



## **Cannock Chase Council**

### **Council Meeting**

**Wednesday 24 January 2024 at 6:00pm**

**In the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock**

#### **Part 1**

Notice is hereby given of the above-mentioned meeting of the Council, which you are summoned to attend for the purpose of transacting the business set out below:

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members**

To declare any interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct.  
Members should refer to the guidance included as part of this agenda.
- 3. Minutes**

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2023, minute numbers 36 – 45, page numbers 27 – 37.
- 4. Chair's Announcements and Correspondence**

To receive any announcements and correspondence from the Chair of the Council.
- 5. Leader's Announcements and Correspondence**

To receive any announcements and correspondence from the Leader of the Council.

## **6. Recommendations Referred from Cabinet:**

Council is requested to consider recommendations from the Cabinet meeting held on 14 December 2023 in respect of the following matters:

### **(i) Development of Cannock Park - Masterplan and Play Area Refurbishment (Cabinet 14/12/23, Draft Minute No. 68)**

"That Council be recommended to consider whether the proposed scheme meets the Cannock Park Trust objectives (as set out in paragraph 5.2 of the 14 December 2023 Cabinet report), and if so, includes into the capital programme for 2024-25 a capital budget of £465,000 (to be financed by £250,000 of S106 funds, £200,000 of Community Infrastructure Levy monies, and a £15,000 grant from the Forest of Mercia). This was in addition to a £220,000 allocation to Cannock Park for CCTV and lighting works as set out in the Safer Streets 5 funding report considered at the same Cabinet meeting."

### **(ii) Local Development Scheme 2023 (Cabinet 14/12/23, Draft Minute No. 69)**

"That Council be recommended to approve the revised Local Development Scheme covering the period December 2022 to December 2025 so that it can be brought into effect on 1 February 2024."

The accompanying reports for the above recommendations can be viewed on the [14 December 2023 Cabinet](#) meeting page on the Council's website.

## **7. Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan Adoption**

Report of the Head of Economic Development & Planning (Item 7.1 - 7.93).

## **8. Comments and Questions on Part 1 Minutes of Cabinet, Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels under Rule 9**

To receive any comments or questions submitted under Rule 9 on Part 1 Minutes of meetings of Cabinet, Committees, Sub-Committees or Panels as included in the Minutes Record circulated alongside this agenda.

## **9. Exclusion of the Public**

The Chair to move the following motion:

"That the public be excluded for the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, and 4, of Part 1, Schedule 12A, of the Local Government Act, 1972."

**Cannock Chase Council**

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**In the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock**

**Part 2**

**10. Comments and Questions on Part 2 Minutes of Cabinet, Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels under Rule 9**

To receive any comments or questions submitted under Rule 9 on Part 2 Minutes of meetings of Cabinet, Committees, Sub-Committees or Panels as included in the Minutes Record circulated alongside this agenda.



**T. Clegg**  
**Chief Executive**

16 January 2024

## Guidance on Declaring Interests at Meetings

### Declaring Interests at Full Council

The Code of Conduct requires that where you have an interest in any business of the Council, and where you are aware or ought reasonably to be aware of the existence of the interest, and you attend a meeting of the Council at which the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.

The following interests must be disclosed where they may be affected by any matter arising at the meeting:

- (a) A **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** is an interest of yourself or your partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners) in respect of employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried out for profit or gain; sponsorship; contracts; land; licences; corporate tenancies; or securities, as defined with the Localism Act, 2011.
- (b) A **Registerable Interest** includes any unpaid directorships or any body of which you are a member, or are in a position of general control, and (i) to which you are appointed by the Council, or (ii) which exercises functions of a public nature, or (iii) which is directed to charitable purposes, or (iv) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy.
- (c) A **Non-Registerable Interest** is any other matter affecting your financial interest or well-being, or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate.

Where the matter **directly relates** to the interest, you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

Where the matter **affects** the interest, but does not **directly relate** to it, you can remain in the meeting and take part **unless** the matter affects the financial interest or well-being to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision, and a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest.

### Please make the nature of the interest clear to the meeting

It would be helpful if, prior to the commencement of the meeting, Members informed the Monitoring Officer of any declarations of interest, of which you are aware. This will help in the recording of the declarations in the Minutes of the meeting.

Some items will be mentioned in the papers for full Council but are not actually being considered by Full Council. In such circumstances the Monitoring Officer's advice to Members is that there is no need to declare an interest unless the particular matter is mentioned or discussed. As a general rule, Members only need to declare an interest at full Council in the following circumstances:

- Where a matter is before the Council for a decision and/or
- Where the matter in which the Member has an interest is specifically mentioned or discussed at the Council meeting.

## Cannock Chase Council

### Minutes of the Meeting of the Council

Held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock

On Wednesday 8 November 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

#### Part 1

**Present:** Councillors:

Pearson, A.R. (Chair)

Foley, D. (Vice-Chair)

Arduino, L.	Jones, P.G.C.
Aston, J.	Jones, V.
Bancroft, J.T.	Kenny, B.
Bishop, L.	Kruskonjic, P.
Boulton, C.	Lyons, N.
Boyer, M.	Lyons, O.
Buttery, M.S.	Mawle, D.
Cartwright, S.M.	Muckley, A.M.
Dunnett, M.J.	Newbury, J.A.A.
Elson, J.S.	Owen, P.
Fisher, P.A.	Preece, J.P.T.L.
Fitzgerald, A.A.	Prestwood, F.
Haden, P.K.	Prestwood, J.
Hill, J.	Stanton, P.
Hoare, M.W.A.	Sutherland, M.
Johnson, J.P.	Theodorou, P.C.
Johnson, P.	Thornley, S.J.
Johnson, T.B. (Leader)	Williams, D.W.G.
Jones, P.T.	Wilson, L.J.

In advance of the start of the formal business of the meeting, the Chair invited all present to stand and mark a minute's silence as a mark of respect in advance of Remembrance Services scheduled to take place this weekend.

#### **36. Apologies**

Apologies were submitted for Councillor C.L. Frew.

#### **37. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members**

Councillor Boulton - agenda item 9 - declared interest as a current taxi driver, will leave room when item is debated.

Member	Interest	Type
Councillor Boulton	Agenda item 9 - Review of Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Driver, Vehicle & Operator Licensing Policy 2023 and CCTV & Dashcam Policy:  Councillor is a private hire taxi driver currently licensed by Cannock Chase Council.	Personal

No other Declarations of Interests were made in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members' Interests.

### 38. Minutes

Councillor Muckley advised of the following required amendment to the 6 September 2023 Council meeting Minutes:

"In Minute No. 33(i), decision (A) to be amended to read (text to be inserted shown as ***bold italic*** text):

- (A) Ensure that the maintenance records of all existing devices ***at Council managed locations*** are up to date, with the expiration dates of the electrode pads monitored, batteries checked and a plan in place to ensure that each device is periodically serviced by a professional.

#### Resolved:

That subject to inclusion of the above amendment, the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 6 September 2023 be approved as a correct record.

### 39. Presentation of Certificate to Honorary Alderman

The Chair reminded Members that at the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 24 May 2023, Council approved that the title of Honorary Alderman be awarded to former Councillor Gerald Molineux. The title was in recognition of eminent service rendered to the Council, as a past Member, for at least three terms in office.

This was a prestigious award that was not only given in relation to length of service but also dedication to the position of ward councillor, and it was considered Gerald was certainly worthy of such an award. He was an outstanding councillor and a credit to this authority.

The Chair was pleased to report that former Councillor Molineux was in attendance at today's meeting and so invited him to forward to collect his award and invited all Members to join in congratulating him.

### 40. The Chair's Announcements and Correspondence

No announcements were made by the Chair.

### 41. Leader's Announcements and Correspondence

#### (i) Redhill Primary School Visit

"Last month I was invited by the chair of governors and the headteacher to visit Redhill School, which is the primary school located in Wright's Avenue, Cannock North ward.

The former chair of governors was of course Frank Allen, so it was an easy to decision to say thank you and yes to the invitation.

I had not been in the school since I was 11 years of age, when I played football for St. Peters School against Redhill. If my memory is correct, we got well and truly thrashed that day 7 goals to 1.

What struck me was that the school had undergone a major redesign. The whole of the site was bright and conveyed a feel of spaciousness.

The chair of governors and the head introduced me to all the pupils in the various year groups and their class teachers. It was a pleasure to meet them all, the children were working hard as were the teachers.

When it is remembered that Redhill School has had some difficult Ofsted inspections a few years ago, it is a credit to the pupils, the teachers, the leadership team, the governors, and of course the parents that the school is now rated 'satisfactory' and is looking to improve on that assessment.

I make this announcement because it is a great example of our statutory services and our communities working together to improve, achieve, and thrive. I saw a happy school at Redhill and it was my pleasure to visit.

There must be other positive stories from our schools and the various groups and organisations that operate in our district. We would like to hear about them and highlight the things we do together in our community."

**(ii) Development of Former Car Park - Avon Road**

"The Avon Road location is to be the site of a new care facility, located close to Cannock town centre. The home will have 33 beds and will cater for the needs of people with disabilities. The project will bring 100 jobs to our district.

National provider Exemplar Health Care will own and manage the property, whilst the Midlands based company Deeley Group will be the construction firm.

The building will have 3 floors, which will include communal living space, sensory bathrooms, a therapy room, gardens, and a car park.

Members will be aware that the car park was earmarked for development some time ago.

This is very welcome investment into Cannock town centre. It helps fill a need for complex nursing care in our district whilst facilitating independence and giving people the chance to be near local amenities."

**(iii) Construction Academy - South Staffordshire College Cannock Campus**

"South Staffordshire College has moved its construction courses from its Rodbaston site to its Cannock College campus. This is following a successful bid for just under £398,000 to Cannock Chase Council for monies provided by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

The new facility was officially opened by Amanda Milling MP, and representatives from this authority also attended. These were the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive (Place), the Head of Economic Development & Planning, and me.

In our district 9 out of 10 jobs are in some form of construction specialism. There are also 20% more job openings within construction than the national average.

Right in the town centre, the college is perfectly located to support young people and adults to gain valuable skills and experience to enable them to secure sustained employment within the construction sector.

The college will also support people already working in the industry to gain higher skills to help increase their earning potential.

The funding provided has enabled the college to build a bespoke carpentry workshop for both bench and site working. Also, there is a purpose-built 'Wet Trades' workshop to support training in floor laying, painting, and of course, brick laying.

The courses were launched in September this year and it was pleasing to hear from the Principal of South Staffordshire College that they are already in high demand.

Such projects come about because of the work of all Members in this Chamber, irrespective of political party, and of course the hard work and dedication of our Officers.

It was a pleasure to visit the college and meet a few of the young people undertaking the various courses.”

#### **(iv) Safer Streets 5**

“I am pleased to highlight that £500,000 is to be invested in combating and preventing anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the Cannock South and Cannock West wards.

The money comes from the 'Safer Streets 5' Fund following a successful bid by the Crime Commissioner's Office to the Home Office.

The project design comes from the Commissioner's team and the funding will be spent by carrying out initiatives in the 2 wards.

This will play a key role in making our streets and our communities safe for both locals and visitors.

The interventions are focused where there is good evidence of positive delivery and include: gating and fencing; CCTV; street lighting; and public guardianship programmes which include street pastors, safe spaces, taxi marshals, environmental improvements, and outreach support.

All the work will complement the Levelling Up proposals for the town centre and plans are in hand for the regeneration of Cannock Park.

The local management will be carried out by our own Community Safety team who must also be congratulated for their work in formulating the successful bid. Thanks also go to the Councillors from the relevant wards and portfolio holder for their contributions.”

#### **(v) Remembrance**

“As we meet here today, we are reminded of the rich tapestry of history that has shaped this district, particularly the deep links that Cannock Chase has with the military. From the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when our land was considered for what became the Woolwich Arsenal, to the World Wars when our district served as a training ground for brave soldiers, Cannock Chase has always been a beacon of resilience and strength.

During the First World War, our district was home to the Brocton and Rugeley training camps, where up to 40,000 soldiers from across the UK prepared for the Western Front. These camps were not just places of training, but also communities, complete with shops, places of worship, and leisure areas.

In the Second World War, RAF Hednesford opened its doors, training mechanics, and later, served as a School of Recruit Training. Today, the Army Cadets continue this legacy of service at their training centre on the site of the old Rugeley camp.

While the landscape of Cannock Chase is now recognised for its outstanding natural beauty, the remnants of crumbled buildings, training trenches, and rifle ranges serve as a poignant reminder of our past. As we look to the future, let us remember the



sacrifices made on this land and strive to uphold the values of resilience, community, and service that have defined Cannock Chase throughout its history.

But let us also remember the service of those within our own council chamber. We are proud to have among us a Royal Marine who serves as our Armed Forces Champion and other councillors who have served in the Army, including the Staffordshire Regiment. Their service to our community and country continues in their roles as public servants. Their sacrifices and support are testament to the strength and resilience of our community.

Therefore, this week, we will pay tribute and honour to the memories of those who have served and sacrificed for our country. We pay tribute to their courage, dedication, and legacy. We also express our gratitude to the men and women who are currently serving in the armed forces for protecting our freedom and security.

They deserve our respect, our support, and our recognition. That is why I can announce today that Cannock Chase District Council is committed to strengthening its offer to the armed forces via the Armed Forces Covenant. I will work closely with the Armed Forces Champion to ensure that those who serve or have served in the armed forces and their families are treated fairly.

We want to ensure that our service personnel and their families have access to our area's best services and opportunities. We want to foster a strong relationship between the Council, the community, and the armed forces. We want to express our appreciation for their service, not only today, but every day.

## **42. Motions Submitted Under Council Procedure Rule 6**

- (i) Consideration was given to the following Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 6 by Councillor O. Lyons, Leader of the Opposition:

### **Rugeley Boardwalk**

"Rugeley boardwalk previously linked Brook Square and Albion Street. It was first closed as a measure to 'make it safe' in October 2018 after part of it collapsed. Investigation found that parts of the wooden supporting structure had rotted and, as a result, the whole boardwalk was stripped down.

On 18<sup>th</sup> August 2018, Cllr Justin Johnson launched a petition requesting the Labour Cabinet at the time repair the boardwalk as a priority. Over 600 people signed the petition, describing the dismantled structure an 'eyesore'. Local businesses expressed how they felt the derelict shell of a structure negatively impacted footfall to Rugeley Town Centre. In July 2019, Rugeley Conservative Councillors wrote again to the former Labour Leader, George Adamson, asking that repairs be considered.

The previous Cabinet agreed to consider the issue highlighted by the Conservative Team and, just prior to the pandemic, set aside £346,000 in the 2020/2021 budget to cover repairs to bridges and boardwalks and for the general maintenance of Council assets. As the previous Cabinet had included a maintenance component, the sum quickly diminished as the general maintenance of wider Council assets resulted in ongoing costs and, naturally, safety works were prioritised. At that time, there was no limit set on the amount to be spent on maintenance, nor was there a specific sum allocated to the repair of bridges and boardwalks.

Three months after the change of administration in 2021 and following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions, the Conservative Cabinet adopted a new Corporate Maintenance Plan and Asset Strategy. The purpose was to build in resilience and enable longer term planning. The Plan committed to replacing bridges and

boardwalks over a three-year period starting from 2021 and the first stage of that process was to review of all bridges within the Council's ownership.

Once the review completed, the remaining £110,000 from the previously allocated budget was set aside in the Capital Programme. This time it was specifically ringfenced to cover the repair of 3 bridges and boardwalks – Rugeley Boardwalk, Anglesey Nature Reserve and Rawnsley Woods.

Following this, a procurement exercise took place in respect of some of the works but the cost of replacing each of the three bridges and boardwalks came in significantly over budget. Combined, the cost of works to all three bridges and boardwalks was over double the allocated budget. This was weighed up in light of wider Council priorities and against the economic backdrop at the time. The Conservative Cabinet agreed that such an excessive overspend of public funds on only three bridges was unjustifiable and would not be prudent given the economic climate at that time. The Conservative Cabinet agreed that, despite this, bridges and boardwalks would remain a priority and diarised that they be reconsidered again in Autumn 2023, when it was hoped, inflation would begin to fall and economic pressures eased.

In May 2023, the administration changed again and, last month, the Labour and Green Coalition agreed to replace the two bridges at Anglesey Nature Reserve and Rawnsley Woods using the funds already identified and allocated within the previous budget. The Labour and Green Coalition also announced that Rugeley Boardwalk would not be reconsidered in Autumn 2023 as originally planned and, rather than be prioritised, it would instead be considered amongst proposals for other wider capital projects falling within the standard, annual budget setting process.

In the meantime, Conservative Councillors have been working to assist and ensure Rugeley Boardwalk remains a priority. Working with the local community, local businesses and a number of Rugeley Town Councillors, a proposal has been prepared to redesign the wider area surrounding the former Rugeley Boardwalk, replace the pathway across the water and landscape the surroundings. The cost estimates for the new proposals provided by professionals are considerably lower when compared against previous estimates. The process for submitting the design proposals has been confirmed with Officers at the District Council and the required tender process has been discussed with the Clerk at Rugeley Town Council.

I therefore move and request that, subject to confirmation of the project by Rugeley Town Council, Cabinet take the time to review the imminent forthcoming proposals in respect of Rugeley Boardwalk and the surrounding area. I ask that the design proposals be considered by Cabinet ahead of the upcoming budgetary timeframe on the basis that funds have already been set aside for this purpose and consideration be given to approving that the sum of £35,000 be allocated to support Rugeley and contribute towards the wider project and plans to renovate Rugeley Boardwalk.”

**Resolved:**

That in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 6(5), the Motion be referred to the next practicable Cabinet meeting for consideration and report, as it was considered the Motion would have a financial impact on the Council as per Council Procedure Rule 6(4).

- (ii) Consideration was given to the following Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 6 by Councillor Haden, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:

**Hedgehogs**

“With hedgehog numbers in decline, there is a great need to increase awareness. There has never been a better time to refocus on hedgehog conservation.

Preferred habitats for Hedgehogs include wooded edges, hedgerows and increasingly gardens. Bushes, twigs, and leaves on the ground provide cover and nesting materials.

Hedgehogs are listed as a species of principal importance in England under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (Section 41), and this helps to ensure that the survival of Hedgehogs is a consideration within the Planning process.

The Council currently encourages developers to use hedgehog friendly fencing, and CP12 of the Local Plan focuses on biodiversity and geodiversity.

I move that Hedgehog Friendly Fencing be incorporated into the landscape designs of all future Council managed developments and that steps be taken within all Council maintained Nature Reserves to ensure they are as hedgehog friendly as possible; this could include incorporating Hedgehog Highways and considering Hedgehog houses in suitable locations.

In addition to this, I move that the Council participates in Hedgehog Awareness Week which falls in May of each year and helps to raise awareness of the importance of Hedgehogs and the threats that they face. The Council could support Hedgehog Awareness week through online campaigns, social media awareness and potential initiatives through the Cannock Chase Can app.

The overall goal is to promote greater awareness of the plight of the hedgehog and to encourage residents to take action in order to protect and conserve this beloved and iconic species.”

Councillor Wilson moved the following amendment to the Motion, which was duly seconded by Councillor Aston

“This Council fully resolves that a letter be sent to the local MP requesting that Hedgehogs should be added to Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981.

Section 9(1) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 prohibits the killing, injuring, or taking by any method of those wild mammals listed on Schedule 5 of the Act.

Section 9(4)(a) prohibits the damage, destruction, or obstruction of access to any structure or place which any wild mammal listed on Schedule 5 uses for shelter or protection, and Section 9(4)(b) prohibits the disturbance of any such mammal while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.”

The Amendment was accepted by Councillor Haden (following clarification of what the Amendment was proposing), and therefore formed part of the substantive Motion.

**Resolved (unanimous):**

That:

- (A) Hedgehog Friendly Fencing be incorporated into the landscape designs of all future Council managed developments and that steps be taken within all Council maintained nature reserves to ensure they are as hedgehog friendly as possible; this could include incorporating Hedgehog Highways and considering Hedgehog Houses in suitable locations.
- (B) The Council participates in Hedgehog Awareness Week which falls in May of each year and helps to raise awareness of the importance of hedgehogs and the threats that they face.
- (C) It be noted the Council could support Hedgehog Awareness week through online campaigns, social media awareness and potential initiatives through the Cannock Chase Can app.

(D) A letter be sent to the local MP requesting that Hedgehogs should be added to Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981.

(iii) Consideration was given to the following Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 6 by Councillor Theodorou, Resources & Transformation Shadow Portfolio Leader:

### **Holocaust Memorial Day**

“Holocaust Memorial Day (“HMD”) serves as a reminder of the atrocities of the Holocaust, during which approximately 6 million Jews, along with other minority groups, were systematically persecuted and murdered.

I ask that this Council reiterates our strong opposition to antisemitism, racism, and hatred in all its forms against Jewish people, emphasising our solidarity with Jewish people, both within our local community and across the world. I ask that, through this motion, we reaffirm our commitment to fostering understanding, tolerance, and inclusivity within our community, ensuring that the lessons of the Holocaust continue to guide us towards a more compassionate and just society.

I move that we, members of Cannock District Council, also agree to formally mark Holocaust Memorial Day on an annual basis within our community.

In recognition of Holocaust Memorial Day, I propose that Council agrees to light a flame located within Cannock Chase in memory of the lives lost, beginning on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and each year thereafter.

In addition to this, I ask that Council consider extending an invitation to our local community, including members of the Jewish Community and other associated groups, to participate in a Memorial Service during the flame lighting ceremony.”

### **Resolved (unanimous):**

That:

- (A) The Council reiterates its strong opposition to antisemitism, racism, and hatred in all its forms against Jewish people, emphasising our solidarity with Jewish people, both within our local community and across the world.
- (B) The Council reaffirms its commitment to fostering understanding, tolerance, and inclusivity within our community, ensuring that the lessons of the Holocaust continue to guide us towards a more compassionate and just society.
- (C) In recognition of Holocaust Memorial Day, the Council lights a flame located within Cannock Chase in memory of the lives lost, beginning on 27 January 2024 and every year thereafter.
- (D) An invitation be extended to the local community, including members of the Jewish community and other associated groups, to participate in a memorial service during the flame lighting ceremony.

At the conclusion of the vote on the Motion a further minute’s silence was observed by all present.

(iv) Consideration was given to the following Motion submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 6 by Councillor Foley, Vice-Chair of the Council:

“Cannock Chase District Council notes that:

- Care experienced people face significant barriers that impact them throughout their lives.

- Despite the resilience of many care experienced people, society too often does not take their needs into account.
- Care experienced people often face discrimination and stigma across housing, health, education, relationships, employment and in the criminal justice system.
- Care experienced people often face a postcode lottery of support.
- As corporate parents, councillors have a collective responsibility for providing the best possible care and safeguarding for the children who are looked after.
- All corporate parents should commit to acting as mentors, hearing the voices of looked after children and young people and to consider their needs in any aspect of council work.
- Councillors should be champions of our looked after children and challenge the negative attitudes and prejudice that exists in all aspects of society.
- The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies, such as councils, to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation of people with protected characteristics.

Cannock Chase District Council resolves that:

1. When making any decisions in relation to its policies or formulating its Council Plan that it recognises that Care Experienced people are a vulnerable group who face discrimination.
2. That it recognises that Councils have a duty to put the needs of vulnerable people at the heart of decision-making through co-production and collaboration.
3. That in the delivery of the Public Sector Equality Duty the Council includes care experience in the publication and review of Equality Objectives and the annual publication of information relating to people who share a Protected Characteristic in services and employment.
4. That this council will treat care experience as if it were a Protected Characteristic so that future services and policies made and adopted by the Council should be assessed through Equality Impact Assessments to determine the impact of changes on people with care experience, alongside those who formally share a Protected Characteristic.
5. To formally call upon all other bodies to treat care experience as a Protected Characteristic until such time as it may be introduced by legislation.
6. To formally call upon all other bodies to adopt corporate parenting for children in care and care experienced people until such time as it may be introduced by legislation.
7. For the Council to proactively seek out and listen to the voices of care experienced people when developing new policies based on their views.

*This motion is based on a model motion developed by Show Us You Care Too”*

Councillor O. Lyons moved the following amendment to the Motion, which was duly seconded by Councillor Sutherland:

“That the Motion be referred, in full, to the relevant Scrutiny Committee for review and consideration.”

The proposed Amendment was rejected by Councillor Foley and therefore a debate was held on the Amendment.

A vote was then held on the Amendment which was lost.

Following further clarification on the purpose of the previous amendment, Councillor D.W.G. Williams moved the following further Amendment to the Motion, which was duly seconded by Councillor O. Lyons:

“That the motion be referred to the relevant Scrutiny Committee for consideration and review of the support offered to Care Experienced People by Cannock Chase Council.”

The proposed Amendment was accepted by Council Foley and therefore formed part of the substantive Motion.

**Resolved (unanimous):**

That the Motion be referred to the relevant Scrutiny Committee for consideration and review of the support offered to Care Experienced People by Cannock Chase Council.

*(Councillor Arduino left the meeting at the end of this item.)*

**43. Periodic Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations**

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Law and Governance (Item 8.1 - 8.7).

*(Councillor Arduino returned to the meeting during the presentation of this item.)*

**Resolved (unanimous):**

That:

- (A) The timescales, review process, and associated matters for the periodic review of polling districts, polling places, and polling stations be noted.
- (B) A further report be brought before Council on completion of the review.

**44. Review of Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Driver, Vehicle & Operator Licensing Policy 2023 and CCTV & Dashcam Policy**

Consideration was given to the Report of the Deputy Chief Executive-Place (Item 9.1 - 9.119).

*(Councillor Boulton left the meeting at the start of this item having declared an interest in it and did not take part in the debate or vote on it.)*

*(Councillor Newbury left and returned to the meeting during the presentation of this item.)*

The Environment & Climate Change Portfolio Leader, Councillor Muckley, moved the following amendments to the report, which were duly seconded:

“That report recommendations 2.3 and 2.4 be amended as follows (proposed amendments are shown in ***bold italic*** text):

- 2.3 The Head of Regulatory Services, ***in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment & Climate Change***, be authorised to make amendments to the Policies required due to changes in legislation or government guidance and variations to the Policy in the interests of service improvement / operational efficiency.
- 2.4 The Head of Regulatory Services, subject to broad headline dates being agreed by Council, be given the discretion, ***in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment & Climate Change*** to determine the timescales within the revised Policy relating to vehicle emissions, the phasing out of licensed vehicles

powered only by internal combustion engines and the introduction of electric and hybrid vehicles into the licensed taxi and private hire fleet.”

**Resolved (unanimous):**

- (A) The revised Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Driver, Vehicle & Operator Licensing Policy 2023, as included at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved and adopted.
- (B) The proposed CCTV & Dashcam Policy, as included at Appendix 12 to the report, be approved and adopted.
- (C) The Head of Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment & Climate Change, be authorised to make amendments to the Policies required due to changes in legislation or government guidance and variations to the Policy in the interests of service improvement / operational efficiency.
- (D) The Head of Regulatory Services, subject to broad headline dates being agreed by Council, be given the discretion, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment & Climate Change, to determine the timescales within the revised Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Driver, Vehicle & Operator Licensing Policy relating to vehicle emissions, the phasing out of licensed vehicles powered only by internal combustion engines and the introduction of electric and hybrid vehicles into the licensed taxi and private hire fleet.
- (E) The Chief Executive be requested to present the revised Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Driver, Vehicle & Operator Licensing Policy to the Staffordshire Sustainability Board, with a view to gaining County-wide consensus relating to taxi and private hire vehicle emissions; the phasing out of licensed vehicles powered only by internal combustion engines; and the introduction of electric and hybrid vehicles into the County’s licensed taxi and private hire fleets.

**45. Comments and Questions on Part 1 and Part 2 Minutes of Cabinet, Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels Under Council Procedure Rule 9**

None received.

The meeting closed at 7:43 p.m.

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**Chair**





## Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan Adoption

<b>Committee:</b>	Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	24 January 2024
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Economic Development and Planning
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Regeneration & High Streets

---

### **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To seek approval to make (adopt) the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan which will form part of the Cannock Chase District development plan, following the positive referendum result.

### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Council note the results of the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan referendum held on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024.
- 2.2 That Council make (adopt) the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan (see Appendix 1) under Section 38A(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, including approval of the publication of the Regulation 19 'Decision Statement' (see Appendix 2).

#### **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 2.3 Neighbourhood Planning is one of the provisions of the Localism Act (2011, as amended). Neighbourhood planning aims to help local communities play a direct role in planning for the areas in which they live and work.
- 2.4 Cannock Wood Parish Council applied to Cannock Chase Council for the land within the Parish boundary to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area in May 2019. Cannock Wood Parish Council has been the body responsible for producing the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan (referred to as the qualifying body in legislation).
- 2.5 The Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan has been the subject of several rounds of public consultation before being independently examined by an appointed Examiner. The Examiners report (received September 2023) recommended that the Plan, subject to modifications, should proceed to referendum. The District Council agreed with the Examiner recommendations and the decision to proceed to referendum was confirmed on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023.
- 2.6 The referendum on the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan was held on the 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024. Eligible voters (i.e., the electorate of the Cannock Wood Parish) were asked the following question: 'Do you want Cannock Chase District Council to use to the Neighbourhood Plan for Cannock Wood to help it decide planning

applications in the neighbourhood area?’ The result of the referendum was a majority ‘yes’ vote (92% of votes cast in favour of ‘yes’).

- 2.7 In line with The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended), if the majority of those who vote in a referendum are in favour of the draft neighbourhood plan, then the neighbourhood plan must be made by the local planning authority within 8 weeks of the referendum. This report seeks approval for the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan to be made (adopted) which will enable it to form part of the local development plan and have material weight in decision making for planning applications.

### **3 Key Issues**

- 3.1 Cannock Wood Parish Council have produced the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan over the course of the past 5 years and have sought to proactively engage with their electorate through consultation and with officers at the District Council to develop the plan to its final version. The plan was approved for referendum by an independent examiner, subject to modifications which were agreed with the Parish Council and made to the plan following the examination. The plan was successful at referendum, with a 30.44% turnout and with 92% of eligible voters in favour of the plan.
- 3.2 As per existing delegated authorities, the Head of Economic Development and Planning is authorised to make decisions on all steps in the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan except for the final making (adoption) of a Neighbourhood Plan by the Council (see Cabinet Report 14.12.17).
- 3.3 There are narrow circumstances where the local planning authority is not required to make the neighbourhood plan which do not apply in this case. The Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with and does not breach human rights obligations. The referendum result is not disputed by any legal challenge. As such, the Council must ‘make’ the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan in line with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

### **4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1 The Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan will help facilitate all aspects of the Council’s priorities which have development implications, as it is in broad conformity with the Cannock Chase Local Plan (Part 1).
- 4.2 The making of the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan will particularly support Priority 3 - The Community, as it empowers the community of Cannock Wood in planning for their parish.

### **5 Report Detail**

- 5.1 Neighbourhood Planning is one of the provisions of the Localism Act (2011, as amended). The Council has a statutory duty to support Neighbourhood Plans pursuant to Schedule 4B of the Parish and Country Planning Act 1990, Section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). This duty includes designating Neighbourhood Areas, publicising submitted plan proposals, arranging the independent examination, running the referendum and – should

there be a majority (50%+1) 'yes' vote – making (adopting) the Neighbourhood Plan.

- 5.2 Neighbourhood planning aims to help local communities play a direct role in planning for the areas in which they live and work. Neighbourhood Plan production is an optional choice for communities. A Town or Parish Council is responsible for preparing a Neighbourhood Plan in Cannock Chase District (or neighbourhood forums for non-parished areas, where applicable). This Plan can show how the community wants to shape the development of their local area. The community can consider a range of issues including where they want new developments to be built; what those new buildings should look like; and what infrastructure should be provided.
- 5.3 In this case, the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan was prepared by Cannock Wood Parish Council. The Plan contains a number of policies that will be used to determine planning applications in the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Area (same area as the Cannock Wood Parish area). These include policies relating to protecting and enhancing local open spaces, heritage assets and rights of way; promoting developments and other improvements within the Parish centre; promoting housing developments, including encouraging the provision of bungalows where viable; and supporting the redevelopment of specific employment areas. The Plan has to be in broad conformity with national and local planning policies and guidance.
- 5.4 Cannock Wood Parish Council applied to Cannock Chase Council for the land within the Parish boundary to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May 2019. The application for the Neighbourhood Area designation was for the whole of the Cannock Wood Parish only. The District Council was therefore required to designate the Neighbourhood Area as requested (in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012, as amended) Regulation 5A). On the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2019, Cannock Chase Council (via delegated authority) resolved to designate the Cannock Wood Parish as the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Area.
- 5.5 The principal stages of consultation included a detailed survey via a paper booklet delivered to every house and online. Results were published at the end of 2021. Draft objectives were drawn up and consulted upon in February 2022 followed by a drop-in event at the Village Hall. Consultation on informal draft policy took place in March 2022. Formal consultation under Regulation 14 was undertaken between 30 May 2023 and 11 July 2023.
- 5.6 The Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan was submitted by the Parish Council to Cannock Chase District Council in October 2022 for assessment by an independent examiner. The Plan (and associated documents) was published for consultation by Cannock Chase District Council for 6 weeks between 3<sup>rd</sup> July and 14<sup>th</sup> August 2023 (the Local Authority publicity consultation period- Regulation 16). Mr Andrew Freeman BSc (Hons) DipTP DipEM FRTPI was appointed as the Independent Examiner for the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan and all comments received to the Local Authority publicity consultation period were passed on for his consideration.
- 5.7 The Examiners Report was received on the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023. The Examiner concluded that subject to modifications the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan

met the Basic Conditions. It also met all of the relevant legal requirements. On this basis it should therefore proceed to referendum.

- 5.8 Schedule 4B (12) of the Parish and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, requires that a local authority must consider each of the recommendations made in the Examiner's report and decide what action to take in the response to each recommendation. If the authority is satisfied that, subject to the modifications being made, the draft Neighbourhood Plan meets the legal requirements and basic conditions as set out in legislation, then the plan can proceed to referendum. This decision should take place within 5 weeks of receipt of the Examiners report (Regulation 17A of the Regulations).
- 5.9 Cannock Chase Council issued a 'Decision Statement'<sup>1</sup> (in accordance with Regulation 18 of the Regulations) on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023 confirming that the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan, as revised according to the proposed modifications, complied with the legal requirements and Basic Conditions set out in the Localism Act 2011; with the provisions made by or under sections 38A and 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004; and such matters as prescribed in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The Plan could therefore proceed to referendum. The referendum must be held within 56 days of the 'Decision Statement' date (or 65 days where this would align with other elections).
- 5.10 The Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan referendum was held on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024. Eligible voters within the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Area were asked the following question: 'Do you want Cannock Chase District Council to use to the Neighbourhood Plan for Cannock Wood to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?' This is the format prescribed in the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations, 2012 (as amended). The referendum was held in accordance with these regulations, similar to those provisions for local government elections. Section 38A(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act stipulates that a local planning authority must make a neighbourhood plan if in the referendum more than half of those voting have voted in favour of the plan (i.e., more than 50%).<sup>2</sup> The result of the referendum was a majority 'yes' vote (92% of votes cast in favour of 'yes' (223 votes) from a turnout of 30.44%).
- 5.11 The District Council is required to 'make' (adopt) the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan within 8 weeks from the date of the 'yes' vote referendum. Once 'made' (adopted) the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the Cannock Chase District development plan and will be used to determine planning applications within the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Area. Note: as per Section 3 of the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 (which amends Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004) a neighbourhood plan that has been approved at referendum but not yet made (i.e., adopted) by the local planning authority already forms part of the development plan. This only ceases if the local planning authority decide not to make (adopt) the neighbourhood plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Under existing delegated authority- see Cabinet Report of 14/12/17

<sup>2</sup> The authority are not to be subject to this duty if they consider that the making of the plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any retained EU obligation or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998).

- 5.12 It is therefore recommended that Council makes (adopts) the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan as part of the development plan for Cannock Chase District.
- 5.13 Following the decision to make (adopt) the neighbourhood plan, the Council must also issue a 'Decision Statement' to that effect (see Appendix 2). It is recommended that Council approves the publication of the Decision Statement.

## **6 Implications**

### **6.1 Financial**

The government provides grants to support councils in meeting their statutory duties and £5,000 can be claimed per designated Neighbourhood Area, up to a maximum of five designations. This limit has been reached. A further £20,000 can be claimed after a successful referendum has been held (there is no limit on the number of Neighbourhood Plans this relates to). There are no financial implications for 'making' the Neighbourhood Plan.

### **6.2 Legal**

The results of the referendum are not subject to legal challenge. There are no legal implications to 'making' the Neighbourhood Plan. However, it is likely there would be legal implications if the Council did not make the Neighbourhood Plan as this would conflict with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

### **6.3 Human Resources**

There are no direct implications on human resources. The 'making' of the Neighbourhood Plan will require publicising by the Policy Team but this is part of the anticipated work program.

### **6.4 Risk Management**

The main area of risk relates to non-compliance with the legislative requirements; however, this has been minimised via the process of independent Examination; production of the required documents at each stage in the process; and the production of this Council report and accompanying Decision Statement that fulfil the Council's duties.

### **6.5 Equalities and Diversity**

The Neighbourhood Plan is subject to examination by an independent inspector who determined that the plan met all legal requirements and the Basic Conditions. As such, the plan should support equality and diversity.

### **6.6 Health**

The plan contains a number of local planning policies which should support healthy lifestyles including CW9 Tranquillity and Light Pollution, CW10 Footpath and Bridleway Improvements, CW11 Highway Safety, CW13 Public Realm and Open Space

### **6.7 Climate Change**

The plan contains a number of local planning policies which should support climate change mitigation such as CW7 Protecting, conserving, and enhancing

the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (National Landscape) and CW8 Protect and enhance the Biodiversity and Geodiversity of the Parish including Tree and Hedgerow coverage.

## **7 Appendices**

Appendix 1: Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan

Appendix 2: Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan Decision Statement

## **8 Previous Consideration**

None. Development of the Neighbourhood Plan has been subject to delegated powers.

## **9 Background Papers**

- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- Localism Act 2011,
- Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017,
- Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended),
- National Planning Practice Guidance (as updated),
- Examiner Report on the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan (2023),
- Cannock Chase Council Regulation 18 Decision Statement (18<sup>th</sup> Oct 2023)

**Contact Officer:** Sushil Birdi  
**Telephone Number:** 01543 464 326  
**Ward Interest:** Rawnsley Ward  
**Report Track:** Council 24/01/24

# CANNOCK WOOD PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2022 - 2039



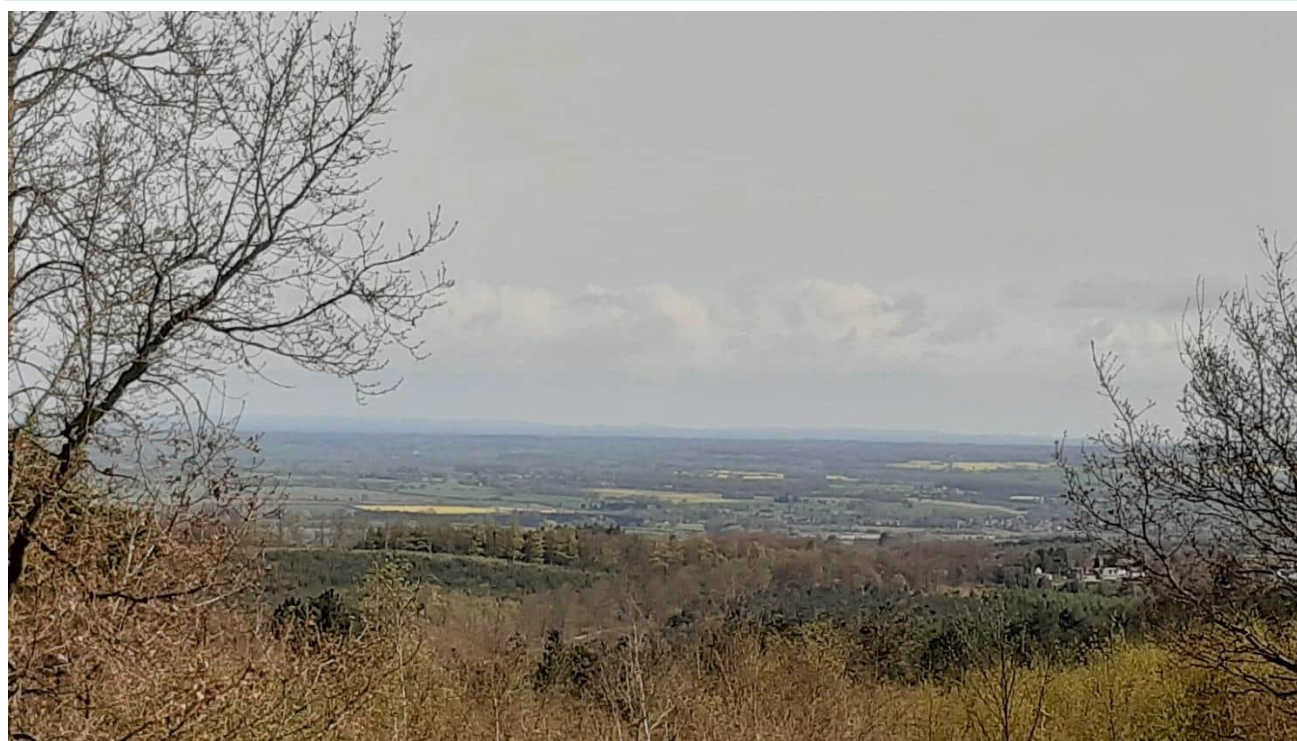
Cannock Wood and Castle Ring Iron Age hillfort, photographed on 9 October 2008 ©Historic England Archive (20829/52)

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*View from Castle Ring looking north-east*

## Foreword

This draft Neighbourhood Plan (NP) has been drawn up in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 to give the residents of the Parish a greater say in how Cannock Wood will develop in the future.

Following extensive consultation, including surveys delivered to every household, a clear majority voiced concern about future development in or around the village.

Cannock Wood has a tightly drawn settlement boundary set within the Green Belt as shown on the map in Figure 1. It is wholly within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which offers some protection from development outside the settlement boundary. Its elevation gives wonderful vistas in many directions which are greatly valued by respondents to the surveys. In addition, we are fortunate to have two sites of historic significance, Castle Ring and a medieval moated site and bloomery in Courtbanks Covert.

It is clear from the survey responses that, for the majority of residents, we should keep any future development within the settlement boundary, maintain the rural character of the village and preserve the wonderful views. The policies contained in this draft NP aim to do this and to establish a blueprint for the future, protecting the character and beauty of the area.

The draft NP will be submitted to Cannock Chase District Council (CCDC) under regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Plan (General) Regulations. The final version (amended, if necessary, after examination) will need to be approved at a referendum by the electorate of Cannock Wood before it becomes a key part of the planning framework of CCDC and will influence all future planning decisions in Cannock Wood Parish.

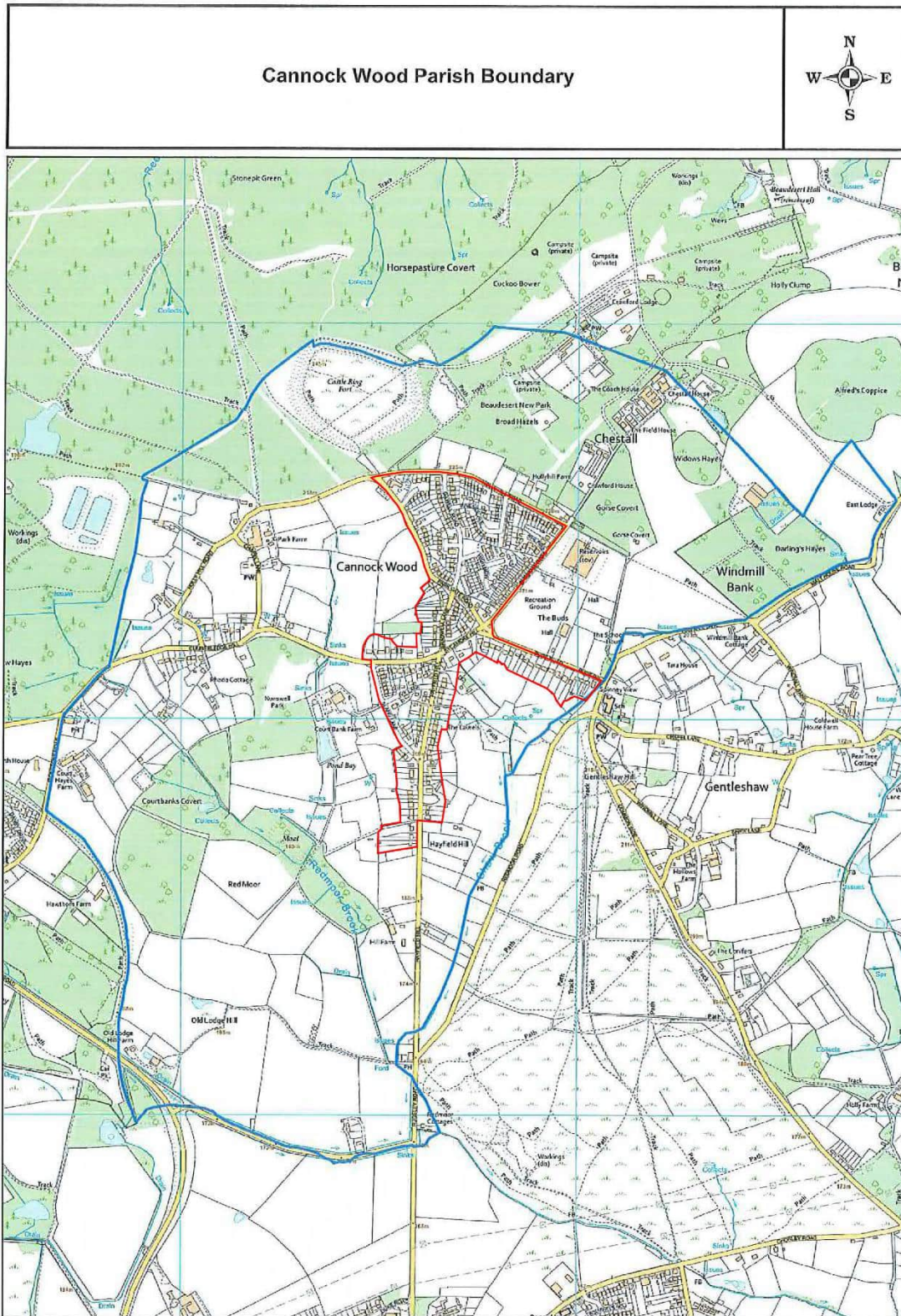
This draft plan has been produced by a Working Group of Parish Councillors and committed and hard-working residents. Thanks to all who have worked so hard to produce this document.

Cannock Wood Parish Council, May 2022.



*Park Gate Barn*

The Neighbourhood Plan covers the whole of Cannock Wood Parish.



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**Figure 1: Cannock Wood Parish (Designated Area) and Settlement Boundary**

Boundary of Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan designated area —————  
 Indication of settlement boundary —————  
 (see Cannock Chase District Council planning policy map for the definitive settlement boundary)

## List of Policies

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CW1	HOUSING DESIGN	<a href="#">24</a>
CW2	LOCAL CHARACTER	<a href="#">27</a>
CW3	NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS	<a href="#">30</a>
CW4	HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT	<a href="#">32</a>
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CW7	PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE CANNOCK CHASE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB)	<a href="#">45</a>
CW8	PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY OF THE PARISH INCLUDING TREE AND HEDGEROW COVERAGE	<a href="#">47</a>
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*View from Castle Ring car park south towards Barr Beacon*

## SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

### Why a Neighbourhood Plan for Cannock Wood Parish?

Cannock Wood Parish Council (PC) began exploring in late 2017 the advantages, disadvantages and the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. In June 2018 the PC distributed a paper questionnaire to all households asking a range of simple questions based on guidance produced by central government. As the results<sup>1</sup> of the questionnaire indicated that a clear majority of the residents had concerns over the village's potential development, both at the time and in the future, the PC<sup>2</sup> decided on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018 to develop a Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) for the Parish. With appropriate planning policies and guidance, the Plan would address several issues affecting the area, in particular:

Issue 1	Housing
Issue 2	Preserving and Enhancing the Landscape, Character and Views including supporting the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Green Belt designations and boundaries
Issue 3	Transport and Road safety for all road users including pedestrians
Issue 4	Maintaining and Protecting key assets in the area such as Castle Ring and Community Facilities

Some of the issues identified from the questionnaire that fall outside the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan may form the focus of new projects and voluntary activities in the village.

By working with Cannock Chase District Council, Cannock Wood Parish Council established that a Neighbourhood Plan would be a good way to address these issues. The Plan sets out the vision and objectives for the future of the Civil Parish of Cannock Wood and establishes how that vision and those objectives will be achieved by identifying planning policies and guidance specific to land use and development within the Parish boundary.



*Public footpath CW2 looking north-east*

Evidence base references in Appendix 1

<sup>1</sup> Summary results of June 2018 survey

<sup>2</sup> Minutes of Parish Council meetings 2018-2022

## Cannock Wood

Cannock Wood is a village and civil parish in the Cannock Chase District of Staffordshire, England. The parish includes Castle Ring, an Iron Age hillfort, at the highest part of Cannock Chase with an altitude of 242 metres above sea level. Cannock Chase is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Cannock Wood is the only village that is completely within the boundaries of the AONB.

The elevated position of Cannock Wood offers long panoramic views in many directions which are highly valued by residents. Castle Ring is a Site of Biological Importance and the close proximity of Gentleshaw Common, a Site of Special Scientific Interest adjoining the parish, means Cannock Wood and its surrounding Green Belt is a haven of tranquillity and wildlife and of importance for biodiversity.

Castle Ring is one of two Scheduled Monuments in this small parish of just over 1,000 inhabitants. The second is a medieval Moated site and bloomery at Courtbanks Covert. Also close to this site is Nun's Well, where a spring rises in a chamber cut from rock that is covered by a Tudor style brickwork arch beneath a venerable tree.

Historically Cannock Chase formed part of the hunting grounds of kings and bishops until the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century when Henry VIII gave lands to Sir William Paget and part of what remains of their Beadesert stately home and estate is within Cannock Wood. Under the ownership of the Pagets (later styled the Marquesses of Anglesey), the coal and iron resources of Cannock Chase were exploited and there was a pit at Cannock Wood from 1775 until 1973.

In 1666 Cannock Wood was a hamlet of eighteen houses and White's 1851 Gazetteer records that Cannock Wood had "a few good farms, and 275 inhabitants, and includes a large portion of the open heath, where there are a number of cottages, with small plots of garden attached". Until the 1930s there was still just a small number of homes scattered around the parish, mostly farmhouses or cottages where there had been informal enclosure of the surrounding heathland. There had been some limited development in the late 1920s when a row of semi-detached properties was built overlooking the newly built covered reservoir and extensive Playing Field which is held in trust for the village. During the 1930s Beadesert Hall was largely demolished, its extensive gardens and woodland were vested into a charity 'The King George V Memorial Scout and Guide Recreation Lands' for the use of Scouts, Guides and other young people; the estate is private property and there is no general public access in line with the Trust's safeguarding policy.



*Playing field looking south over houses on Buds Road to Barr Beacon*

The aerial photograph shown in Figure 2 below was taken in 1956, shortly before the main development phase during the 1960s and 1970s.



*Figure 2: Castle Ring and Cannock Wood, 6th April 1956*  
 Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photography © copyright reserved.

As part of this, a Village Hall was built in 1967 after sustained community fundraising on land kindly donated and held in trust for the inhabitants of Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw. The Village Hall is much used and there is a primary school and a church just over the road from Cannock Wood in Gentleshaw, which is in the Longdon Parish of Lichfield District. There is one combined community of Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw despite the administrative separation of Parish and District Council boundary lines. There is a small historic Methodist Chapel and there are two pubs in Cannock Wood and two more just the other side of the parish boundary in Gentleshaw.

In 2022 Cannock Wood has 441 homes and is a mainly residential area within the tightly drawn settlement boundary, but the pattern of scattered dwellings is still present in the areas outside the settlement boundary which are designated Green Belt.



*Extensive horse-grazing at Court Bank Farm*

fringed by parts of Cannock Chase Forest and other mixed woodland, the Green Belt land accommodates a commercial livery, as well as farmland used as hayfields and for grazing cattle, sheep and horses, and some is maintained under the Countryside Stewardship scheme.

## Engagement

In 2021 Cannock Wood Parish Council set up a Working Group to oversee the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan). The Working Group was asked to develop a consultation and engagement strategy allowing the residents of Cannock Wood to be involved throughout the process. By following this strategy, residents have been consulted as widely and thoroughly as possible to ensure that the draft and final Plan is representative of the views of residents. The voluntary Working Group membership itself comprises a dozen or more residents as well as Parish Council representation. The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by Cannock Wood residents for Cannock Wood residents.

The consultation and engagement strategy has been principally based on the distribution to every household in the parish of printed documents at various stages in the process. Whilst the same documents have been made available as pdfs on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the Parish Council's website [www.cannockwood.org](http://www.cannockwood.org), the requirement for paper distribution to all households was recognised to ensure that there was no digital divide within the community.

Signage has also been used to raise awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan at various consultation points, an example of which is shown in Figure 3. An email address for queries and feedback has been publicised on the signage. Provision has been made for residents to address any queries or feedback verbally at Parish Council meetings and a local telephone number was made available when the survey was delivered for additional copies to be requested or if help was needed.



Figure 3: signage used to raise awareness and promote engagement

The Neighbourhood Plan survey conducted in November 2021 was a fundamental part of the development of the Plan. It was a comprehensive document that provided an explanation about the process and included a draft Vision statement for comments as well as a range of questions. Detailed analysis was prepared of the survey responses and the full survey results including every comment made were published on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the PC website. Results relevant to local organisations were provided to them in bespoke documents between December 2021 and February 2022. As the survey responses showed a 97.5% approval rating for the draft Vision statement, draft Objectives for the Plan were then developed to support the Vision.

In February 2022 a second major printed document providing summary highlights of the Survey Results and the Draft Objectives was distributed to every household and published online. A Village Drop-in Event was held at the Village Hall on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2022 offering residents the opportunity to chat to the Working Group members and their consultant about the Neighbourhood Plan, ask any questions and provide feedback about the draft Objectives. This was a well-publicised event through invitations within formal printed documents, online through Nextdoor and through signage within and at three entry points to the village as shown in Figure 3 above. Public comments on the Draft Objectives and supporting text were explicitly encouraged and facilitated and that feedback was in turn used to inform the development of Draft Policies.

In early March 2022, a printed document of the Draft Policies was distributed to every household and published online. Responses were strongly encouraged using a tick box for ease of completion and analysis, whilst also being entirely open to comments and suggestions. Cannock Chase District



Council (CCDC), Staffordshire County Council (SCC) and Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) were informally consulted on the Draft Policies in March 2022 and all generously made time to respond. The Draft Policies were revised taking into account feedback from residents, CCDC, SCC and AONB and the revised wording is presented in this Pre-Submission consultation.

More detail and a full list of the printed documents circulated to all residents for consultation and published online is provided in Appendix 4.



*Ivy Lane looking south-west towards Court Bank Farm and Nunswell Park*

## SECTION 2 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

### VISION

Based on engagement with both residents and local businesses, Cannock Wood Parish Council developed a Vision statement for the future of Cannock Wood and this was consulted on in the November 2021 survey. The survey responses showed a 97.5% approval rating for the Vision for the village set out below.

Cannock Wood should

- be a village apart from urban sprawl surrounded by a sea of Green Belt,
- have long countryside views and ready access to open spaces,
- reinforce its local distinctiveness as a haven of tranquillity and wildlife.

Cannock Wood housing should be

- of a high standard of design and use appropriate materials,
- a mix of properties of appropriate size according to residents' needs,
- sustainably and sensitively developed within a tightly drawn settlement boundary to respect and enhance the AONB setting which is so important to the village.

Cannock Wood residents will have greater well-being

- as part of a friendly and cohesive community,
- as a mix of families and those of retirement age,
- by having access to important community facilities and services,
- by taking steps together to improve the village we call home.



*Public footpath in Cannock Chase forest*

## OBJECTIVES

Cannock Wood Parish Council aims to work towards realising the shared Vision by achieving the following Objectives.

<b>OBJECTIVE 1: HOUSING</b>
Ensure that any new housing is of high quality and well designed, is appropriate for the needs of the area and respects the character of the village.

The consensus from the survey is that the housing stock in the village is generally adequate but any new development should focus upon appropriate housing types such as smaller bungalows or starter homes.

A Design Code can help articulate what “good design” and “high quality” mean including considering aspects such as:

- Materials – traditional brick or render or other sympathetic materials.
- Green spaces and space around properties, avoiding removal of existing native hedgerows and trees and encouraging the planting of native hedges and trees.
- Scale and proportion in relation to surrounding buildings and setting in the village and wider landscape.
- Maintaining views for existing residents and glimpsed views between properties.
- Inclusion of features to improve energy conservation and future accessibility and adaptability.
- Provision of adequate porous off-road parking, minimising surface water run-off, and landscaped with hedges and trees to screen parking.



*Hayfield Hill looking towards Bradwell Lane*



*Slang Lane looking towards the forest*



*Chestall Road*

**OBJECTIVE 2: LOCAL CHARACTER**

New development should respect local character, protect landscape character and reflect local vernacular or high-quality contemporary design and be fully integrated into the Parish.

The Survey has shown that people value the character of the area very highly and that this should be respected. A Character Assessment can identify the elements that contribute to the distinctive character of the Parish possibly including specific character areas within the Parish boundary so as to distinguish between them. A Design Code can indicate suitable approaches to respect the local character.



*Chapel Lane looking south-west with farmland and woodland rising beyond*



*Panoramic view through 90° from Chapel Lane from west round to north*

**OBJECTIVE 3: VIEWS**

Views, in particular the long panoramic views which are so important to residents in Cannock Wood, should be protected and where possible enhanced.

Cannock Wood, given its elevation, enjoys long panoramic views. There are also many important views through and into the Parish from outside the Settlement boundary. Some protection already exists but views can be better protected and enhanced by identifying and documenting them and reflecting their importance in policy. There may also be opportunities to enhance views through selected clearance of overgrown areas.



*View looking east from public footpath CW3 with Lichfield Cathedral in the middle distance*



*View from Holly Hill Road looking south-west*



*View from Park Gate Road looking south over Bradwell Lane to Barr Beacon and beyond*

**OBJECTIVE 4: GREEN BELT**

Support the aim of the Green Belt to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.

National Policy provides protection for land identified as Green Belt as follows:

*“Protecting Green Belt land*

*137. The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.*

*138. Green Belt serves five purposes:*

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.”*

The area of the parish outside the settlement boundary is green belt and there is overwhelming support for that designation to continue to apply where it does now.



*View from public footpath CW5 over Shaw Brook to Christchurch, Gentleshaw*

**OBJECTIVE 5: CASTLE RING**

Protect and enhance Castle Ring.

Threats to Castle Ring include mountain biking and horse-riding and potential inappropriate access interventions. Castle Ring belongs to Cannock Chase District Council and has protection in policy already. We see benefits for the community to be involved in any planned alterations or maintenance to the site.

**OBJECTIVE 6: AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB)**

Protect the scenic natural beauty, landscape character and tranquil wildlife habitats of the AONB.

The AONB gives substantial protection from major development but it does not completely prevent development. It is important that any development should be appropriate for the area both in scale and proportion, particularly at the sensitive edges of the Settlement Boundary.



*View over hayfield looking south-east to Gentleshaw Common and beyond*

**OBJECTIVE 7: BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE**

Protect and enhance the biodiversity and wildlife of the parish including tree and hedgerow coverage.

Where there is development, biodiversity gain can be achieved through measures such as enhancing hedgerows and trees and by linking areas of biodiversity together through green corridors / wildlife connectivity corridors.

Opportunities may exist to designate new local nature reserves and enhancement opportunities for Biodiversity Net Gain.



*View looking west from Gentleshaw Common over horse pastures to woodland beyond*



*View looking west to Courtbanks Covert and woodland beyond*



**OBJECTIVE 8: LIGHT POLLUTION**

Minimise light pollution wherever possible especially within rural areas.

This supports the Dark Skies project being run by the AONB and Campaign to Protect Rural England to promote better:

- appreciation and enjoyment of the wonder of dark skies in Cannock Chase AONB, and
- understanding of the effects of light pollution on human well-being, wildlife and sustainability.

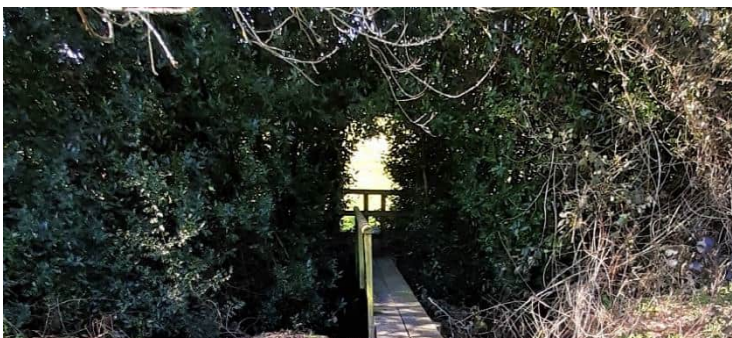
**OBJECTIVE 9: FOOTPATHS**

Seek to improve provision for pedestrians in the village in terms of accessibility, safety and quality.

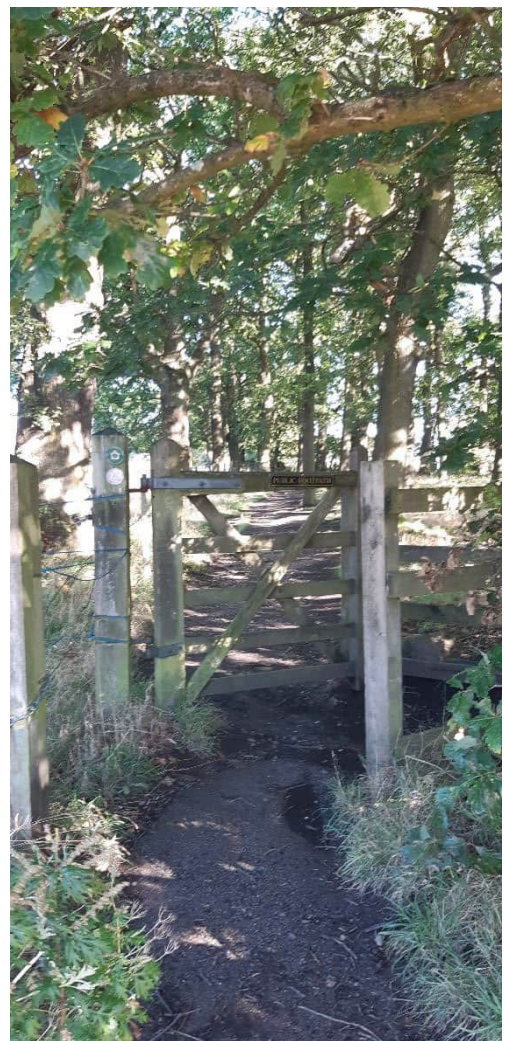
Opportunities for improvements to pedestrian movement can be identified, for example the entrance to the footpath from Holly Hill Road/Chestall Road alongside Gentleshaw Reservoir and checking that Rights of Way are accessible. Some of these can be supported through policies in the Neighbourhood Plan while others may require complementary interventions such as lobbying Staffordshire County Council for improvements.



*Public footpath CW6*



*Public footpath CW5*



*Public footpath CW3*

**OBJECTIVE 10: ROADS**

Seek to improve road safety in the village for all users by working with the relevant authorities.

Opportunities for improvements to road safety can be identified, for example at the junction of Buds Road and Chestall Road and the speed of vehicles using Cumberledge Hill, Hayfield Hill and Buds Road. These can be supported in a number of ways such as lobbying Staffordshire County Council for highways improvements but are less likely to be enabled through land use planning policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.



*Park Gate Road junction with Gilwell Road and Bradwell Lane*



*Inconsiderate parking, congestion and speeding traffic create dangers for all road users and pedestrians*

**OBJECTIVE 11: COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

Strive to ensure that the community facilities and amenities are appropriate for the needs of the parish, allowing residents of all ages the opportunity to take part in activities that lead to a sense of individual and/or community well-being.

This is important to people in the parish and a number of options can be explored such as improving communication with respect to use of existing facilities, identifying opportunities to develop other facilities that might be appropriate given the AONB/Green Belt context and providing protection for existing community facilities. "Community facilities" might include function rooms, shops, leisure and recreation or health and educational facilities and may be enclosed or open air and may be multi-functional.



*Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Village Hall*



*Playing field on a match day, with play equipment, pavilion and basketball court beyond*

**OBJECTIVE 12: PUBLIC REALM**  
 Support improvement to the public realm.

Public realm improvements can include enhanced areas of public realm such as high quality-public open space and safe pedestrian priority.



*Corner of Gilwell Road and High Meadow*



*High Meadow*



*Pineside Avenue*



*Sycamore Hill*



*Planter in verge on Sycamore Hill*



*Junction of Sycamore Hill, Bradwell Lane, Cumberledge Hill and Hayfield Hill*

### DELIVERING THE VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Cannock Wood Parish Council aims to achieve the Objectives above through the Neighbourhood Planning Policies set out in the following section. Some Objectives have a single corresponding Policy and others are a theme reflected in multiple Policies as set out Table 1 below. There are some elements of the shared Vision which are outside the scope of Planning Policies and Cannock Wood Parish Council will seek to work alongside community groups and other volunteers on projects to meet those aspirations.

Table 1: Policies arising from each Objective

OBJECTIVES	POLICIES
<b>OBJECTIVE 1: HOUSING</b> Ensure that any new housing is of high quality and well designed, is appropriate for the needs of the area and respects the character of the village.	CW1: HOUSING DESIGN CW7: PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE CANNOCK CHASE AONB
<b>OBJECTIVE 2: LOCAL CHARACTER</b> New development should respect local character/protect landscape character and reflect local vernacular or high-quality contemporary design and be fully integrated into the Parish.	CW2: LOCAL CHARACTER CW3: NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS CW4: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT CW6: PROTECT AND ENHANCE LANDSCAPE HERITAGE
<b>OBJECTIVE 3: VIEWS</b> Views, in particular the long, panoramic views which are so important to residents in Cannock Wood, should be protected and where possible enhanced.	CW5: VIEWS AND VISTAS CW6: PROTECT AND ENHANCE LANDSCAPE HERITAGE CW7: PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE CANNOCK CHASE AONB
<b>OBJECTIVE 4: GREEN BELT</b> Support the aim of the Green Belt to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.	CW7: PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE CANNOCK CHASE AONB CW14: VILLAGE BOUNDARY
<b>OBJECTIVE 5: CASTLE RING</b> Protect and enhance Castle Ring.	CW6: PROTECT AND ENHANCE LANDSCAPE HERITAGE
<b>OBJECTIVE 6: AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY</b> Protect the scenic natural beauty, landscape character and tranquil wildlife habitats of the AONB.	CW7: PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE CANNOCK CHASE AONB CW9: TRANQUILLITY AND LIGHT POLLUTION
<b>OBJECTIVE 7: BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE</b> Protect and enhance the biodiversity and wildlife of the parish including tree and hedgerow coverage.	CW6: PROTECT AND ENHANCE LANDSCAPE HERITAGE CW8: PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY OF THE PARISH INCLUDING TREE AND HEDGEROW COVERAGE CW10: FOOTPATH AND BRIDLEWAY IMPROVEMENTS CW13: PUBLIC REALM AND OPEN SPACE

OBJECTIVES	POLICIES
<b>OBJECTIVE 8: LIGHT POLLUTION</b> Minimise light pollution wherever possible especially within rural areas.	CW9: TRANQUILLITY AND LIGHT POLLUTION
<b>OBJECTIVE 9: FOOTPATHS</b> Seek to improve provision for pedestrians in the village in terms of accessibility, safety and quality.	CW10: FOOTPATH AND BRIDLEWAY IMPROVEMENTS
<b>OBJECTIVE 10: ROADS</b> Seek to improve road safety in the village for all users by working with the relevant authorities.	CW11: HIGHWAY SAFETY CW13: PUBLIC REALM AND OPEN SPACES
<b>OBJECTIVE 11: COMMUNITY FACILITIES</b> Strive to ensure that the community facilities and amenities are appropriate for the needs of the parish, allowing residents of all ages the opportunity to take part in activities that lead to a sense of individual and/or community well-being.	CW12: COMMUNITY FACILITIES
<b>OBJECTIVE 12: PUBLIC REALM</b> Support improvement to the public realm.	CW13: PUBLIC REALM AND OPEN SPACES



*Central part of Castle Ring*

## SECTION 3 POLICIES

### POLICY CW1: HOUSING DESIGN

1. All residential proposals including extensions must:
  - a. Respond positively to the character of Cannock Wood Parish as outlined in this Neighbourhood Plan and the Character Assessment (See Appendix 1 and Policy CW2: Local Character, below).
  - b. Be respectful of the character of the village in scale and proportion.
  - c. Be of high quality and well designed. This may include innovative and contemporary design solutions provided they positively enhance character.
  - d. Avoid reducing the gaps between the settlement boundary (See Figure 1) and clusters of buildings outside the boundary.
  - e. Avoid further extending strips of development outside the settlement boundary.
  - f. Consider the extent to which external lighting is needed as part of the siting and design of development. Whilst sufficient lighting for safety is supported, light pollution should be avoided as detailed by Policy CW9: Tranquility and Light Pollution. See also the Design Code and the Cannock Chase AONB publication A Good Lighting Guide (Appendix 1).
  - g. Consider inclusion of features to improve energy conservation and future accessibility and adaptability including electric vehicle charging points providing that there is no material harm to the character or appearance of the area or the host property.
2. All residential proposals including extensions should:
  - a. Use appropriate materials – traditional brick or render or other sympathetic materials – in keeping with the character of the area.
  - b. Where possible, avoid ‘terracing’ whereby semi-detached and detached houses end up so close to one another that the effect is similar to a continuous terrace.
  - c. Protect and enhance green infrastructure by avoiding removal of existing native hedgerows and trees and encouraging the planting of native hedges and trees.
  - d. Be of a scale and proportion in relation to surrounding buildings and setting in the village and wider landscape so as to not dominate them.
  - e. Demonstrate sensitive positioning within plots.
  - f. Maintain glimpsed views between properties.
  - g. Maintain a reasonable level of landscaping with native hedges and trees.
  - h. Promote or maintain natural surveillance over public space such as streets for example by ensuring that houses overlook the street.
  - i. Create or maintain clear public/private interface i.e., a clear difference between what is public and what is private land.
  - j. Create or maintain active frontage that faces outwards onto the street and avoids presenting a blank elevation to the street.
3. All housing proposals except extensions should meet the following criteria:
  - a. Provide housing of a type and tenure appropriate to the needs of the population (See interpretation below and Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix 1)).

*continues on following page*

### POLICY CW1: HOUSING DESIGN (continued)

3. All housing proposals except extensions should meet the following criteria: *(continued)*
  - b. Be 'tenure blind' so that the tenure of the housing (i.e. whether it is privately or socially owned or rented) cannot be determined from its design or location.
  - c. Provide safe access and adequate parking.
  - d. Create attractive green spaces through landscaping, planting and the arrangement of buildings.
  - e. Use native trees and hedgerows in landscaping schemes and boundary treatment where possible to enhance the surrounding character and local biodiversity.
  - f. Minimise flood risk by incorporating Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) which minimises surface water run-off. These may include features such as ponds, swales and permeable paving designed as part of the development and to reflect the character of the area. Unless proved to be an inappropriate strategy, proposals shall avoid the discharge of surface water into a public sewerage network, in line with the surface water hierarchy.
4. Where housing proposals involve demolition of an existing building, proposals will be required to show that the replacement building will be of an equal or superior design in terms of the above criteria.
5. Redevelopment, alteration or extension of historic farmsteads and agricultural buildings within the Parish should be sensitive to their distinctive character, materials and form.
6. The Cannock Wood Character Assessment (Appendix 1) and Design Code (Appendix 1) will be used to assess development schemes coming forward.

#### INTENTION

To meet the Objective:

##### OBJECTIVE 1. HOUSING

Ensure that any new housing is of high quality and well designed, is appropriate for the needs of the area and respects the character of the village.

#### JUSTIFICATION

Cannock Wood lies entirely within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This status prevents major development from taking place within Cannock Wood. However, minor proposals can take place, although even these will be largely restricted to minor infill by strategic policy including the Green Belt designation. The AONB Design Guide<sup>13</sup> states that: *'New development should be carefully located, especially when sited towards the edges of settlements, so that it does not contribute to unnecessary ribbon development or coalescence between settlements.'*

Good design is about more than character. It includes other aspects of design mentioned above, for example active frontage and safe streets, use of green areas and planting to minimise flood risk such as from hard landscaping of driveways.

Evidence base references in Appendix 1

<sup>13</sup> Cannock Chase AONB Design Guide



## INTERPRETATION

The Character Assessment<sup>3</sup> (Appendix 1) outlines the elements that make up the character of the area.

The Design Code<sup>4</sup> (Appendix 1) provides guidance on how housing design can meet the policy.

In terms of housing type and tenure, there is a need for small bungalows and starter homes. Two-bed homes are to be preferred over one-bed homes. Three-bed homes are still a popular option. There is some demand for large homes but numbers should be restricted. Greater detail can be found in the Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix 1).

About 75-80% of affordable housing should take the form of rented tenures such as social and affordable rent (preferably the former) with the remaining percentage being provided as affordable routes to home ownership.

Across the parish of Cannock Wood there are a number of historic farmsteads, mainly of 19<sup>th</sup> century origin. These farmsteads contribute to the overall historic character of the parish landscape and face increasing pressure due to the diversification of farming practices and demand for housing. Staffordshire County Council, in partnership with Historic England, have produced guidance<sup>5</sup> on understanding the contribution of farmsteads to the historic landscape character of the county. The guidance offers design advice and a framework to facilitate long term conservation and sensitive conversion of historic farm buildings. Information on the location, form and survival of farmsteads across the parish is held within the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record<sup>6</sup>.

The settlement boundary is indicated by the red line in Figure 1. The settlement boundary is as defined by the Cannock Chase Local Plan.

## EVIDENCE

Character Assessment<sup>3</sup> (Appendix 1).

Design Code<sup>4</sup> (Appendix 1).

Housing Needs Assessment<sup>5</sup> (Appendix 1).

Historic Farmsteads<sup>6</sup> (Appendix 1)

Staffordshire Historic Environment Record<sup>7</sup> (Appendix 1)



*Bradwell Lane*



*Holly Hill Road*

Evidence base references in Appendix 1

<sup>3</sup> Character Assessment

<sup>4</sup> Design Code

<sup>5</sup> Historic Farmsteads

<sup>6</sup> Staffordshire Historic Environment Record

## POLICY CW2: LOCAL CHARACTER

1. Proposed development should respond to, protect or enhance the character of the immediate surroundings, the wider Neighbourhood area and the rest of AONB. Proposals should be able to demonstrate a thorough understanding of the character, history and design of the surrounding buildings and landscape and show how this has been taken into account in the design of the proposals.

In particular, proposals should be of a scale, density and mass that is sympathetic to the character of the immediate surroundings and the wider area.

As described in the Character Assessment in Appendix 1, consideration should be given to the elements which contribute to local character including the following:

- a. Landscape and Topography
- b. Biodiversity and Green and Natural Features
- c. General Patterns of Built Form and Open Space including Density
- d. Main Uses and Mix of Uses
- e. Views and Vistas and Enclosure
- f. Movement and Legibility
- g. Building Typologies
- h. Building Details including Scale and Height
- i. Heritage
- j. Streetscape
- k. Parking and Access
- l. Lighting and Security
- m. Gardens, Boundary Treatments, and the Public Private Interface.

Reference should also be made to the Cannock Wood Design Code (Appendix 1) where appropriate.

2. Landscape improvements in particular should be appropriate for the surrounding landscape character.

### INTENTION

To meet the Objective:

#### OBJECTIVE 2. LOCAL CHARACTER

New development should respect local character, protect landscape character and reflect local vernacular or high-quality contemporary design and be fully integrated into the Parish.

### JUSTIFICATION

The Neighbourhood Plan Survey<sup>7</sup> in November 2021 has shown that residents value highly the character of the area and that this should be respected. A Character Assessment can identify the elements that contribute to the distinctive character of the Parish, possibly including specific character areas within the Parish boundary so as to distinguish between them. A Design Code can indicate suitable approaches to respect the local character.

### INTERPRETATION

The Character Assessment<sup>3</sup> in Appendix 1 identifies those elements that contribute to the character

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Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

<sup>7</sup> Neighbourhood Plan Survey and results

of the area including ways in which the character varies from one part of the Parish to another.

The Design Code<sup>4</sup> in Appendix 1 has specific guidance on how to protect and enhance local character and landscape character.

A Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) can be used to assess the impact of development proposals. The Landscape Institute provides guidance on LVAs which can be found at:

<https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical/glvia3-panel/>.

Landscape character types have been identified by:

- the Review of AONB Landscape Character Framework, Stage 2 Landscape Character Type Descriptions<sup>8</sup>, 2017;
- the section on Landscape and Topography in the Cannock Wood Character Assessment which examines how these types work in Cannock Wood Parish including recommendations about appropriate management and other interventions.

The four Landscape Character Types within the Parish shown in Figure 4 below are discussed in more detail in the Character Assessment.

It is noted that over time some of the higher tier policy documents and legislation may change in terms of some elements that can be implemented and the spirit of Local Character as described should continue to be respected.

#### EVIDENCE

Character Assessment<sup>3</sup> (Appendix 1)

Design Code<sup>4</sup> (Appendix 1)

Review of AONB Landscape Character Framework<sup>9</sup>, Stage 2 Landscape Character Type Descriptions, 2017 (Appendix 1)



*View towards Buds Road triangle from public footpath CW5*

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#### Evidence base references in Appendix 1

<sup>3</sup> Character Assessment

<sup>4</sup> Design Code

<sup>8</sup> Character Type Descriptions 2017

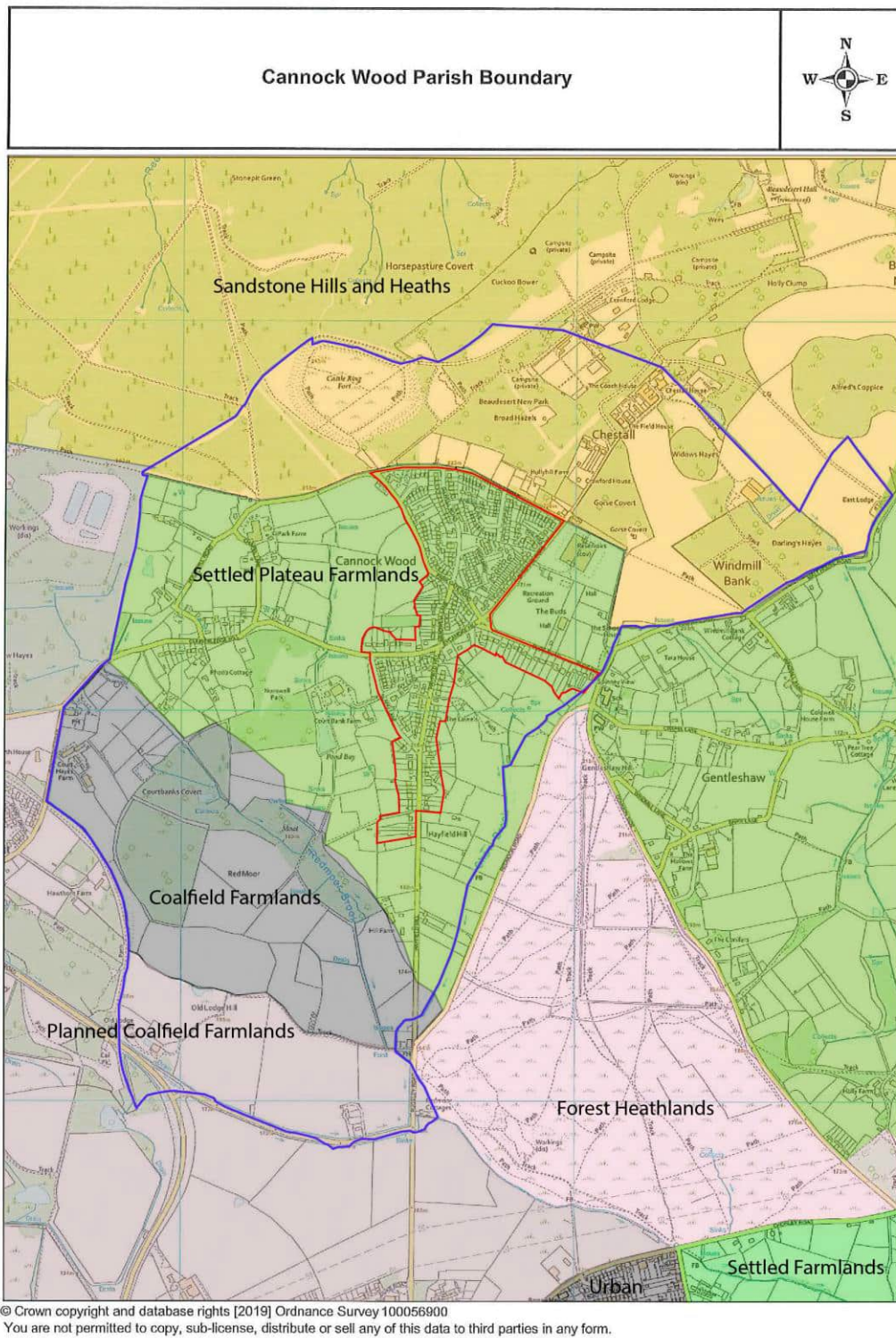


Figure 4: Landscape Character Types - based on a map from the Review of AONB Landscape Character Framework, Stage 2 Landscape Character Type Descriptions, 2017 by Ashmead Price for Cannock Chase AONB

### POLICY CW3: NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

1. The sites listed in Table 4 (Appendix 2) should be regarded as non-designated heritage assets.
2. Proposals which affect the significance of non-designated heritage assets will be determined by considering the extent to which those aspects which contribute to its significance are conserved or enhanced.
3. The assets identified as non-designated heritage assets in Appendix 2 should be submitted for inclusion in Cannock Chase District Council's emerging Local List of non-designated heritage assets once it is established. Inclusion of any non-designated heritage assets on the Local List is not necessary for the application of policy CW3.

#### INTENTION

To meet the Objective:

##### OBJECTIVE 2. LOCAL CHARACTER

New development should respect local character, protect landscape character and reflect local vernacular or high-quality contemporary design and be fully integrated into the Parish.

#### JUSTIFICATION

There are two Scheduled Monuments (Appendix 2) within Cannock Wood: Castle Ring and a Moated site and bloomery in Courtbanks Covert; they are designated heritage assets.

The development of a Neighbourhood Plan provides the opportunity to recognise those other buildings and sites which make positive contribution to the local character and sense of place because of their heritage value for Cannock Wood. This policy sets up a list of Non-Designated Heritage Assets of buildings and sites which have heritage significance for Cannock Wood. Cannock Wood Parish Council may add assets to this list where further research provides the evidence required.

The non-designated heritage assets identified in the policy all contribute to the character of the area so their protection is important to achieve the objective of respecting local character.

#### INTERPRETATION

A heritage asset is defined as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets.

Cannock Chase District Council's Design Supplementary Planning Document proposes that:

*"any building or feature shall meet one or more of the following criteria in order to be selected for the Local List:*

- *Of local historic interest serving as a reminder of the social, economic, cultural or military history of the District including archaeological interest or a link to a local figure.*
- *Of architectural or landscape interest including innovative design, decoration, craftsmanship or plan form.*
- *Making a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness, character and appearance of the District, including the interest of any group of buildings of which it forms part, landmark value or contribution to local identity.*
- *Is unprotected by statutory listing though may be within a Conservation Area".*

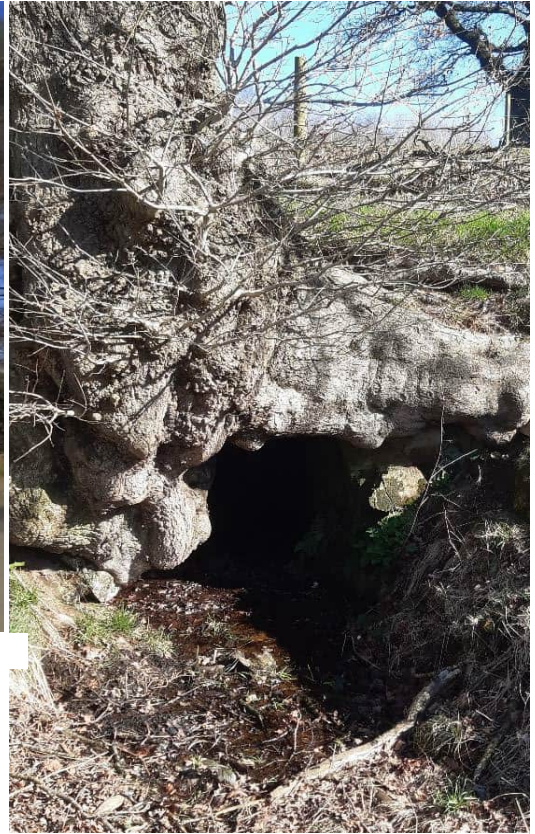
Cannock Chase District Council could use the non-designated heritage assets in Appendix 2 as potential candidates for a future Local List<sup>9</sup> for the Cannock Chase District, along with others included on the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record<sup>7</sup>.

**EVIDENCE**

Various sources including advice from Historic England.



*Cannock Wood Methodist Church*



*Nun's Well*



*Cumberledge Hill*

Evidence base references in Appendix 1

<sup>9</sup> Cannock Chase Local List

## POLICY CW4: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

1. Proposals which affect any part of the historic environment, both built heritage and above and below ground archaeological remains, will be determined by considering the extent to which those aspects which contribute to its significance are conserved or enhanced.
2. Proposals affecting any part of the historic environment should be informed by an understanding of the site's context and heritage significance and proposals which impact, directly or indirectly, on a heritage asset or its setting, shall be accompanied as appropriate by a heritage statement which must:
  - a. Explain how the proposal has taken into account the significance of any designated or non-designated heritage assets.
  - b. Evaluate any effect that the proposal would have on the significance of a heritage asset, and support the proposal by:
    - i. Demonstrating that they have avoided or minimised harm to the significance of an asset through the design of the development.
    - ii. Explaining how possible mitigation of any harm has been fully considered.
    - iii. Identifying any public benefits that would arise.

### INTENTION

To meet the Objective:

#### OBJECTIVE 2. LOCAL CHARACTER

New development should respect local character/protect landscape character and reflect local vernacular or high-quality contemporary design and be fully integrated into the village settlement.

### JUSTIFICATION

The two important Scheduled Monuments (Appendix 2) at Castle Ring and the Moated site and bloomery in Courtbanks Covert, the Non-Designated Heritage Assets (Appendix 2) and other sites identified elsewhere including Historic Environment Assessment<sup>11</sup> Cannock Chase AONB, June 2015 and on the emerging Cannock Chase Local List<sup>10</sup> all contribute to the character of the area. Their protection is important to achieve the objective of respecting local character. Loss or unsympathetic development impacting any of these sites would lead to a gradual and irreversible loss of the character of the village and we must act as the custodians of the sites for the future.

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Evidence base references in Appendix 1

<sup>10</sup> Cannock Chase Local List

<sup>11</sup> Historic Environment Assessment AONB

## INTERPRETATION

The historic environment is defined as all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

The historic environment includes:

- the two Scheduled Monuments which are designated heritage assets (Appendix 2)
- Non-designated Heritage Assets identified in this plan (Appendix 2) and
- sites identified elsewhere including the Historic Environment Assessment<sup>11</sup> Cannock Chase AONB, June 2015 and Addendum<sup>12</sup> 2017, the "Buildings of Historic Character" identified in the Settlement Constraints and Opportunities map on Page 21 of the Cannock Chase AONB Design Guide<sup>13</sup>, July 2020 and any others on the emerging Cannock Chase Local List<sup>10</sup>.

## EVIDENCE

For a local context to the historic environment and its sensitivities within Cannock Wood parish, the Cannock Chase and the Cannock Chase AONB Historic Environment Assessments (HEAs) are useful aids. These assessments aimed to provide a summary of the historic character and sensitivities within defined areas, dividing each into a series of Historic Environment Character Zones (HECZs). The assessment also provides an overall evaluation of the potential impact of larger scale housing development upon the historic environment within each identified 'zone'. Within the Cannock Chase HEA refer specifically to Zone CHECZ 24 (Cannock Wood) and within the Cannock Chase AONB HEA refer to Zones HECZ 16 (Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw) and HECZ 13 (Beaudesert Park).

- Historic Environment Assessment<sup>11</sup> Cannock Chase AONB, Staffordshire County Council, June 2015 (Appendix 1).
- Historic Environment Assessment Addendum<sup>10</sup> (Appendix 1)

Staffordshire Historic Environment Record<sup>7</sup> (Appendix 1)

Cannock Chase AONB Design Guide<sup>11</sup>, July 2020 (Appendix 1).

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### Evidence base references in Appendix 1

<sup>9</sup> Historic Environment Assessment

<sup>11</sup> Historic Environment Assessment AONB

<sup>10</sup> Historic Environment Assessment Addendum

<sup>11</sup> Cannock Chase AONB Design Guide



## POLICY CW5: VIEWS AND VISTAS

Those key views and vistas listed in Table 2 and indicated on the map below (Figure 5) should be conserved from any significant adverse impact of new development (such as detracting from or obscuring views and vistas). Proposals must demonstrate that they do not as a result of height or scale or any other aspect of the development have an adverse impact on the key views and vistas, and positively enhance them where possible.

Table 2: The Views and vistas identified by the Views Assessment are:

Ref	Description	Viewing points
1	Panoramic vista to south and south-west, with horizon formed by Sutton Park, Barr Beacon, Birmingham skyline and The Wrekin	From the playing field (and village hall entrance)
2	Panoramic vista to east and south-east, including Lichfield Cathedral, Tamworth and far beyond towards Nuneaton	From public footpath CW3 alongside covered reservoir
3	Vista over farmland and Shaw Brook to Gentleshaw Common, with horizon formed by Sutton Park, Barr Beacon and the Birmingham skyline. This forms part of the foreground to AONB Views and Settings Guide Viewpoint 10 and the middle distance for AONB Views and Settings Guide Viewpoint 11.	South and west from Hayfield Hill and Buds Road, looking towards AONB Viewpoint 10 on Gentleshaw Common. Also looking east and from public footpath CW7.
4	View over farmland towards Cuckoo Bank (SSSI), Courtbanks Covert ancient woodland, Nunswell Park and Cannock Chase Forest. This forms part of the foreground and middle distance to AONB Views and Settings Guide Viewpoint 10 and Viewpoint 11.	South and west from Hayfield Hill, Slang Lane and public footpath CW5. Also looking north and west from public footpath CW7.
5	Panoramic vista to south and west with wide open views across farmland to Barr Beacon, Nunswell Park, Cannock Chase forest and to Cannock Wood village.	South and west from Park Gate Road and Holly Hill Road.
6	View over grazing land to woodland	North from Holly Hill Road

POLICY CW5: VIEWS AND VISTAS (continued)

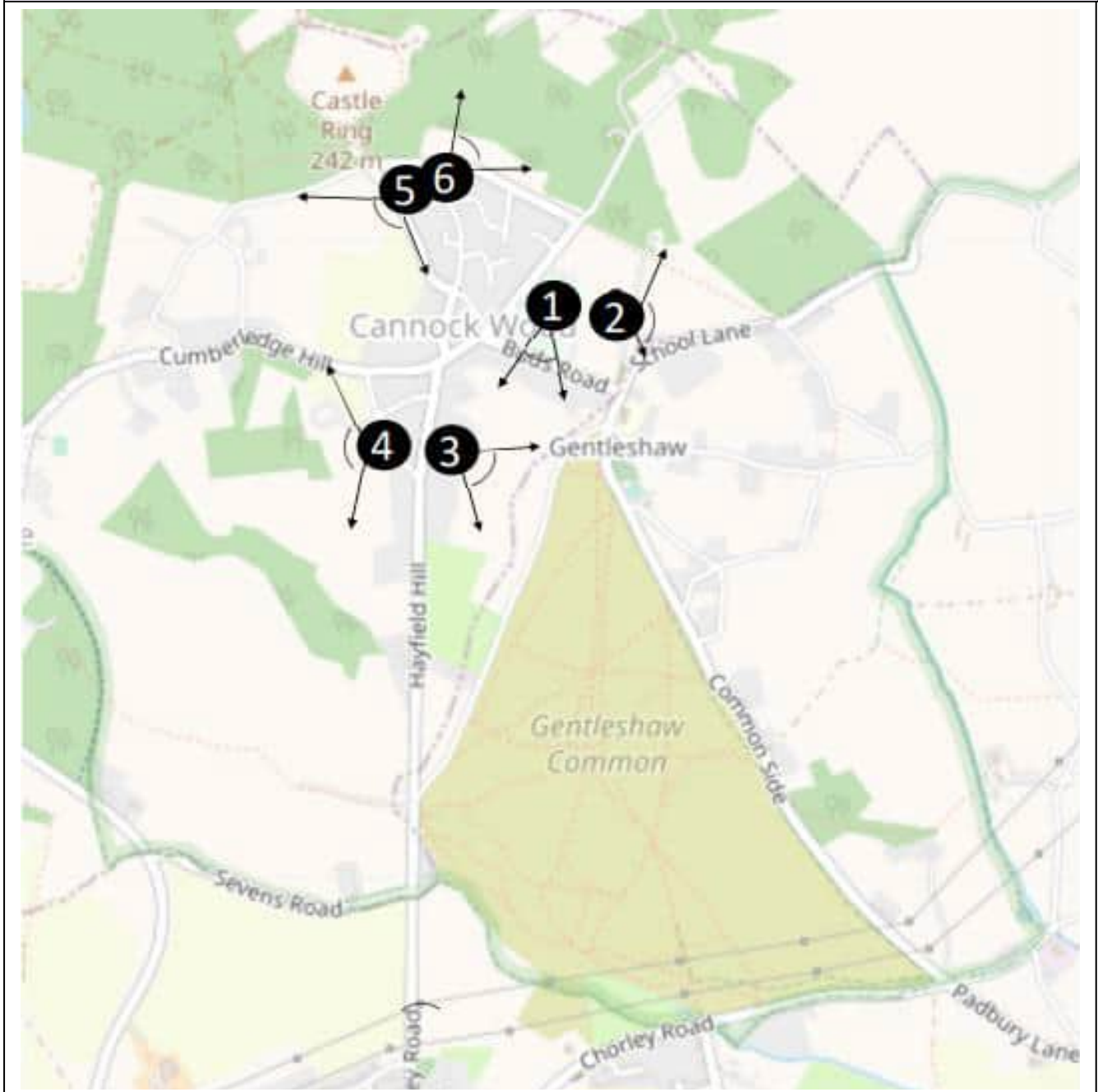


Figure 5: Views and vistas identified by the Views Assessment  
 © OpenStreetMap contributors

## INTENTION

To meet the Objectives:

### OBJECTIVE 3. VIEWS

Views, in particular the long panoramic views which are so important to residents in Cannock Wood, should be protected and where possible enhanced.

### OBJECTIVE 6. AONB

Protect the scenic natural beauty, landscape character and tranquil wildlife habitats of the AONB.

### OBJECTIVE 4: GREEN BELT

Support the aim of the Green Belt to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.

### OBJECTIVE 2. LOCAL CHARACTER

New development should respect local character, protect landscape character and reflect local vernacular or high-quality contemporary design and be fully integrated into the Parish.

## JUSTIFICATION

The Statement of Significance required to justify Cannock Chase's status as an AONB hangs on several key criteria including Scenic Quality, in accordance with Natural England's Guidance for assessing landscapes for designation. The special qualities of Cannock Chase on which AONB designation depends include 'inspiring views, both to the elevated plateau of the Chase from surrounding areas and from the high ground of the Chase across the farmed vales and countryside of the Midlands'.

Due to the topography of Cannock Wood, there are important panoramas, views and vistas within Cannock Wood which contribute not just to the character of Cannock Wood but also to the special qualities of the AONB itself.

The AONB Cannock Chase Management Plan 2019-2024 is a 'locally prepared and agreed statement of public policy for managing this nationally important landscape'. Although the current Management Plan runs only until 2024, this edition builds upon the previous three editions and will in due course be replaced by subsequent iterations since it is a requirement of Section 89 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000 to produce a Management Plan for the AONB and to ensure it is reviewed every five years.

The AONB Management Plan recognises that wide-ranging uninterrupted views are one of the AONB's special qualities and that views towards the distinctive profile of Cannock Chase are also an important attribute within the surrounding area. These are part of the special qualities essential to AONB designation. The Management Plan states at paragraph 2.1.4 that 'the loss, damage or deterioration of any of these special qualities would fundamentally alter the character and quality of the natural beauty of Cannock Chase'.

The AONB Management Plan explains the particular importance of protecting the setting of the AONB as follows (paragraph 4.12):

'Protecting the setting. The elevated plateau of the Chase gives long vistas over the farmed vales and countryside of the Midlands from many places within the AONB. At the same time, the Chase is present as a prominent wooded skyline from many surrounding settlements and roads. The small size of the AONB and its prominent elevation mean that its setting has an increased significance to the Chase's landscape character. Protecting and enhancing the

setting of the AONB is important for ensuring the long-term survival of the special qualities. Views, including historic views, are one of the key ways that setting is experienced and understanding these views into and out of the Chase will help to protect them.’

It is for this reason that the AONB has produced its Views and Settings Guide on significant viewing points and views into and out of the AONB. The number of views analysed in the Guide was restricted on cost grounds to 20 for the whole of Cannock Chase and the Guide states that ‘the 20 locations identified are by no means an exhaustive list of the important views within the setting of the AONB but have been used to demonstrate how the guide may be applied to specific views within the landscape’.

It is not by chance that 3 of the 20 views are from or of Cannock Wood, even though Cannock Wood is just a small part of the whole AONB; other views from or to Cannock Wood have been used to illustrate the AONB’s Views and Settings Guide. Cannock Wood is at the southern end of Cannock Chase and includes the highest point of Cannock Chase at Castle Ring. There are panoramic views in all directions from Cannock Wood and these are recognised as one of the special qualities of the AONB. They enable residents and visitors to enjoy the scenic beauty of the AONB and beyond. The views into, out of and across Cannock Wood are an important part of the character of the area as identified in the Character Assessment<sup>3</sup> and the Cannock Wood Views Assessment<sup>14</sup>. They enable residents and visitors to enjoy the scenic beauty of the AONB and beyond. The views can be vulnerable to inappropriate development such as poorly designed or located or overly large buildings or extensions, or large expanses of glass which can cause distracting reflections. Views can also become interrupted by overgrown vegetation.

## INTERPRETATION

There are many views and vistas in the Parish. The Views Assessment<sup>12</sup> attempts to list just some of these as listed in the policy in Table 2 and it provides photos of the views.

Views are important or very important to 98% of respondents in the survey. When asked to explain which views are important, over 40% did not just give one or two views, but stated ‘all views are important’ even though the question did not invite that response. One of the main tenets of the Neighbourhood Plan is to uphold the rural setting of the main settlement and maintain the highly valued AONB status and including open fields adjacent to the settlement boundary which are important elements of the village landscape.

The Cannock Wood Views Assessment<sup>14</sup> includes the three views of or from Cannock Wood which are used as examples in the AONB Views and Settings Guide, including the Zone of Theoretical Visibility studies performed for those. The Views Assessment indicates which of the other views identified by residents:

- form part of those identified by the AONB, as they often look towards the viewpoints selected by the AONB;
- can be appreciated from the network of roads and public footpaths in and immediately around the Parish.

## EVIDENCE

Character Assessment<sup>3</sup> (Appendix 1).

Cannock Wood Views Assessment<sup>14</sup> (Appendix 1).

Cannock Chase AONB Views and Settings Guide<sup>13</sup> (Appendix 1).

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Evidence base references in Appendix 1

<sup>3</sup> Character Assessment

<sup>12</sup> Cannock Wood Views Assessment

<sup>13</sup> Cannock Chase AONB Views and Settings Guide

## POLICY CW6: PROTECT AND ENHANCE LANDSCAPE HERITAGE

1. Protection and enhancement of the sites at Castle Ring and Courtbanks Covert including improvements to access will be supported where they maintain and preserve these Ancient Monuments in their present state and respect the character of the area as well as the fragile habitats in the Site of Biological Importance and Ancient Woodland and the wildlife found there.
2. Proposals which harm Castle Ring and Courtbanks Covert and their fragile habitats and the wildlife found there will be resisted. Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons. As ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees are irreplaceable, discussions over possible compensation should not form part of the assessment to determine whether the exceptional benefits of the development proposal outweigh the loss.
3. Sensitive woodland management will be supported to respect the former dominance of Castle Ring as an Iron Age hill fort in the landscape through retention of open views.

### INTENTION

To meet the Objectives:

#### OBJECTIVE 2. LOCAL CHARACTER

New development should respect local character/protect landscape character and reflect local vernacular or high-quality contemporary design and be fully integrated into the village settlement.

#### OBJECTIVE 3. VIEWS

Views, in particular the long panoramic views which are so important to residents in Cannock Wood, should be protected and where possible enhanced.

#### OBJECTIVE 5. CASTLE RING

Protect and enhance Castle Ring.

#### OBJECTIVE 7. BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

Protect and enhance the biodiversity and wildlife of the parish including tree and hedgerow coverage.

The Department for the Culture Media and Sport's document 'Scheduled Monuments and nationally important but non-scheduled monuments, October 2013' states:

*"Under the terms of the 1979 Act the Secretary of State has a duty to compile and maintain a schedule of ancient monuments of national importance, the purpose being to help preserve them, so far as possible, in the state in which they have come down to us today. The Act creates criminal offences in respect of unauthorised works to, or the destruction or damage of, Scheduled Monuments."*

The government's 2018 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment'<sup>14</sup> is more ambitious: 'to leave our environment in a better state than we found it'.

Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

<sup>14</sup> A Green Future: 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment

Both the Scheduled Monuments in Cannock Wood are important natural habitats and the term 'landscape heritage' is used here to embrace both natural heritage and cultural heritage. The foreword to Natural England's 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' explains that 'Landscape reflects the relationship between people and place, and the part it plays in forming the setting to our everyday lives. It is a product of the interaction of the natural and cultural components of our environment, and how they are understood and experienced by people.'

### Castle Ring

Castle Ring is both a Scheduled Monument and Site of Biological Importance.



*Castle Ring with acidic grassland and standing water*

According to Cannock Chase District Council's website<sup>15</sup> description of Castle Ring in 2022:

*"Today the monument is a shadow of its former self. Human activities and weather have worn away the banks. The long-term aim is to maintain and preserve the monument in its present state. This is being achieved by preventing invasive scrub taking over site. Repairing erosion scars with locally sourced materials and plastic reinforcement meshing. Due to high visitor pressure the site also requires the topping up of the paths with locally sourced sand and gravel. Recent additions have been a circle created next to the car park representing the size of an iron age round house and new notice boards have been installed to inform visitors about the site.*

*You can help us protect the site by:*

- *Keeping to the footpaths.*
- *No horse riding on the monument.*
- *No cycling on the monument.*
- *No sledging on the monument."*

As such it is important that any works to the site protect and enhance it.

Cannock Chase District Council's website description of Castle Ring in 2022 continues:

*"As well as being a Scheduled Monument the site is also a Site of Biological Importance. The nature of the site has led to a variety of small but distinct habitats from sphagnum bog, acidic grassland to areas which are more like heathland. This variety provides home to a range of birds, mammals, reptiles and invertebrates. You may see species such as the black darter dragonfly, green*

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Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

<sup>15</sup> Cannock Chase District Council's section on Castle Ring

*hairstreak butterfly and lizards if you are lucky.*

*These habitats are fragile and easily damaged through pressures from access and disturbance, so please keep to the main paths.*

**Access**

*A circular route can be taken around the top of the monument via steps from the car park. Castle Ring is a great place to start longer walks off into the adjoining Beaudesert Old Park and Cannock Chase. There is also a route down to Hazelslade Local Nature Reserve. Castle Ring is found just at the edge of the village of Cannock Wood. There is a large free car park, off Holly Hill Road and opposite the Park Gate Inn."*

Castle Ring lies on two long distance footpaths, The Heart of England Way and the Two Saints Way, and these are part of an extensive network of public footpaths in Cannock Chase.

There are currently issues with respect to access to Castle Ring. The site is particularly difficult for mobility impaired to access and so appropriate improvements would be welcome provided they do not damage the site in terms of its value both in terms of heritage and wildlife.

**Courtbanks Covert**

*Courtbanks Covert is Ancient Woodland, as indicated in Figure 6 below, and includes the site of a Scheduled Monument.*

The standing advice<sup>16</sup> from Natural England and the Forestry Commission states:

*"Ancient woodland takes hundreds of years to establish and is defined as an irreplaceable habitat. It is a valuable natural asset important for:*

- *wildlife (which include rare and threatened species)*
- *soils*
- *carbon capture and storage*
- *contributing to the seed bank and genetic diversity*
- *recreation, health and wellbeing*
- *cultural, historical and landscape value."*

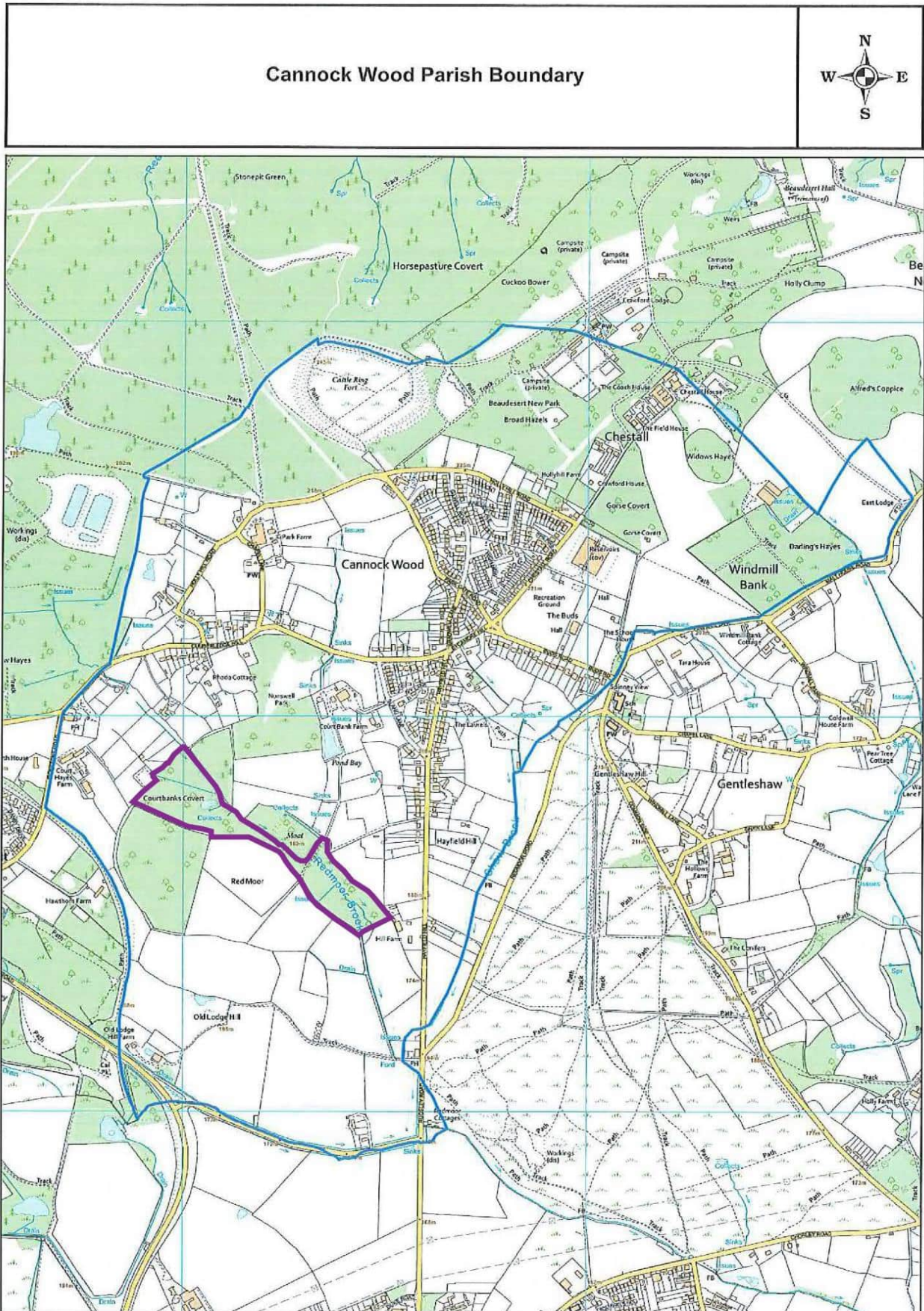
Trees are some of the most important features of the area for local people and eponymous for Cannock Wood. Cannock Chase Local Plan (2014) identifies the fact that trees are an important part of the character and visual amenity and that they can play a significant role in well-designed development proposals. The Cannock Chase AONB Design Guide<sup>13</sup> points out that: 'many of the settlements within the AONB are set within a context of mature tree cover which contributes to their character'; as the only settlement wholly within the AONB this applies nowhere more strongly than for Cannock Wood.



*Green Heritage Flag awarded for 2021/2022*

Evidence base references in Appendix 1

<sup>16</sup> Ancient Woodland Standing Advice



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Figure 6: Ancient Woodland outlined in purple





*Courtbanks Covert, 9<sup>th</sup> October 2008*

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The government's Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services (2011)<sup>17</sup> set out the government's ambition to halt overall loss of England's biodiversity by 2020, support healthy, well-functioning ecosystems, and establish coherent ecological networks, for the benefit of wildlife and people. The Natural Capital Committee's first report in 2013 noted that ancient woodland cannot be replaced and states: "When thinking about natural capital, wild species and habitats require special treatment that reflects their irreplaceability". The Neighbourhood Plan policies aim to avoid harm to ancient woodlands and veteran trees and are in conformity with the revised National Planning Policy Framework.

The Scheduled Monument (Appendix 2) listing of the Medieval moated site and bloomery at Court Bank Farm describes the site as follows:

*"The monument includes the earthworks and buried remains of a medieval moated site and a nearby bloomery situated within the valley of Redmoor Brook. A rectangular moated site measuring externally up to 140m north west to south east by 100m south west to north east encloses an internal area of approximately 0.5 hectares. The Redmoor Brook has been re-cut to run through the south west and south east arms of the moat. It is possibly the site of a royal hunting lodge built by Henry II in 1157-1158. To the north east at SK 0414 1179 lie the buried remains of a medieval bloomery or iron furnace, evident by buried mounds of iron slag, cinder and black earth. Situated close by is a rock-cut well known as Nun's Well which may be medieval in date. The possible site of a 12<sup>th</sup> century hermit priory which adopted Cistercian rule in 1141 and then moved to Stoneleigh by 1159, is thought to lie in the vicinity."*

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Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

<sup>17</sup> Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy

Landscape heritage is also revealed by Historic England's Cannock Chase Interactive map<sup>18</sup> using lidar in the immediate vicinity. This shows evidence of ridge and furrow farming practice and slopes and banks, likely also to be medieval, on the south-west facing slopes above Courtbanks Covert.

#### INTERPRETATION

Potential improvements to access to Castle Ring could be made without damaging the site including wheelchair access from the car park.

Potential improvements to access to Courtbanks Covert could be made with the consent of the landowners by creation of a permissive footpath between The Redmore Inn and Courtbanks Covert, joining up public footpaths CW7 and CW5 as outlined below in policy CW10: Footpath and Bridleway Improvements.

Signage around Castle Ring and on routes to the site especially those used by mountain bikers could emphasise the damage that cycling on the site can cause. Facilities to secure bicycles could be provided to encourage visiting cyclists not to take their bikes on to Castle Ring.

Signage around Castle Ring and on routes to the site especially those used by dog walkers could emphasise the damage that not picking up dog fouling can cause to the biodiversity of the site.

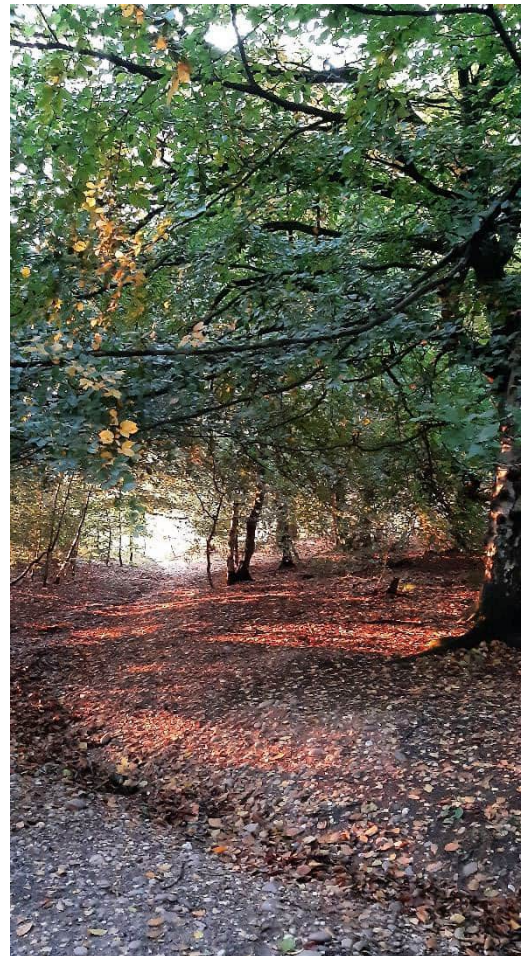
Signage around Courtbanks Covert could inform those using the adjacent public footpath about the nature of the heritage of the Scheduled Monument and the wider landscape heritage, as well as the qualities of the Ancient Woodland.

Sites of Biological Importance are referred to nationally as Local Wildlife Sites. They are locally identified and have no statutory designation but can be subject to planning policy.

The government's Biodiversity 2020 Strategy identified as a priority action bringing "a greater proportion of our existing woodlands into sustainable management and expand the area of woodland in England" and continued:

- *"Woodlands are one of our richest habitats, containing a very wide diversity of wildlife. Woodlands cover 10% of England, of which around half is 'priority woodland habitat' (i.e. ancient and native woodland).*
- *Active management of woodland can prevent and address the most widespread and serious problems affecting ecological condition, for example, shadiness and high deer populations causing a loss of shrub layer and ground cover. It can also deliver other benefits, for example, woodfuel and timber and recreation and leisure.*

*Our woodland resource is highly fragmented. Small, isolated patches of ancient woodland are particularly vulnerable to climate change and other pressures. Many species typical of ancient*



*Broadleaved woodland adjacent to Castle Ring*

Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

<sup>18</sup> Historic England Interactive Lidar Map

*woodland are slow to colonise new areas and only move slowly across the landscape. Enlarging and buffering ancient woods is therefore often a more immediate priority than attempting to create large-scale networks and corridors."*

The standing advice<sup>18</sup> from Natural England and the Forestry Commission provides additional information on the qualities of buffer zones for designated Ancient Woodland:

*"For ancient woodlands, the proposal should have a buffer zone of at least 15 metres from the boundary of the woodland to avoid root damage (known as the root protection area). Where assessment shows other impacts are likely to extend beyond this distance, the proposal is likely to need a larger buffer zone. For example, the effect of air pollution from development that results in a significant increase in traffic.*

*For ancient or veteran trees (including those on the woodland boundary), the buffer zone should be at least 15 times larger than the diameter of the tree. The buffer zone should be 5 metres from the edge of the tree's canopy if that area is larger than 15 times the tree's diameter. This will create a minimum root protection area.*

*Where assessment shows other impacts are likely to extend beyond this distance, the proposal is likely to need a larger buffer zone.*

*Where possible, a buffer zone should:*

- *contribute to wider ecological networks*
- *be part of the green infrastructure of the area*

*A buffer zone should consist of semi-natural habitats such as:*

- *woodland*
- *a mix of scrub, grassland, heathland and wetland*

*The proposal should include creating or establishing habitat with local and appropriate native species in the buffer zone.*

*You should consider if access is appropriate. You can allow access to buffer zones if the habitat is not harmed by trampling.*

*You should not approve development proposals, including gardens, within a buffer zone.*

*You should only approve sustainable drainage schemes if:*

- *they do not affect root protection areas*
- *any change to the water table does not negatively affect ancient woodland or ancient and veteran trees."*

## EVIDENCE

Cannock Chase District Council, which owns Castle Ring, has a lot of information about the site including its history, its biological importance, threats to the site and its management on its website<sup>17</sup> (Appendix 1).

Ancient Woodlands Natural England/Forestry Commission<sup>18</sup> (Appendix 1)

Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services (2011)<sup>19</sup> (Appendix 1)

Historic England Interactive Lidar Map<sup>20</sup> (Appendix 1)

Scheduled Monument listing (Appendix 2).

## POLICY CW7: PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE CANNOCK CHASE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

As the whole of the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area lies within the protected landscape areas of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the area receives the highest degree of protection from damaging or inappropriate development by National Policy. This policy gives great weighting to conserving and enhancing the landscape in AONBs.

Development proposals within the Parish will be expected to positively contribute to the AONB and its setting.

Development proposals which, individually or cumulatively, adversely impact the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB or its setting, including its visual relationship with its surroundings, will be resisted.

All development proposals will need to set out how the development would contribute to meeting the overall objectives that are set out in the following sections of the Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan (2019-2024):

- a. Landscape character and planning;
- b. Wildlife and nature;
- c. Historic environment and culture;
- d. Experience and enjoyment; and
- e. Communities and business.

### INTENTION

To meet the Objectives:

#### OBJECTIVE 6. AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB)

Protect the scenic natural beauty, landscape character and tranquil wildlife habitats of the AONB.

#### OBJECTIVE 4. GREEN BELT

Support the aim of the Green Belt to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.

#### OBJECTIVE 3. VIEWS

Views, in particular the long panoramic views which are so important to residents in Cannock Wood, should be protected and where possible enhanced.

#### OBJECTIVE 1. HOUSING

Ensure that any new housing is of high quality and well designed, is appropriate for the needs of the area and respects the character of the village.

### JUSTIFICATION

Cannock Wood lies entirely within the Cannock Chase AONB. This status prevents major development from taking place within Cannock Wood. However, minor developments may be proposed and it is important that such development is controlled so as not to damage the unique character and beauty of the area.

### INTERPRETATION

AONB Management Plan<sup>21</sup> (2019-2024) gives more detail about the AONB landscape as does the Review of AONB Landscape Character Framework, Stage 2 Landscape Character Type

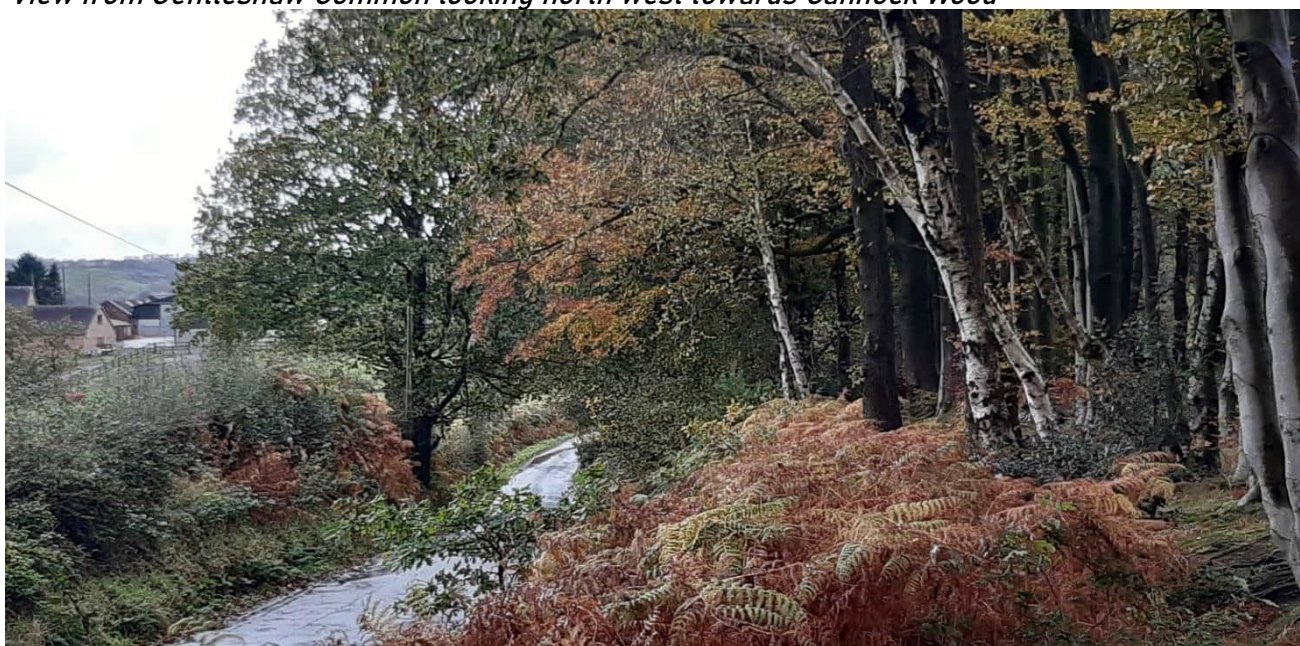
Descriptions<sup>9</sup>, 2017 (Appendix 1).

#### EVIDENCE

AONB Management Plan<sup>21</sup> (2019-2024 and subsequent plans) (Appendix 1).



*View from Gentleshaw Common looking north west towards Cannock Wood*



*View down Holly Hill Road with adjacent broadleaved woodland and farmland in distance*

Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

<sup>21</sup> Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan

**POLICY CW8: PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY OF THE PARISH INCLUDING TREE AND HEDGEROW COVERAGE**

1. The conservation, management and enhancement of local features of interest for their biodiversity and geodiversity will be supported and encouraged. These include:
  - a. Retention of hedgerows and traditional field boundary treatments and restoration, where these are fragmented, to improve their landscape condition and contribution, while avoiding encroachment onto pavements and obscuring of traffic sight lines.
  - b. Retention of existing trees around and within new development and additional planting where appropriate to maintain and enhance tree cover.
  - c. Promotion of the nature conservation and ecological value of current and future Local Wildlife Sites, Green Infrastructure, existing Woodland and Wildlife Corridors as designated in the Cannock Chase District Council Local Plan and subsequent Local Plan versions, or identified by the relevant designating bodies.
  - d. Retention and restoration of historic field patterns wherever possible including within any areas of new development.
  - e. Management of semi-natural habitats to prevent deterioration.
  - f. Incorporation and maintenance of hedgerows into the wider landscape whilst ensuring existing open views are not obscured.
  - g. Incorporation of new woodland and tree cover within the wider landscape whilst ensuring existing open views are not obscured.
  - h. Creation of Wildlife Corridors and Stepping Stones between existing and future areas of biodiversity including, but not limited to: various types of designated wildlife sites within and beyond the Parish; privately owned nature reserves, Ancient Woodlands and other irreplaceable habitats; and priority habitats such as lowland meadows and lowland heath.
  - i. Support for other initiatives which assist in linking biodiversity sites such as land management.
  - j. Protection and enhancement of surface and ground water quality to comply with the Water Framework Directive in ensuring that development does not cause deterioration of the status of inland waters.
2. As appropriate, the potential impacts on any protected and priority species and opportunities for Biodiversity Net Gain should be identified at an early stage in the design of any development proposal and then incorporated as the design of the scheme develops. Advice shall be sought from Natural England, Environment Agency, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Cannock Chase District Council and any other relevant bodies with suitable expertise.
3. Development proposals should include information demonstrating how any adverse impacts have been avoided, satisfactorily mitigated or compensated for as appropriate to the particular proposal.

*continues on following page*

**POLICY CW8: PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY OF THE PARISH INCLUDING TREE AND HEDGEROW COVERAGE (continued)**

4. Development must not adversely impact on areas of ecological importance such as waterbodies, habitat corridors and stepping stones, or designated wildlife sites including Sites of Scientific Interest. Adverse impacts to Local Wildlife Sites will not be permitted unless they can be adequately mitigated to retain and enhance the size, condition and function of the site. A landscaped buffer of appropriate width will be required between any built development and a designated wildlife site or feature of importance, commensurate with the site-specific requirements for conserving the habitats and species potentially impacted. The design of any buffer area shall be informed by detailed advice and evidence.
5. The Environment Act 2021 provides that grants of planning permission in England be subject to a condition requiring biodiversity value attributable to the development to exceed the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat by a relevant percentage. Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021 sets the relevant percentage at a minimum of 10% and empowers the Secretary of State by regulations to vary the relevant percentage. Biodiversity Net Gain should be achieved even where there are no losses as an integral part of sustainable development. Development proposals on land designated as Green Belt in the parish of Cannock Wood should demonstrate a minimum gain of the higher of 20% and the relevant percentage under Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021.

**INTENTION**

To meet the Objective:

**OBJECTIVE 7. BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE**

Protect and enhance the biodiversity and wildlife of the parish including tree and hedgerow coverage.

**JUSTIFICATION**

Biodiversity is an important objective for the Neighbourhood Plan, identified through community engagement in the survey. It is an important element of the landscape and wider character of the area, as identified in the Character Assessment.

Designated Green Belt surrounds Cannock Wood's tightly drawn Settlement Boundary, as well as the entire boundary of Cannock Wood parish. The whole parish lies within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, attaching a premium to the importance of maintaining and enhancing biodiversity.

Adjacent to the parish to the south-east lies Gentleshaw Common, which is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and to the south-west of the parish is another SSSI, Chasewater and the Southern Staffordshire Coalfields.

Local Wildlife Site is a nationally used term which covers all locally designated sites. These are called Sites of Biological Importance and Biodiversity Alert Sites in Staffordshire, which are of county and district importance for wildlife respectively. Local Wildlife Sites are identified and designated by the Staffordshire Local Wildlife Sites Partnership, which is led by Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and involves all the local planning authorities in Staffordshire.

There are two Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) at Castle Ring and Courtbanks Covert and two Biodiversity Alert Sites: Hayfield Hill (near Redmoor) and Gentleshaw Grassland. Two further sites lie adjacent to the parish boundary (Sevens Road SBI and New Hayes Tip SBI), which could have

relevance to any development proposal nearby with regards to potential impacts or opportunities for habitat links.

Any opportunities to improve and protect the existing Local Wildlife Sites should be encouraged. The 'Making Space for Nature' report<sup>22</sup> recommends that we need 'more, bigger, better and joined' sites to make our ecological networks robust. Wildlife corridors linking important sites can enhance their function, and can coincide with walking and cycling routes where multiple benefits can be actively encouraged. Stepping stones are unconnected areas of semi-natural habitat close to wildlife corridors, allowing more mobile species to move through the landscape.

The adjoining planning authority, Lichfield District Council has since 2015 embedded a Biodiversity Net Gain policy within its local plan, requiring a minimum gain of 20% to be demonstrated. Of the entire length of the parish boundary of Cannock Wood, 70% is bordered by Lichfield District Council and Biodiversity Net Gain in Cannock Wood should be commensurate with the minimum Biodiversity Net Gain long-established by Lichfield District Council. A Viability Assessment<sup>23</sup> has been prepared to evaluate the significance for development of a 10% uplift in Biodiversity Net Gain above the mandatory minimum 10% in the Green Belt areas of Cannock Wood.

Ecological networks must be maintained and fragmentation of important existing habitats avoided and it takes time for populations to establish and flourish, so better mitigation is provided by requiring a higher minimum Biodiversity Net Gain in the Green Belt areas of Cannock Wood.

The Biodiversity Net Gain requirements of The Environment Act 2021 are effective from November 2023 but early adoption in Cannock Wood is encouraged using the latest adopted biodiversity metric.



*Valley ditch at Castle Ring between the ramparts*

Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

<sup>22</sup> Making Space for Nature 'The Lawton Report'

<sup>23</sup> Viability Assessment



## INTERPRETATION

Development proposals and associated landscape schemes can conserve and enhance biodiversity including protecting the habitats of wildlife. These habitats can include hedges, ditches, ponds, woodland, wild areas and wildlife corridors for example. These elements should be seen as forming a connected system and opportunities should be taken to enhance it.

Nunswell Park was formerly recognised for its biodiversity value in initial surveys of the county but has not been assessed to the current Local Wildlife Site criteria. It is a key opportunity for assessment and possible enhancement.

The number, size, condition and connectivity of Local Wildlife Sites are key factors to increase and therefore Staffordshire Wildlife Trust were commissioned to produce a report<sup>24</sup> on Nature Sites to:

- identify sites for further survey for potential Local Wildlife Site designation;
- identify areas and sites where Biodiversity Net Gain could be best achieved;
- suggest potential projects for nature recovery and enhancement.

Sites and potential projects identified in the report will be the subject of ongoing work, where funding allows, to update the biodiversity evidence base for the parish and facilitate future green infrastructure delivery.

Potential biodiversity enhancement areas are outlined in green in Figure 7. These areas should be considered as strategic locations for the purposes of assessing biodiversity net gain. Any development within these areas should contribute to, and avoid conflicting with, the objectives of the area.

- Northern Woodland Link: linking Local Wildlife Sites New Hayes Tip, Castle Ring and Alfred's Coppice ancient woodland, including several areas of semi-natural woodland.  
*Objectives: Enhance existing woodlands structure, tree shrub and flora diversity, using locally sourced seed and plants. Management to create glades, rides, more dead wood and varied age structure of trees.*
- Grassland Edge: existing species-rich / semi-improved acidic grasslands along the edge of New Hayes Tip.  
*Objectives: Manage and enhance grasslands for good floral diversity and sward structure for invertebrates.*
- Shaw Brook Corridor: meadows along the Shaw Brook adjacent to Gentleshaw Common SSSI, linking to the north.  
*Objectives: Enhance and link grasslands in the corridor to create species rich dry and damp meadows along the brook corridor, to slow water flow and buffer/link Gentleshaw Common with other semi-natural habitats.*
- Redmoor Brook Corridor: ancient woodland and semi-natural woodlands along the Redmoor Brook, linking New Hayes Tip SBI to Gentleshaw Common.  
*Objectives: Naturalise brook with more woody debris and meanders*
- Old Lodge Hall Heathland Link: grassland and heathy areas linking Sevens Road SBI with Gentleshaw Common SSSI  
*Objectives: Create heathland mosaic habitats (heathland, acid grassland, scrub) along linear features to link up existing habitats. Manage existing habitats for greater floristic and structural diversity. Add invertebrate features.*

Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

<sup>24</sup> Staffordshire Wildlife Trust evidence

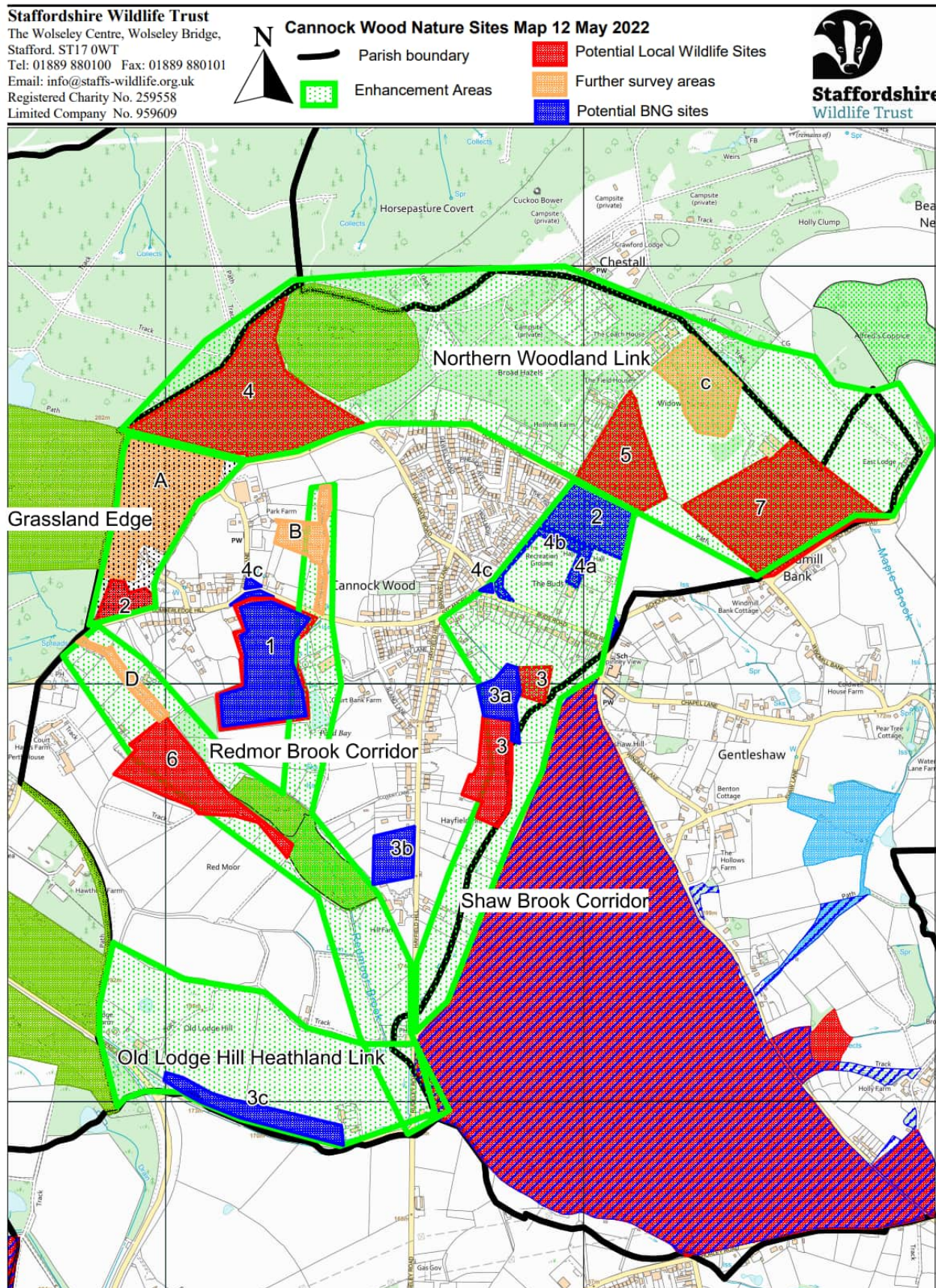


Figure 7: Nature Sites

Potential projects or general initiatives that could apply across the parish include enhancing the wildlife value of:

- Brook corridors
- Road verges
- Heathland mosaic links
- Greenways
- Equine land management
- Hedgerow enhancement
- Pond creation

Funding could be sought to enable such work in future, whether through grants, partnership projects or biodiversity offsetting. New development should also consider incorporating or contributing to such features, where appropriate.

## EVIDENCE

Making Space for Nature, 'The Lawton Report'<sup>22</sup> (Appendix 1).

Viability Assessment<sup>23</sup> (Appendix 1).

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust evidence<sup>24</sup> (Appendix 1).

Cannock Chase District Nature Recovery Network Mapping<sup>25</sup> FINAL REPORT, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust 2020 (Appendix 1).

Environmental Capacity in Cannock Chase District<sup>26</sup> Final Report Prepared by LUC, January 2013 (Appendix 1).

Green Infrastructure Assessment<sup>27</sup> (Final Version), March 2011, Cannock Chase District Council (Appendix 1)

Biodiversity net gain. Good practice principles for development. A practical guide<sup>28</sup> (Appendix 1)

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### Evidence base references in Appendix 1

<sup>25</sup> Nature Recovery Network Mapping for Cannock Chase

<sup>26</sup> Environmental Capacity in Cannock Chase

<sup>27</sup> Green Infrastructure Assessment

<sup>28</sup> Biodiversity net gain. Good practice principles for development. A practical guide.

**POLICY CW9: TRANQUILLITY AND LIGHT POLLUTION**

1. New development should not significantly disturb the tranquillity of the Parish through the creation of excess noise and increases in traffic or light pollution.
2. Proposals for development will be required to demonstrate that, if external lighting is required, it protects public visual amenity and the night sky from light pollution through:
  - a. The number, design, specification and position of lamps;
  - b. Full shielding at the horizontal and above of any lighting fixture exceeding 500 initial lumens and evidence of limited impact of unshielded lighting through use of adaptive controls;
  - c. Limiting the correlated colour temperature of lamps to 3000 Kelvins or less; and
  - d. Providing landscaping to reduce glare and reduce unnecessary light throw to a minimum.

Further guidance is to be found in the Design Code<sup>4</sup> and in the report Light Pollution and Dark Skies in the Cannock Chase AONB – A Good Lighting Guide (Appendix 1).

**INTENTION**

To meet the Objectives:

**OBJECTIVE 8. LIGHT POLLUTION**

Minimise light pollution wherever possible, especially within rural areas.

**OBJECTIVE 6. AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB)**

Protect the scenic natural beauty, landscape character and tranquil wildlife habitats of the AONB.

**JUSTIFICATION**

Cannock Chase AONB in which Cannock Wood is located is the smallest inland AONB in England and suffers from more light pollution than any other AONB due to light spilling in from the surrounding towns. Nonetheless it still benefits from relatively dark skies and darkness at night is an integral part of the landscape's character, adding to its beauty, tranquillity and sense of remoteness.

The AONB website<sup>29</sup> in 2022 outlined the problems caused by light pollution.

“A starry night sky and the wonder of the Milky Way is one of the most magical sights the countryside can offer, connecting people to an important part of our natural heritage. Sadly, many people don't get to experience this beauty due to light pollution. As well as reducing our ability to see the stars, light pollution has serious impacts for wildlife, our health, and the health of the planet. It disrupts the natural behaviour of wildlife, can be harmful to human health and wastes energy, at a time when many people are trying to live more sustainably.

**Human health**

Our sleep can be disrupted by too much light at night, and research suggests that night light can increase risks for more serious health problems. Research suggests that exposure to blue light at night is especially harmful.

**Wildlife and ecosystems**

Plants and animals depend on the daily rhythm of light and dark to govern life-sustaining behaviours such as breeding cycles, food and sleep. Stray artificial light has negative effects on many creatures, including amphibians, birds, mammals, invertebrates, and plants, and as a result

Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

<sup>29</sup> Cannock Chase AONB Dark Skies

affects the sensitive habitats on the Chase. Controlling stray light particularly helps nocturnal animals that are busy at night.

#### Energy costs and carbon emissions

Poorly-designed or misdirected light, which shines into the sky contributes to 'sky glow', the orange haze many of us now see rather than dark skies and the stars. This wastes energy, raising costs unnecessarily and contributing to carbon emissions and global warming. By turning off or dimming down unnecessary lighting, substantial savings can be made by local authorities, businesses and individuals.”

In April 2021 Staffordshire County Council began the replacement of over 47,000 street light luminaires (lanterns) in Staffordshire with energy efficient LED equivalents. The project will take four years to complete across the county and will reduce street lighting energy consumption by 70%, an energy saving of 8,627,504 kWh per annum. The completed scheme will result in a reduction of the county's annual street lighting energy bill by £1.6m and reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by an estimated 2,650 tonnes every year. Although the LED lantern the County Council chose may give the impression of dimmer overall lighting levels compared to the old lights, the advancement in LED streetlights means that the emitted light should be more accurately focused on the highway and significantly reduce upward light pollution. The relamping of the street lights in Cannock Wood has been completed.

Lighting can sometimes be too bright or aimed so that it spills upwards polluting and impairing appreciation of the night sky. It can also create shadows which can impair visibility as well as being wasteful of energy.

Lower height columns and shielding is beneficial for manège lighting, as is restricted operation hours and landscape mitigation.

#### INTERPRETATION

Further advice can be found at: Dark-Sky Lighting Basics<sup>30</sup> (Appendix 1)

#### EVIDENCE

Cannock Chase AONB Dark Skies<sup>29</sup> (Appendix 1).

Dark-Sky Lighting Basics<sup>30</sup> (Appendix 1).

National guidance<sup>31</sup> on how to consider light pollution in the Planning System (Appendix 1)

Artificial Light in the Environment<sup>32</sup>, Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, 2009 (Appendix 1).

Cannock Chase AONB Annual Review<sup>33</sup> , 2020-21 (Appendix 1).

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#### Evidence base references in Appendix 1

<sup>30</sup> Dark Sky Lighting Basics

<sup>31</sup> National planning guidance on light pollution

<sup>32</sup> Artificial Light in the Environment

<sup>33</sup> Cannock Chase AONB Annual Review 2020-21

## POLICY CW10: FOOTPATH AND BRIDLEWAY IMPROVEMENTS

1. The improvement of footpath and bridleway access and the facilitation of new circular walks and routes around and from the village will be supported. New provision should complement existing provision and if possible also link communities with local facilities and services including public transport.
2. All improvements should respect the character of the area in terms of use of materials, lighting, surfacing, location and signage appropriate to the AONB status. Through good design footpath/bridleway improvements and improved signage can both improve access for visitors while also protecting local habitats.
3. Provision should be made for the ongoing maintenance of any footpaths and bridleways provided under this policy.
4. Design or adaptation of new footpaths and bridleways to function as wildlife corridors is encouraged.

### INTENTION

To meet the Objectives:

#### OBJECTIVE 9. FOOTPATHS

Seek to improve provision for pedestrians in the village in terms of accessibility, safety and quality.

#### OBJECTIVE 7. BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

Protect and enhance the biodiversity and wildlife of the parish including tree and hedgerow coverage.

### JUSTIFICATION

Footpaths and bridleways are key to the character of the area and to the enjoyment of the parish and beyond, especially the rest of Cannock Chase AONB. The physical and mental health benefits of walking and of connecting people of all ages to the environment are well established<sup>16</sup> making the availability and quality of footpaths and bridleways fundamentally important.

- Footpaths serve both as a way for people to enjoy the countryside and as access routes around and through the parish.
- Some Rights of Way have been obstructed and others closed.
- Some footpaths need repair and others could be improved through new infrastructure.
- The strategic network could be improved through a variety of works which have been identified.
- New and existing footpaths and bridleways can work as wildlife corridors connecting areas of biodiversity.
- Some footpaths suffer from poor access due to gates that make it hard to get a pushchair, pram, bike, wheelchair or mobility scooter through and these could be improved.

INTERPRETATION

A number of potential improvements to the strategic network of footpath and cycle links have been identified including those indicated in Figure 8 and described below.

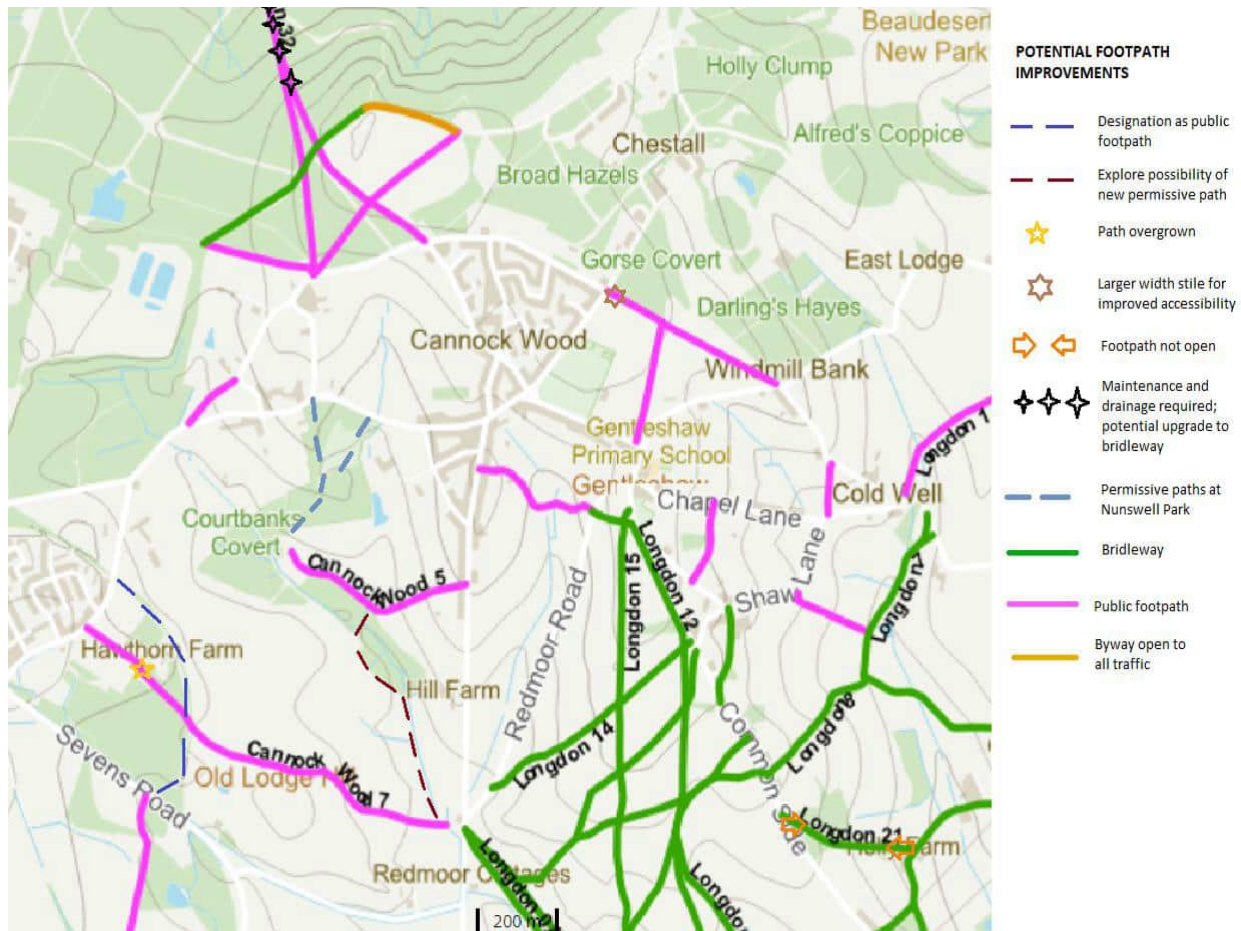


Figure 8: Potential footpath improvements

- New designation as public footpath of the route of the former mineral railway which forms part of the Chase2Water Route between paths Cannock Wood 7 and Cannock Town 0.795.
- Discussion of the possibility of a new (permissive) footpath from The Redmore Inn to Courtbanks Covert to link up with footpath Cannock Wood 5. It might be possible to use the existing track which is well fenced.
- Maintenance of footpath Cannock Town 67 near Hawthorn Farm where the path is overgrown with brambles.
- Expansion of the stile on footpath CW2 which currently cannot get a pram or buggy through the stile without dismantling the pram or folding up the buggy, on what would otherwise be a walking route to the school, church and village hall. It is also inaccessible for wheelchairs.
- Maintenance of footpath Cannock Town 0.782 / 0.785, locally known as Telegraph Hill, including drainage and cambering so the path does not get eroded by rainwater as at present and to ensure the lower end is not flooded. This work is required just for maintenance of the public footpath but it would enable the route to be upgraded to a bridleway to provide connection from Cannock Wood to the extensive network of cycle paths in Cannock Chase.
- Re-opening of Rights of Way at path Longdon 22 from Commons side. This is not in Cannock Wood Parish itself but is part of the footpath network in the immediate area.

Further improvements to the strategic network may be identified by the Parish Council from time to time and an up to date version of the network including proposed improvements will be kept on the Parish Council website at <https://cannockwood.org>. Any proposed new public footpaths must be designated as such by Staffordshire County Council, but permissive paths depend on the goodwill of landowners.

Provision for ongoing maintenance might be through a number of mechanisms including adoption of the path as highway or by recording the path as a public right of way on the Definitive Map or by other appropriate mechanism.

Staffordshire County Council Rights of Way Charter sets out the standards by which the County will deal with identified issues in Rights of Way.

Improvements could include provision of appropriately designed and sited cycle parking.

The Design Code<sup>4</sup> gives guidance on footpath design and cycle parking.

It may be important that any areas of development land required to safeguard a future link identified in the strategic network, or to safeguard a link to a potential development site, be included in the adopted public highway, or otherwise be transferred into public ownership and remain in public ownership.

#### EVIDENCE

The Plan at Figure 8 above is adapted from and based on the Staffordshire County Council map of Public Rights of Way [Staffordshire County Council interactive map](#).

Character Assessment<sup>3</sup>/Design Code<sup>4</sup> (Appendix 1).

A Green Future: 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment<sup>16</sup>



*Crossing Shaw Brook on public footpath CW4*



*Public footpath CW5 at Hayfield Hill*



**POLICY CW11: HIGHWAY SAFETY**

1. As appropriate, development proposals should demonstrate that there is no significant detrimental impact on traffic safety and where possible contribute to improvements in traffic safety including the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.
2. Where proposed development sites are located on a road with no pavements or other provision for pedestrians, consideration should be given to making new provision for pedestrians where this would enhance safety.
3. Where appropriate proposals should reduce car dependency and incorporate sustainable transport provision, including:
  - a. having good access to public transport;
  - b. prioritising the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders;
  - c. providing any necessary highway improvements to accommodate proposed development;
  - d. demonstrating how the traffic generated by the proposed development will, when considered in conjunction with other committed developments, be accommodated through the proportional contribution towards any necessary highway improvements, to ensure that there is no significant detrimental impact on traffic safety, congestion or air quality.
4. Where development proposals will create demand for parking they will be required to provide off-street parking and not reduce safety for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.
5. New development should provide safe access to the carriageway.
6. The impact of the private car on the street scene should be minimised wherever possible.

**INTENTION**

To meet the Objective:

**OBJECTIVE 10. ROADS**

Seek to improve road safety in the village for all users by working with the relevant authorities.

**JUSTIFICATION**

Many residents of Cannock Wood continue to register their concern over road safety on Parish roads, especially along Hayfield Hill and Cumberledge Hill where many cars travel in excess of the 30mph speed limit, and at the junction of Parkgate Road and Buds Road.

**INTERPRETATION**

Road safety improvements could consider including traffic calming, signage, junction improvements, priority changes or pedestrian crossings. Manual for Streets<sup>34</sup> gives greater detail of how to design safe streets and roads. Staffordshire County Council is the highway authority responsible for highway improvements and safety.

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Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

<sup>34</sup> Manual for Streets

**EVIDENCE**

Manual for Streets<sup>34</sup>, Department for Transport, 2007 (Appendix 1).

Residents Survey<sup>8</sup> highlighted road safety as a major issue (Appendix 1).



*Looking down Sycamore Hill at Buds Road triangle junction with Chestall Road and Park Gate Road*



*Speed limit signage on Hayfield Hill*

**POLICY CW12: COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

Facilities of importance to the life and enjoyment of the local community are shown on the map at Figure 9. Development proposals that will enhance the viability and/or community value of the facilities shown in Figure 9 or any others on Cannock Chase District Council's list of Assets of Community Value<sup>35</sup> will be supported as long as it is not detrimental to the character of the Parish. Otherwise, proposals that result in either the loss of the facility or in significant harm to the community value of a facility will be resisted, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the operation of the facility or the ongoing delivery of the community value of the facility is no longer financially viable.

**INTENTION**

To meet the Objective:

**OBJECTIVE 11. COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

Strive to ensure that the community facilities and amenities are appropriate for the needs of the parish thus allowing residents of all ages the opportunity to take part in activities that lead to a sense of individual and/or community well-being.

**JUSTIFICATION**

Community facilities are valued in the area but there may be some potential threats to them. For those facilities designated as Assets of Community Value, the Parish Council would be made aware should an asset of community value be put on the market and provide a short moratorium to explore potential options including the Community Right to Bid.

**INTERPRETATION**

Potential improvements could include:

- Improvements to access.
- Improvements that allow other uses that the community values.
- Improvements that make the facility more viable.

The local community regard all the facilities shown in Figure 9 as important.

The Localism Act 2011 introduced the term 'Asset of Community Value' in relation to buildings and other land added to the local authority's register of Assets of Community Value. The main



*The Rag Inn*

use must currently or recently have been to further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community and could do so in the future. The Localism Act states that 'social interests' include cultural, recreational and sporting interests. An Asset of Community Value is subject to additional protection from development under the Localism Act 2011. Voluntary and community organisations such as the Parish Council can nominate an asset to be included on Cannock Chase District Council's register of assets of community value. The Parish Council intends to apply for Nunswell Park, the

Village Hall and Village Hall Field, and the Beaudesert Sports Field And Recreation Ground to be included on Cannock Chase District Council's register of Assets of Community Value<sup>35</sup>. The Park Gate Inn was added to Cannock Chase District council's register of Assets of Community Value in March 2022 at the request of the Parish Council, but a request to include Cannock Wood Methodist Church was rejected in April 2022 and a request to include The Rag Inn was rejected in June 2022.



*Nunswell Park*

## EVIDENCE

List of Assets of Community Value in Cannock Chase<sup>35</sup> (Appendix 1).

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Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

<sup>35</sup> List of Assets of Community Value in Cannock Chase

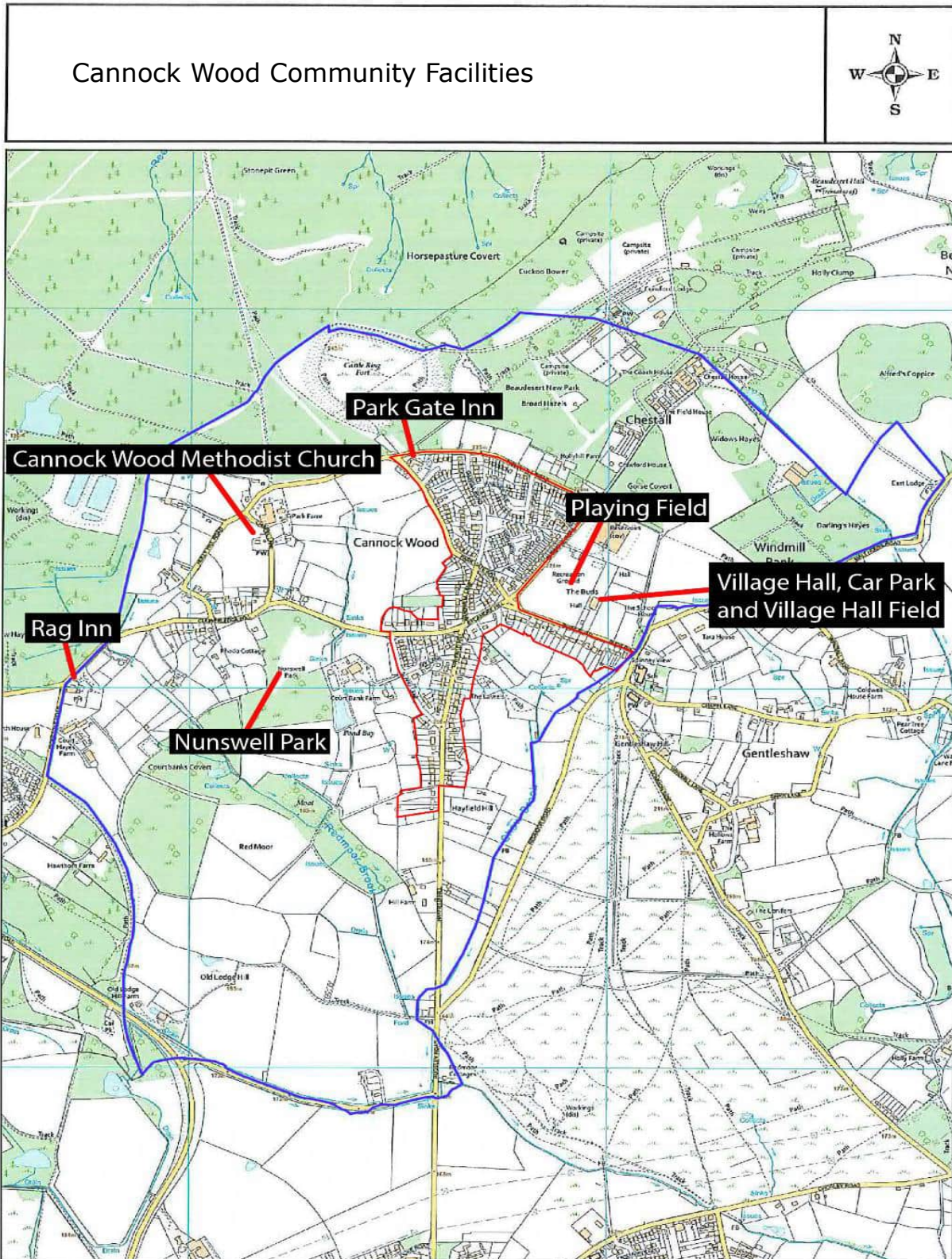


Figure 9: Community Facilities

## POLICY CW13: PUBLIC REALM AND OPEN SPACES

Proposals for alterations of the public realm and open spaces will be supported provided they are in keeping with the character of the area as described in the Character Assessment<sup>3</sup> and are informed where appropriate by the Design Code<sup>4</sup>. Public Realm includes road, pavement, grass verges, street furniture, the playing field and other public areas. The policy also covers maintaining, cleaning and attending to the appearance, safety and condition of the public realm should planning permission be required.

### INTENTION

To meet Objectives:

#### OBJECTIVE 12. PUBLIC REALM

Support improvement to the public realm.

#### OBJECTIVE 10. ROADS

Seek to improve highway safety in the village for all users by working with the relevant authorities.

#### OBJECTIVE 7. BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

Protect and enhance the biodiversity and wildlife of the parish including tree and hedgerow coverage.

### JUSTIFICATION

The quality of the public realm contributes to the quality of the environment and the character of the area. There are many ways in which different aspects of the Public Realm and Open Spaces in the Parish could be enhanced in terms of design and appearance so that they better serve residents and visitors and contribute to the character of the area. For example, grass verges could be places where biodiversity is encouraged and junctions could be made more pedestrian friendly.

### INTERPRETATION

The Character Assessment outlines aspects of the public realm and open spaces that contribute to the character of the area. The Design Code provides guidance on ways in which the public realm and open spaces could be improved.

### EVIDENCE

Character Assessment<sup>3</sup> (Appendix 1)



*Playground and cricket pavilion*



*Buds Road triangle and post box*

## POLICY CW14: VILLAGE BOUNDARY

In the Cannock Chase District Council Local Plan Part 1, 2014, Policies Map, the Main Settlement is excluded from the Green Belt by a Settlement Boundary. The rest of the Parish lies inside the Green Belt. Any development outside the Settlement Boundary and therefore lying within the Green Belt will have to be regarded as 'not inappropriate' or demonstrate exceptional circumstances, as well as evidenced need and must be in conformity with other policies in this Plan, the adopted Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

### INTENTION

To meet Objective:

#### OBJECTIVE 4. GREEN BELT

To support the aim of the Green Belt to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.

### JUSTIFICATION

The protection offered by the Green Belt is welcomed by the Parish Council as it keeps land open between settlements within the Parish and beyond which is a key feature of the character of the area.

### INTERPRETATION

The Green Belt covers all the area outside the Settlement Boundary as shown in Figure 10.



*View looking north east from public footpath CW7 to Gentleshaw Common across Green Belt land*

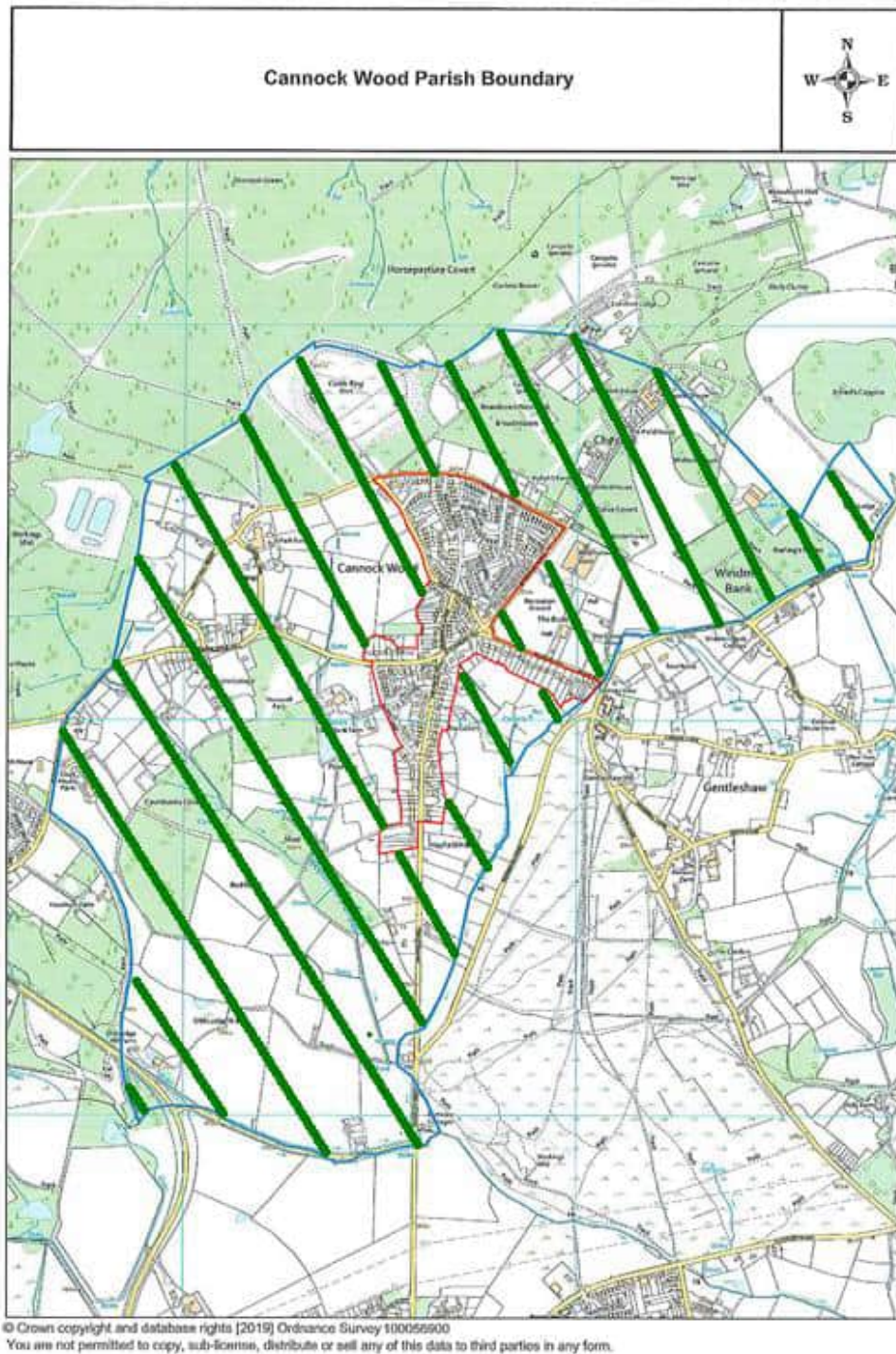


Figure 10: Indication of Green Belt rural areas of Cannock Wood

Boundary of Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan designated area ———

Indication of settlement boundary ———  
 (see [Cannock Chase Planning Policy Map](#) for the definitive settlement boundary)

Indication of Green Belt rural area // //  
 (see [Cannock Chase Planning Policy Map](#) for the definitive boundaries)



## SECTION 4 DELIVERY

### Monitoring the Plan after it has been made

Cannock Wood Parish Council is notified of all planning applications within the Parish by Cannock Chase District Council and asked for their comments. Monitoring the Plan after it has been made is important to ensure that the Plan is achieving its objectives and to understand how it is being used, and how decisions are taking into account the Parish Council's comments on planning applications.

### Application Response Form

The Parish Council will use an Application Response Form (as shown on the next page) to record its comments on planning applications. This form will prompt the Parish Council to comment on how it determines individual planning applications have considered each of the Neighbourhood Plan's policies by providing space against each policy for comments. It also provides space for noting the eventual outcome, i.e. the District Council's decision and how the Parish Council's comments and Neighbourhood Plan policies have been considered in the decision.

### A Plan Monitoring Table

A Plan Monitoring Table, as shown below, can be used as a framework for monitoring the effectiveness of the Plan over time by recording information about a range of planning decisions. It contains spaces for a brief summary of the information for each planning application commented on by the Parish Council including relevant dates and a brief summary of the Parish Council's comments and outcome. This will help give an overview of how applications are being dealt with and decided upon.

On an annual basis this table can be used to form the basis of a report on the effectiveness of the Plan which can include recommendations for how the Plan can be monitored in the future and for potential future versions of the Neighbourhood Plan. This table will be available on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

Application Number	Registration Date	Date Parish Council Notified	Target Date for Determination	Date of Determination	Parish Councils Response and Outcome

Cannock Wood Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan Application Response Form				Application Reference			
Description of Development							
Address or Location							
Registration Date		Date Parish Council Notified		Target Date for Determination		Date of Determination	
Policy Number	Policy Name			Parish Council's Comments			
CW1	HOUSING DESIGN						
CW2	LOCAL CHARACTER						
CW3	NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS						
CW4	HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT						
CW5	VIEWS AND VISTAS						
CW6	PROTECT AND ENHANCE LANDSCAPE HERITAGE						
CW7	PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE CANNOCK CHASE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB)						
CW8	PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY OF THE PARISH INCLUDING TREE AND HEDGEROW COVERAGE						
CW9	TRANQUILLITY AND LIGHT POLLUTION						
CW10	FOOTPATH AND BRIDLEWAY IMPROVEMENTS						
CW11	HIGHWAY SAFETY						
CW12	COMMUNITY FACILITIES						
CW13	PUBLIC REALM AND OPEN SPACE						
CW14	VILLAGE BOUNDARY						
Other Comments							
Outcome: How was the planning application determined and how were the Neighbourhood Plan policies and Parish Council comments dealt with in the decision?							

## APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Schedule of Evidence	page 69
Appendix 2	Scheduled Monuments and Non-Designated Heritage Assets in Cannock Wood	page 72
Appendix 3	Localism Act 2011: Neighbourhood Planning and Assets of Community Value	page 74
Appendix 4	How Cannock Wood Parish Council Prepared this Plan	page 76
Appendix 5	Glossary of Terms	page 82

## Appendix 1 Schedule of Evidence

1. Summary results of June 2018 survey  
[Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan - Cannock Wood](#)
2. Minutes of Parish Council meetings 2018-2022  
[Cannock Wood Parish Council Meetings - Cannock Wood](#)
3. Cannock Wood Character Assessment  
[Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan - Cannock Wood](#)
4. Cannock Wood Design Code  
[Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan - Cannock Wood](#)
5. Cannock Wood Housing Needs Assessment  
[Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan - Cannock Wood](#)
6. Historic Farmsteads  
[Historic Farmsteads](#)
7. Staffordshire Historic Environment Record  
[Staffordshire Historic Environment Record](#)
8. Neighbourhood Plan Survey 2021 and results  
[Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan - Cannock Wood](#)
9. Character Type Descriptions: AONB Landscape Character Framework, Stage 2 Landscape Character Type Descriptions, 2017  
[AONB Landscape Character Assessment 2017](#)
10. Cannock Chase Local List  
[Local List | Cannock Chase District Council](#)
11. Historic Environment Assessment Cannock Chase AONB, June 2015  
[Cannock Chase AONB Historic Environment Assessment](#)
12. Historic Environment Assessment Addendum 2017  
[Historic Environment Assessment Addendum 2017](#)
13. Cannock Chase AONB Design Guide  
[AONB Design Guide](#)
14. Cannock Wood Views Assessment  
[Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan - Cannock Wood](#)
15. Cannock Chase AONB Views and Settings Guide  
[Cannock Chase AONB Views and Settings Guide](#)
16. A Green Future: 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment  
[25-year-environment-plan](#)

17. Cannock Chase District Council Website – Castle Ring  
[Castle Ring Scheduled Monument | Cannock Chase District Council](#)
18. Ancient Woodland Standing Advice  
[Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions](#)
19. Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy  
[Biodiversity 2020](#)
20. Historic England Interactive Lidar Map  
[Chase Through Time: the Archaeology of Cannock Chase Revealed from the Air by Lidar | Historic England](#)
21. Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan  
<https://www.cannock-chase.co.uk/publications/aonb-management-plan/>
22. Making Space for Nature (Lawton et al. 2010)  
[Making Space for Nature: Lawton et al 2010](#)
23. Viability Assessment  
[Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan - Cannock Wood](#)
24. Staffordshire Wildlife Trust Evidence on Cannock Wood  
[Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan - Cannock Wood](#)
25. Cannock Chase District Nature Recovery Network Mapping, FINAL REPORT, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust 2020  
[SWT nature recovery mapping for Cannock Chase](#)
26. Environmental Capacity in Cannock Chase District, Final Report Prepared by LUC, January 2013  
[Environmental Capacity in Cannock Chase District](#)
27. Green Infrastructure Assessment (Final Version), March 2011, Cannock Chase District Council  
[Green Infrastructure Assessment Cannock Chase](#)
28. Biodiversity Net Gain. Good practice principles for development. A practical guide.  
[Biodiversity net gain. Good practice principles for development. A practical guide \(cieem.net\)](#)
29. AONB Dark Skies  
[Dark Skies - Cannock Chase AONB \(cannock-chase.co.uk\)](#)
30. Dark-Sky Lighting Basics  
[Outdoor Lighting Basics - International Dark-Sky Association \(darksky.org\)](#)

31. National guidance on how to consider light pollution in the planning system  
[Light pollution - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
32. Artificial Light in the Environment, Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, 2009  
[Artificial Light in the Environment](#)
33. Cannock Chase AONB Annual Review, 2020-21  
[AONB Annual Review 2020-21 - Cannock Chase AONB \(cannock-chase.co.uk\)](https://cannock-chase.co.uk)
34. Manual for Streets, Department for Transport, 2007  
[Manual for Streets](#)
35. Assets of Community Value in Cannock Chase  
[Assets of Community Value | Cannock Chase District Council](#)

## Appendix 2 Scheduled Monuments and Non-Designated Heritage Assets in Cannock Wood

### Scheduled Monuments

There are two Scheduled Monuments within Cannock Wood Parish, as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Scheduled Monuments

Castle Ring, a multivallate hillfort and medieval hunting lodge	Moated site and bloomery in Courtbanks Covert
Grid reference SK 04434 12827	Grid reference SK 04225 11733
Entry list number 1014687	Entry list number 1003750
<p>Castle Ring is a good example of an Iron Age hillfort in a commanding position. The ramparts and ditches will retain archaeological information on the construction of the hillfort, in particular, the partly silted ditches will retain environmental evidence on the economy of the site's inhabitants and the landscape in which they lived. The site retains buried features and structures which will provide information not only on the site's occupation during the Iron Age but also on its reuse in the medieval period. The reuse of the hillfort following the construction of the hunting lodge is matter of interest since it illustrates the resumption of high-status occupation at the site. Furthermore, as a feature of the park of Beaudesert, the hunting lodge itself provides evidence for the leisure activities of the nobility during the medieval period.</p> <p><a href="#">Castle Ring, a multivallate hillfort and medieval hunting lodge, Cannock Wood - 1014687   Historic England</a></p>	<p>The monument includes the earthworks and buried remains of a medieval rectangular moated site and a nearby bloomery situated within the valley of Redmoor Brook. The Redmoor Brook has been re-cut to run through the south west and south east arms of the moat. It is possibly the site of a royal hunting lodge built by Henry II in 1157-1158. To the north east at SK 0414 1179 lie the buried remains of a medieval bloomery or iron furnace, evident by buried mounds of iron slag, cinder and black earth. Situated close by is a rock-cut well known as Nun's Well which may be medieval in date. The possible site of a C12 hermit priory which adopted Cistercian rule in 1141 and then moved to Stoneleigh by 1159, is thought to lie in the vicinity.</p> <p><a href="#">Moated site and bloomery in Courtbanks Covert, Cannock Wood - 1003750   Historic England</a></p>

## Non-Designated Heritage Assets

The Cannock Wood list of Non-Designated Heritage Assets at the date of this Plan is shown in Table 4 below. The character of each of these assets makes a positive contribution to local identity, distinctiveness and appearance.

Table 4: Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Asset	Grid Reference
Cannock Wood Methodist Church, Chapel Lane	SK 04188 12357
Nun's Well, Court Bank Farm	SK 04149 11798
The Cottage, Slang Lane	SK 04538 12007
Broome Cottage, 6 Cumberledge Hill	SK 04581 12169
1 Chestall Cottages, Beaudesert Park	SK 05073 12671
4 Chestall Cottages, Beaudesert Park	SK 05051 12690
The Granary, Chestall Park	SK 05118 12795

Other sites and buildings may be added by the Parish Council which is responsible for curating the list of Non-Designated Heritage Assets. A complete listing is available from the Parish Council on request.



*Cannock Wood Methodist Church in middle distance*



## Appendix 3 Localism Act, 2011: Neighbourhood Planning and Assets of Community Value

The 2011 Localism Act introduced a number of new rights for communities including neighbourhood planning and the right to nominate land and buildings as Assets of Community Value to give them extra protection.

### Neighbourhood Planning

What is neighbourhood planning?

Neighbourhood Planning allows local communities to set planning policies through a neighbourhood plan that forms, along with the Local Planning Authority's Local Plan, part of the development plan used to determine planning applications. Cannock Chase District Council is the Local Planning Authority for Cannock Wood.

According to Government guidance:

"Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead. Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to plan for the types of development to meet their community's needs and where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area."

(Source <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#what-is-neighbourhood-planning>)

What is the status of neighbourhood planning?

The status of neighbourhood planning is outlined in paragraphs 29 and 30 of The National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021):

"29. Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies.

30. Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently. "

Who does neighbourhood plans?

Where a designated neighbourhood area contains all or part of the administrative area of a parish council, the Parish Council is responsible for neighbourhood planning. However, where the Parish Council chooses to produce a neighbourhood plan it should work with other members of the

community who are interested in, or affected by, the neighbourhood planning proposals so that they can play an active role in the preparation of the neighbourhood plan.

For more information on how Cannock Wood Parish Council put together the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan, please see Appendix 4, How Cannock Wood Parish Council Prepared their Plan

See also [National Planning Policy Framework - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework-guidance) and <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/> for further details about neighbourhood planning.

### Assets of Community Value

In England, the Localism Act 2011 provides additional protection to land or buildings known as Assets of Community Value that the local community regards as being of importance. The Local Authority must keep a register of Assets of Community Value and voluntary and community organisations (such as Parish Councils) can nominate land or buildings to be included on this register.

Once an Asset is on a register the local community can benefit from a Community Right to Bid should the Asset come up for sale. This a right under the Act which imposes a moratorium period (known as the Full Moratorium Period) on the sale of the Asset for up to 6 months to allow the local community a chance to determine if they can raise the finance to purchase the Asset and if so submit an offer to purchase it. The community group have a period of 6 weeks once the owner has notified the Council of an intention to sell the Asset to decide if they want to be considered as a bidder (this is known as the Interim Moratorium Period). There is no obligation on the owner to accept the offer or treat the community group as a preferential bidder.

For more information on this process, see <https://mycommunity.org.uk/what-are-assets-of-community-value-acv>

Although not a provision of the Localism Act, the status of land or buildings as Assets of Community Value can be treated as a material consideration in a planning application including refusal for full or partial demolition or change of use. Also Assets of Community can be subject to Compulsory Purchase by a Local Authority where there is the threat of long-term loss to the community.

Further to the Localism Act, The Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012 set out more detailed regulations.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2421/contents/made>

## Appendix 4 How Cannock Wood Parish Council Prepared their Plan

The Parish Council carried out a village survey in 2018 which showed that 70% of respondents felt housing to be the most important of several issues affecting Cannock Wood then and in the future. Cannock Wood Parish Council established that a Neighbourhood Plan with appropriate planning policies and guidance would be a good way to address some of these issues.

### Area Designation

Cannock Wood residents were interested in issues that could affect large parts of the Parish and so the Parish Council decided to apply to Cannock Chase District Council for the whole Civil Parish to be designated as the Neighbourhood Plan Area in May 2019. The District Council was therefore required to designate the Neighbourhood Area as requested and no public consultation on the application was required (in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012, as amended) Regulation 5A). On 6th June 2019, Cannock Chase District Council (via delegated authority) resolved to designate the Cannock Wood Parish as the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Area.

### Plan Preparation

The Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (“the Regulations”), the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2003 and the EU Directive 2001/42 on Strategic Environmental Assessment.

This included setting up a Working Group and Cannock Wood Parish Council has been fortunate enough to be able to draw on local expertise in a variety of specialist areas in the form of volunteers. The Working Group started detailed work in October 2021 to oversee the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan for Cannock Wood. The Working Group comprises two or three parish councillors and twelve to fifteen local residents. The Working Group has met regularly, usually once a month, and smaller sub-groups have met as required to focus on certain themes of the plan's development and to organise public engagement.

The Parish Council and Working Group decided that they would need independent specialist help at certain points in the Plan-making process. To this end the Working Group established a budget including grants made available by the Government specifically for the purpose of producing Neighbourhood Plans. The Working Group has liaised frequently with Edward Taylor of PlanSpace and is very appreciative of his time, technical guidance and expertise. It was also able to access support from Cannock Chase District Council including large scale maps of Cannock Wood.

## Community Engagement

The Parish Council tasked the Working Group with producing a consultation and engagement strategy, showing how the public would be involved throughout the process, and consulted as widely and thoroughly as possible during the process to ensure that the draft and final Neighbourhood Plan would be representative of the views of residents.

The strategy developed is principally based on distribution to every household in the parish of printed documents at various stages in the process. The same documents have been made available as pdfs on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the Parish Council's website [www.cannockwood.org](http://www.cannockwood.org). It was agreed that paper distribution was required to all households to ensure that there is no digital divide within the community. A full list of the paper documents circulated is provided in Table 5 below and all have made clear that feedback and comment is welcome throughout and all opinions expressed would be considered in the round to inform the contents of the developing Neighbourhood Plan.

The village survey prepared by the Working Group in October 2021 was a fundamental part of the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. It was comprehensive and provided explanation about the process and a draft Vision as well as a range of questions. It was also an ideal opportunity for the residents to pool ideas and suggestions about what else is important for Cannock Wood. There was a good response rate, and many residents made a lot of thoughtful comments and suggestions.



*Collection box at central location for survey and consultation responses*

The Working Group undertook the considerable task of analysing all the responses, logging responses on a spreadsheet including every comment made, however long; a sample was cross-checked for accuracy independently by a member of the Working Group not involved in the inputting of data. The spreadsheet provided data for the tables and charts which are shown in the subsequent survey results and feedback documents prepared by the Working Group. Full survey results including every comment made were published on the website and results relevant to local organisations provided to them in bespoke documents between December 2021 and February 2022.

The survey responses showed a 97.5% approval rating for the draft Vision and so, based on the detailed analysis of the survey responses, draft Objectives for the Plan were developed. A second major document providing highlights of the Survey Results and the Draft Objectives was distributed to every household in February 2022 and published online.

A Village Drop-in Event (shown in Figure 11) was held at the Village Hall on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2022 that offered residents the opportunity to have a chat about the Neighbourhood Plan, ask any questions and provide feedback. This was well publicised by invitations within formal documents, in a free newsletter which has been an early positive outcome of the Neighbourhood Plan process, and online through Nextdoor. Over 100 people attended.



Figure 11: Village Drop-in Event

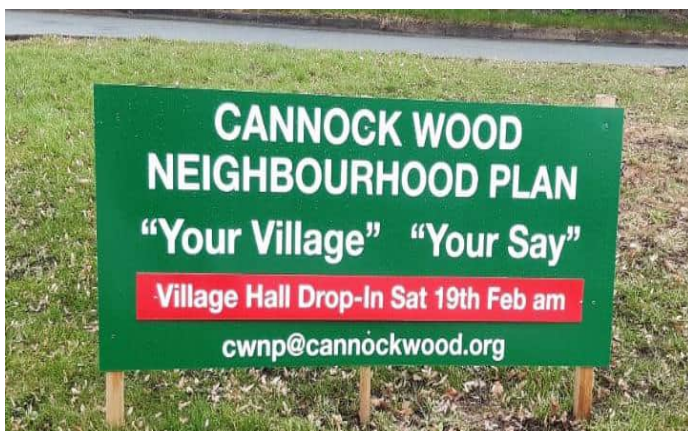


Figure 12: Variable signage which was removed to storage when not needed, so that it was less likely to be overlooked at key stages of public engagement.

Signage (as shown in Figure 12) was also erected in four prominent locations within the parish to raise awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan survey in 2021 and the Drop-in Event in 2022; it was removed to storage when not current for greater impact when in use. The text on a red background has been changed to keep the message relevant to the stage of the Neighbourhood Plan process. An email address for queries and feedback has been publicised on the signage and in the survey.

Public comments on the Draft Objectives and supporting text were explicitly encouraged and facilitated and that feedback used to inform the development of draft Policies.

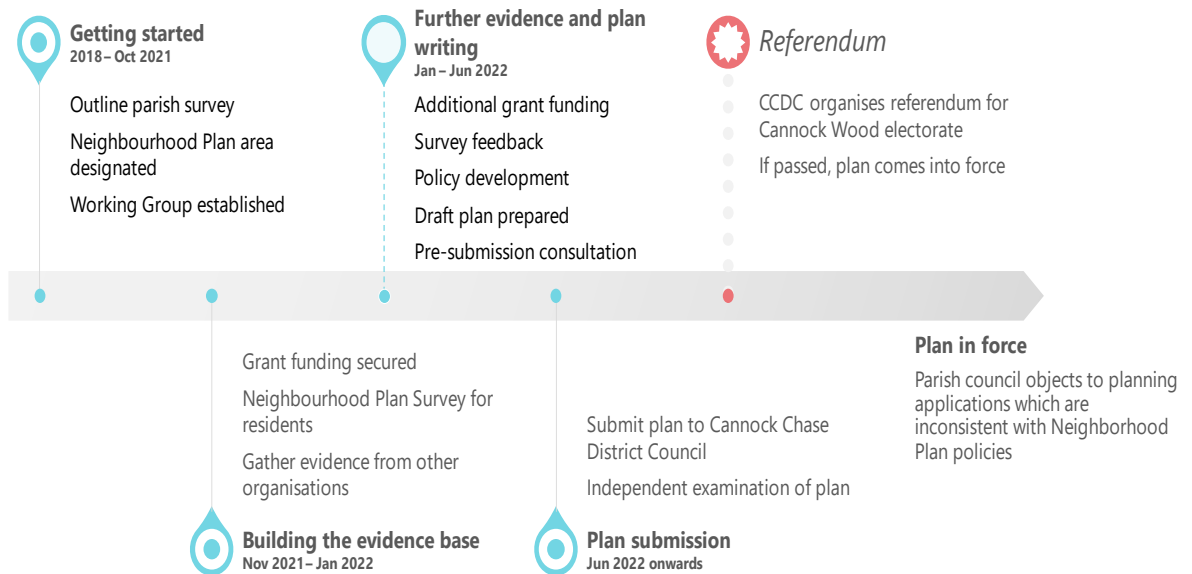
The text of the Draft Policies was distributed in print to every household in early March 2022 and published online. Responses were strongly encouraged using a tick box for ease of completion and analysis, whilst also being entirely open to comments/suggestions.

Provision has also been made for residents to address any queries or feedback verbally at the Parish Council. A local telephone number was made available when the survey was delivered for additional copies to be requested or if help was needed in returning the survey. Lifts to the Village Drop-in Event were offered to make it possible for those unable to make their own way to attend.

Detailed survey and explanation of process and draft vision	20 A4 pages	Printed and delivered to every house in the village and pdf online. Returns could be made to a central collection box or to the Village Hall. <a href="https://www.cannockwood.org/np-survey">NP survey (cannockwood.org)</a>	November 2021
Full survey results including every comment made	80 A4 pages	Pdf online. Pdf available for consultation at drop-in event provided to the Parish Council. <a href="https://www.cannockwood.org/full-survey-results">Full survey results (cannockwood.org)</a>	December 2021
Survey results relevant to local organisations provided to them in bespoke documents	Various	Pdf and paper and discussion in person: four local pubs, the shop, the Village Hall and Playing Field committees, and the Vicar. Regarding Castle Ring ancient monument to Cannock Chase District Council's Principal Landscape & Countryside Officer. Some of results were also incorporated into a Housing Needs Assessment prepared by AECOM.	December 2021 – February 2022
Survey feedback and draft objectives	16 A4 pages	Printed and delivered to every house in the village and pdf online <a href="https://www.cannockwood.org/survey-feedback-and-draft-objectives">Survey feedback and draft objectives (cannockwood.org)</a>	February 2022
Draft policy consultation	16 A4 pages	Printed and delivered to every house in the village and pdf online. <a href="https://www.cannockwood.org/draft-policy-consultation">Draft policy consultation (cannockwood.org)</a>	March 2022
Informal policy consultation: draft policies with purpose and justification	32 A4 pages	Distributed as pdf for comment to Cannock Chase District Council CCDC, Staffordshire County Council SCC, Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty AONB, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust SWT and Historic England, as all have been contributed to the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.	March 2022
Formal pre-submission consultation	20 A4 pages	Printed and delivered to every house in the village and pdf online. Also to statutory consultees.	May 2022
Full Plan, Design Code and Character Assessment.	183 A4 pages	PDF online. Reference copies made available by appointment with the Chair of the Parish Council	May 2022

Every public engagement document distributed to all homes in the parish has included an outline of progress with the development of the Neighbourhood Plan and what to look out for next. This has also been summarised in a timeline infographic shown at Figure 13 which is included on the Neighbourhood Plan website, along with more detail on the steps required and organised public engagement [Neighbourhood Plan milestones](#).

Figure 13: Infographic for website



Once draft policies had been developed and the informal consultation described in Table 5 was drawing to a close, a screening report was prepared to establish whether formal Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) were required. The feedback from the informal policy consultation of residents and organisations informed the development of the “pre-submission Plan”.

Before the Plan was submitted to Cannock Chase District Council, Cannock Wood Parish Council undertook a statutory 6-week consultation on the “pre-submission Plan”.

After the 6-week pre-submission consultation any feedback, suggestions and comments were recorded and where appropriate amendments made to the Plan accordingly. This is recorded in the Consultation Statement which accompanies the Plan as it is submitted to the Council for Examination and Referendum.

### Local Authority Engagement

It has been critical to engage with the Local Authority, Cannock Chase District Council, throughout the process as once the Plan has passed the Referendum it will form part of the Development Plan for the area and any Planning Applications made for development in Cannock Wood from that point on will then be judged against the Neighbourhood Plan as well as the Local Plan.

Preparation of the Plan was happening at the same time as Cannock Chase District Council's Local Plan was being reviewed. As the Neighbourhood Plan has to be in general conformity with the Strategic Policies of the Local Plan, this made it even more important to maintain a good dialogue with Cannock Chase District Council throughout the process.

In addition, Cannock Chase District Council have been able to help in a variety of ways in accordance with the Duty to Support required by the Localism Act.

### Engagement with other bodies

As the whole of Cannock Wood lies within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty the generous support of the AONB planning policy officer and her counterpart at Staffordshire Wildlife Trust have also been key in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. Strong support has also been provided by various teams at Staffordshire County Council including Historic Environment, Rural Development and Public Rights of Way and by a County Councillor.



## Appendix 5 Glossary of Terms

**Ancient Woodland:** An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites.

**Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB):** Land protected by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act). It protects the land to conserve and enhance its natural beauty.

**Assets of Community Value:** As defined in the Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012. Land or buildings nominated by a Town or Parish Council or certain local voluntary or community groups and which the Council decides meets the requirements to be listed as an asset of community value giving the local community an opportunity to make a bid for the asset when it comes up for sale.

**Biodiversity:** The wide variety of plants, animals, fungi and bacteria on earth.

**Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):** An approach to development, and/or land management, that aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand.

**Design Code:** A document that sets out rules and/or guidance for development in a specified area.

**Development Plan:** This includes adopted Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans that has been made, as defined in Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It is the starting point for determining planning applications and contains the policies against which applications are determined. Neighbourhood plans that have been approved at referendum are also part of the development plan, unless the local planning authority decides that the neighbourhood plan should not be made.

**Geodiversity:** The range or variety of geological and geomorphological features and processes (rocks, minerals, fossils, structures) that make up the surface and subsurface of the earth and constitute and shape the physical landscape.

**Green Belt:** A planning policy whose fundamental aim is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

**Habitat Corridor:** Strip of land, for example along a hedgerow, or a set of steppingstones of habitat conserved and managed for wildlife, usually linking more extensive wildlife habitats. Also known as Wildlife Corridors.

**Heritage Asset:** A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

**Historic Environment:** All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

**Irreplaceable habitat:** Habitats which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen.

**Light Pollution:** When artificial light becomes a source of annoyance to people or harmful to wildlife or undermines the enjoyment of the countryside or the night sky, especially in areas with intrinsically dark landscapes.

**Listed Building:** A building of special architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings are graded I, II\* or II with grade I being the highest. Listing includes the interior as well as the exterior of the building and includes any buildings or permanent structures within its curtilage which have formed part of the land since before 1 July 1948. Historic England is responsible for designating buildings for listing in England.

**Local Plan:** The plan for the future development of Cannock Chase District, drawn up by Cannock Chase District Council in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the Development Plan. Documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, current core strategies or other planning policies, which under the regulations would be considered to be Development Plan Documents, form part of the Local Plan.

**Local Planning Authority (LPA):** The Local Authority or Council that is empowered by law to exercise planning functions. In the case of this Neighbourhood Plan the LPA is Cannock Chase District Council.

**Local Plan Core Strategy:** This sets out the overall vision and planning strategy for development in Cannock Chase District and contains strategic planning policies to ensure that new development addresses the economic, environmental and social needs of the area. It covers the period 2006-2028.

**Neighbourhood Plan:** The Cannock Wood Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

**Non-designated Heritage Assets (NDHAs):** Buildings, structures and potentially areas which while not qualifying as either Listed Buildings, Registered Parks or Conservation Areas or Scheduled Monuments are recognised as having heritage value and can be given some protection through policy.

**NPPF:** The National Planning Policy Framework which sets out planning policy in England.

**NPPG:** The National Planning Practice Guidance which provides guidance for interpretation of the NPPF.

**Parish Council:** Cannock Wood Parish Council.

**Pre-Submission Draft:** The Pre-Submission version of the Cannock Wood Parish Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) consulted on under Regulation 14. Following consultation, the pre-submission version will be amended if appropriate to produce the submission version to be submitted to Cannock Chase District Council for Examination.

**Public Realm:** Any part of the built environment that the public have free access such as roads, pavements and squares

**Regulation 14:** Regulation 14 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 directs that the Pre-Submission of the Neighbourhood Plan is used to publicise and consult with people who live, work or carry on business in the Neighbourhood Area.

**Right of Way:** You can walk on all public rights of way and some public rights of way are also open to horse riders, cyclists or motorists.

**Scheduled Monument:** A building, structure, or work whether above or below the surface of the land, and any cave or excavation or any site comprising the remains of any such building, structure or work or any cave or excavation included on the Schedule of Monuments found on the National Heritage List for England which is maintained by Historic England on behalf of the Secretary of State for DCMS.

**Settlement Boundary:** In the case of Cannock Wood a line around the main settlement which effectively excludes the main settlement from the Green Belt which applies to the rest of the Parish.

**Site of Biological Importance (SBI):** A non-statutory designation used by Staffordshire County Council to protect locally valued sites of biological diversity described generally as Local Wildlife Sites by the UK Government. A local example is Castle Ring.

**Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI):** A formal conservation designation for land under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

**Submission Draft:** The version of the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan which will be submitted to Cannock Chase who will perform a legal check on the Plan before appointing an Examiner.

**Wayfinding:** The means and processes by which people find their way around an area. This can include signage as well as other visual cues such as landmarks. It is sometimes referred to as 'legibility'.

**Wildlife Corridor:** Strip of land, for example along a hedgerow, or a set of steppingstones of habitat conserved and managed for wildlife, usually linking more extensive wildlife habitats. Also known as Habitat Corridors.



## Decision Statement Regarding Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Development Plan (24.01.24)



(Regulation 19 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, as amended)

Cannock Chase District Council decided by resolution of Full Council on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024 to make the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Development Plan under Section 38A(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). The Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Development Plan now forms part of the Development Plan for Cannock Chase District.

### 1. Decision and Reasons

1.1 The Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Development Plan meets the Basic Conditions and its promotion process is compliant with legal and procedural requirements. Paragraph 38A(4)(a) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the Council to make the Neighbourhood Plan if more than half of those voting in the referendum have voted in favour of the Plan being used to help decide planning applications in the area. The Plan was endorsed by more than the required threshold in the referendum on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

### 2. Background

2.1 Cannock Wood Parish Council applied to Cannock Chase Council for the land within the Parish boundary to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2019. The application for the Neighbourhood Area designation was for the whole of the Cannock Wood Parish only. The District Council was therefore required to designate the Neighbourhood Area as requested (in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012, as amended) Regulation 5A). On the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2019, Cannock Chase Council (via delegated authority) resolved to designate the Cannock Wood Parish as the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Area.

2.2 The principal stages of consultation included a detailed survey via a paper booklet delivered to every house and online. Results were published at the end of 2021. Draft objectives were drawn up and consulted upon in February 2022 followed by a drop-in event at the Village Hall. Consultation on informal draft policy took place in March 2022. Formal consultation under Regulation 14 was undertaken between 30 May 2023 and 11 July 2023.

2.3 The Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan was submitted by the Parish Council to Cannock Chase District Council in October 2022 for assessment by an independent examiner. The Plan (and associated documents) was published for consultation by Cannock Chase District Council for 6 weeks between 3<sup>rd</sup> July and 14<sup>th</sup> August 2023 (the Local Authority publicity consultation period- Regulation 16). Mr Andrew Freeman BSc (Hons) DipTP DipEM FRTPI was appointed as the Independent Examiner for the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan and all comments received to the Local Authority publicity consultation period were passed on for his consideration.

- 2.4 The Examiners Report was received on the 19th September 2023. The Examiner has concluded that subject to modifications the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan meets the Basic Conditions. It has also met all of the relevant legal requirements. On this basis it should therefore proceed to Referendum.
- 2.5 Cannock Chase District Council issued a Reg 18. 'Decision Statement' on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023 which agreed with the Examiners recommendations and confirmed that the plan should proceed to Referendum.
- 2.6 A referendum was held on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024. 92% of those who voted were in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan. Paragraph 38A(4)(a) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires that the Council must make the Neighbourhood Plan if more than half of those voting have voted in favour of the plan.
- 2.7 This decision statement can be viewed online on the Cannock Chase District Council website [www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/planningpolicy](http://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/planningpolicy) or hard copies are available to view at the following locations during normal opening hours:
- Cannock Chase Council Civic Centre offices, Beecroft Road, Cannock, WS11 1BG (9am - 4pm weekdays)
  - Burntwood Library, Sankeys Corner, Bridge Cross Road, Burntwood WS7 2BX (9am - 5pm weekdays, 10am - 4 pm Saturday)