examination prior to a document being considered sound for adoption. The tests are set out in the Government document Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS12) and they are so fundamental to the new planning process that they are shown below.

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<td><strong>Procedural</strong></td>
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<td>i. it has been prepared in accordance with the local development scheme;</td>
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<td>ii. it has been prepared in compliance with the statement of community involvement, or with the minimum requirements set out in the Regulations where no statement of community involvement exists;</td>
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<td>iii. the plan and its policies have been subjected to sustainability appraisal;</td>
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<td><strong>Conformity</strong></td>
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<td>iv. it is a spatial plan which is consistent with national planning policy and in general conformity with the regional spatial strategy for the region or, in London, the spatial development strategy and it has properly had regard to any other relevant plans, policies and strategies relating to the area or to adjoining areas;</td>
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<td>v. it has had regard to the authority's community strategy</td>
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<td><strong>Coherence, consistency and effectiveness</strong></td>
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<td>vi. the strategies/policies/allocations in the plan are coherent and consistent within and between development plan documents prepared by the authority and by neighbouring authorities, where cross boundary issues are relevant;</td>
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<td>vii. the strategies/policies/allocations represent the most appropriate in all the circumstances, having considered the relevant alternatives, and they are founded on a robust and credible evidence base;</td>
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<td>viii. there are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring;</td>
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<td>ix. the plan is reasonably flexible to enable it to deal with changing circumstances.</td>
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Whilst all tests must be met, some of the key aspects which provide a setting for the core strategy are considered below:

**National Planning Policy**

National legislation on LDFs is set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and the planning documents that District Councils need to prepare are governed by this Act, accompanying regulations and Planning Policy Statement 12.

Guidance on specific subjects such as employment, housing, retail and leisure are
contained within either Planning Policy Statements (PPS) or Planning Policy Guidance (PPG), each supported by additional documents which elaborate policy further. A list of these can be found in Appendix C.

**West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy**

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands (WMRSS) adopted in 2004 and covering the period up to the 2021 identifies Cannock and Rugeley as Local Regeneration Areas, in recognition of the continuing concentrations of deprivation. Cannock is also identified as one of 25 strategic town centres. Key location specific constraints are protection of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and the Green Belt, unless releases are needed to deliver the most sustainable development option(s). It is currently the subject of a partial revision, extending the plan to the period 2026.

**WMRSS Phase 2 Revision**

The WMRSS Phase 2 Revision aims to achieve both urban and rural renaissance and sets out housing figures up to 2026 that each Local Planning Authority must provide for via its LDF. At April 2008, the ‘Preferred Option’ was for 365,600 new homes to be built across the West Midlands between 2006 and 2026 with Cannock Chase District providing 5,800 (an annual average of 290). In January 2008, Government announced that the regional figure needed to be raised and further work has been commissioned to assess the impact of raising the figure as well as taking into account new population projections which are significantly higher than those on which the RSS Phase 2 Revision are based. The implications of this for Cannock Chase District are not yet known although at this Issues and Options stage Government Office advice is to build in sufficient flexibility to allow for potential outcomes.

In 2006/7 the District saw 558 completions and in 2007/8 there were 356 completions. There is a committed supply of 914 dwellings meaning a net remaining requirement of 4,886 additional dwellings to deliver to 2026. This is equivalent to a development rate of 271 dwellings per annum. These figures may be subject to any further revision arising from the Government’s enhanced figure for the region.

The WMRSS Phase 2 Revision Preferred Option also proposes a rolling five-year “reservoir” of readily developable employment land. This can be a combination of new and recycled land. For Cannock Chase District this is 28 ha for each five year period through to 2021, a total requirement of 84 hectares. Taking into account current supply of as yet undeveloped allocation and recycled land coming forward, this leaves a need to find a further 30 ha of new land.

The WMRSS Phase 2 Revision Preferred Option also proposes 25,000m² of additional retail floorspace for Cannock (as a tier 4 strategic shopping centre) between 2006 and 2021 for which the LDF must currently plan with an additional 10,000m² requirement between 2021 and 2026. Similarly Cannock should provide for 30,000m² of new office space between 2006 and 2026 either within or on the edge of its town centres.

The consultation period had previously been provisionally extended to the 30 June. This followed a letter received by the Assembly from Baroness Andrews in January 2008 in which she informed the Assembly that GOWM would commission a study to provide the Panel undertaking the Examination in Public with further options that could deliver higher housing
numbers.

GOWM has appointed planning consultants Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners to undertake this study. A final report is now not expected to be available in the first week of October 2008. GOWM will then make the study publicly available as additional evidence for consultees to consider when making their responses on the WMRSS Phase Two Revision Draft.

The Assembly has therefore agreed to further extend the consultation period on the WMRSS Phase Two Revision Draft in order to allow all consultees at least eight weeks to take the GOWM study into account in responding to the consultation. Based on the assumption that the study will be available on the 7 October 2008, the Assembly has therefore extended the WMRSS Phase Two Revision Draft consultation period to 12:00pm on 8 December 2008.

In the light of this, it is now anticipated that the Examination in Public will be held in Spring 2009, although a final date has still to be confirmed.

**WMRSS Phase 3 Revision**

The WMRSS Phase 3 Revision commenced in early 2008 and is addressing a diverse range of issues not covered via the Phase 2 revision and including rural areas, the environment, culture and the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers. Because of the delay to the Phase 2 Revision process, a preferred option for Phase 3 will not be developed until after the Examination in Public for Phase 2, likely to be April 2009.

**Other Key Regional Documents**

The West Midlands Regional Economic Strategy (RES) provides the framework for sustainable economic growth and its spatial implementation is via the WMRSS.

The West Midlands Regional Housing Strategy seeks to apply the principles of urban and rural renaissance, as set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy, to the Region’s housing markets. and to guide decisions on housing investment in the Region, in order to tackle the immediate issues of decent and affordable homes. The ultimate purpose of the Strategy is to secure mixed and balanced sustainable communities in the West Midlands.

**Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan**

Most policies from the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011 (adopted 2001) have been saved until replaced by the relevant LDF.

**Cannock Chase District Local Plan**

85 policies from the Cannock Chase District Local Plan have been saved to run beyond September 2007. The Core Strategy and other Development Plan Documents will eventually supersede these policies.

**Local Area Agreement (Final Submission, 19 May 2008)**

Priorities for change across Staffordshire are increasingly being addressed via a Local Area Agreement (LAA) which is used to channel Government funding. Across Staffordshire, partners
have come together under the umbrella of the Staffordshire Strategic Partnership (SSP) to develop and negotiate this new LAA. The SSP also has the responsibility for developing and agreeing the Sustainable Community Strategy for the County, while at a local level Cannock Chase Council and other partners are developing District Sustainable Community Strategies. These strategies set the long term visions for an area.

The LAA submission (submitted to Government in May 2008) is rooted in the priorities of Sustainable Community Strategies, and translates their priorities into targets which will in turn secure improvements in service delivery and quality of life. The LAA is the only place where central government agrees targets with Staffordshire.

The following four outcomes have been proposed for the Staffordshire LAA.
1. A vibrant, prosperous and sustainable economy
2. Strong, safe and cohesive communities
3. Improved health and sense of well being
4. A protected, enhanced and respected environment

These outcomes will be achieved by focussing on 35 Improvement Targets. The Core Strategy will play a major part in ensuring many of these are delivered, so where indicators are relevant, they are listed at the start of each of the Objectives which the Core Strategy aims to achieve: these are contained in Section 8.

**Sustainable Community Strategy for Staffordshire (Shaping the Future of Staffordshire 2006-21)**

This Strategy focuses on five priorities which are important to the local community and are shared nationally with the Government:

- Improving the quality of life for children and young people;
- Creating healthier communities and giving older people greater control over their own lives;
- Developing safer and stronger communities;
- Facilitating the growth of the local economy and encouraging enterprise for the benefit of individuals, employers and communities;
- Sustaining communities through improved transport, enhancing the local environment, reducing waste and providing sustainable local development.

**Sustainable Community Strategy for Cannock Chase District**

The LDF is the spatial delivery mechanism for the Cannock Chase Sustainable Community Strategy. The Sustainable Community Strategy was produced in June 2008 by the Chase Community Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership or LSP for the district) following a period of consultation / participation. The LDF Core Strategy process has paid close attention to this consultation phase of the SCS as responses are relevant to both processes. The SCS contains the following vision:

To achieve a Cannock Chase we can all be proud of. A Cannock Chase that will become a place with a diverse and united community, a modern economy, a healthy, safe and clean environment and quality services which work together for the good of the public.
The SCS contains the following strategic priorities:

1. Prosperity – Securing the District’s Economic Future

   Priorities
   - Develop vibrant and sustainable town centres that serve the need of the community
   - Improve skill levels to support growth in high value added business
   - Increase the levels of new business formations and their survival
   - Reduce worklessness

2. Places – Making the Whole District Clean, Green and Safe

   Priorities
   Making it Clean and Green
   - Reducing the volume of waste to landfill and increasing recycling rates
   - Reduce carbon emissions
   - Enhance and ensure access for all environments that are valued, protected and enjoyed
   - Reduce the reliance on the car by encouraging the use of public transport
   - Maintain parks and open spaces that are valued by residents and visitors

   Making it Safe
   - Criminal Damage
   - Anti Social Behaviour
   - Violent Crime
   - Business Crime
   - Community Engagement and Empowerment

3. People – Creating Opportunities and Sustaining Ambition

   Priorities
   - Encouraging healthier lifestyle choices
   - Reducing health inequalities and provide a healthy start in life
   - Promoting positive mental health
   - Promoting independence inclusion and well being for older and disabled people
   - Improving the physical, emotional and mental well-being of children and young people
   - Improving the life chances of children and young people who are at risk
   - Improving standards of enjoyment and achievement for children and young people
   - Increasing opportunities available for children and young people to make a positive contribution
   - Achieve economic well being

Cannock Chase Council Corporate and Performance Plan

The Council has also set a vision which covers the early part of the LDF period:
By 2015, Cannock Chase District will be recognised as a place where everyone’s lives are enriched by a strong cultural identity, vibrant local economy and pride in the outstanding natural environment.

Since the Council published its first Performance Plan in 1999, it has used the acronym **CHASE** to identify issues of concern to local communities as objectives.

**CHASE** stands for:
- **C**ULTURE and **S**PORT. “Increasing participation in culture and sporting activities.”
- **H**EALTH – “Developing a healthy community.”
- **A**ccess to **S**KILLS and **E**CONOMIC **D**EVELOPMENT – “A sustainable job for everyone, learning opportunities for all.”
- **S**OCIAL **I**NCLUSION and **H**OUSING – “Reducing Inequality, Decent Homes for all.”
- **E**NVIRONMENT – “A clean, safe and sustainable environment.”

### Strategies and Plans

In addition, other important strategies and plans which the Core Strategy will need to help develop or at least acknowledge include:

- Regional Economic Strategy
- Regional Housing Strategy
- Regional Energy Strategy
- Staffordshire Economic Review
- Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan
- Forest of Mercia Management Plan
- Tourism Strategy for Cannock Chase District
- Cannock Chase Economic Regeneration Strategy
- Staffordshire Bio-diversity Action Plan
- Cannock Chase Housing Strategy 2007-2010
- Cannock Chase Sustainability Strategy
- Stafford Borough LDF
- Lichfield District LDF
- Black Country Authorities LDF
- South Staffordshire LDF
- Walsall Unitary Development Plan
- Local Transport Plan

### Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

All local planning authorities are required to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal of their Local Development Documents. This is a checklist of issues which need to be taken into account to ensure sustainability issues have properly been considered.

To start the process a Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for the Core Strategy was issued for consultation in 2006. The Scoping Report helps to set the context of all subsequent DPDs and SPDs, define their objectives, establish the baseline, and decide upon the scope and level of detail required of the subsequent SA to ensure that sustainability concerns will be taken into account throughout the production of the document. The next stage of the SA process will assess Issues and Options as part of the process of moving to Preferred Options.
In addition to the Sustainability Appraisal there is now a need to undertake “Appropriate Assessment” of all Local Development Documents where a site of European importance for nature conservation is affected. This relates to Articles 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) and is concerned with assessing the likely significant effects of spatial plans on such sites known as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). The District has such sites on Cannock Chase and at the Cannock Extension Canal south of Norton Canes. This process runs alongside the Sustainability Appraisal process.

Evidence Base

The evidence base is a range of information which is critical to ensuring that the local planning authority has a thorough understanding of the needs and issues of its area and that delivery is not compromised by a lack of sites, infrastructure or other constraints. Cannock Chase Council is therefore undertaking a series of studies either itself, in partnership or via other agencies which will help underpin policies and proposals.

The evidence base can be found in Appendix D
5. What is our District like in 2008? A Spatial Portrait

Cannock Chase Council produces a ‘State of Cannock Chase’ report on an annual basis and this provides us with a very good picture of the quality of life and wellbeing across the district. It also identifies some of the key challenges and wide ranging issues the district faces. Key facts and figures for health, education and a range of other issues are set out late in this section but first we set the scene with descriptions of the main geographic components of the district.

Cannock/Hednesford/Heath Hayes

These areas are described together because they form a a continuous urban area. The combined population is 63,000, 68% of the District total (Census 2001). It contains the strategic centre of Cannock, the town centre of Hednesford and Hawks Green district centre. The largest employment areas are along the M6 Toll (where there has been rapid growth following its construction), A5, A34, A460 and A4601 south of Cannock town centre. Other employment areas are at Hawks Green/East Cannock and Keys Park.

Bus services are good in the area with frequent services both around the local area (Cannock / Hednesford / Heath Hayes) and to neighbouring areas such as Stafford, Lichfield and Walsall. The Chase Line Rail Service, connecting Rugeley with Birmingham, via Hednesford and Cannock is seen as a valuable public transport resource for the district. However, there are current concerns in connection with the existing level of service, and discussions are ongoing aimed at resolving these concerns.

Housing provision is a mix of age, size and tenure: there are large amounts of pre and post war properties in the area. There are problems with some estates of public housing which are of poor quality, being constructed from defective pre cast reinforced concrete.

Health provision is mixed: small doctors’ surgeries are scattered across the area rather than being provided from larger health centres. There are a number of schools and community facilities spread across this area.

This area contains or is adjoined by major areas of open space of important nature conservation value (Hednesford Hills, Mill Green, Hazelslade, Fair Lady Coppice) but some residential areas do not have good access to good quality children’s play facilities.

Rugeley and Brereton

The combined population is 23,240, almost 26% of the District total (Census 2001). The area contains most of the historic built heritage in the District with six conservation areas including the Trent and Mersey Canal and the town centre which is the subject of an Area Action Plan. The eastern by-pass was completed in September 2007 aimed at reducing through traffic on the old A51 through the town. There are frequent bus services linking the town with Stafford, Lichfield and Cannock and rail connections to Stafford and Birmingham via Walsall but no evening service on weekdays and Saturdays. Rugeley and Brereton combined are sustainable settlements with good communications including proposals for improved inter-regional rail services from Trent Valley Station linking Stoke-on-Trent, Stafford and London.

Rugeley town centre has had limited new investment since the mid 1980s and is in need of regeneration which is to be handled at site specific level in the Area Action Plan. New
employment opportunities, following the closure of Lea Hall Colliery in 1991, have been relatively slow in coming forward but the 40.5 ha Towers Business Park is now almost fully committed with built and planned developments.

Apart from the Victorian residential streets around Rugeley town centre and the historic core of Brereton village, most housing is post 1945 with several estates of public housing including a former National Coal Board estate, the Pear Tree, which has environmental and infrastructure problems. The low density housing area of Etching Hill situated adjacent to the AONB became attached as a suburb following substantial private sector housing development at the north western end of the town in the 1970s.

A new Health Centre has recently been constructed, in Sandy Lane. There are a number of Primary schools in the area, two High Schools and a number of community facilities.

**Norton Canes**

Norton Canes has a population of 6,394, 6% of the District total (Census 2001). Originating as a mining village it expanded to include estates of public housing. The last mine was replaced by an industrial estate in the 1970s and new estates of private housing were built in the late 1960s and 1970s together with a more recent development of 300 dwellings built on a former colliery site from the year 2000 onwards. There are 2 primary schools, a secondary school, library and community centre together with a limited range of local shops. A new health centre opened in late 2007.

There are 3 main areas of open space and pedestrian/cycle access to the Chasewater Country Park to the east. The centre and east of the village has relatively good public transport access, the south-west less so. The M6 Toll and associated Norton Canes Service Area are major recent developments to the south of the village. Norton Canes has well developed community organisations, including Norton Canes Community Partnership and Norton Canes Parish Council.

**The Rural Areas**

The Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is the largest tract of rural land in the district and separates the urban area of Cannock / Hednesford / Heath Hayes from Rugeley / Brereton. It contains one of the largest areas of readily accessible recreational land in the West Midlands and is a significant asset for nearby communities. The landscape is dominated by forestry plantations and it is the forest plan of felling and re-planting which will continue to be the major influence on how this area will look. On the fringes, there are a number of influences on the landscape, relating to the area’s mining history, agriculture and equestrian activity. The AONB is also within the Green Belt with the exception of the two villages of Slitting Mill and Cannock Wood together with the low density residential suburb of Etching Hill.

East of Heath Hayes, north of Norton Canes – is all Green Belt with the exception of the former mining settlement of Prospect Village. The area performs a Green Belt function of separating Heath Hayes, Norton Canes and Burntwood. There are large areas of heathland/grassland designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and much of the rest of the area is a restored former opencast mine. Prospect Village has no shop or school but has a half hourly daytime weekday and Saturday bus service to Cannock, Hednesford, Burntwood and Lichfield.
The rural tract east of Cannock, south of Heath Hayes and west of Norton Canes is a relatively new landscape restored from opencast mining in the 1970s and 1980s and is all in the Green Belt. It also contains several sites of county level nature conservation value (SBIs) including the Fair Lady Coppice country park. The large Poplars landfill site and the developing Kingswood Lakes Business Park form the western boundaries. The area performs a Green Belt function of separating Cannock, Heath Hayes and Norton Canes.

The rural area south of the M6 Toll contains the hamlet of Little Wyrley and a few isolated dwellings and farms. In addition there are the commercial developments at Watling Street, Lime Lane and the landfill at the former Grove Colliery. All the land is in the Green Belt and is part of a larger area of Green Belt extending into South Staffordshire District to the west and Walsall MBC to the south and east. It contains the Cannock Extension Canal SAC.

Population

The District’s population continues to grow (94,300 in 2005 / 6, projected to grow to 95,300 by 2026) and has a relatively youthful population profile compared to other areas within the Region. Moreover, older people represent amongst the lowest proportions in Staffordshire Local Authorities. Population will grow however, and the District’s older population aged over 65 is expected to increase by nearly 70% by 2029, bringing this total to 22,500 people compared to 14,400 in 2008.

Health and Education

Cannock Chase is the worst district for health in the South Staffordshire Primary Care Trust area. It is worse than the England average for life expectancy, early deaths from smoking related diseases, obese adults, teenage pregnancy rates (under 18 years) and homelessness. The District’s educational performance has improved recently, however it continues to have some of the lowest levels of education participation and attainment in Staffordshire. Over 20% of working age people do not have qualifications.

Community Deprivation

All Local Authority areas in England are ranked using a variety of statistics known as the Index of Multiple Deprivation which gives an indication of the levels of deprivation in each area. The rank of Cannock Chase District improved between 2004 and 2006 from 134th to 135th out of 354 Local Authority areas. However, Cannock Chase District is still the most deprived Local Authority in Staffordshire (excluding Stoke-on-Trent) and ranks within the most deprived Local Authorities in England. Deprivation occurs mainly in Education Skills and Training, Employment, Health and Disability and Income. 18% of the population aged below 16 years are living in income deprived families. 16% of older people are suffering with income deprivation. Average gross weekly earnings for Cannock Chase residents are 14% lower than the average for Great Britain.

Crime

Since the formation of the Cannock Chase Crime and Disorder Partnership in 1999, there have been significant reductions in many major crime types such as house burglaries and car crime, and Cannock Chase Council was awarded Beacon status in 2004 for its partnership working on
community safety. However, the public still perceive that there are significant amounts of crime occurring on their streets, and there are particular problem areas which need addressing.

In 2005/06 there were 96 reported crimes per 1,000 people, similar to the average for West Midlands Region but lower than Staffordshire with 99 and England and Wales with 103. Violent crime continues to increase within the District and across the Staffordshire Force. Between 2001/02 and 2005/06 violent crime rose by 28% which is the equivalent of 196 violent offences per month in 2005/06. Domestic violence continues to contribute a significant proportion of violent crimes within the District.

**Housing**

Strategic housing issues have been analysed in 2008 across the region. Cannock Chase District falls within a sub regional area with the Black Country Local Authorities, South Staffordshire and Telford. This area is known as the C3 area. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the C3 Housing Market Area of the West Midlands (2008) provides the broad strategic context for housing supply and type for Cannock Chase District. From a detailed analysis of the market the report has concluded that there is a shortfall of 1 and 2 bedroom flats and 3 and 4 bedroom houses in Cannock and Rugeley, but an oversupply of 2 bedroom houses.

The type of households is also set to change: between 2006 and 2026 there will be considerable growth in smaller households with older occupants: for example there will be 40% more households containing couples with no children aged 65 to 79 and 77% growth in single occupants aged over 80. The full details can be found in the C3 Housing Market assessment referenced in Appendix D.

The requirement for more affordable housing is now a growing problem for the District as the provision of affordable housing has not kept pace with need. The C3 report has determined that levels of affordable housing should be set locally. The Cannock Chase Housing Strategy 2007–10 estimates an affordable housing need of 194 homes per annum. Of these, preferences indicate 61% seeking rented accommodation, 34% lower cost home ownership and 5% shared ownership/equity. There is strong demand for 2 and 3 bedroom accommodation (53% of the Housing Register April 2007). The last nine years has seen 628 additional affordable homes being provided. This averages 60 per annum, just 31% of the required total. In the same period 1,380 council homes were sold under the right to buy scheme. Local house prices are currently 7 times average local incomes.

**Employment**

The local economic base has developed and diversified significantly from the mining heritage of the not too distant past. The District has a more diverse employment structure but remains heavily reliant upon manufacturing employment which represents 21% of jobs (Optimat Analysis 2008) and transport, distribution and communications at 26%.

There are an estimated 33,700 jobs in the District and 59,500 persons of working age. As a result, unsustainable levels of out commuting (largely within Staffordshire and to the West Midlands conurbation) are an integral feature of the local labour market.
Given the low levels of skills in the District (see Health and Education, above), there are also problems with linking local people to local jobs: the 2001 Census shows the largest numbers of residents (33%) to work in semi routine and routine occupations, with just over half employed within the District. This is low when compared to other areas within the C3 region: the average is 67% of residents employed within their own Local Authority area for this category of employment (C3 Housing Market assessment 2008).

**Town Centres and Shopping**

The retail health of the District’s town centres is a picture of under-performance. All three town centres at Cannock, Rugeley and Hednesford need to grow in order to increase their competitiveness against other centres outside the district.

**Transport and Infrastructure**

There are significant opportunities for business and commerce in the south of the District to maximise the position on the M6 Toll road and the wider links this offers to the national road network.

The district has a good rail link between its main centres and the Birmingham conurbation. There are also good rail link opportunities for Rugeley with its position on the West Coast Main Line including the introduction of a new hourly service to London in late 2008.

**Environment**

Cannock Chase provides an area of accessible countryside, better than most other districts in the West Midlands Region. It provides for conservation, recreation and economic and tourism benefits. Large parts of the district are Green Belt, important for preventing the coalescence of urban areas but also important for wildlife and recreation. The overall biodiversity of the District is however declining through the loss of small sites and fragmentation of the Green Space network.

| Q. Do you recognise Cannock Chase District from the spatial portrait given? |
| Q. What other relevant information should we include in a portrait of the district that is distinctive to Cannock Chase District in 2008? |
6. What could our district be like in 2026?

A Spatial Vision

The next 15 to 20 years are likely to see significant change for Cannock Chase District and we are all keen to see that changes are positive and occur in a sustainable way. Leading change at the district level will be the Sustainable Community Strategy and Cannock Chase Council’s Corporate Plan for which the LDF Core Strategy will be the main means of directing development on the ground. The visions of the SCS and Corporate Plan are suggested as the basis of the spatial vision for the Core Strategy summarising the main ingredients of a changed district in 2026.

To achieve a Cannock Chase we can all be proud of. A Cannock Chase that will become a place with a diverse and united community, a modern economy, a healthy, safe and clean environment and quality services which work together for the good of the public.

Cannock Chase District will be recognised as a place where everyone’s lives are enriched by a strong cultural identity, vibrant local economy and pride in the outstanding natural environment. This will be because:

a. The district retains a locally distinctive but healthier, safer and better-balanced community identity,

b. the strategic geographical position, infrastructure and workforce potential will be maximised as significant economic assets, and

c. the Cannock Chase AONB is clearly recognised as the greatest environmental asset in southern Staffordshire inspiring a greener future.

Taking each of these themes in turn:

a. The district retains a locally distinctive but healthier, safer and better-balanced community identity via:

Pride in attractive, safe, local communities

➢ Residents are confident that primary health care provision will be available from modern accessible buildings within all the main urban areas.
➢ Provision of important community facilities will adequately reflect need and be well used.
➢ Significant reductions will have occurred in crime and anti-social behaviour as well as the fear of crime.
➢ A greater emphasis on urban design and place-shaping will be transforming the appearance of key locations
➢ All Conservation Areas will have seen progress towards enhancing their characteristic qualities.
➢ Community Pride will be clearly evident for Cannock Chase AONB as a great local resource for events and leisure time.

Well housed communities

➢ All new housing is ‘zero carbon’ and well designed.
➢ Provision for local needs in both affordable and market housing.
A higher proportion of people in professional and managerial have been retained in, or attracted to the District.

The demand for independent or supported living in retirement has been met.

Estates of poor quality public housing will have been re-developed or re-modelled to provide better standards of housing and an improved local environment.

Healthy living opportunities across the district

- The quality and range of indoor and outdoor sport and recreation facilities will have been enhanced across the District.
- The quality of urban open spaces will have been improved.
- Local needs in children’s play facilities having been met.
- Land managed with priority given to its nature conservation value will be in good or improving condition and the area of land of local nature reserve status will have increased.
- Green links between urban open spaces and between town and countryside will have been established or improved.

b. The strategic geographical position, infrastructure and workforce potential will be maximised as significant economic assets to achieve:

A vibrant local economy and workforce

- Significant progress will have been made in broadening the economic base.
- A higher percentage of local jobs will reduce the daily outflow of the resident workforce.
- A broader economic base with higher representation in growth sectors.
- Effective education and vocational training has created a better skilled workforce.

Sustainable transport infrastructure

- Rail and bus services will be better used having provided for better connections between the two transport types.
- Rail services will be improved, being faster and more frequent.
- Local, sub-regional and inter-regional public transport will encourage more people to choose to travel by public transport instead of using the car.
- Attractive cycle routes will be available across the District for both work and leisure travel.
- A completed Cannock Eastern Primary Route will have reduced through traffic using residential and local shopping streets and town centre congestion.

Attractive town centres

- The town centres of Cannock, Rugeley and Hednesford will have grown to provide the scale and range of facilities commensurate with their roles.
- Cannock as a strategic centre will have a much wider choice of non-food shopping & commercial leisure facilities satisfying more of the needs of its catchment reducing the need to travel elsewhere.
- Rugeley will have benefited from new investment in food and non-food shopping enabling it to fulfil its role as the service centre for the north of the District and adjoining rural areas.
- Hednesford’s decline will have been reversed with new shopping development to re-establish its role as a local centre.
c. The Cannock Chase AONB is clearly identifiable as the area's greatest environmental asset to inspire a greener future.

Well managed and appreciated environments
- The landscapes and habitats of the Cannock Chase AONB will continue to have been protected and managed with no inappropriate development having taken place within or on the edge of the designated area.
- Having accommodated the planned sustainable development needs of the community the Green Belt will have been protected from inappropriate development and positively managed and its use linked to the AONB.
- Cannock Chase AONB is better known as a place for both day visits and as place for a longer stay.
- The urban green space network will have been strengthened and positively managed for recreation and biodiversity.
- The District’s best built heritage will be safeguarded and appreciated.

A greener future
- New development will have been designed to provide a high quality of both individual buildings and public places, using sustainable construction techniques, incorporating renewable energy, water conservation and flood prevention features.

Q. Is this the right sort of vision for the future?

Q. What would you add or take away to improve the vision?

Objectives
In order to meet the vision we need to be clear where our priorities for action lie and, by setting objectives, we aim to do this. We have deliberately kept the suggested objectives small in number, closely linked to meeting the vision and focussed on those areas we believe will make the biggest difference.

The suggested objectives are as follows:

Objective 1 Promote pride in attractive, safe, local communities
- To facilitate better design of spaces to minimise opportunities for crime, improve environmental quality of spaces and ensure the safety of pedestrians/cyclists.
- To help address issues of crime and anti-social behaviour via cleaner, greener, safer public spaces and safer roads as top priorities for the community.

Objective 2 Create healthy living opportunities across the district
- To support improved healthcare provision.
- To help developments which cater for longer, healthier, more active and more independent living.
- To facilitate provision of sport, recreation, leisure and entertainment facilities.
- To help support measures which address issues of obesity and teenage pregnancy.
Objective 3 Provide for housing choice
  ➢ To facilitate sustainable housing provision.
  ➢ To help meet both local need for affordable housing and aspirational housing

Objective 4 Encourage a vibrant local economy and workforce
  ➢ To maximise the strategic location of the district and provide a continuous supply of good quality accessible employment land to attract more new businesses
  ➢ To help support improvements in workforce skills, a broader economic base and training opportunities to enhance local recruitment.
  ➢ To ensure that business locations and centres are accessible by public transport from all areas of the district with reduced travel needs where possible.

Objective 5 Encourage sustainable transport infrastructure
  ➢ To make journeys unnecessary where possible through spatial development choices.
  ➢ To achieve improvements to public transport and increased walking and cycling.
  ➢ To enhance and ensure sustainable access for all to environments that are valued, protected and enjoyed.
  ➢ To reduce reliance on private cars.
  ➢ To reduce the need to travel

Objective 6 Create attractive town centres
  ➢ To support growth of shops, offices, business and leisure in town centres improving access to employment, thereby achieving town centres with vitality and viability.

Objective 7 Provide well managed and appreciated environments
  ➢ To protect and enhance the districts natural and historic built environmental assets.
  ➢ To achieve new development designed to provide a high quality of built form and public realm.

Objective 8 Support a greener future
  ➢ To promote sustainable construction methods/materials including recycling of construction waste and water conservation/recycling.
  ➢ To promote appropriate renewable energy and green technologies.
  ➢ To maximise flood protection and adaptation to, and mitigation of, climate change in building design and landscape.
  ➢ To reduce waste and increase recycling.
  ➢ To reduce carbon emissions.

We have tried to keep the objectives succinct but as locally relevant as possible.

Q Have we identified the right objectives?

Q Are there other objectives we should include?
The next two sections go into detail on issues and options for Cannock Chase District. Section 7 looks at the ‘big decisions’ which need to be made: where should development as a whole be located in the district? (We are not looking at specific sites at this stage: site allocation will be dealt with as a separate part of the Local Development Framework).

Having provided this broad strategic context, Section 8 then looks at issues and options around the different objectives as listed above and as derived from the Sustainable Community Strategy.

We strongly recommend that you read both of these sections carefully before submitting your response. The issues they contain are closely linked in terms of issues we need to consider in deciding what we need to locate where, and why this should be the case.
7. What are the big decisions for locating development and delivering services?

Strategic Spatial Options

Underpinning the locally distinctive vision and objectives is the requirement to deliver a sustainable spatial strategy. Whist the term ‘sustainable’ is often debated, one of the first, and most used, definitions of sustainability is the one created by the Brundtland Commission, which defined sustainable development as development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." ¹

In order to help ensure sustainability in the actions we take we should employ the ‘precautionary principle’, which states that ‘if there is a risk that an action could cause harm, and there is a lack of scientific consensus on the matter, the burden of proof is on those who would support taking the action’.

At this stage we will consider all possible spatial choices within the constraints of national and regional policy and in the context of sustainability and the precautionary principle (above). When we make choices on the options, this will be helped by a process called ‘Sustainability Appraisal’, which helps us assess the impact each option will have before we make recommendations on the preferred option (which will again be consulted upon). This is one of the ‘test of soundness’ referred to earlier in this document.

When making choices is it is important to remember that we have to deliver on the following as proposed by the Regional Spatial Strategy:

- Housing (the amount is currently being revised but will be at least 5,800 new dwellings between 2006 and 2026)
- Employment land provision of 84 hectares between 2006 – 2021
- New office development of 30,000 square metres
- New comparison retail floorspace of 25,000 square metres between 2006 and 2021 and a further 10,000 square metres between 2021 and 2026

This level of development will also need supporting infrastructure, such as educational facilities, health provision, transport and sport, leisure and recreation facilities. Section 8 goes into more detail on these matters.

Available land to meet the strategic development needs of Cannock Chase District is constrained by protective policies for Cannock Chase AONB, accounting for most of the northern half of the District and the Green Belt forming the south eastern portion of the district. The remaining land is divided between four main centres: Cannock merging into Hednesford and Heath Hayes south of the Cannock Chase AONB, Rugeley to the north of the AONB and Norton Canes within the Green Belt. This limits genuine spatial options to some extent, although we have set forward four approaches which we believe would each meet the suggested spatial vision and spatial objectives. One of these options, elements from these options, or even an alternative option may move forward into being justified and developed as a Preferred Option.
Strategic Spatial Option 1.
Concentrated development in Cannock, Hednesford and Heath Hayes

Concentrate most new development in Cannock / Hednesford / Heath Hayes to significantly strengthen the urban area’s role as the district’s service centre and taking account of the difficulties in finding land in Rugeley/Brereton because of Green Belt / AONB / administrative boundary constraints.

Features of this option include:
- Cannock’s role strengthened as a service centre for south-west Staffordshire
- Cannock’s strategic position on motorway network maximised.
- Cannock’s proportion of district housing raised from 68% to as high as 85% meaning some reuse of employment land.
- Rugeley will increasingly look to access services in the south of the district by better public transport.
- No growth at Norton Canes on the basis that there are more sustainable locations across the southern part of the District within and adjoining the main urban area of Cannock/Hednesford/Heath Hayes.
Strategic Spatial Option 2.
Dispersed development across all urban communities

Focus development across the existing settlements of Cannock / Hednesford / Heath Hayes, Norton Canes and Rugeley / Brereton, developing service provision to meet existing balances in housing across the district.

Features of this option include:
- Cannock’s role remains the main service centre for the district.
- Significant cross boundary provision of sites for housing and/or employment at Rugeley required in Stafford District and more particularly, in Lichfield District.
- Housing in Cannock/Hednesford/Heath Hayes remains around the current proportion of total population (68%).
- Allow growth at Norton Canes to retain about 6% proportion of district provision – the safeguarded Local Plan policy C7 site (between Norton Canes and the M6 Toll) would deal with all of this.
- Growth in housing at Rugeley is kept at the current proportion of total (26%) but recognising that development already committed within the Rugeley Eastern Regeneration Zone in Lichfield District, but not yet started will effectively form an urban extension to Brereton thereby making a major contribution to the growth of Rugeley/Brereton as an urban area meeting most of the gap between 15% & 26%. This would not count towards Cannock Chase District’s RSS housing allocation, but to that for Lichfield District, so the options for Cannock/Hednesford/Heath Hayes and/or Norton Canes would need to meet the shortfall.
Strategic Spatial Option 3.
Norton Canes expansion and reduced dispersed development across all other urban communities

At Norton Canes, take advantage of the safeguarded site (Local Plan policy C7 site) and some Green Belt to deliver significant local infrastructure improvements in shopping/ community facilities/public transport on the back of 500 – 600 new dwellings plus employment development. Distribute remaining new development between Cannock, Rugeley, Hednesford and Heath Hayes.

Features of this option include:

- The proportion of housing in Cannock reduces to less than 60% of the district supply.
- Growth at Rugeley restricted to what could reasonably be accommodated within and on the edge of the urban area without major impact on the Green Belt – approximately 15% of total District growth.
Strategic Spatial Option 4.
New sustainable communities at urban edges

Concentrate new development as significant phased urban edge expansions on one or more large available safeguarded sites including those identified through the Local Plan process to deliver significant infrastructure improvements via developer contributions.

Features of this option include one or more of the following:

- At Norton Canes, take advantage of the safeguarded site (Local Plan Policy C7) and Green Belt to deliver significant local infrastructure improvements in shopping/community facilities/public transport in support of 500 – 600 new dwellings plus employment development.
- North-west of the Cannock/Hednesford urban area (west of Pye Green Road and north of Limepit Lane) identify land which was safeguarded for future development in the 1997 Local Plan to deliver significant local infrastructure improvements in shopping/community facilities/public transport and a new school. This land is 57.38 hectares in size, which has the potential for at least 1,000 new dwellings.
- Identify land south and east of Heath Hayes, most of which is Green Belt but includes a small area of safeguarded land east of Wimblebury Road to deliver significant local infrastructure improvements in shopping/community facilities/public transport and a new school. This land is 219.8 hectares in size and has potential for 5,000 new dwellings if all developed.
- Recognise that development already committed within the Rugeley Eastern Regeneration Zone in Lichfield District but not yet started will effectively form an urban extension to Brereton thereby making a major contribution to the growth of Rugeley/Brereton as an urban area meeting most of the gap between 15% and 26%.
- This option would require careful management of phasing and would ultimately cater for Cannock District’s development needs well beyond the plan period.
- There are concerns with this option about significantly less focus on regeneration objectives for existing sustainable centres at Cannock and Rugeley.
To help in considering options we have produced a table which aims to show how easily we believe each option will be able to help meet the suggested spatial objectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Option 1</th>
<th>Option 2</th>
<th>Option 3</th>
<th>Option 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Promote pride in attractive, safe, local communities</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Create healthy living opportunities across the district</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>3 Provide for housing choice</td>
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<td>4 Encourage a vibrant local economy and workforce</td>
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<td>5 Encourage sustainable transport infrastructure</td>
<td>√</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Create attractive town centres</td>
<td>√</td>
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<td>X X</td>
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<td>7 Provide well managed and appreciated environments</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>8 Support a greener future</td>
<td>√</td>
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Key  
√ supports  - neutral  x conflicts  xx severely conflicts

Q Have we identified appropriate strategic spatial options?
Q Are there other strategic spatial options we should consider?
Q Have we correctly indicated how well each option might meet objectives?
8. How can we best meet our objectives when developing Options?

In considering the eight objectives that the Core Strategy will need to address we have taken a strong lead from those in the Sustainable Community Strategy, but have developed these to take into account wider considerations of national and regional planning policy insofar as they influence local circumstances and require local policy elaboration. Achieving sustainable development is at the core of all the objectives.

Objective 1 Promote pride in attractive, safe, local communities

➢ To facilitate better design of spaces to minimise opportunities for crime, improve environmental quality of spaces and ensure the safety of pedestrians/cyclists.
➢ To help address issues of crime and anti-social behaviour via cleaner, greener, safer public spaces and safer roads as top priorities for the community.

National and Regional Planning Policy Framework
Promoting pride in attractive, safe local communities is a cross cutting issue to which a variety of guidance applies. The most relevant is:
PPS1: Planning for Sustainable Communities
PPS3: Housing
PPS6: Planning for Town Centres

The Local Area Agreement (LAA) outcomes that this section will help to deliver are:

• NI4: Percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality
• NI7: Environment for a thriving third sector
• NI110: Young People’s participation in positive activities
• NI21: Dealing with local concerns about anti social behaviour and crime by the local council and police

Links with the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities for Improvement

This objective will help deliver the ‘Making the District Clean, Green and Safe’ strategic theme of the SCS, specifically the following ‘Making It Safe’ Priorities for Improvement:
• To reduce levels of violent crime, and in particular serious violence, domestic violence and alcohol fuelled violence in our town centres
• To reduce incidents of anti social behaviour including peoples perceptions of anti social behaviour and increase awareness of partnership activity to address it
• Take action against business crime
• To engage and empower local communities so that the CDRP is accountable for the decisions and actions it takes on their behalf

How important is it to retain or develop new local identity in future design and development?

National design guidance (Companion Guide: By Design) advises that ‘Good design can help create lively places with distinctive character; streets and public spaces that are safe, accessible, pleasant to use and human in scale; and places that inspire because of the imagination and sensitivity of their designers’. People need to feel a sense of pride in the area
in which they live and/or work: where this does not happen levels of vandalism and antisocial behaviour tend to rise which, if not addressed can lead to the more serious decline of an area. The Home Office cites 'lack of neighbourhood attachment' as playing a key role in Anti Social Behaviour.

The image of Cannock Chase as a district has suffered recently as a result of being publicly named on a television programme as being the 16th worst place to live in the UK. Not only is external perception an issue: the draft Sustainable Community Strategy advises that over a third of the District’s residents believe that the area is a worse place to live than two years go although 80% are still either very satisfied or satisfied with their neighbourhood. The main reasons for poor perception of the area seem to be neglect in some neighbourhoods and the impact of the collapse of the coal industry.

However, despite issues surrounding economic decline, the District is very proud of its mining heritage and its close links to surrounding countryside. There needs to be a balance between retaining and protecting the local identities of which people are proud and actively shaping places to create new and positive identities for neighbourhoods. In terms of the latter, particular opportunities might involve those neighbourhoods where there is a lot of vandalism and anti-social behaviour, engaging communities from the outset in redesigning their neighbourhoods so that they have a sense of ownership and pride in shaping the areas in which they live.

There will also be a significant opportunity to carefully design new neighbourhoods to have a strong sense of place so new residents will feel a sense of belonging and a desire to look after the area in which they live.

Options for shaping places to enhance and develop local identity might include:

1. Avoiding a ‘one size fits all’ approach to new neighbourhood development, requiring it to take account of local characteristics in consultation with local communities
2. Not just retaining an existing or historical identity but creating a new sense of identity for an area of which people can be proud.
3. Engaging communities from the outset

Q. How can we help create neighbourhoods which people are proud of and want to help to look after?

Q. How can we ensure that local people are fully involved in shaping positive identities for their communities?

Q. How should we balance the need to design out opportunities for crime in open space provision against other objectives such as encouraging trees and woodlands or creating safe, segregated cycle paths for example.

The Cannock Chase Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) is in the process of producing a Strategic Assessment. Based on detailed local analysis it identifies the following priorities for action:
- Criminal damage
- Anti Social Behaviour
- Violent Crime
- Business Crime
- Community Engagement

In terms of actual recorded crime, there are particular problems around licensed premises in town centres (especially related to the night time economy) and also around schools. Business Crime is a problem and more research is to be commissioned. The need for communities to become more involved with developing a sense of ownership of, and pride in, their neighbourhoods is recognised: projects have recently been run to improve the local environment under the ‘Own Your Streets’ initiative.

Certain communities are particularly vulnerable. The Staffordshire Sub Regional Observatory has produced ‘Our Shared Future, Community Cohesion in Staffordshire’. It identifies a ‘vulnerable community’ as an area which experiences problems relating to community breakdown and fragmentation and where trends indicate the problems are recurring or increasing. Small neighbourhoods are analysed for a variety of data: In Cannock Chase District 24 such areas are ‘vulnerable’, 8.1% of the population are affected.

However, it is important to realise that recent crime statistics for the District indicate a reduction in crime and an improvement in detections. Crime incidents continue to be lower than those for the County, Region and England. Notwithstanding this, fear of crime is still an issue, particularly at night when 35.7% of the population feel, either ‘fairly’ or ‘very’ unsafe (Citizens Panel, 2007). When asked why, 76.1 of these respondents said it was due to large numbers of young people congregating on the streets. In a response to a different question asked to the Citizens Panel, 57.7% said they thought there needed to be improved activities for teenagers.

Options for reducing crime and the fear of crime in the way we plan our towns could include:

1. Focussing on the ‘hot spots’ to redesign areas where there are persistent problems
2. Continuing to ‘design out crime’ on new developments
3. Working with schools to engage young people in the planning process so that they are developing activities they want and will use
4. Encouraging a wider diversity of town centre development so that the evening economy does not just centre upon licensed premises.

Q. How can the layout of towns and neighbourhoods be improved to discourage crime and anti social behaviour?

Q To what extent should we integrate / segregate homes, shops and businesses in the district to both keep places busy throughout the day and allow for personal living space?

Q. How should school provision and design be improved to help ensure a good start in life?

Q: What sort of uses should a town centre contain to ensure a vibrant and safe evening economy?
Objective 2 Create healthy living opportunities across the district

- To support improved healthcare provision.
- To help developments which cater for longer, healthier, more active and more independent living.
- To facilitate provision of sport, recreation, leisure and entertainment facilities.
- To help support measures which address issues of obesity and teenage pregnancy.

National and Regional Planning Policy Framework

PPS1 Delivering sustainable development
PPS3 Housing
PPS6 Town Centres
PPG 13 Transport
PPG 17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Improving health in the district is a key feature of the Local Area Agreement (LAA)(May 2008 submission). The Planning system can contribute to achieving the following health related outcomes:

- N14: percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality
- NI7: environment for a Thriving Third Sector
- NI121: mortality rate from all circulatory diseases @ ages under 75
- NI56 Obesity among primary school children in year 6
- NI175: Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling
- NI8: Adult Participation in sport
- NI 146: adults with learning disabilities in employment
- NI110: young peoples participation in positive activities

Links with the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities for Improvement

This objective will help to deliver the Creating Opportunities and Sustaining Ambition Strategic theme of the SCS, specifically in relation to the following Priorities for Improvement relating to Health:

- Promote healthier lifestyle choices for all
- Reduce health inequalities and provide a healthier start to life
- Promote positive mental health
- Support the independence, inclusion and wellbeing of the most vulnerable members of the community

How can the planning system help deliver changes which support improved healthcare in the District?

The Sustainable Community Plan states that there are deep rooted health problems in the District. Life expectancy is lower than the national average and early death from heart disease and cancer is prevalent. Compared with residents in other parts of Staffordshire, those who live in Cannock Chase District are less likely to have a healthy lifestyle: for example a quarter of the population are overweight and only a fifth exercise for 30 minutes 3 times a week. There is a higher than average number of residents claiming incapacity benefit and a higher rate of teenage conceptions compared to England and Wales. In Cannock Chase, more babies have a low birth weight compared to the national average and life expectancy at birth is below the national average.
The Chase Community Partnership has the following vision for 2020:
‘By 2020 Cannock Chase will be an area where health inequalities are less marked. There will be a reduction in the number of people smoking. More people will take regular exercise and will be thoughtful about what they eat. There will be more opportunities to incorporate exercise into everyday life and schoolchildren will be positively encouraged to take part in sport or other physical activity’. Further more, as a Beacon Council for healthier communities, Cannock Chase District Council aims that ‘by 2015 no area of the district will fall within the top quartile of the most deprived authorities in England’.

Government reform in the way in which health issues are addressed focuses on prevention of health problems through encouraging healthier lifestyles for example improved diet and nutrition, sensible drinking, reduced smoking, more exercise. More services are to be delivered locally to a better informed public, but there is a need to tailor services to individual communities to ensure that services meet need and are easy to access. Without this flexible local approach it will not be possible to tackle health inequalities, especially in deprived communities. The Lifetime Homes Strategy recently launched by the Government expands upon this principle by providing the framework for developing sustainable communities for an ageing population.

This focus upon flexible and diverse communities, aimed at avoiding health problems where these are preventable and providing housing and local services to meet a variety of needs is at the core of a new suite of Joint Commissioning Strategies for services in Staffordshire. These strategies are targeted at services in Staffordshire for Older people, People with Physical and Sensory Disabilities, Mental Health and People with Learning Disabilities. They are currently in draft form and out to consultation until 30th June 2008.

Wards which are particularly affected by issues of health deprivation are as follows (the figure in brackets relates to the number of small neighbourhoods, (technically known as Lower Super Output Areas) in the ward which fall within the most deprived 25% in England):

- Cannock North (4)
- Cannock East (3)
- Hednesford North (2)
- Cannock South (2)
- Hagley (2)
- Western Springs (1)
- Etching Hill and the Heath (1)
- Brereton and Ravenhill (1)
- Norton Canes (1)

Clearly, when prioritising spatial options for development in relation to health and wellbeing, these particular locations need to be borne in mind. In terms of health centre / GP capacity the PCT has advised that there is sufficient capacity in Rugeley and Norton Canes but a need to address issues elsewhere in the District.

The PCT has current plans to concentrate and expand primary care facilities on a site in Cannock town centre in order to provide an expanded health and wellbeing service to local communities. However no site is currently available so a location for this facility needs to be found.
Wider options relating to the need for, and delivery of, new facilities will largely depend on the distribution of new housing in order to be able to secure the relevant funding. Major new housing developments in the form of urban extensions could need provision of further new health centres, whereas smaller developments could link in to existing facilities although the issue over current capacity levels would need to be addressed in partnership with the PCT. Clinical facilities need specialised, bespoke units, however there is the potential to better utilise community centres, extended schools and other local facilities in the provision of wider ‘wellbeing’ services.

Options for providing improved healthcare facilities for Cannock Chase District could include:

1. Developing a new Health centre for Cannock Town Centre
2. Encouraging the use of other facilities in the community for more general health and wellbeing needs

Q. Have we identified appropriate options for health?
Q. Where should a new health centre for Cannock be located?
Q Where could ‘outreach’ services be provided in communities?

Should we be seeking provision of many small and locally accessible play areas and other open space across the district or should we deliver larger parks/play areas with better facilities?

The need for children to have somewhere safe to play, for young people to have something to do, for all children to be active in the quest to lead healthier lifestyles and reduce childhood obesity is well documented nationally. The local campaign by the District Council and PCT to encourage residents to lead healthier lifestyles needs to start having an influence at the earliest possible age in order to give local children the best possible start in leading a healthy and active lifestyle. Encouraging active play is one way this can be achieved and in which the planning system can have a key role. The role the natural environment can play in tackling health issues is also discussed under Objective 7.

Cannock Chase District Council has a leisure strategy. This recognises the need to link play with healthy and active lifestyles as a whole. It proposes improvements to the provision of playing pitches across the District and improved leisure centres including the new swimming pool at Rugeley and proposals for a new leisure centre in Cannock, to include a relocated theatre facility.

Options for delivering play / open space provision across the District might be:

1. Place more emphasis on investing in existing open spaces within the urban area rather than creating new open spaces.
2. Create major new open spaces as part of large scale housing

Q. Are these the right options or should anything else be included?
How can the Cannock Chase AONB and Green Belt be better used by local residents to help improve health?

Cannock Chase District is very fortunate in that it has attractive, publicly accessible countryside on its doorstep which caters for a variety of interests such as walking and cycling which contribute to healthier lifestyles and a sense of wellbeing.

However there is always scope for improvement and encouraging better local links to this facility and the opportunities afforded by the AONB and Green Belt. Linking the Chase and the Green belt to the local Green Space network (a network of open space across the District) is an important opportunity and this is discussed further under Objective 7. Improving accessibility whilst reducing dependency upon the car is an important issue needing consideration: sustainable transport is addressed in a separate section, and the benefits of safe cycling routes in improving local peoples’ health is an opportunity which needs developing.

Options for improving local residents’ usage of the AONB, the Green Belt and the Green Space network could include:

1. Allowing limited local development to encourage a wider variety of activities which would appeal to a wider range of local people while not compromising the AONB status of the Chase and the Green Belt
2. Protect the Chase and Green Belt from development as this is what makes the area so attractive at present

**Q.** What would encourage local residents to make more use of the Chase and the local countryside?

**Q.** Is it appropriate to restrict ALL development on the Chase or limited and carefully thought through development help enhance local enjoyment and improve local health?

How can improved equality of access to goods, services and employment be used to improve health and wellbeing?

The District has a history of respiratory disease and coronary heart disease which are linked not only to smoking and obesity but also to the mining history of the area. Some wards and neighbourhoods are more affected by health issues than others, as demonstrated earlier in this section, however the same principles of sustainable communities should apply to all neighbourhoods in encouraging healthier lifestyles ie residents should be able to easily access outlets providing healthy food (eg local shops, markets etc), services which help them lead a healthy lifestyle (eg health services, leisure centres, allotments etc) and to be able to be employed locally in a job which pays a wage which does not compromise their ability to live a healthy and active lifestyle.

However, more affluent communities are likely to be able to find it easier to achieve this aspiration and inequalities in accessing such services are likely to be found in more deprived communities.
There are other options also of relevance to enabling people to access a variety of goods and service to enhance their health and sense of well being. Local allotments are increasing in popularity nationally and their retention / development should be encouraged locally.

Options for addressing this imbalance in equality could be:

1. Providing the conditions locally to encourage local service provision, eg local shops, outreach health facilities.
2. Enabling improved transport links for deprived communities to access a wide range of good quality facilities aimed at all residents across the whole of the District.
3. Restricting vehicle access in some areas to enable safer pedestrian and cycle links to open space.

Q. Have we identified the above options correctly?

Q Should vehicular access be restricted in some areas to allow safer access to open spaces by pedestrians and cyclists and if so, where?

In providing new and improved sports and leisure facilities across the district, how can better local use be ensured?

There are current proposals to sell the Cannock Sports Stadium in order to raise the necessary money to develop improved leisure facilities across the district which are ‘fit for purpose’ and better geared to meet a wider range of local needs. The disposal of the land at the sports stadium will raise the finance needed for the following options:

- Sports facilities relocated in the community including:
  - 6 lane floodlit athletics track, full size floodlit all weather pitch and 2 multi use games areas including availability for community use (preferred location Blake Valley Technology College)
  - Cardinal Griffin Catholic High School: full size all weather floodlit football pitch also available for community use
- Investment in future leisure facilities (Leisure village and new theatre to replace the existing Chase Leisure Centre in Cannock, , extended facilities at Rugeley Leisure Centre)
- Development site for new housing, including provision for open space area

Through wide public consultation, Cannock Chase Council has developed a playing pitch strategy which sets out proposals for provision of playing pitches in the District which more effectively serve local need and demand for example providing a full size Astroturf pitch at Rugeley Leisure Centre. This strategy has informed the Council’s leisure strategy which also proposes the following developments (some of which are underway): a new swimming pool in Rugeley, a new leisure centre and theatre in Cannock, improving formal outdoor play provision, improving local outdoor tennis facilities and developing the Chase Heritage Trail and an extension to the museum.

Options for encouraging better use of sports and leisure facilities could include:

1. Provision of a range of smaller scale facilities spread across a wide number of communities.
2. Concentrate on providing larger facilities aimed at meeting a variety of needs in town centres.
Objective 3 Provide for housing choice

- To facilitate sustainable housing provision for all.
- To help meet both local need for affordable housing and aspirational housing to increase the proportion of the District’s population who are in professional and managerial occupations.

National and Regional Planning Policy Framework

PPS1 Delivering sustainable development
PPS2 Planning and climate change
PPS3 housing
PPS6 Planning for Town Centres
PPS7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
PPS25 Development and Flood Risk
PPG2 Green Belts
PPG 13 Transport
PPG 15 Planning and the Historic Environment
PPG 17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

This Objective will contribute to the following outcomes of the LAA (May 2008 Submission):

- NI155: Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)
- NI154: Net additional homes provided
- NI4: percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality
- NI7: Environment for a thriving third sector
- NI 175: Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling

Links with the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities for Improvement

This objective will help to deliver the Creating Opportunities and Sustaining Ambition Strategic theme of the SCS, specifically in relation to the following Priorities for Improvement relating to Housing, specifically:

- To increase the proportion of homes in the District that achieve and maintain the decent homes standard
- To increase the supply of affordable housing and provide dwellings that meet the needs of the local population
- Work with providers of housing from the public, private and voluntary sectors to provide seamless services to the public

Where are the best locations for providing housing land and delivering new homes?

We believe that all options for new housing will need to build in some flexibility to allow for potential increases in the latter part of the plan period as indications at regional level suggest that the proposed allocations in the RSS phase 2 revision will not be treated as maxima in the
shire districts because of the overall gap in identified provision across the region and the possibility of projected requirements moving upwards. This belief has been reinforced following Government intervention to raise overall housing figures at the preferred options consultation stage.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the C3 Housing Market Area of the West Midlands (2008) provides the broad strategic context for housing supply and type for Cannock Chase District. From a detailed analysis of the market the report has concluded that there is a shortfall of 1 and 2 bedroom flats and 3 and 4 bedroom houses in Cannock and Rugeley, but an oversupply of 2 bedroom houses. The report also shows clearly that the population is ageing, and so future flatted development might be more appropriate if geared towards older communities, particularly at those looking to ‘downsize’ thus freeing up larger houses for families.

At earlier consultation stages for both the Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPD, substantial areas of land around the three urban areas have been put forward by landowners/developer interests mostly for housing with some for employment development or mixed housing/employment development. A lot of this land is in the green belt and in the case of Rugeley / Brereton nearly all of it is Green Belt.

The spatial choices eventually made for new housing and employment development will be the major influences on what the District will look like moving towards 2026. We think that spatial choices for delivery of new housing can be more widely drawn than for delivery of employment land.

Housing development can come forward on a lot of relatively small sites in existing urban areas, for example by re-development of existing dwellings at higher densities, re-development of redundant commercial/industrial premises, redevelopment of redundant education/health premises or other public sector sites or as part of mixed use town centre schemes. The more of these type of sites which are chosen the less land would be needed as expansion around the edges of existing urban areas.

The Cannock, Hednesford and Heath Hayes area probably has the most scope for re-development of older and/or poor quality housing at higher densities and of old industrial premises such as in Bridgtown and East Cannock. It also contains high quality low density housing west of the town centre along the B5012.

Suggested options for housing distribution at Cannock/Hednesford/Heath Hayes are:

1. Maximise use of all urban brownfield land for housing, including old industrial areas, town centres and the low density area to the west of Cannock Town Centre, using 40 dwellings per hectare as a guide.

Some land in the form of urban extensions would be needed, which vary depending on which strategic option is chosen (see Section 8). The choice of locations would be either land north-west of the urban area (west of Pye Green Road north of Limpit Lane) which was safeguarded for future development in the 1997 Local Plan or land south and east of Heath Hayes most of which is Green Belt but includes a small area of safeguarded land east of Wimblebury Road. A further alternative would be to
develop parts of each of these areas. (This aligns with the strategic options 1, 2 or 3: see Section 7).

2. Rely on commitments only going forward within the existing urban areas, retain old industrial land for employment development, focus town centre re-development on commercial uses only, keep the existing character of the low density area west of Cannock Town Centre by allowing only limited change. Larger urban extensions would be needed which could require most of the safeguarded land west of Pye Green Road or safeguarded land plus some green belt land around Heath Hayes. (This aligns with strategic option 4, see Section 7).

Q. Which option is the most appropriate for this area? Are there any alternatives?

Q. What sort of housing would be most appropriate in this area given that the C3 report advises there is an undersupply of 1 and 2 bedroom flats and 3 and 4 bedroom houses?

At Norton Canes options might include:

1. Minimal housing development recognising the scope for redevelopment within existing housing areas is very limited. Continue to develop the outstanding Local Plan housing allocation at Burntwood Road with a capacity of about 90 dwellings (This aligns with strategic options 1 and 2).

2. More significant development using a safeguarded site of 22ha south west of the village and potentially a derelict former greyhound stadium in Green Belt to the south of the village. (This aligns with strategic options 3 and 4).

Q. Which option is the most appropriate for Norton Canes? Are there any alternatives?

At Rugeley / Brereton potential for future growth of housing is constrained. There are no remaining allocated Local Plan housing sites and virtually all the employment land is developed or committed. The three key constraints on growth are:

- On the north-east side of the town all undeveloped land is within the River Trent floodplain.
- On the south west & south sides nearly all land beyond the existing urban area is in the Green Belt or green belt & AONB.
- Built development, with some minor exceptions, extends up to the administrative boundaries with Stafford Borough to the north-west and Lichfield District in the south east.

We suggest the following options for housing distribution at Rugeley / Brereton:

1. Linked to strategic options 1 and 3 (see section 7), make maximum use of all potential urban capacity within existing residential areas apart from Etching Hill, plus surplus education and health sector sites at a density of 40dph, reallocate redundant industrial land/precincts at Redbrook Lane, allow small urban extensions on the urban sides of the by-pass at Rugeley and Brereton (Green Belt in the latter case) and develop some of the green belt at Hagley Park. Maintain the low density character of the Etching Hill residential area within the AONB.
2. Again as above (linked to strategic option 1, Section 7) but retain all existing industrial land for employment use and develop more green belt at Hagley Park and south of Brereton.

3. Using strategic option 2 (Section 7) follow the principles in distribution for option 1 above but develop no Green Belt apart from within the by-pass at Brereton.

Q. Which option is the most appropriate for Rugeley? Are there any alternatives?

Q. What sort of housing would be most appropriate in this area given that the C3 report advises there is an undersupply of 1 and 2 bedroom flats and 3 and 4 bedroom houses?

How should new affordable housing be provided to best meet the needs and aspirations of residents?

The recognised need for affordable housing may be met in a variety of ways. These include the effective management and maintenance of social housing, promoting a healthy private rented sector, broadening choice in the allocation of social housing and reducing empty properties.

The Housing Market assessment for the C3 area indicates a total need of 843 affordable dwellings per annum with current supply being only 508, a deficit of 335 per annum. The study indicates a shortfall in 1 / 2 bedroom flats, 3 and 4 (or more) bedroom houses and a surplus in 2 bedroom houses. The Cannock Chase Housing Strategy 2007 – 10 shows that customer preferences indicate 61% seeking rented accommodation, 34% lower cost home ownership and 5% shared ownership/equity. There is strong demand for 2 and 3 bedroom accommodation (53% of the Housing Register April 2007). The last nine years has seen 628 additional affordable homes being provided. This averages just 60 per annum, 275 per annum short of the new total. In the same period 1,380 Council homes were sold under the right to buy scheme. Local house prices are currently 7 times average local incomes.

PPS3 encourages greater affordable provision recognising it as a national issue. Cannock Chase Council has already responded positively by seeking a housing provision figure within the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy which will allow for greater affordable housing provision to help meet the annual deficit in provision

Options might include:

1. Housing Associations build more affordable housing
2. Find the right percentage of affordable in new build. Should there be differentiation between urban and rural areas?
3. Find the right percentage of provision between social housing, low cost home ownership and shared ownership/equity. Should this reflect recent stated preferences in the housing strategy?

Q. Have the right options for affordable housing been included? If not, what should be included and / or taken out?

How should new 'aspirational' housing be provided?

The Housing Strategy for Cannock Chase District seeks to deliver a range and choice of housing through the District for all residents including high quality aspirational market housing
that meets the size and location needs of residents. Aspirational housing is described as housing which is likely to be in the form of large (four or more bedrooms) detached dwellings and 2 bedroom luxury apartments. Having a wider housing offer in the District would make a significant contribution towards attracting and retaining those in professional and managerial occupations and therefore increasing the strength of the local economy. This complements the approach to affordable housing by helping create mixed tenure and balanced communities.

Via the adopted Housing Choices SPD the District Council has been seeking to work with developers and house builders to provide a range of high quality aspirational market housing, such as higher density apartments for smaller households, large detached executive homes and retirement housing where there is a local need and demand for it, and where this is consistent with local planning policy is sustainable.

Suggested options are:

1. Seek to mix new aspirational homes in most new housing schemes
2. Identify high quality lower density areas of the district where higher cost housing can be maintained and encouraged.

Q. Are these the right options for aspirational housing? If not, what needs to be changed?

How should vulnerable people best be housed?

By vulnerable people, we are referring to a range of people who are at some risk for reasons such as poor health, age, low income, or who require help or care. There are a range of housing needs of vulnerable residents in the District, such as appropriate housing for older people, offering greater housing choice, and more housing related support for vulnerable people in their own home.

Currently about 30% of Council-owned housing stock does not meet the Government’s decent homes standard, although following recent improvements it is considered that all council homes will meet this standard by 2010 in line with Government targets. Similarly there are an estimated 984 private sector homes housing a vulnerable person, of which 31.4% are non-decent. There are some estates that are hotspots of holistic deprivation and poor quality housing, particularly former National Coal Board estates.

Housing vulnerable people can be delivered primarily through reducing homelessness and the use of inappropriate temporary Bed and Breakfast accommodation, adapting people’s homes to promote independence, providing housing related support to the elderly, the young and people with disabilities, and promoting equality of access to housing services.

For older age groups a recent form of provision takes the form of specific developments for the frail and elderly, which in addition to providing suitable homes can also offer close medical care on site as well as communal areas and some retail catering for basic needs. Cannock Chase District is currently under-represented in this older age group, however over the plan period the older population is set to rise and small numbers of this type of development may be a suitable means of meeting need.

The Governments Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods strategy (2008) requires the following standards to be met in ensuring that new homes can be adapted to meet a variety of...
needs. Sixteen key features make up the 'Lifetime Homes' standard (to be enforced from 2013) and will mean that wider doors, improved design of bathrooms and staircases big enough to take stair lifts will be a feature of every new home. To accelerate progress, from 2011, all new social housing is to be built to the 'Lifetime Homes' standards.

Another group with specific accommodation needs is Gypsies and Travellers. The Council has jointly commissioned a Gypsies and Travellers housing needs assessment with Local Authority partners through the Southern Staffordshire and Northern Warwickshire Housing Partnership. There are three licensed sites for Gypsies and Travellers within the District. Two sites are off Lichfield Road, Cannock and one is at Lime Lane, Norton Canes. One site at Lichfield Road comprises 7 caravans with 11 adults and 5 children. The second site has 11 caravans with 20 adults and 8 children. The site at Lime Lane contains between 15-18 caravans, 25-30 adults and 10-14 children. There is one long-standing unauthorised site off Stokes Lane, Norton Canes that comprises 3 caravans with 3 adults and 2 children.

Options for different aspects of provision for the vulnerable might be:

Setting the rate of increase for the number of new market housing and affordable housing developments that meet the Lifetimes Homes Standard:

1. Seek to meet the Lifetime Homes Standard on all new homes as early as possible
2. Set a phase transition to meet the Lifetime Homes Standard by the Government (by 2011 all social housing is to be built to this standard, by 2013 this will apply to all new homes).

Providing more appropriate accommodation for the elderly:

1. Seek to enable the frail and elderly population to stay in their existing homes longer, especially via more Lifetime Homes
2. Seek to provide more purpose built 'close care' housing developments for the frail and elderly

Providing for the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show-people:

1. Provide accommodation as part of the settled community provision
2. Provide purpose built site(s)

Q. Have the right options been included for vulnerable groups? If not, what should be developed further, or amended?

Objective 4 Encourage a vibrant local economy and workforce

- To maximise the strategic location of the district and provide a continuous supply of good quality accessible employment land to attract more new businesses
- To help support improvements in workforce skills, a broader economic base and training opportunities to enhance local recruitment.
- To ensure that business locations and centres are accessible by public transport from all areas of the district with reduced travel needs where possible.

National and Regional Planning Policy Framework
This objective will help to deliver the following outcomes of the LAA May 2008 submission:

NI117: 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)
NI172 percentage of small businesses in an area showing growth
NI 152: working age population on out of work benefits
NI45: Young offenders engagement in suitable education, employment or training
NI146: Adults with learning disabilities in employment
NI175 Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling

Links with the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities for Improvement

This objective links to Strategic Theme 1 of the SCS: Prosperity – Securing the District’s Economic Future. Specifically, it will help to deliver the following Priorities for Improvement:
- Develop vibrant and sustainable town centres that serve the need of the community
- Improve skill levels to support growth in high value added businesses
- Increase the levels of new business formations and their survival
- Reduce the number of people out of work
- Enhance educational performance

Where are the most sustainable locations for employment?

In Cannock/Hednesford/Heath Hayes and Norton Canes there is likely to be considerable pressure for development. 84 hectares of new employment land 2006-2021 is proposed for the Cannock Chase district as a whole in the RSS phase 2 revision, but there is little scope for further development in the north of the district. One 1997 Local Plan Site at Mill Green (8ha) has not yet commenced development and there is 27ha remaining at Kingswood Lakes. Redevelopment of existing old employment sites along the A5 in Bridgtown is likely to bring forward a further 19ha leaving a further 30ha to be identified.

Apart from some office developments within or on the edge of town centres or re-development of existing employment sites, new employment development in the manufacturing and distribution sectors tends to be brought forward in relatively large sites, say 5 hectares (12 acres) or more in order to be viable. It also needs to have direct access to the main highway network (A roads and motorways) in order to attract investment. So in Cannock Chase District the locational choices are limited. This is reflected in the spatial options put forward below.

Options for employment land at Rugeley are very limited. Virtually all the Local Plan allocated employment land is developed or committed. There are small (less than 5ha ) potential additions to the Towers Business Park some of which already has outline planning permission as part of the Eastern Regeneration Zone (ERZ) proposals. Other than this land, options are severely restricted. There are no areas outside the Green Belt with direct access to the primary
road network other than a 3ha. site next to Brindley Bank pumping station on the A51 at the northern edge of Rugeley, which is being promoted as a housing site.

The most feasible option in providing employment land for Rugeley is to work jointly with Lichfield District to aim to secure the bringing forward of further employment land within power industry ownership between Brereton and Armitage. There are large areas of previously developed land which are due to become surplus to power industry requirements. It should be noted that employment land provided in Lichfield would not count towards Cannock Chase’s regional allocation.

Options for providing employment land for the north of the District include:

1. Work with Lichfield District to provide further employment land for Rugeley
2. No further significant employment land need for Rugeley in the plan period and only consider options in the south of the District.

Q. Are these the right options? Is there anything else that should be included?

The options put forward below therefore assume that all 30ha will need to be found south of the AONB. Over and above the sites listed above all land in this broad location is green belt apart from the 22ha safeguarded site south west of Norton Canes. Some Green Belt land is already developed for employment uses at Watling Street Business Park and Lime Lane. There is a landfill site and disused former colliery land at Grove Colliery also on Lime Lane identified for tourism, leisure and recreational development in the 1997 Local Plan.

Options for employment land distribution in the southern half of the district include:

1. Close to the A5/M6 Toll corridor
   a. Take advantage of existing infrastructure at Kingswood Lakes and expand the business park north and/or east.
   b. Develop the land between the A5 & M6 Toll north of Great Wyrley.
   c. Develop the safeguarded land south west of Norton Canes to include some employment uses.
   d. Combine and redevelop the existing employment sites at Watling Street and Lime Lane also taking forward the Local Plan proposals at Grove Colliery.
2. Combination of above

Q. Have we identified appropriate options for employment?

Where should we be providing space for offices?

The economic strategy is seeking a move towards greater office provision in Cannock Chase District in a bid to broaden the economic base and move from traditional manufacturing to more professional and managerial jobs. The emphasis will therefore move towards increased office provision. The RSS identifies 30,000 square metres. The background evidence indicates at least 40,000 square metres will be required if Cannock is to compete with nearby centres. Town centre locations are sought by the RSS but these are difficult to find in Cannock. Some
flexibility is allowed for edge of centre/edge of town office development up to 5,000 square metres.

Options for locating offices might be:

1. Small scale office development in town centre opportunity sites
2. Larger scale office development within expanded Cannock and Rugeley town centres (subject to Rugeley Town Centre Area Action Plan)
3. Edge of centre/edge of town office developments up to 5,000 square metres (as part of broader employment options above)
4. Regeneration of underutilised and outdated employment land for offices
5. Combination of above

Q. Are these the right options? Are there any alternatives which should be added in?

How can we make the most of the District’s strategic location?

Cannock Chase District’s position on the country’s strategic road network is rightly identified as a strong economic asset. The kinds of business that are likely to benefit from such strong links will include transport and road haulage, certain manufacturing businesses requiring ready access to distributors and markets and logistics.

The distribution, transport and communication sector stands at 25.6% of total employment (Optimat 2006) there is demand due to the still fairly recently completed M6 Toll. Whilst the strength of this sector is clearly demonstrated in order to achieve a balanced economic structure, other sectors may need greater encouragement, particularly if there are other options which achieve a better balance of economic priorities (see below).

Options:

1. Encourage further development which responds to the Districts strategic position in relation to the M6 Toll and A5.
2. Encourage other sectors which are less reliant on the strategic road network location but which positively benefit the local economy and workforce

Q. Which option could help to achieve a thriving economy?

How far should we aim to balance the number of jobs in the district with the size of its potential workforce?

Cannock Chase District has a district “job density” of 0.63 (meaning that there are 0.63 employee jobs for every person of working age in the district). This is the third lowest job density of the Staffordshire districts after South Staffordshire and Staffordshire Moorlands (which are the two least industrially developed districts in the County). This is significantly below the average for the West Midlands Region at 0.82 and Great Britain which has a job density of 0.84. The average for Staffordshire is 0.75.
The regeneration policy aim of Cannock Chase District Council is to improve the sustainability of the district by increasing the current "Job Density Ratio" of 0.63 up to a level of 0.75 (the Staffordshire average). The jobs density ratio is defined as: total employee jobs in district / all people of working age in district.

Alongside aiming to increase the job density ratio, the Council needs to be aware that the RSS Phase 2 Revision employment land allocation is for 84 hectares additional new employment land. It is not clear if this figure will be sufficient to achieve the desired job density ratio and as a result it may need to be overstretched. Much will depend on the nature of new employment coming through. By way of example office space provision clearly takes less space per new job than logistics.

Furthermore, whilst the economic development strategy aims to raise the skill levels of the district, provision of new skilled jobs will not necessarily go to local residents. Consideration should be given to this matter when new developments are being negotiated in order to ensure that local residents have a fair opportunity to access local employment – for example through Section 106 (planning) agreements which support local training initiatives.

Options:

1. Seek to provide sufficient employment to ensure that job density achieves a ratio of 0.75 in 2026. A policy directed towards increasing the employment density of Cannock Chase District could have implications for the land supply of the district with potentially higher amounts of development on green field land. Further development on brown field land may be limited by the availability of new sites coming forward through the recycling of land from other employment land already in the district.
2. Accept that if RSS employment land allocations are not to be overstretched that the job density ratio of 0.75 may not be achievable in the plan period.
3. Aim to ensure that local residents have a fair opportunity to access local jobs by ensuring that new developments contribute towards local training schemes and initiatives designed to upskill the local workforce.

Q. Are these the right options? Has anything been missed out?

To what extent should rural business be encouraged?

Cannock Chase District's countryside areas are heavily protected from development. The majority is designated Green Belt and much of this is within the AONB. However there may be some opportunity for appropriate rural business to flourish as part of an overall approach to achieving balanced communities. Rural business has, in the main, traditionally focussed around agriculture and forestry and previously included areas of mining. More recently rural diversification has led to increases in horse related businesses (stabling and riding), horticulture, local tourism (such as the new 'Go Ape' challenge in Birches Valley) and the reuse of some traditional buildings for offices and storage.

The rural economy has a part to play in the overall prosperity of the district but the right balance needs to be found with protecting and using the countryside for other reasons, including environmental and recreational purposes – see also Objective 2 and Objective 7.
Options for striking this balance will include:

1. Encourage a diversification of rural business in the Green Belt.
2. Allow appropriate industrial uses in place of redundant farm buildings.
3. Focus on live/work units (housing with office space) as the most sustainable form of new business in the rural areas.
4. Restrict rural business opportunities in the green belt to traditional countryside uses.
5. Combination of above.

Q. Are these the right options in terms of supporting rural business? If not, what should be added?

What’s the best way to regenerate or reuse aging or underused employment sites?

The latest government guidance requires local planning authorities to consider aging or outdated industrial or employment sites for other uses, including housing, particularly where there is a high level of vacancies on employment sites. In such cases a reduction of employment provision will need to be matched by a similar scale allocation elsewhere.

Cannock Chase District contains a number of such areas. The urban centres of the district also have a number of areas where employment land stands cheek by jowl with residential areas. This potentially increases the opportunities for changing from underperforming employment uses to housing or other uses and for defining the most appropriate mix of uses to achieve sustainable development.

Some broad options for considering the strategic approach to such sites might include:

1. Give priority to retaining employment uses, in particular sectors highlighted in the economic strategy.
2. Give priority to regeneration for office uses.
3. Consider such sites for housing.
4. Consider on a site by site basis.

Q. Which option do you think is most suitable for regenerating ageing or underused employment sites? Are there other options not included here?

How can planning best facilitate sustainable tourism development in the District?

Tourism continues to be a growing sector of the UK economy. In the context of Cannock Chase District, the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) represents the area of greatest potential, although promotion of tourism needs to be balanced against environmental sensitivities, particularly as the area is a relatively compact 20 square miles, the smallest AONB in England. Currently the AONB caters more for one day recreational visits rather than longer tourism visits. The Core Strategy needs to take its lead on the level of tourism appropriate to the Chase from the AONB Management Plan.

Another key area of tourism opportunity relates to the District’s built heritage including the canal network. Much of this heritage has ties with the industrial revolution, including a particularly rich mining heritage.
In the north of the District the Trent and Mersey Canal passes the northern edge of Rugeley. The Rugeley Town Centre Area Action Plan is addressing options for better integration of the canal into the town centre which would include consequent tourism benefits to the local economy. In the south of the District although there are significant barriers to be overcome, the restoration / re-creation of the Hatherton Canal would open up canal based tourism opportunities for the Cannock, Norton Canes and Little Wyrley areas. The contribution that the natural environment can make to economic and social development targets is also discussed in further detail under Objective 7.

Options might include:

1. Facilitate increased tourism in the rural parts of the district but balanced against landscape and conservation needs
2. Focus tourism growth on regeneration objectives particularly where these link to the district’s built heritage.

**Q. Are there any other options for tourism not included here?**

**Objective 5 Encourage sustainable transport infrastructure**
- To make journeys unnecessary where possible through spatial development choices.
- To achieve improvements to public transport and increased walking and cycling.
- To enhance and ensure sustainable access for all to environments that are valued, protected and enjoyed.
- To reduce reliance on private cars.

**National and Regional Planning Policy Framework**
- PPS1 Delivering sustainable development
- PPS3 Housing
- PPS6 Planning for Town Centres
- PPS7 Sustainable development in Rural Areas
- PPG 13 Transport
- PPG 17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

This objective contributes to the following LAA (May 2008 submission) objectives:
- NI7: Environment for a thriving third sector
- NI 175: Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling

Links with the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities for Improvement.

This objective will help to deliver Strategic Theme 2 of the SCS, ‘Making the District Clean, Green and Safe’. In particular it relates to the following priority for improvement:
- Reduce reliance on the car by encouraging the use of public transport

**How can the need to travel be reduced?**

Decisions on where to locate development can help to reduce the need to travel. Locating residential, employment areas and leisure and entertainment facilities near each other can help in reducing the need to travel. However this only works if the jobs being provided match the skill sets of those living nearby. Increased home working can also reduce the need to travel.
and might be achieved by encouraging jobs which allow for remote working or by development of live/work units. This reduction in travel could make a considerable contribution to the delivery of zero-carbon development in the District, discussed in further detail under Objective 8.

Options

1. Encourage more mixed communities where residential and employment uses combine. This can include more live/work units (housing with office space attached).
2. Encourage more employment uses with the potential to allow for more remote working.

Q Have we identified appropriate options likely to reduce the need to travel?

How should public transport be improved at the local and sub-regional levels?

Cannock is relatively well served by public transport, however there are some existing shortfalls in provision and the need for further provision will be influenced by the outcome of development choices.

Rail
The Chase Line Rail Service, connecting Rugeley with Birmingham, via Hednesford and Cannock is seen as a valuable public transport resource for the district. However, there are current concerns in connection with the existing level of service, mainly around poor frequency, especially with the evening service to Rugeley on weekdays after 6pm and general reliability. The through service to Stafford is to be withdrawn in December, with future electrification of the Walsall to Rugeley section providing the best chance of restoring this through service. Discussions are ongoing aimed at resolving these concerns.

The West Coast Main Line railway runs through Rugeley Trent Valley Station. By the end of 2008 there will be an hourly service to and from London. This will be a valuable addition to existing services.

Bus
Existing bus services in the District have some gaps that need to be plugged, especially if certain development options are to be pursued. While there have been some improvements, there has been a long term trend in service reduction, declining patronage and increased fares, similar to that experienced in the rest of the country outside London.

There is currently no east-west bus service along the A5 and a high frequency service would be needed within the A5/M6 Toll corridor to make employment land choices in this area sustainable.

The south western part of Norton Canes village is poorly served by buses, which needs to be addressed, particularly if development choices see significant expansion of the village. Cannock Wood also has a very poor service to Cannock, while Rugeley, the second largest town in the district, only has one bus service on Sundays.
Links between different modes of transport will need to be improved if fuller use is to be made of public transport both in terms of accessibility between bus and rail stations in both Cannock, Hednesford and Rugeley and in terms of linking service timetables.

Further public transport provision across the district is not the direct responsibility of the District Council. However, in catering for public transport needs associated with new development the Council is able to require contributions to enhanced provision by means of developer contributions (a proportion of the cost of infrastructure being paid for by the developer). Resources therefore need to be focussed and spatial options can be drawn up for directing resources in different ways in order to best maximise public transport usage:

Options might include:

1. Improve inter-modal links (links between different types of transport) especially at town centres
2. Increase frequency and quality of rail services
3. Increase frequency and quality of bus services
4. Seek provision of more bus service routes across the district
5. Improve east-west bus service links in the south of the district
6. Develop a community transport scheme

What are the key missing pieces of local transport infrastructure?

Under the recently introduced Planning Bill expected to be enacted in Spring 2009, it will become a requirement for local authorities to identify infrastructure needs in their area and then impose a Community Infrastructure Levy on certain new developments to help pay for remedying deficits in provision. This includes transport infrastructure.

In advance of a full assessment of infrastructure needs in Cannock Chase District there are several known infrastructure needs:

Roads

A longstanding section of proposed new road (safeguarded within the Local Plan) is the Winchester Road Extension – the missing piece of the Cannock Eastern Primary route following completion of the Pye Green Valley distributor road planned for 2009. This would bring major benefits in helping to remove through traffic from some residential streets and Chadsmoor local centre. It is envisaged that delivery would depend entirely on developer contributions in connection with new developments.

If strategic housing choices included substantial numbers south and east of Heath Hayes substantial new highway infrastructure would be needed in this area. (evidence from County and HA).

Cycling

The Chase Heritage Trail developed during 2007 and 2008 provides not only a new recreational asset across the AONB but also useful new off road cycling infrastructure along sections located in Hednesford, Cannock and Rugeley. Improved cycle linkages to the trail route, has the potential to create a more comprehensive cycle route network in future.

Suggested options are:

1. Actively seek new road infrastructure provision to serve Pye Green and Heath Hayes
2. Rather than new road provision focus new transport infrastructure on public transport and improved cycle routes and footpaths

Q Have we identified appropriate options for new transport infrastructure provision?

Objective 6 Create attractive town centres

➢ To support growth of shops, offices, business and leisure in town centres improving access to employment, thereby achieving town centres with vitality and viability.

National and Regional Planning Policy Framework

PPS1 Delivering sustainable development
PPS3 Housing
PPS6 Planning for Town Centres
PPG4 Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms
PPG 13 Transport
PPG 15 Planning and the Historic Environment
PPG 17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

This objective will help to deliver the following outcomes of the draft LAA:

NI117: 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)
NI172 percentage of small businesses in an area showing growth
NI 152: working age population on out of work benefits
NI45: Young offenders engagement in suitable education, employment or training
NI146: Adults with learning disabilities in employment
NI175 Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling

Links with the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities for Improvement

This objective will help to deliver Strategic Theme 1 of the SCS, ‘Prosperity, Securing the District’s Economic Future’. In particular it relates to the following priorities for improvement:

• Develop vibrant and sustainable town centres that serve the need of the community
• Increase the level of new business formations and their survival

What should be the respective roles of the Districts Town Centres in the future retail hierarchy and what elements must they include?
Under policy PA11 in the RSS Cannock is identified as one of 25 strategic town and city centres in the West Midlands. Essentially this means that within the district Cannock town centre will be a focus for major retail developments, major cultural, tourist, social and community venues and large scale leisure and office developments.

Rugeley and Hednesford are not specifically named but are categorised as having the function of meeting local needs where appropriate development will be encouraged where it maintains and enhances their function as town centres.

Options for Cannock town centre’s future might include the following (NB, read this in conjunction with the Strategic Spatial Options contained in Section 7):

1. Ensure more people choose to shop in Cannock rather than further afield, by offering a more vibrant mix of development including stronger retail attractions/department store(s), more cultural attractions and more town centre office employment.
2. Retain Cannock town centre’s current status and focus growth mainly on new retail and office provision.
3. Retain Cannock town centre’s current status and focus growth primarily on improved retail attractions.

Rugeley Town centre is the subject of an Area Action Plan. Depending on the option preferred for town centre growth the centre could continue to serve local needs or provide a much enhanced offer that could place it closer to, and more competitive with, the 25 strategic town and city centres in future, in particular Lichfield, Stafford and Cannock.

Options for Hednesford are less pronounced. It is anticipated that the centre should continue to serve local need via appropriate food and convenience retail development opportunities.

\[ \text{Q} \quad \text{Have we identified appropriate options for Cannock’s future role in the retail hierarchy? Are there other options we should be considering?} \]

How widely should town centres expand?

All town centres need to grow and improve their offer to some extent just in order to maintain their position against other centres and avoid possible decline.

Cannock is a strategic centre which is currently relatively weak in relation to the retail offer for its catchment. It has an allocation of 35,000 square metres of non-food retail floor space in the RSS Phase 2 revision to be in two phases, pre and post 2021. A scheme which would deliver most of this is under discussion with a developer. If delivered this would provide a much improved choice of shopping facilities. A smaller scale mixed retail/leisure/residential scheme is currently being worked up.

Cannock has also been allocated 30,000sq m of office development in the RSS phase 2 revision. A draft town centre boundary, considerably expanded from the 1997 Local Plan boundary was produced at an earlier stage in this process. It is unlikely to be large enough to accommodate all the proposed growth, particularly for offices. The centre is adjoined by housing development of a variety of ages.
Options for Cannock might be:

1. Limit the extension of the town centre boundary only where essential to deliver the retail scheme. Support smaller scale office developments on new out of centre employment sites.
2. Extend the centre more widely e.g. towards Cannock railway station to encourage this as a redevelopment location for offices.

Rugeley Town Centre has lacked investment since the 1980s and an Area Action Plan (AAP) is being produced with the overall aim of stimulating regeneration. The AAP has already set out objectives, issues and options.

Local shopping facilities at Hednesford are limited and could be improved to become more self-sufficient in food and convenience shopping.

Options for Hednesford could include:

1. Retain Hednesford as a small scale town centre serving local needs
2. Allow some limited expansion of town centre facilities in Hednesford

Q. Have we identified appropriate options for Cannock Town Centre expansion?
Q. Have we identified the right options for Hednesford?

What role should smaller local centres perform?

Local shopping facilities are found at Norton Canes, Heath Hayes and Chadsmoor, providing very much for local convenience needs. Hawkes Green is a District Centre as defined in the Retail Hierarchy (Site Allocations DPD, May 2007). The future role of local centres could continue as at present or there might be scope to expand the range of offer currently available by facilitating some level a additional provision. The future of Norton Canes village centre in particular should relate closely to the level of growth that the settlement sees over the plan period. This in turn will be guided by the overall spatial option for distributing the district’s growth.

Options for local centres include:

1. Continue to support the existing level of provision in local centres
2. Seek to increase the amount and range of convenience provision in all local centres
3. Seek to increase the amount and range of convenience provision only in those local centres where significant growth is identified as a preferred option

Q. Have we identified appropriate options for local centres?
Q. How could more people be encouraged to use local shops and businesses?

Objective 7 Provide well managed and appreciated environments
   ➢ To protect and enhance the districts natural and historic built environmental assets
To ensure new development is designed to provide a high quality of built form and public realm

National and Regional Planning Policy Framework
PPG2 Green Belt
PPS9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment
PPG16 Archaeology and Planning
PPG17 Sport and Recreation
PPS22 Renewable Energy
PPG25 Development and Flood Risk
Policies QE1-QE9 (West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy 2004)
Policies QE1-QE9 (Draft West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy 2007)

This objective will help to deliver the following LAA (May 2008 submission) outcomes:

NI197 Improved local bio – diversity – proportion of local sites where possible conservation management has been, or is being implemented.
NI4: percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality
NI6 Participation in regular volunteering
NI7 Environment for a thriving third sector
NI110 Young people’s participation in positive activities
NI21 Dealing with local concerns about anti social behaviour and crime by the local council and police

Links with the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities for Improvement
This objective will help to deliver Strategic Theme 2 of the SCS, ‘Places, making the District Clean, Green and Safe’. In particular it relates to the following priorities for improvement:

- Enhance and ensure access for all environments that are valued, protected and enjoyed
- Maintain parks and open spaces that are valued by residents and visitors

How can trends in biodiversity and landscape character degradation be reversed?

The District is rich in natural assets, which are recognised from the local to national and international level. The ecological, geological and visual values of Cannock Chase are demonstrated by its designations including an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), several Sites of Scientific Special Interest (SSSI), a Special Area of Conversation (SAC) and Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS). 60% of Cannock Chase District is designated Green Belt and there are a number of other SSSIs and SACs within the District, some water-based, some formed from restored open cast mining sites and large areas of lowland ancient heathland that is vital to the biodiversity of the West Midlands region. There are also sites of county level nature conservation value (Sites of Biological Importance-SBIs) including the Fair Lady Coppice Country Park and the majority of the Districts’ rural area lies within the regional Biodiversity Enhancement Area, where priority is to be given to heathland habitat regeneration to link Cannock Chase with Sutton Park. The locally designated Forest of Mercia, Nature Reserves and Green Space Network assist in creating a vital link between the Districts’ urban areas with the countryside (although parts of the Green Space Network and Forest of Mercia have more visual and recreational value as opposed to ecological value). The green spaces within the District also have a fundamental role to play in addressing climate change issues.
The natural environment described above gives the District a valuable semi-rural landscape character. Cannock Chase District resides in the designated Cannock Chase and Cankwood Regional Landscape Character Area, which is distinct from other Landscape Character Areas in the Region by virtue of its ecological, geological and visual landscape features.

The protection of these biodiversity and landscape character assets needs to be balanced with the development pressures to accommodate further growth of existing villages and larger urban areas; the overall biodiversity of the District is already declining through the loss of small sites and fragmentation within the Green Space Network and many areas within the SSSIs have been found to be in unacceptable condition as a result of degradation. A 2006 assessment of Cannock Chase and Cankwood indicates that the character of the area is ‘diverging’ from its original, and desirable form, primarily due to agricultural practices and development pressures. The Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan (2004-2024) provides a more detailed assessment of the condition of the Chase and identifies a range of key threats and pressures, including many issues associated with the expansion of urban areas and recreational pressures. These pressures have a detrimental impact upon the sensitive and rare biodiversity within the Chase (the SSSIs) so it is clear that action needs to be taken to reverse current trends.

Various steps have already been taken to reduce biodiversity and landscape degradation in the District by restricting development in particular areas. Applications have been made to Natural England for the designation of Hawks Green/Mill Green Local Nature Reserve and for Hednesford Hills Common to be given SSSI status and included within the AONB. In order to address the specific issues at the Cannock Extension Canal SAC consideration is now being given to diversion of the proposed alignment of the proposed Hatherton Canal link (currently protected under Saved Local Plan Policy TR4). Various existing and forthcoming studies will all serve to identify areas under threat and those with the potential for enhancement; the work may lead to the designation of additional local nature conservation and wildlife areas.

It already appears that there are a range of sites suitable for such designation, particularly around the Chase and Bleak House Area. This work could assist in the creation of ‘wildlife corridors’ that link important sites (heathland areas in particular). There is the potential for such a corridor of heathland sites that links Brownhills Common outside the southern boundary of the District to Cannock Chase in the north and beyond in adjoining authorities, running via Chasewater, Bleak House and Hednesford Hills. Possible extensions to the Green Space Network could contribute to such corridors and such expansions would also contribute to the alleviation of pressure upon the sensitive Chase area by providing alternative open spaces for recreational purposes. This option would assist in strengthening the regional Cannock to Sutton Park Biodiversity Enhancement Area, which is a regional designation covering a large tract once composed of mainly lowland heathland linking the two key areas of Cannock Chase and Sutton Park (this designation encompasses most of Cannock District).

However given previous developments that have taken place in and around environmentally sensitive areas there will be difficulties in creating new protected areas and identifying opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. The scope for extending the Green Network as an...
ecological resource is restricted by such development and similar issues apply to the possible creation of 'buffer zones' around the Chase and Hednesford Hills. Development has encroached in some parts up to the very edge of these sensitive sites and a comprehensive buffer zone may prove problematic. An alternative may be to apply a 'protected setting' policy whereby any new developments or extensions of existing development are treated similar to those within the AONB national designation i.e. not allowing development unless it contributes to the objectives of the AONB. As identified above, opportunities for new semi-natural areas to be accommodated within new development should be identified to ensure that future growth of the District does not neglect biodiversity considerations and landscaping schemes could be tailored to incorporate specific local species as identified in the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan.

The Green Belt also plays key role in maintaining the character and biodiversity of the District. Minor boundary changes have occurred in light of developments along the newly constructed Rugeley by-pass, related to the Rugeley Eastern Regeneration Zone, and Saved Policy C7 / CP1 of the 1997 Local Plan contains three ‘safeguarded sites’ for development. Given the Districts current supply of housing and employment land in relation to Regional Spatial Strategy targets there may not be a need to reconsider the Green Belt boundaries within this plan period and the retention of existing boundaries could serve to contribute towards reversing biodiversity degradation trends. However, there may be areas that although are Greenfield/Greenbelt do not contribute to the biodiversity or landscape value of the District. In these instances it may be appropriate to consider the limited release of ‘derelict’ Green Belt sites for particular uses e.g. recreational or housing developments (in accordance with the options for housing).

Options for reducing biodiversity and landscape degradation include:

1. The continued application of existing Green Belt boundaries OR the limited release of ‘derelict’ Green Belt land for development.
2. The continued protection of the Green Space Network, (particularly sites of ecological value).
3. Continuing to promote the inclusion of Hednesford Hills Common within the AONB and as an SSSI. Creating a ‘protected setting’ zone of restricted development and use around Hednesford Hills Common and the Cannock Chase AONB.
4. Continuing to designate and protect local wildlife sites including the potential creation of a wildlife corridor across a central area of the District.

Q1. Have the appropriate options been identified or are there any other options that should be considered for tackling biodiversity and landscape character degradation?

Q2. Which of the options are the most suitable for the District?

Q3. Which of the four Strategic spatial options (Section 7) would be most suited to delivering this objective? For example, would concentrated development in Cannock be more suitable than dispersed development?

Where can increased use or development within the natural environment enhance its value and help contribute to the District’s overall regeneration?
Cannock Chase District contains one of the largest areas of readily accessible recreational land in the West Midlands and is a significant asset for both local and nearby communities. The role of rural businesses and sustainable tourism is addressed under Objective 4 whilst Objective 2 discusses the role the Green Belt and AONB can play in promoting healthier communities. This section expands upon the points already considered under these objectives and discusses how limited development could enhance the natural environment when appropriately targeted and help deliver the Councils Economic Strategy and Sustainable Community Strategy objectives. The District currently suffers from poor health and educational achievement indicators and the Economic Strategy identifies the key role tourism could play as a growth sector to regenerate the District and enhancing its image following the decline of industrial and mining activities. The Cannock Chase AONB and surrounding Green Belt provide a range of conservation, educational, recreational and tourism benefits. The canal network also serves as both an important natural habitat and recreational attraction. The ongoing restoration of the Hatherton Branch Canal demonstrates the value of this semi-natural resource to the Districts’ character, environment and tourism sector. The natural landscape thus has a clear role to play in contributing to healthier, greener communities and delivering economic regeneration within the District, but close consideration should be given to the impact of increased activities upon these areas.

Whilst some developments will have a detrimental impact upon sensitive areas, appropriate development can also play a positive role in ensuring their longevity by enhancement. Large areas of natural environment within the District are already protected at international, national and regional level from inappropriate development. The AONB is currently well-utilised for day visits to its five visitor centres (not all in Cannock District) and the thrust of existing tourism strategies is to ensure sustainable tourism by focusing activity upon these centres. Some of the centres are in close proximity to ecologically sensitive SSSIs and as such any increased use is carefully monitored.

However, outside of these protected areas there are opportunities where increased use or development can enhance the value of the Districts natural environments. As an established Community Forest, the Forest of Mercia to the south of the AONB offers the most potential for expansion of recreational and educational activities (that are in line with its aims) whilst the potential restoration of sites such as Grove Colliery provide opportunities for development to encourage habitat restoration combined with increased recreational and tourism facilities.

The majority of the existing Green Network and canal environment can also play a crucial role in absorbing recreational pressures without detrimental impacts upon its landscape or ecological value. Such strategies would enable the directing of increased pressure away from the sensitive AONB sites and enhance the overall value of all the Districts natural environment resources. An Innovation Centre, built in 2001 at the nearby Chasewater Country Park is illustrative of the type of environmentally sustainable, educational and conference facility that can contribute towards the local economy when situated in an appropriate location.

The extent of how far the rural landscape can be utilised for large-scale renewable energy schemes also requires consideration. The Forestry Commission holdings within the Forest of Mercia and the AONB may be suitable for providing biomass fuel to the local area. More sustainable forms of energy would assist in reducing pollution that contributes to biodiversity degradation and they can also contribute to the achievement of economic and social goals i.e. generating investment in the District and reducing fuel poverty by providing cheaper fuel
alternatives. However the impact upon particular sites by the development of such schemes needs to be carefully assessed. This is dealt with in further detail under Objective 8.

Options for increased use and development include:

1. Focusing increased use within the Forest of Mercia, the Green Network and along the canal environment (where appropriate) in order to relieve pressure upon the most sensitive sites around the District.
2. Restriction of uses within these areas to recreational, educational and sustainable tourism-related led developments.

Q1. Have the appropriate options been identified or are there any other options that should be considered to enhance the value of the natural environment?

Q2. Are the areas for increased use suitable locations and are there any other areas that should be included?

How can brownfield sites and urban development contribute to biodiversity and the natural environment as a whole?

There is a growing recognition that brownfield sites can be equally, if not more valuable, sites of biodiversity interest than some greenfield sites (the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan recently identified a large population of great crested newts on the former Hednesford Brickworks site). Whilst preference for development should remain to be on brownfield, or previously developed land, policies could also reflect the potential for conservation-led restoration of brownfield sites. The legacy of coal mining in the District has also provided the opportunity for restoration to recreational and open space use.

Issues such as falling water table levels in the District and the creation of networks for biodiversity can also be addressed by sustainable building construction within the urban areas; grey water recycling measures and green roofs are just two cases in point. As identified above, the landscaping schemes associated with particular developments could be required to include species of local importance and interest, thus contributing to the reversal of biodiversity degradation.

Draft Policy SR3 of the Regional Spatial Strategy (2007) outlines the use of the West Midlands Sustainability Checklist, which assesses wider sustainability standards of a scheme, and sets out standards for developments to achieve. This includes measures included in the Code For Sustainable Homes ratings such as water conservation, waste and construction materials. There may be scope for the West Midlands Checklist to be amended for adoption at local level and used to help determine planning applications, or for adopting minimum Code For Sustainable Homes level to ensure new developments are contributing to wider sustainability and environmental aims.

Options for brownfield sites and urban areas contributing to biodiversity include:

1. Policy recognition that brownfield sites may be more suitable for conservation restoration than development.
What role can the Districts built heritage play in delivering regeneration?

The Districts’ medieval origins, mining legacy and heritage have provided the area with a wealth of valuable built assets. This is reflected in the number of conservation areas within the District including one in Cannock Town Centre and five in and around Rugeley Town Centre. Cannock Town Centre Conservation Area, designated in 1991, is based around 12 listed buildings. Rugeley’s medieval origins and growth during the Industrial and Victorian periods have resulted in a high quality mix of historic buildings and street patterns. This heritage contributes to the quality of the place and its local distinctiveness. The emerging Rugeley Town Centre Area Action Plan, and relevant background work, emphasise the positive contribution that the conservation areas make to the town character and in particular the potential of the currently under-utilised Trent and Mersey Canal Conservation Area.

Subsequent developments in the District, particularly in the 1960/70s, have not always been sympathetic to the historic built environment and on occasion this has resulted in less attractive streets and towns; the existing Conservation Area Appraisals identify specific buildings and boundaries that exert a negative influence upon the settings.

Consideration should be given to the role that the historic built environment can play in regeneration of the District in terms of both influencing future development design to raise the profile of the District, redevelopment of inappropriate buildings within the Conservation Areas and in generating tourism or educational-related income. Due care needs to be taken that future developments complement and/or enhance the historic character of the area and similarly, if efforts are not made to ensure the upkeep and enhancement of these key features they may well become neglected and fall into states of disrepair.

Positive policies for the re-use of historic buildings could encourage their regeneration and retention. The Hednesford Town Centre Improvement Scheme, the Bridgtown Image Enhancements Scheme and the High Green Court development in Cannock demonstrate the value that can be added to an area by considering local character and design. There are notable areas within the town centres of Cannock and Rugeley that would benefit from redevelopment in a more sympathetic vein to the historic character. More detailed Development Control Policies could seek to use key landmark buildings or focal points within the Districts respective centres as inspiration for design.

However, the needs of modern commercial operators and retailers needs to be balanced with any desire for more traditional design and well-designed modern developments can also provide an interesting and complementary contrast to the traditional structures.

Options for using the built heritage to deliver regeneration might include:

2. Require all developments to achieve the sustainability standards that is either in line with OR above the standards set in Draft RSS Policy SR3

| Q1. Have the appropriate options been identified or are there any other potential options that should be considered? |
| Q2. Are there any degraded areas in the District that could be restored to encourage biodiversity rejuvenation? |
1. Continued protection of the existing Conservation Areas
2. Policies for design to take into account local historic features and encouraging re-use of historic buildings
3. The redevelopment or alteration of unsympathetic, modern developments within Rugeley and Cannock Town Centres’ to enhance their respective statuses and focusing heritage-led regeneration efforts along the canal environment across the District

To what extent should development be controlled to protect and enhance the character of the historic built environment?

As outlined above, the built heritage of Cannock Chase District has not always been given due consideration in the design of new developments. Development control decisions are now often more considerate of the historic environment and examples such as the modern Georgian replica Rugeley Library demonstrate how new developments can contribute to the enhancement of Conservation Areas.

However, concerns have been raised in respect of small scale modern alteration works to existing properties that are eroding the architectural and historical merits of their wider setting in the Conservation Areas. Consideration should be given to the potential for controlling these minor developments in those Conservation Areas most at risk of degradation. Developments in and around Conservation Areas can also impact upon their overall character and consideration should be given to how far planning policies expect these developments to take the historic setting into account. The level of protection deemed appropriate in the Core Strategy will inform further, more detailed Development Control Policies.

Options for controlling development to protect character might include:

1. Continued protection of the existing Conservation Areas
2. Policies for design to take into account local historic features, particularly for developments within and nearby the Conservation Areas

To what extent should heritage-led regeneration be promoted in Cannock, Rugeley and along the canal environment? Are there any other areas that would benefit from heritage-led regeneration?

Q1 Have all of the appropriate options been identified or are there any other options that could help the built heritage deliver regeneration?
Q2 To what extent should heritage-led regeneration be promoted in Cannock, Rugeley and along the canal environment? Are there any other areas that would benefit from heritage-led regeneration?

Options for controlling development to protect character might include:

Q1 Have all of the appropriate options been identified or are there any other options that should be considered to protect the Conservation Areas?
Q2 Which Conservation Areas do you feel are at most risk of degradation and should small scale works be more closely controlled?
Q3 To what extent should local historic features be protected and promoted?
How can new development deliver high quality places?

National guidance has increasingly emphasised the role that new developments have to play in creating sustainable and healthy communities that are inclusive via high quality building. The Cannock Chase Sustainable Community Strategy key priority on ‘People’ highlights the need to promote homes that are compatible with decent home standards and the role quality buildings can play in raising pride and aspirations. Planning policy emphasis should therefore be on the encouragement of high quality design that can reflect the local distinctiveness of the District whilst also providing safe, enjoyable and usable spaces. There is an increasing recognition of the role design can play in fostering safer spaces by ‘designing out crime’ and enjoyable spaces can be delivered by consideration of guidance such as ‘Active Design’, which is discussed in more detail under Objective 1.

Whilst high quality design is undoubtedly an aesthetic consideration, the sustainability of a place or building is also a key aspect of its overall quality. The implementation of a Code for Sustainable Homes levels has already been put forward as an option under Objective 8 and if adopted District-wide would feed into the design of new developments. Draft Policy SR3 of the Regional Spatial Strategy states that all new housing developments should meet the Building For Life ‘good’ or ‘very good’ standard. The Building For Life standards set out a series of measurements for the quality of a scheme including how distinctive its architectural design is and how adaptable the buildings are for potential different uses in the future. As discussed under Objective 1, the Lifetime Home Standards identify the measures that can be taken to ensure new homes are adaptable for the whole of a persons lifetime needs, for example from young families, to the elderly and wheelchair users. This means considering issues such as ground floor accessibility in the design of new homes or the layout of bathroom facilities.

In terms of non-domestic buildings, the BREEAM standards referred to in Objective 8 consider the sustainability of a scheme, but there is less guidance as to the visual qualities of commercial developments. Should commercial developments be encouraged to obtain similar high standards to those set for new homes? The level of support for such design will inform the production of more detailed Development Control Policies.

Options for promoting high quality design include:

1. Incorporating Building For Life and Lifetime Homes standards in a District-wide policy for high quality, sustainable design of new homes
2. Setting a District-wide policy for high quality, sustainable design of new commercial buildings

| Q1   | Have the appropriate options been identified or are there any other options that should be considered? |
| Q2   | To what extent should the Council promote high quality design? Should this be District and sector-wide? |

Objective 8 Support a greener future

- To promote sustainable construction methods/materials including recycling of construction waste and water conservation/recycling.
- To promote appropriate renewable energy and green technologies.
➢ To maximise flood protection and adaptation to, and mitigation of, climate change in building design and landscape.
➢ To reduce waste and increase recycling.
➢ To reduce carbon emissions.

National and Regional Planning Policy Framework
PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development
PPS1 Supplement: Planning and Climate Change
PPS22 Renewable Energy
PPS25 Development and Flood Risk
Policies EN1-EN2 (West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy 2004)
Policies EN1-EN2; SR1-SR4 (Draft West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy 2007)

This relates to the following outcomes of the LAA (May 2008 submission):
NI186 Per Capita CO2 emissions in the LA area
NI197 Improved local biodiversity – proportion of local sites where possible conservation management has been, or is being implemented.
NI175: Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling

Links with the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities for Improvement:
This objective will help to deliver Strategic Theme 2 of the SCS, ‘Making the District Clean, Green and Safe’. In particular it relates to the following priorities for improvement:
• Reduce the volume of waste to landfill and increase recycling rates
• Reduce carbon emissions

To what extent can zero carbon or carbon neutral development be achieved during the plan period and how should this be addressed?

Responding to climate change in the way we plan and implement development is a new requirement under the supplement to PPS1 and a target to reduce the UK’s CO2 emissions by at least 60% by 2050 compared to a 1990 base date will become a statutory duty under the Climate Change Bill (due late 2008). Climate change is an integrating theme across the Core Strategy, for example sustainable transport and the resilience of ecological sites are all considered under other objectives and it is recognised that tackling climate change requires efforts to be co-ordinated authority-wide.

The Sustainable Community Strategy for Cannock Chase includes making the District ‘clean, green and safe’ as one of the key priorities and this section considers how planning can serve to enable other key partners from the public and private sectors to deliver the necessary changes in our built environment. Focus is specifically upon how carbon dioxide emissions can be reduced by carefully considering the location and design of new developments with the use of renewable low carbon energy. The monitoring of carbon emissions from Local Authority operations and emissions per capita in the District are now new national indicators for the Council and part of the Staffordshire Local Area Agreement (Sustainable Development Block). The LAA currently sets a target of reducing carbon emissions per capita by an average of 1.5% each year (from local measures) in order to achieve the 2050 national goal. It may therefore be

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4 Whilst the definition of zero-carbon development is debated it can broadly be defined as a building where there are zero net emissions from all energy use over the course of a year. Carbon neutral development refers to instances where offsetting measures from new developments, such as carbon sinks and retrofitting of existing properties, can also deliver reductions.
appropriate to set specific carbon reduction targets for new developments (and retrofitting of existing stock) that can help achieve the Staffordshire Local Area Agreement and national aspirations.

Existing Building Regulation standards already require new buildings to demonstrate a reduction in their carbon emissions. The recently released Code for Sustainable Homes expands upon these existing targets and sets out an optimum standard for new residential developments to meet by 2016, which not only includes carbon reduction measures but also water, waste and other sustainable construction considerations. Zero-carbon development is achieved at Level 6 of the code and it is expected that similar standards will be set for non-residential developments to meet by 2019/20 (BREEAM standards currently provide a national framework for the assessment of the sustainability of non-domestic buildings).

However, achieving even the minimum level of the Code for Sustainable Homes will continue to be voluntary for private developers (publicly-funded projects are set mandatory higher targets). However, the Draft West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (Policy SR3) states that non-domestic developments should aim for carbon reductions that are 10% below the target emission rate of the current Building Regulations by 2016 and new homes should be achieving the Code for Sustainable Homes level 4 before 2013. Consideration should therefore be given at a local level to adopting either the regional standard or higher targets for residential and commercial developments in order to deliver zero-carbon development.

Housing association-led schemes in the District are now required to meet Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 as a minimum. The redevelopment scheme at Bevan Lee is expected to reach EcoHomes ‘Very Good’ Level, which is broadly equivalent to Level 3 of the Code, whilst forthcoming schemes at Brereton and Hednesford are expected to reach Level 4. A District-wide target could be set or it may be appropriate to take into account local factors that could either result in lower or higher targets for specific areas. For instance should the town centres as existing and future foci of development be set higher standards than smaller, restricted settlements in the rural area or should brownfield sites be set lower targets than greenfield sites?

In addition to using the Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM standards, consideration could be given to the adoption of a locally tailored Sustainability Checklist (derived from Policy SR3 of the Draft West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy). This would assess the whole of the development in terms of its sustainability; not just the individual buildings. For example, the developments contribution to economic development, its proximity to sustainable transport links and how the development contributed to biodiversity in the District would all be part of this wider assessment.

In Cannock’s context measures such as Travel Plans are already required to demonstrate and enhance the sustainability of a scheme in transport terms and maximum car parking standards are increasingly reducing provision within the main town centre areas of Cannock and Rugeley. Developer contributions are also sought towards identified sustainable transport systems including improvements to the District’s railway and bus stations, particularly Cannock, Hednesford and Rugeley. The growing popularity of live/work units as a way of delivering zero-carbon sustainable development could also be encouraged to reduce people’s need to travel (discussed under Objectives 4 and 5). It is proposed that these measures and other sustainable design and construction methods continue to be applied and extended, potentially
via the setting of targets using the Code for Sustainable Homes/BREEAM standards and the adoption of a Sustainability Checklist to be submitted with planning applications.

The developments referred to above have involved the redevelopment old housing stock in the District and whilst there is scope for achieving zero carbon development from new builds consideration must also be paid to an area largely outside the remit of the planning system; the retrofitting of existing stock. With new builds representing only a small proportion of the existing and future stock (particularly in Cannock’s context), the environmental impact of the existing built environment is a major issue. This requires an authority-wide effort and the potential for retrofitting of renewable energy supplies is discussed further in the following section. In order to encourage retrofitting, or redevelopment of existing stock under the Districts Local Regeneration Area status, the potential for designating ‘Action Areas’ for zero-carbon development could be explored or the promotion of a flagship low-carbon community. The compact nature of Cannock and Rugeley Town Centres, with their range of public services and mixed uses, could lend them to become ‘Action Areas’ that aim for above-average standards.

The goal of zero-carbon development requires a shift in the planning context in terms of where development is located and how individual buildings are designed. Under Spatial Options 1-4 the Council would continue to focus new development in and around established urban centres across the District, focusing upon the existing main towns but with consideration of urban extensions. The main point for consideration is which option would be the most suitable in terms of promoting zero-carbon development i.e. does Cannock’s infrastructure make it more suitable than urban extensions, or could these be suitably linked into existing networks to achieve zero-carbon development? (Our initial assessment suggests Options 1 and 2 may provide the most opportunity for delivering this objective).

As part of all these options there could be stricter policies applied to rural settlements for new residential development i.e. no net increase in residential properties via infill schemes, a tiered policy for location according to the settlement hierarchy and higher minimum densities across the District could all serve to increase provision within existing sustainable centres. However this approach would need to be balanced with rural housing and economic development needs (see Objectives 3 and 4).

Options for achieving zero-carbon development include:

1. Require all developments to demonstrate a reduction in carbon emissions that is either in line with OR above the standards set in Draft RSS Policy SR3.
2. These standards to be set on a District-wide basis OR differentiated according to location i.e. higher standards for the urban, town centre areas.
3. Seeking to identify site-specific opportunities for delivering higher standards in zero-carbon development and designating ‘Action Areas’ to encourage retrofitting.
4. Adopting minimum density standards and a tiered approach to the location of development within the District, with major growth focused on the main centres of Cannock and Rugeley OR across all of the urban areas (See Spatial Options 1-4).

Q1    Have all of the potential options been identified?
Q2    Which options do you feel would be best able to deliver zero-carbon and carbon neutral development?
Q3    If appropriate, which areas do you feel may be best suited to higher or lower targets in carbon reductions? Are there any areas with the potential for being ‘flagship’ communities?
What level of encouragement should be given to renewable energy?

The IPCC suggest that 60-80% of carbon dioxide reduction savings could come from changing energy supply use and improving energy efficiency. DEFRA experimental data suggests that the majority of Cannock Chase Districts carbon emissions are attributable to domestic and commercial electricity consumption (2005 base date). Renewable energy technologies can therefore make a significant contribution to the overall national, regional and local targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, renewable, on-site generation can assist in alleviating fuel poverty thus further serving to address the Sustainable Community Strategy aims of reducing currently above-average standards of deprivation in the District.

Renewable technologies (as defined in PPS1 Supplement) can be applied at both the large (macro) scale i.e. wind farms and at the small, on-site level (micro-generation). Macro renewable energy schemes can generate significant local interest and debate in particular.

The recent wind farm application at Cuckoo Bank demonstrates the level of interest that such schemes can attract and the concerns of various stakeholders. Given the semi-rural character of the District there may be a perception there is the potential capacity for larger scale renewable energy schemes. The 2004 Wind Capacity Study for the West Midlands identified the broad area of South Staffordshire as a ‘wind resource area’. However, large tracts of these areas are environmentally sensitive sites with high visual landscape value of national and international importance. Thus the impact of any macro renewable energy schemes would be subject to rigorous scrutiny (in line with international and national regulations) and the extent to which local, criteria-based restrictions are imposed on such developments in the AONB, or other locally designated sites, should be considered.

Rugeley Power Station (coal-fired) is one of the largest in the region and continues to be a key source of pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in the District and Region. However, a £100m investment in flue gas desulphurisation plant has recently been installed which, as well as extending the operational life by 30 years, will also result in a substantial reduction in emissions. There has been some implementation of multi-fuel use at this station and the potential for increasing the use of locally generated biomass should be explored further.

The Staffs Renewables Project and the recently initiated Staffordshire/Shropshire (Stropshire) Renewables Project (which expands upon the former Staffordshire Biomass Project) all aim to provide a cluster of knowledge and expertise in the County for biomass energy generation. The Biomass project began to build a network of suppliers within the County, (which as an agricultural region is potentially well resourced), and most notably produced the Eccleshall Biomass Plant. This new project seeks to expand upon these achievements by building upon existing supply and demand networks for woodfuel and assessing the viability of installation biomass boilers in existing or planned developments. Such a programme clearly provides an opportunity for the District, particularly in light of the Forestry Commission holdings in close proximity to the main urban centres. However any impact upon the Districts biodiversity also requires careful consideration when promoting biomass expansion and the transportation of such fuels needs to be factored into decision-making.

Existing methane gas extraction for electricity generation at Poplars Landfill to the south of the District could also potentially be extended and other waste-to-energy schemes encouraged in

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5 At national government level a UK target of generating 10% of electricity from renewable sources by 2010 and 20% by 2020 has been set, and this aspiration is carried through in the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands.
such locations, directing macro schemes away from the environmentally sensitive Cannock Chase and AONB area.

Following the example set by Merton Borough Council in 2004 with their policy of requiring a 10% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by provision of on-site renewable energy sources national government legislation and guidance has increasingly encouraged the application of similar polices across the country, now reinforced by the PPS1 Supplement and recent deregulation of householder permitted development rights in terms of installing micro-generation. This should serve to increase take up of the increasingly affordable technologies such as solar panels or domestic wind turbines and generate growth in the ‘green’ energy sector.

As part of the ‘Action Areas’ proposed above, the need for planning permission for micro-generation equipment on commercial buildings could be relaxed at the local level to encourage retro-fitting. However, the practicalities of implementing policies similar to the ‘Merton Rule’ require consideration of site-specific environmental characteristics, financial feasibility and the availability of other approaches including energy efficiency-led measures. Policies setting a target for on-site renewable energy generation therefore need to be sufficiently flexible to allow for site-specific issues and the potential for use of other technologies that can serve to reduce energy demand.

Support for more district-wide renewable, decentralised supplies via Combined Heat and Power (CHP) and other systems (as defined in PPS1) to develop a network of renewable energy supplies that developments can connect to or extend would help meet zero-carbon development targets. Encouraging early consideration of suitability for renewable energy sources in the site selection process could assist in the development of such a network i.e. the fairly compact nature of Cannock and Rugeley town centres may lend them towards wider CHP systems. Teaming up with larger housing or commercial developments, particularly in areas of regeneration to implement CHP or ‘Energy Action Areas’ could also serve to act as a catalyst for the future expansion of decentralised renewable energy networks and supplies.

Options for renewable energy supplies include:

1. Setting a policy that requires a certain level of energy demands to be met by on-site or decentralised renewable energy supplies
2. Not setting an on-site/decentralised renewable energy target but an overall carbon reduction target in line with national indicators set out in the current Building Regulations, Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM standards.
3. Setting a District-wide target OR differentiating targets according to locations and designating ‘Action Areas’ where appropriate.
4. Promoting the development of large-scale (macro) renewable energy technologies on a District-wide basis OR with local restrictions for certain areas i.e. the AONB

| Q1 | Have the appropriate options been identified or are there any other options that should be considered? |
| Q2 | Would a ‘Merton Rule’ OR carbon reduction style policy be appropriate? |
| Q3 | To what extent should macro-scale renewable energies be encouraged? |
| Q4 | Are ‘Action Areas’ an appropriate option to help foster decentralised supplies? |
How can we plan for the potential impacts of climate change and ensure developments are ‘built to last’?

Adaptation to the effects of climate change is a key area for planning to address if we are to build sustainable communities within the District that will be able to endure the predicted changes to our built and natural environment as a result of climate change. Whilst there is still a degree of uncertainty in terms of the predicted impacts it is increasingly recognised that rising average temperatures, increased precipitation and more frequent heavy rainfall events will all be features of our future climate. This change necessitates a response in terms of how and where our communities are built.

Mitigation measures used to reduce greenhouse gas emissions can often double as adaptation solutions. Green roofs serve to both reduce energy demands by providing insulation and absorbing rainfall, thus reducing the amount and rate of rainwater entering the drainage system and alleviating flood risk.

The need to adapt to climate change will be applied District-wide and more detailed criteria are likely to be set out in Development Control Policies on design. The main spatial option refers to the areas currently known to be at risk of flooding- the Ridings Brook catchments to the south of the District and the Trent Valley catchments to the north. PPS25 already requires a sequential approach to be taken that should direct development away from high-risk areas and avoid development which increases flood risk. As part of the spatial options consideration should be given to restricting development in and around those areas most at risk (to be informed by the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment) and considering mitigation measures which could be taken to counter any flood risk.

Options for adapting to climate change include:

1. Setting a District-wide policy for sustainable construction that requires adaptation to climate change to be incorporated in all new developments.
2. Setting higher flood-risk mitigation requirements for those areas most at risk i.e. mandatory Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems in the Ridings Brook area.

Q1 Have the appropriate options been identified or are there any other options that should be considered?

To what extent can planning contribute to reducing waste, increasing recycling and water conservation?

The issues of reducing waste and increasing recycling will be addressed at both the strategic scale via the Staffordshire County Council DPDs on Waste and Minerals and at the individual unit scale via the District Councils DPDs. Reducing waste outputs, increasing recycling and water conservation at the individual building scale can be achieved through planning by promoting the Code for Sustainable Homes and similar standards in commercial developments (see above). There are issues of lowering water table levels in the District, due to abstraction rates, and this has potential detrimental consequences for the biodiversity of the Cannock Chase in particular. A Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM target would encourage the provision of more grey water recycling measures and water efficiency, reducing the demand for abstraction. At the construction stage the use of local or recycled building materials can also
be promoted via Site Waste Management Plans (Draft RSS Policy SR3) as this will be addressed in more detailed Development Control Policies. However, the sourcing of local materials for building construction can give rise to potential conflict with environmental protection objectives, for instance an expansion of the Poplars quarry could create capacity for a larger landfill site.

The County Council are currently preparing background studies for consultation to inform the Issues and Options stage of the Waste DPD for Staffordshire. This will seek to identify the key issues, objectives and areas for concentration in respect of waste including the potential of waste as a resource i.e. for energy generation. The Minerals DPD is scheduled for Issues and Options consultation in June 2008 and this will explore the potential for sustainable construction resources.
9. Which issues are important when dealing with most day to day applications for development?

We are now incorporating development control policies into the Core Strategy DPD. We consulted during 2007 on Issues and Options for Development Control Policies and your responses have influenced and helped us to refine the topics we need to consider for inclusion. The table below indicates how the Development Control Policy areas could now be grouped and how they could relate to the suggested core strategy objectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Control Policy Areas</th>
<th>Objective</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developing with climate change in mind</td>
<td>8. Support a greener future</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Encourage sustainable transport infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Quality by design’</td>
<td>8. Support a greener future</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Promote pride in attractive, safe, local communities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Facilitate well housed communities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Create healthy living opportunities across the district</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Encourage a vibrant local economy and workforce</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6. Create attractive town centres</td>
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<tr>
<td>Living and working in the district</td>
<td>8. Support a greener future</td>
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<tr>
<td>The ‘natural’ surroundings</td>
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The following table identifies an extensive list of options for Development Control Policy coverage. It is likely that the final suite of development control policy actually required will be smaller than this, probably in the order of 15 to 20 policies. For each suggested option an explanation is given for the potential policy intent. For some policy it may become clear as a preferred option is developed that a further supplementary planning document is required.

We would stress that Development Control Policies are only required if further local definition is needed beyond national, regional and LDF Core policy. For a number of development control policy options we invite your views on whether you agree or disagree about further local elaboration being needed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Control Policy Options</th>
<th>Chain of Conformity</th>
<th>Policy Intent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developing with climate change in mind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CC1 Flood Risk</td>
<td>PPS25 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To set out how the balance between flood risk and regeneration objectives will be assessed in existing developed areas and to define those areas where sustainable drainage measures will be required rather than encouraged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC2 Renewable Energy</td>
<td>PPS22 PPS1 supplement RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To encourage appropriate power generation from renewable energy sources and seek to include on-site micro generation in an increasing range of residential and business developments. No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC3 Energy efficient development</td>
<td>PPS1 Supplement RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To promote sustainable construction methods and the move to zero carbon developments over the plan period. No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC4 Lifetime homes</td>
<td>PPS3 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To support the development of ‘lifetime homes’ which cater for all stages of life and access abilities No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC5 Waste minimisation</td>
<td>PPS10 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To support minimisation of waste in construction and design and encourage reuse of existing buildings and materials. No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC6 Green travel</td>
<td>PPS1 Supplement PPG13 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport. This will include both support for new physical infrastructure and a requirement for submission of green travel plans and transport assessments with planning applications. No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC7 Contaminated Land</td>
<td>PPS23 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To encourage remediation and reuse of contaminated land. No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC8 Pollution</td>
<td>PPS23 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To safeguard air, land and water from pollution. In particular to deliver improvements in areas of local concern including Bridgtown air quality management zones and emissions at Norton Canes from aluminium smelting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC9 Infrastructure capacity</td>
<td>PPS1 PPG13 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To recognise the infrastructure requirements of all development and its effect on existing capacity No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Quality by design’</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>QD1  Design principles</strong></td>
<td>PPS1 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To set out local design principles for all development, to include scale, layout, urban design and landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>QD2  Designing out crime</strong></td>
<td>PPS1 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To provide local design principles for all new development to actively ensure that the potential for crime is reduced or eliminated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>QD3  Parking and access</strong></td>
<td>PPS1 PPG13 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To set out a framework for local parking and access standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>QD4  Access for all</strong></td>
<td>PPS1 Planning and access for disabled people: a good practice guide (ODPM) RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To set a local approach to ‘access for all’ to new developments and modifications to existing developments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>QD5  Developer Contributions</strong></td>
<td>PPS1 C 05/2005 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To set out a local approach to development contributions to provide appropriate infrastructure or facilities to accompany identified developments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>QD6  Development Briefs</strong></td>
<td>PPS1 PPS12 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To help guide via master planning the development of significant or larger schemes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>QD7  The canal environment.</strong></td>
<td>PPS25 PPG15 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To seek the positive use and design of canal environments and associated developments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>QD8  The historic environment</strong></td>
<td>PPG15 PPG16 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To set a tiered approach to protection and where appropriate enhancement of the historic environment including Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Structures of Local Significance/ Local Lists, Grade 1 and II* Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Historic Battlefields and Historic Landscapes. Local elaboration only needed at sub regional level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>QD9  Conservation Area Management Plans</strong></td>
<td>Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Core Strategy</td>
<td>To use Conservation Area Management Plans as positive tools for ensuring new developments conform with or enhance existing Conservation Areas and areas around them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QD10 Landscape Character</td>
<td>PPG7 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To use Landscape Character Assessment as a positive tool for ensuring new developments conform with or enhance existing landscapes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QD11 Parish Plans and Village Design Statements</td>
<td>PPG7 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To provide local status for Parish Plans and Village Design Statements as positive tools for ensuring new developments conform with or enhance existing Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QD12 Public Art</td>
<td>PPS1 RSS</td>
<td>To promote provision of public art at appropriate locations either in its own right or as part of development proposals. No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QD13 Telecommunications</td>
<td>PPG8 RSS</td>
<td>To set out a policy position on suitability of locations for telecommunications equipment. No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QD14 Advertisements</td>
<td>PPS1</td>
<td>To ensure new signs and advertisements are appropriately designed and sited and do not degrade local amenity. No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living and working in the district</td>
<td>Housing Provision</td>
<td>To provide district wide policy guidance for aspects of housing provision, including choices, size, type, densities and affordable housing. No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LW2 Infill development</td>
<td>PPS1 PPS3 Core Strategy</td>
<td>To set out principles for where infill development will be appropriate No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LW3 Phasing of housing.</td>
<td>PPS3 Core Strategy</td>
<td>To guide the phasing of development at housing sites. No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LW4 Low density housing areas</td>
<td>PPS3 Core Strategy</td>
<td>To retain areas of existing lower density housing such as in the AONB villages and Cannock West to help meet aspirational housing needs. No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LW5 Accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers and showpeople</td>
<td>PPS3 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To ensure the accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers and showpeople are adequately catered for at sustainable locations. No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LW6 Sport and recreation</td>
<td>PPG17 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To set out local standards to ensure sufficient space for sport and recreation is retained or delivered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LW7 Town Centres and Retail Development</td>
<td>PPS6 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To set out specific local planning policy to guide developments in the town centres of Cannock, Rugeley, Hednesford, and at local centres, such as Norton Canes. Policy would also cover approaches to commercial development outside town centres. No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LW8 Cultural &amp; Community Facilities</td>
<td>PPS1 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To support appropriate developments which add positively to provision of cultural and community facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LW9 Business Development</td>
<td>PPG4 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To guide new business development and encourage innovative approaches to work including: a. active design and ‘active workplaces’ b. appropriate development proposals which facilitate improved work/life balance including residential conversions to permit live/work development.</td>
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<tr>
<td>LW10 Childcare</td>
<td>PPS1</td>
<td>To support sufficient childcare provision to reduce barriers to employment - including nurseries and indoor play areas No further local elaboration needed</td>
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</table>
| LW11 Tourism   | PPG4  
PPS7  
RSS  
Core Strategy | To support appropriate developments which recognise the untapped tourism potential of the district.  
No further local elaboration needed |
| LW12 Rural Business | PPG4  
PPS7  
RSS  
Core Strategy | To protect the best agricultural land and facilitate appropriate agricultural and farm diversification (including equestrian facilities and to conserve and sustainably re-use traditional farm buildings.  
No further local elaboration needed |
| LW13 Nurseries and Garden Centres  | PPG4  
PPS7  | To provide policy guidance on proposals for Nurseries and Garden Centres.  
No further local elaboration needed |
| LW14 Cemetery  | PPS1  
Core Strategy | To support appropriate proposals for new cemetery provision.  
No further local elaboration needed |
## The natural surroundings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NS1 The Green Belt</th>
<th>PPG2 RSS Core Strategy</th>
<th>To protect and enhance the green belt for conservation and recreation. No further local elaboration needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NS2 The Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</td>
<td>PPS7 PPS9 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To protect areas in and around the AONB and help facilitate delivery of the AONB management plan. No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS3 Hednesford Hills</td>
<td>PPG2 PPS7 Core Strategy</td>
<td>To protect the Hednesford Hills Common and Local Nature Reserve from inappropriate development around its fringes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS4 Forest of Mercia</td>
<td>PPG2 PPS9 Core Strategy</td>
<td>To encourage tree and woodland planning alongside development to contribute to the establishment of the Forest of Mercia. No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS5 Sutton Park/Cannock Chase BEA</td>
<td>PPS9 Core Strategy</td>
<td>To help safeguard and recreate a complex of heathland habitat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS7 Protecting Trees</td>
<td>PPS1 PPS9 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To promote the use of Forestry Commission grant schemes, tree preservation orders, planning conditions and conservation areas as tools for the management and protection of trees and woodlands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS8 Green Spaces and Ecological networks</td>
<td>PPS9 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To protect and enhance green space networks, create green corridors and to safeguard quality and ecology ecologically sensitive sites including the water based ecological environment. No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS9 Priority habitats and species</td>
<td>PPS9 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To facilitate delivery of the biodiversity action plan including tiered site protection for international (SAC), national (SSSI, NNR) and sub-regional (SBI, SPSP and Local Nature Reserves) sites. Local elaboration only needed at sub regional level</td>
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<tr>
<td>NS10 Geological conservation</td>
<td>PPS9 RSS Core Strategy</td>
<td>To protect RIGS and recognised geomorphological sites. No further local elaboration needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Have we identified appropriate Development Control Policy areas and do they adequately conform to and develop the Core Strategy themes?  

Have we identified sufficient Development Control Policy options? Are there options that should be added or alternatively omitted?  

How should we merge policy options to make them more ‘generic’?
### Glossary of terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAP</td>
<td>Area Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AONB</td>
<td>Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AWM</td>
<td>Advantage West Midlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAP</td>
<td>Biodiversity Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEA</td>
<td>Biodiversity Enhancement Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>Borough Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BREEAM</td>
<td>Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>County Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>Cannock Chase District Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDRP</td>
<td>Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHP</td>
<td>Combined Heat and Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CROW</td>
<td>Countryside Right of way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVS</td>
<td>Council for Voluntary Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>District Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCLG</td>
<td>Department of Communities and Local Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEFRA</td>
<td>Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPD</td>
<td>Development Plan Document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPH</td>
<td>Density Per Hectare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERZ</td>
<td>Eastern Regeneration Zone</td>
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<td>GOWM</td>
<td>Government Office for the West Midlands</td>
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<tr>
<td>HA</td>
<td>Hectare</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPCC</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAA</td>
<td>Local Area Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>LDF</td>
<td>Local Development Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>LNR</td>
<td>Local Nature Reserve</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSP</td>
<td>Local Strategic Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBC</td>
<td>Metropolitan Borough Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCB</td>
<td>National Coal Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEET</td>
<td>Not in Education Employment or Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBC</td>
<td>Practice Based Commissioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCT</td>
<td>Primary Care Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPG</td>
<td>Planning Policy Guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPS</td>
<td>Planning Policy Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIGS</td>
<td>Regionally Important Geological Sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSS</td>
<td>Regional Spatial Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>Sustainability Appraisal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAC</td>
<td>Special Area of Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBC</td>
<td>Stafford Borough Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBI</td>
<td>Site of Biological Importance</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCC</td>
<td>Staffordshire County Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCP</td>
<td>Staffordshire Community Partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCS</td>
<td>Sustainable Community Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>SFRA</td>
<td>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHLAA</td>
<td>Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOA</td>
<td>Super Output Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD</td>
<td>Supplementary Planning Document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPG</td>
<td>Supplementary Planning Guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSDC</td>
<td>South Staffordshire District Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSSI</td>
<td>Site of Special Scientific Interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMRA</td>
<td>West Midlands Regional Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMRSS</td>
<td>West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Responses to previous consultation (2006/7)

Most responses were from planning consultants. These responses were largely geared towards supporting site specific development proposals, being referred to either directly or indirectly. Representations from the public totalled 3. This is clearly of concern and we are aiming to get a much higher response this time. The highest number of responses were on Chapter 5. Spatial Strategy; Chapter 6. Issue 5 – Housing; Chapter 7. Spatial Options and Chapter 1. Spatial Portrait. We have summarised comments made so far as follows (NB the terminology used reflects that of the responses submitted; the meaning of abbreviations and acronyms used can be found in the Glossary):

Spatial Strategy

- Doubts expressed on the Council approach to office provision.
- Lack of evidence on sectoral demands to challenge the Regional Spatial Strategy on employment land provision.
- Both support and opposition to extension of Winchester Road and development of land west of Pye Green Road from competing developers.

Housing

- Responses were largely dominated by developers seeking to justify development of site interests for which they are acting.
- Concerns form developers about methodology/approach to housing provision.

We also consulted on an Issues and Options for a Development Control Policies DPD during 2007. That document has now been integrated into the LDF Core Strategy so it is useful to summarise the main areas of feedback:

General Comments:

- Increase reference to national and regional guidance and give better definition of terms
- Develop policies to focus on ecological networks, priority habitats and species and Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priorities and targets and the impact of climate change.
- Develop policies with more specific emphasis on the critical nature of highway infrastructure.

Sustainable Development Principles

- Sequential approach in relation to development principles no longer included in PPS3 although non-Green Belt land should be ahead of Green Belt land.
- Social impact of development not mentioned. Failure to acknowledge importance of open space/green space.
- For flood risk the proposed sequential approach should be amended to take account of PPS25.
- Update to take account of climate change and flood risk issues.
- Insert new principle on reducing the need to travel.
- Only brownfield sites in sustainable locations should be developed.
- Adequate parking should be provided to provide off street parking.

**Design & Amenity**

- BRE Eco homes standards are obsolete.
- Energy efficiency measures need to be maximised.
- Historic environment should be included.
- Consideration of historic character of wider rural landscapes needs to be given.
- Need to include concept of Active Design. Commercial/employment development should include ‘active workplaces’.
- Needs of canal users need to be more explicitly detailed.
- Need to take landscape character based approach on enhancing local landscapes.
- Include reference to Grade 1 and II* Registered Parks and Gardens and Registered Historic Battlefields and historic landscapes.
- Climate change should be afforded higher priority.
- Good quality design/landscaping needed for development adjacent to the Trent and Mersey canal.

**Local Economy**

- Conservation and sustainable use of traditional farm buildings should be included.
- Fails to address other town centre functions, e.g. accessible community facilities.
  - Active workplaces should be promoted.
- Need to ensure land made available for employment and housing.
- Retail policy should be robust to ensure out-of-centre development occurs in a sustainable way.
- Need a policy that supports need for new food retail development.
- Rugeley Town Centre uses need to include employments as well as retail.
- Lack of reference to local centres, e.g. Norton Canes.
- Need to refer to residential conversions to permit live/work development.
- Proposed Hatherton Canal restoration and marina/associated developments should be given greater encouragement.

**Housing**

- More needed about provision of broad sustainable communities. Should be more specific on facilities to be provided in light of PPG17 Audit results.
- Employment land should be safeguarded in accordance with the WMES objectives.
- Reference needed to phasing of housing sites.
- Infill definition should refer to the urban area outside the Green Belt.
- Need to refer to “aspirational housing.” B. Open Space trigger of 10 dwellings considered too low and should be 20. C. Infill only acceptable in main settlements.
- A. Use Government terminology of gypsy and traveller site provision. Criteria too restrictive re AONB, Green Belt, visual amenity, nuisance, etc. “reasonable distance of local facilities” needs defining. Exception policy needed as per Circular 01/06.
- Travelling showpeople clause is too restrictive.
- Concerns over how issues dealt with compared to other housing issues and are too restrictive. An exception policy should be included.
Need reference to phasing of housing.

Infrastructure, Accessibility and Developer Contributions

- Developer contributions must be backed by support of need.
- B. Expand to include cycle/pedestrian tracks/ storage.
- E. Rename ‘Open space, sport & recreation’. Fails to address other community facilities / infrastructure.
- Need to confirm that existing infrastructure capacity can support new development.
- Education contributions shouldn’t be sought for affordable housing.
- Cultural & Community Facilities should be included in the DPD.

6. Natural Environment

- Historic environment of the AONB should be reflected in policy.
- Needs to refer to a Green Space Strategy. Concerned at references to schools as these green spaces are protected by government policies.
- Need to consider geological conservation (PPS9); restoration creation of priority habitats; protection/enhancement/expansion habitats important to conservation biodiversity (CROW Act); maintenance/repair/enhancement of networks; protection of important species/habitats; Sutton Park/Cannock Chase BEA; UK Biodiversity Action Plans & targets; River Trent strategic river corridor; Staffordshire LAA Block 5 Sustainable Development – habitat creation and Local Nature Reserve targets.
- Reference should be made mitigation measures for ecologically sensitive sites and the water based ecological environment.
- Green Belt boundaries should be considered in A. re. their land adjacent to. Rugeley Bypass.
- C. need to ensure that built development intrusions into Green Space subordinate their function. D. Reference is needed to protect trees in the AONB.
- New buildings should be permitted if allocated under a specific policy, e.g. Grove Colliery marina or Hatherton Canal.

We also know some of your wider views facing the future of the district from the following consultations:

- Site Allocations
- Sustainable Communities Strategy
- Cannock Chase Council’s Corporate Plan
APPENDIX C

Key national planning policies:

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development

This discusses the Government's overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. National planning policy promotes the principles of 'sustainable development' which must be treated in an integral way within Local Development Frameworks, in particular the interrelationship between social inclusion, protecting and enhancing the environment, prudent use of natural resources and economic development.

The ‘Planning and Climate Change’ supplement sets out how planning, in providing for the new homes, jobs and infrastructure needed by communities, should help shape places with lower carbon emissions and resilience to the climate change now accepted as inevitable.

PPG2 Green Belts

This outlines the history and extent of Green Belts and explains their purposes. It describes how Green Belts are designated and their land safeguarded. Green Belt land-use objectives are outlined and the presumption against inappropriate development is set out.

PPS3 Housing

This underpins the delivery of the Government's strategic housing policy objectives and the goal of ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent home, which they can afford in a community where they want to live.

PPS4 Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms

This elaborates one of the Government's key aims, to encourage continued economic development in a way which is compatible with its stated environmental objectives. Economic growth and a high quality environment have to be pursued together.

PPS6 Planning for Town Centres

This presents the Government's policy on planning for the future of town centres aiming to ensure their continued vitality or regeneration.

PPS9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

This sets out planning policies on protection of biodiversity and geological conservation through the planning system.

PPS12 Local Development Frameworks
This describes the Government's policy on the preparation of local development documents which will comprise the Local Development framework.

PPG13 Transport

This aims to integrate planning and transport at the national, regional, strategic and local level and to promote more sustainable transport choices both for carrying people and for moving freight.

PPG17 Planning for Open Space Sport and Recreation

This sets out the Government policies for open space, sport and recreation that need to be taken into account by local planning authorities in the preparation of development plans. They may also be material to decisions on individual planning applications.

PPS22 Renewable Energy

This presents the Government's policies for renewable energy, which planning authorities should have regard to when preparing local development documents and when taking planning decisions.

PPS25 Development and Flood Risk

This aims to ensure that flood risk is taken into account at all stages in the planning process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, and to direct development away from areas of highest risk. Where new development is exceptionally necessary in such areas, policy aims to make it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere and where possible reducing overall flood risk.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Scope</th>
<th>Clients</th>
<th>Produced by</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Housing Needs Survey</td>
<td>Update of a 1998 survey to consider affordable housing needs within the district</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>Outside Research and Development</td>
<td>July 2003</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the C3 Housing Market Area of the West Midlands</td>
<td>SHMA in accordance with PPS3 guidance</td>
<td>CCDC, Sandwell MBC, Dudley MBC, Walsall MBC, Wolverhampton CC, South Staffs DC, Telford and Wrekin BC, WMRA</td>
<td>Ecotec</td>
<td>May 2008</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cannock Chase Housing Strategy 2007 - 10</td>
<td>Current iteration of housing intentions for the district</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>July 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cannock Chase District Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment</td>
<td>SHLAA in accordance with PPS3 guidance</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>May 2008</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cannock Chase District Urban Housing Capacity Study</td>
<td>Assessment of district land availability to be replaced by SHLAA</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>January 2005</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Draft Housing and Employment Land Strategy</td>
<td>Analysis of sites suggested for development through the abandoned local plan consultation process</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>October 2003</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Southern Staffordshire, North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth and Rugby Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment</td>
<td>Assessment of Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs along the midlands A5 corridor in accordance with DCLG guidance 02 06</td>
<td>Rugby BC, Lichfield CC, South Staffordshire DC, Nuneaton and Bedworth BC, Cannock Chase DC, North Warwickshire BC, Tamworth BC</td>
<td>Salford Housing and Urban Studies Unit and Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, University of Birmingham</td>
<td>May 2008</td>
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<td>Cannock Chase District Housing Trajectory</td>
<td>Annually produced housing trajectory showing 5 year supply</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>Annual</td>
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<td>Employment</td>
<td>Draft Housing and Employment Land Strategy</td>
<td>Analysis of sites suggested for development through the abandoned local plan consultation process</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>March 2003</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cannock Chase District Council, Employment Land Study, Future Land Estimation Report</td>
<td>An assessment of the existing employment land situation, an examination of how much employment land may be required for the future and the identification of a portfolio of sites for the future</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>SCC</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connecting to Success: West Midlands Economic Strategy</td>
<td>Regional Economic Strategy</td>
<td>AWM and partners across the region</td>
<td>AWM</td>
<td>December 2007</td>
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<td>Cannock Chase Strategic Economic Development Support</td>
<td>Study examining potential future employment sectors</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>Optimat</td>
<td>2007</td>
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<td>National land Use Database</td>
<td>Derelict land database</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>English Partnerships</td>
<td>annual</td>
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<td>Retail / Town Centres</td>
<td>Town Centres Retail Health Check</td>
<td>Town Centres health Check of Cannock, Rugeley and Hednesford</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>White Young Green</td>
<td>March 2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>RSS Phase 2 Revision – Regional Retail Study</td>
<td>Study of Regional Strategic Centres (including Cannock)</td>
<td>WMRA</td>
<td>Roger Tym and Partners</td>
<td>2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rugeley Town Centre. Future Retail Expenditure Study</td>
<td>To provide future forecasts on retail expenditure to guide future town centre policies in the context of proposed residential proposals</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>White Young Green</td>
<td>April 2005</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Draft Joint Commissioning Strategies for Services 2008 – 2011: for Older People; for people with Physical and Sensory Disabilities; for Mental Health; for People with Learning Disabilities</td>
<td>Partnership Joint Commissioning Unit between North Staffordshire, South Staffordshire PCT and Staffordshire County Council – out to consultation until 30 June 08</td>
<td>Joint Commissioning Unit</td>
<td>Joint Commissioning Unit</td>
<td>To be finalised July 2008</td>
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<td>West Side Story: PBC Service and Estates Strategy 2008 / 9: DRAFT – restricted access</td>
<td>Practice Based Commissioning strategy</td>
<td>West Locality Service PBC, SCC, CCDC SBC and SSDC</td>
<td>West Locality Service</td>
<td>April 2008</td>
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<td>Education</td>
<td>Adult and Community learning 3 year Development Plan 2005 – 8</td>
<td>Development plan</td>
<td>SCC</td>
<td>SCC</td>
<td>2005 to 2008</td>
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<td>Category</td>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>Implementing Body</td>
<td>Responsible Body</td>
<td>Date</td>
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<td><strong>Education Planning Obligations Policy annual update 2006 / 7</strong></td>
<td>Criteria for planning applications in terms of provision and need</td>
<td>SCC</td>
<td>SCC</td>
<td>2006 / 2007</td>
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<td><strong>School Organisation Plan 2007 - 2012</strong></td>
<td>Strategic plan for schools</td>
<td>SCC</td>
<td>SCC</td>
<td>2007 – 12</td>
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<td><strong>Community</strong></td>
<td>Cannock Chase Crime and Disorder reduction Partnership Strategic Assessment: DRAFT, restricted access</td>
<td>Staffordshire CDRP</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>September 2007</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Strategic assessment to assist the CDRP in producing its partnership plan</td>
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<td>Our Shared Future: Community Cohesion in Staffordshire</td>
<td>Staffordshire Community Partnership</td>
<td>SCC</td>
<td>2007</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Community Cohesion issues and priorities for action in Staffordshire</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Transport</strong></td>
<td>Transport Modelling</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>Staffordshire CC</td>
<td>March 2008</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Modelling of transport implications of key locations and sites</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Local Transport Plan for Staffordshire 2006 - 11</td>
<td>SCC</td>
<td>SCC</td>
<td>2006 – 11</td>
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<td>Strategic transport plan for the County</td>
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<td>Cannock Line Rail Showcase</td>
<td>CCDC/CENTRO/Staffordshire CC</td>
<td>Faber Maunsell</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>Study to ensure a high standard of service and infrastructure upgrade on the Cannock line</td>
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<td><strong>Climate Change</strong></td>
<td>Cannock Chase District Strategic Flood Risk Assessment</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>Halcrow</td>
<td>May 2008</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>SFRA in accordance with PPS25</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rugeley Town Centre Strategic Flood Risk Assessment</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>Halcrow</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SFRA in accordance with PPS25</td>
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<td><strong>Tourism, Leisure and Recreation</strong></td>
<td>Playing Pitch Strategy and Open Spaces Assessment</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>CCDC (Strategic Leisure)</td>
<td>September 2004</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PPG17 study carried out in two parts, the first dealing with the Playing Pitch Strategy and a Green Space Audit</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cannock Chase Council’s commitment to the provision and improvement of Leisure Services across the District</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Natural Heritage</strong></td>
<td>Biodiversity Survey of Cannock Chase District</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Phase 1 Habitat Survey update prioritising potential areas of development</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan</td>
<td>Management plan</td>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Study in connection with the Appropriate Assessment for the Cannock Extension Canal SAC.</td>
<td>CCDC and the Black Country Authorities</td>
<td>White Young Green</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<td></td>
<td>AA of the LDF Core Strategy to ensure that there is no adverse impact of the Cannock Chase SAC</td>
<td>CCDC and Stafford BC</td>
<td>CCDC and Stafford BC</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cannock Extension Canal Appropriate Assessment</strong></td>
<td>AA under the EC Habitats Directive 92/43 to ensure that the Core Strategy will not have any adverse impact on any site of European importance.</td>
<td>CCDC and the Black Country Authorities</td>
<td>White Young Green</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<td><strong>Landscape Character Assessment</strong></td>
<td>Detailed analysis of landscape type</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>SCC</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<td><strong>Built Heritage</strong></td>
<td>Conservation Area Appraisals</td>
<td>Appraisals of existing and potential new Conservation Areas as a basis for Management Plans</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>Various</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td>Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Plan</td>
<td>Parish Plan</td>
<td>Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Plan Steering Committee</td>
<td>Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Council</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Area Agreement for Staffordshire 2008 to 2011</strong></td>
<td>LAA submission document includes 35 key outcomes for Staffordshire</td>
<td>Staffordshire Community Partnership</td>
<td>SCC</td>
<td>May 2008</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State of Cannock Chase Report</strong></td>
<td>Analysis of statistical data and public perception in Cannock Chase District</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>May 2006</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location Location Location, Channel 4 website, online debate / comments / feedback</strong></td>
<td>Online debate concerning Cannock Chase as 16th Worst Place to live in Britain</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>Channel 4 website</td>
<td>April 2008</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Flood Risk assessment (SFRA)</strong></td>
<td>District wide study based on the sites detailed in the Site Allocation Issues and Options DPD 2007</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>Halcrow</td>
<td>May 2008</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainability Appraisal</strong></td>
<td>SA / SEA of the Cannock Chase LDF</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>Halcrow</td>
<td>2007 onwards</td>
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<td><strong>Rugeley Town Centre Area Action Plan SFRA</strong></td>
<td>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment</td>
<td>CCDC</td>
<td>Halcrow</td>
<td>2008</td>
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ANNEX 2

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL

PROPOSED LDF COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

May 12 2008
BACKGROUND and OBJECTIVES

Cannock Chase Council is embarking on a further stage of public consultation on the Core Strategy of its Local Development Framework (LDF). Previous stages of consultation have had only limited levels of response from the public, and the Council wishes to ensure the maximum level of response for this latest stage, particularly from groups defined as “hard to reach” in the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement.

The objectives of this Communications Strategy are therefore:-

- To maximise public awareness of the consultation exercise and its importance for the future of the district
- To provide a range of opportunities for people to engage with the consultation, ensuring that hard to reach groups have every opportunity to become aware of the consultation and to take part if they wish
- To encourage the maximum possible number of responses from the public, with particular emphasis on hard to reach groups

Measures

The success of the communications campaign will be measured by:

- Media publicity received
- Attendance / footfall at events and exhibitions
- Numbers of consultation responses
STRAPLINE /SLOGAN / GRAPHICS

It is important that the whole consultation is given a clear and uniform branding that can be used on all documents and publications associated with the consultation. This will include the Cannock Chase Council (CCC) logo, but should also include a strong and easily recognisable graphic element that can be used at exhibitions etc.

The authority will have its own views on what may be appropriate, but a stylised “finger post” style signpost has been used successfully elsewhere. This would reflect the rural areas of the district, but might be inappropriate to reflect the urban and aspirational elements of the core strategy. The montage of images used on the Rugeley Town Centre AAP Issues and Options document conveys the range of issues and areas involved, but is probably not suited as a brand that can be easily recognised. Something more strongly graphic is required and it is suggested the Council’s design consultant be asked to consider and suggest some options.

A strong slogan is also required. What is needed is something that is both active and aspirational, reflecting the impact on the future of the area. Again, the council will have a view on this, but the suggested slogan is:

‘Chase Shaping’

Some other ideas might include:

Towards a brighter future
Building a better future
Facing the future
Chasing the future
Making a better Cannock Chase
Your Cannock Chase – your future
Shaping your future
Your community – your future
Making change work for you

If it is possible to engage a local celebrity to assist in supporting the consultation, it will add to the branding, but it is accepted that there may be no-one suitable for this role in the locality.

METHODOLOGY

The aim will be to make use of as many communications channels as possible to reach the maximum number of citizens.

Local media

While readership of local newspapers is high, it cannot be assumed that this channel will reach all citizens, especially those in some hard-to-reach groups. Involving local radio, and if possible, TV should also be attempted to maximise public knowledge. Direct contact with the local media should be established at an early stage to “sell” the consultation and engage the attention of Editors/News Editors, particularly with radio/TV. It is recommended that initial contact is by CCC’s press office team as they already enjoy a relationship of trust with the local media.
A launch event for the media, giving them the opportunity to ask questions and to receive a briefing from senior Councillors (together with a photo opportunity) is strongly recommended. Although such events are not always as well attended by the media as might be wished, it is valuable as a signal to the media of how highly the consultation is regarded by the council and provides an initial opportunity for the council’s press team to “sell” the consultation.

For TV and radio, it is important to have clearly identified spokespeople who will act as the “face” of the Council for the consultation. In view of the importance of the consultation, it is recommended that this should be the responsible Cabinet member or the Leader of the Council. Some authorities have felt that the fact that the LDF is not simply a “planning” strategy means that the Leader of the Council is the most appropriate spokesperson, but this is a matter for the Council. In any event, the decision should be based in part on the likely availability of the spokesperson at short notice to exploit any media opportunities.

It is proposed that a stream of News Releases targeted on the local media be released throughout the consultation, as particular milestones are reached. These will in part be determined by events but should include:

- Publication of Cabinet papers (making clear Cabinet will be taking decision)
- Formal launch of consultation
- Publication of Chase Matters
- Key local events / exhibitions (see below)
- Caption stories based on pictures of events / exhibitions (if appropriate)
- Progress reports on responses (e.g. “Questionnaires flooding in”, “100s of replies received”, “Don’t miss out” etc)
- “Closing date” prompts (e.g. “Only two weeks to have your say…”, “Get your reply in by Friday…” etc)

It may also be desirable to issue News Releases responding to any local controversies or disagreements if and when they occur. This has the advantage of providing a ready response that can be handed out in response to enquiries, made available in local libraries, via the internet and so on. The aim should be to ensure that there is at least one story per week in the local press throughout July and August (this should be aided by the relative scarcity of other news items normally experienced by the press during this period).

If required, News Releases can be drafted by Consult Communications Ltd for subsequent approval/editing by the council (a copy of the council’s style guide will be required). It is recommended that the Council, as the source known and trusted by the local media, actually issue all News Releases.

**Chase Matters**

It is important to make maximum use of Chase Matters, as it is received by all households. If possible, it would be desirable to move forward the date of publication to coincide with the formal launch of the consultation, but it is recognised that this may not be possible because of other schedules which have already been locked to the established publication date.

Chase Matters will be the major communication received by most households regarding the consultation, and it is recommended that as a minimum, eight pages of illustrated material be
included in the magazine to appear as a pull-out insert. This will probably mean increasing the pagination of the magazine, but this should represent a substantial cost saving over a separate, dedicated leaflet. Indeed, if the extra pages are included as the centre pages, the printer should be able to produce additional run-on copies at relatively low cost, providing a stock of leaflets for dissemination at events, exhibitions and so on.

*Chase Matters* should also be distributed with a printed, reply-paid questionnaire as a separate document. Maximising the ease of response will be important in gaining the maximum possible response. It is strongly recommended that the return of the questionnaire is *incentivised* by a substantial prize draw into which all completed questionnaires will be entered (for obvious reasons, entry would be restricted to private individuals). Incentives that have been used successfully elsewhere include:

- A year’s Council Tax (actually a cheque equivalent to the average Band D Council Tax for the district)
- A thousand chances to win a million (£1000 in Premium Bonds)
- A simple cash / vouchers prize

The prize should be large enough to grab the attention of the media, without appearing profligate. The Consultants believe that providing a substantial incentive is extremely important to achieving the best possible response rate, but the Council needs to take a view on what level / character of prize is best suited to its area. Draft rules for a prize draw are available from Consult Communications on request. Our experience is that providing an incentive does not in any way diminish the quality of responses. It would be made clear that only completed forms would be entered. It is recommended that the eventual draw be the subject of further publicity in due course, and be carried out by a leading local figure (for example, the Chairman of the Council).

**Exhibitions / events**

A series of local exhibitions should be held at a number of highly visible public locations, probably using the Council’s existing exhibition trailer. These should include a selection of supermarkets and/or town centres, and, if appropriate, commuter hubs such as railway or bus stations. These events should be staffed by a Council officer able to answer questions about the LDF and the consultation, supported by Consult Communications Ltd (for obvious reasons, it would be desirable to concentrate the events together in terms of timing as far as possible: it is unlikely that spending more than half a day in any location is productive). These events will serve to remind people about the consultation and help target hard-to-reach groups who may not be responsive to the media or *Chase Matters*. As the most deprived areas of the district contain the highest concentrations of the hard to reach, it is suggested that locations convenient to these areas be given the highest priority. It is suggested that the Council take the lead on identifying and organising locations in conjunction with Consult Communications. It should be noted that in our experience, it is unlikely that many additional responses will be received at the exhibitions. However, they have a valuable role in reminding people about the consultation, demonstrating how important it is to the Council and giving citizens the chance to ask questions. Help could be offered, however, to anyone having difficulty with completing the questionnaire.

If required, representatives of key local groups (for example, the Council for Voluntary Services, local tenants’ groups, parish councils, managers of sheltered housing schemes and day centres) could be invited to a consultation meeting at a key location (such as the Council offices) to explain the consultation to them and encourage them both to participate directly, and to encourage others to do so. This event would need to be run by Council officers as it is our experience that
groups are organisations are often suspicious of “consultants”. Subject to demand and the views of the Council, it may be appropriate to stage separate events for different groups, for example parish councils.

A separate event (or possibly more than one) should be staged for local secondary schools, giving students an opportunity to respond. Exactly how these should be organised will depend on the local schools, but the consultation has clear links to citizenship issues within the national curriculum, and schools have responded to similar events by providing, for example, sixth form students or the school council to debate the issues. We have successfully used local radio / TV presenters to act as facilitators at such events in the past, but this is obviously subject to local availability and would be an extra cost. The timing of the school holidays means that this event will almost certainly have to be delayed until September: we believe there is little likelihood of being able to arrange an event before the end of the school year because of the schools’ existing commitments, but a start should be made on organising it as soon as possible.

It is important that all the events are adequately supported by maps, graphics, copies of publications, questionnaires etc. This is to connect the various strands of the consultation and ensure additional information is available if requested.

Direct mail to local groups / organisations

The Council would no doubt be sending copies of the formal consultation document to many key groups and organisations (including local businesses). It is recommended that this is extended to all the groups and organisations that the Council has records for, probably simply enclosing either the “insert” from Chase Matters or a copy of the magazine and the questionnaire, together with a suitable covering letter, including a contact for further information. The aim will be to raise awareness of the consultation in the community and to ask contacts to encourage others to respond. Administratively, it is probably easier for the Council to undertake this activity directly, with Consult Communications advising on the content of the covering letters etc, but Marketing Assistance would be able to assist with distribution if required at extra cost.

Citizens’ Panel

All members of the Citizens’ Panel should be sent a copy of Chase Matters and a questionnaire with a covering letter from the Council through the Council’s independent research organisation. While this will inevitably mean some panel members receive duplicates, it will help ensure a useful core of responses from a group already predisposed to respond to Council consultation.

Visitors

As an area receiving a large number of visitors, the Council may wish to consider producing a very short summary leaflet to be available at Tourist Information Centres etc. A one-third A4 (DL) flyer style leaflet would probably be sufficient. This would act as no more than a signpost to other materials (such as, principally, the website), but may encourage some useful responses from non-residents of the district who may, nonetheless, be seen as stakeholders in its long-term future. Given that much of the consultation will take place over the peak visitor season, this may be a useful additional channel of responses that can easily be sorted from resident responses by home address. If the Council wishes to pursue this idea, it may be desirable to restrict the prize draw to people normally resident in the district.
Website

While our experience suggests it is unlikely that a high proportion of responses will be received via the website, it will be an extremely valuable resource for those seeking further information. It is important that the branding of the consultation is extended to the relevant pages of the website, and prominently linked to the front page.

PROPOSED TIMETABLE

It is understood that the latest stage of consultation will be considered by Cabinet on June 19. The earliest date on which a Cabinet decision can be implemented is July 4, in view of the requirement for a call-in period.

Ideally, the consultation would take place entirely outside the holiday period, but it is recognised that the Council’s timetable does not permit this. However, the proximity of the school holidays make the earliest possible start desirable in order to make the maximum impact before the start of the holidays, and the following schedule is therefore suggested:

June ?  “Warm up” News Release to local media explaining report to Cabinet and its importance (while not prejudging outcome – ie making it clear that Cabinet is being asked to take the decision to go ahead). This may be supplemented with an informal press briefing.

July 4  Press event (media briefing/press conference)

July 7  Formal start of consultation period: Issues and Options full document, web pages and on-line questionnaire etc available from this date

Early July  Meeting with local groups (see above – invitations should be distributed as soon as Cabinet agrees the report, giving reasonable advance notice)

July 14  Start of local events (exhibitions etc). Summary leaflet to be available for these

Mid-end July  Publication of Chase Matters with summary text

September  Schools event(s)

CONCLUSION

We believe this is a comprehensive strategy but are very happy to discuss any alternative suggestions or proposals. If the recommendations here are followed, we believe the Council will be able to demonstrate that it has conducted an effective and engaging consultation, in line with the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement.