

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

of the

**CANNOCK CHASE SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION (SAC)
PARTNERSHIP**

between

The Partner Authorities

Cannock Chase District Council
East Staffordshire Borough Council
Lichfield District Council
South Staffordshire District Council
Stafford Borough Council
Wolverhampton City Council
Walsall Borough Council

Key Facilitators

Natural England
Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership
Staffordshire County Council
Forest England
National Trust
Staffordshire Wildlife Trust

Relating to:

**The impact of residential development on
the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation**

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Definition of Terms

In this Agreement the following words and expressions shall have the following meanings unless the context requires otherwise:

AONB Visitor Management Strategy (VMS)	aims to deliver a sustainable quality visitor experience to the Cannock Chase AONB. The Cannock Chase SAC mitigation proposals (SAMMM) sit within the VMS.
Appropriate Assessment (AA)	is the second stage in a Habitats Regulations Assessment process where consideration is given to the potential impacts on the integrity of a European site (e.g. SAC), either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, with regard to the site's conservation objectives and to its structure and function.
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	<p>means Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which the Cannock Chase SAC sits within. The Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a legal designation confirmed under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW). Please note that this may be updated with an addendum when the Environment Bill is enacted.</p> <p>An AONB is an outstanding landscape whose distinctive character and natural beauty are so precious that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard them. The designation seeks to protect and enhance natural beauty whilst recognising the needs of the local community and economy. For further information please see http://www.cannock-chase.co.uk/.</p>
Competent Authority	An organisation becomes a competent authority under the Habitats Regulations when the exercise of its functions will, or may affect European Sites (for example classified Special Protection Areas and designated SACs).
Conservation Objectives	objectives defined by Natural England to secure the favourable conservation status of the qualifying features. Each SAC has a formal description of the reasons why the site has been designated, which is contained in the SAC citation and which when combined with the Conservation Objectives provide a framework which should inform any 'Habitats Regulations Assessments' that a competent authority may be required to undertake. The Conservation Objectives also inform any measures necessary to conserve or restore the SAC and/or to prevent the deterioration or significant disturbance of its qualifying features.
Detailed Implementation Plans (DIPs)	a plan of actions to mitigate for the likely increase in the number of visits resulting from new housing development within 15km of the Cannock Chase SAC. A summary of the two DIPs (Car Park and Site User Infrastructure, Education and Engagement) can be found attached to Appendix 2.

Habitats Regulations	the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	a formal assessment of the implications of new plans or projects which are capable of affecting the designated interest features of a European Site (e.g. SAC) before deciding whether to undertake, permit or authorise such a plan or project. This assessment comprises several distinct stages which are conveniently and collectively described as a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' (or HRA).
Key Facilitators	means key facilitators to the Partnership with no voting rights
Partnership	means the organisations listed as the Partner Authorities.
Relevant period	the residential development forecast within the Zone of Influence that relates to each of the Partnership Authorities' Local Plan periods.
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	<p>is a strictly protected site designated under the EC Habitats Directive, described by the UK Government as 'Our best examples of habitats that are either threatened or valuable within the EU'. The overall objective of the Habitats Directive is defined in Article 2 which specifies in particular that:</p> <p><i>Measures taken pursuant to this Directive shall be designed to maintain and restore, at a favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of Community interest.</i></p> <p>SAC designation requires Member States to establish conservation measures which correspond to the ecological requirements of Annex I habitats and Annex II species present on the site (Article 6.1), and to take appropriate steps to avoid deterioration of the natural habitats and habitats of species, as well as significant disturbance of species, for which the site is designated (Article 6.2) The Habitats Directive is primarily transposed in England under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).</p>
Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Measures (SAMMM)	the plan of actions to mitigate for the likely increase in the number of visits as a result of new housing development within 15km of the Cannock Chase SAC that ran from April 2015 until March 2022. The mitigations after this date will also be referred to as the DIPs.
Windfall Housing	windfall housing sites are those that have come forward unexpectedly and not identified for housing through the Local Plan preparation process.

Zone of Influence

Research has shown that 75% of all visitors to the Cannock Chase SAC are from within a 15km radius of the SAC¹². The planned level of residential growth within a 15 kilometre radius from the edge of Cannock Chase SAC is likely to have a significant effect on the SAC in the absence of mitigation. For the purpose of this MOU the 0-15km radius is defined as the Zone of Influence.

¹ ‘Cannock Chase SAC Visitor Survey’ Footprint Ecology/Durwyn Liley, February 2013

² ‘Cannock Chase SAC Visitor Survey 2018’ Footprint Ecology/Durwyn Liley, May 2019

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Partnership provides a framework for coordination between statutory bodies having land use planning responsibilities in relation to Cannock Chase SAC.
- 1.2 The key objective of the Partnership is to use statutory planning processes and specific site and visitor management measures to secure appropriate mitigation for the impacts on the Cannock Chase SAC of Development Plan policies and proposals contained in individual planning applications and projects, thereby ensuring that the integrity of the Cannock Chase SAC is maintained and the requirements of the Habitats Regulations are met.
- 1.3 This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets out how the Cannock Chase SAC Partnership will take responsibility for a programme of measures to mitigate for the impact residential development has upon the Cannock Chase SAC, and how the Partnership will work together to review, prepare and implement common plans and policies to protect the Cannock Chase SAC, and promote its understanding and appreciation to help to deliver sustainable development.
- 1.4 This Partnership approach is to provide simplicity for planners and developers providing a consistent approach to the protection of the SAC from the significant effects of residential development through the delivery of a programme of mitigation. It must however be recognised that other forms of development³ within the 0-15km zone which may give rise to additional visits to Cannock Chase SAC may need to carry out a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). Participation in the developer contributions scheme is optional and if applicants do not wish to participate they will need to provide appropriate information to the Local Planning Authority to allow a bespoke Habitats Regulations Assessment.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Sitting within the wider Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the Cannock Chase SAC was designated in 2005 under the provisions of the European Habitats Directive, the majority of the site having previously been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in 1987. Cannock Chase represents the largest area of heathland habitat surviving in the English Midlands and though much diminished in area from its original extent, as with all lowland heathland zones, the habitat and dependent species are of very high nature conservation importance.
- 2.2 The Annex I habitat, European Dry Heath is the primary reason for designation of the SAC. The character of this vegetation is intermediate between the upland or northern heaths of England and Wales and those of southern counties. Dry heathland communities belong to NVC types H8 *Calluna vulgaris* – *Ulex gallii* and H9 *Calluna vulgaris* – *Deschampsia flexuosa* heaths. Within the heathland,

³ Other development include but are not limited to Bed and Breakfast establishments, self catering holiday lets, hotels and gypsy sites.

species of northern latitudes occur, such as cowberry *Vaccinium vitis-idaea* and crowberry *Empetrum nigrum*. Cannock Chase has the main British population of the hybrid bilberry *Vaccinium intermedium*, a plant of restricted occurrence. There are important populations of butterflies and beetles, as well as European nightjar and five species of bats. The Annex I habitat that is present as a qualifying feature, but note a primary reason for selection of this site is **Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix***. Wet heath usually occurs on acidic, nutrient-poor substrates, such as shallow peats or sandy soils with impeded drainage. The vegetation is typically dominated by mixtures of cross-leaved heath *Erica tetralix*, heather *Calluna vulgaris*, grasses, sedges and *Sphagnum* bog-mosses.

- 2.3 The evidence base shows a range of impacts consistent with high visitor numbers⁴⁵. An increase in visitor numbers on the scale expected is likely to have a significant effect on the Cannock Chase SAC unless measures are taken to prevent harm. The main impacts are the fragmentation of habitat from a multiplicity of paths and tracks, track and path widening with erosion, trampling and compaction, and eutrophication from dog fouling.
- 2.4 In October 2005, the judgment the European Court of Justice in the case of Flood Management Plans and the implications of Case C-6/04 Commission Vs United Kingdom, required the UK to extend the requirements of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive to include the assessment of the potential effects of spatial and land use plans on European sites. Evidence commissioned by the SAC Partnership suggests that the planned level of growth within a 15 kilometre radius of the SAC (as set out in Map 1) is likely to have a significant effect on the designated site. The effect of increased visitor numbers consists of additional damage from site use and vehicle emissions⁶. In granting planning permissions the Local Planning Authorities must comply with their duty under the Habitats Regulations as Competent Authorities to ensure appropriate mitigation is delivered prior to developments being built and new visits generated.

3.0 Conservation Objectives

3.1 European Site Conservation Objectives for Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation

Site Code: 0030107

With regard to the SAC and the natural habitats and / or species for which the site has been designated (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintain or restoring:

⁴ 'Cannock Chase SAC Planning Evidence Base Review' Footprint Ecology/Durwyn Lily, July 2017

⁵ 'Cannock Chase SAC Planning Evidence Base Review Stage 2' Footprint Ecology/Durwyn Lily, July 2021

⁶ NE advice letter to the partnership dated 10/04/2013 – Vehicle emission issues are dealt with outside the SAMMM and through the Local Plan or development process.

- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats;
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats; and,
- The supporting processes on which the qualifying natural habitats rely.

3.2 This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Supplementary Advice document, which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of Objectives set out above.

3.3 Qualifying Features:

H4010. Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*; Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath

H4030. European dry heaths

4.0 Objectives of the Partnership

4.1 The Partnership's overall objective is to facilitate sustainable residential development whilst ensuring compliance with the Habitats Regulations through securing appropriate developer contributions towards a programme of mitigation. Participation in the developer contribution scheme (as detailed at Appendix 1) is optional. Applicants will need to supply information to the Local Planning Authority to allow a bespoke Habitats Regulations Assessment to be undertaken if they do not wish to participate.

4.2 The objectives of the Cannock Chase SAC Partnership are to secure measures to mitigate for the effects of development⁷ by:

- Ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained, that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features and enabling the sustainable development of the area
- Conserving the Cannock Chase SAC by ensuring that new development does not undermine the delivery of its Conservation Objectives
- Raising awareness and understanding of the biodiversity of the Cannock Chase SAC
- Achieving 'joined up' management with neighbouring protected landscapes and habitats.⁸

⁷ Housing and other development such as tourist accommodation which requires HRA and would have an impact on the SAC.

⁸ The SAC mitigation proposals (SAMMM) sit within the wider AONB Visitor Management Strategy.

5.0 Key Commitments

5.1 The Partner Authorities:

- a) Will work together to develop and implement consistent planning policies in respect of Development Plan documentation and development processes which provide a framework to mitigate for the impact of residential development on Cannock Chase SAC.
- b) Will collectively and individually ensure that all plans, projects, and management activities meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations
- c) Agree an evidenced planning obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy charging process will be used to seek contributions from housing proposals
- d) Agree that from the date of this MOU, appropriate assessment of housing proposals within the 0-15km Zone of Influence (ZOI) set out in Map 1 will not be required unless these fall beyond the scope of established local housing targets as set out in Appendix 1 or where the applicant does not agree to make contributions.
- e) Will develop, agree and monitor, through collaboration and engagement with key facilitators, landowners, including landowners and managers, a 15 year programme of mitigation for Cannock Chase SAC as set out in the Delivery Implementation Plans (DIPs) and based on the delivery of 21,671 dwellings⁹. The effectiveness of the DIPs mitigation proposals will be reviewed on a 5 year basis as part of the MOU review. The Partner Authorities acknowledge that specific projects may require decisions by landowners through their internal governance arrangements.
- f) Will on an annual basis monitor housing delivery numbers on which the current mitigation actions in the DIPs are based. A review of the MOU and DIPs will be triggered if the annual review indicates the 21,671 homes figure is being approached within the 15 km ZOI.
- g) Will work closely with key facilitators, including landowners, and other complementary designations and initiatives such as the AONB and the Connecting Cannock Chase Partnership and take account of other statutory designations
- h) Agree that the area within which the mitigation will be undertaken is the statutorily designated areas of the Cannock Chase SAC, but on occasions will also extend to the wider adjoining areas in relation to specific issues, for example visitor and access network management, where a wider working area may be required to maintain favourable condition of a qualifying feature within the SAC.
- i) Agree on the identity of the host Partner Authority which will hold the developer contributions and will act as the financially accountable body. The developer contributions will be spent collectively based on the DIPs. The details of these arrangements will be set out in a legally binding financial agreement between the contributing Partner Authorities and the host Partner

⁹ Table 2 Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation Planning Evidence base Review Stage 2 (2021)

Authority. The level of contributions from each Partner Authority towards the DIPs, whilst this MOU is in force, is provided in Appendix 1 and will be monitored annually by agreement of the Partnership.

- j) The finance agreement shall contain provisions to deal with the following matters:
 - o The scope of the duties, rights and obligations of the host Partner Authority to the other Partner Authorities and third parties;
 - o Responsibility for the recruitment and employment of the SAC Project Team;
 - o An indemnity from the other Partner Authorities in favour of the employing Partner Authority in relation to the costs of employing the SAC Team, including on-costs and redundancy payments; and
 - o Obligations on the host Partner Authority to report regularly and comply with audit and other public sector requirements
- k) Will agree a protocol for decision making on spending the developer contributions based on the mitigation plan (DIPs).

6.0 Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Although only Competent Authorities have statutory responsibilities, it is acknowledged that other key facilitators participate in the management of the SAC in order to deliver programmes and specific projects.

6.2 The governance of the project will be determined through the Terms of Reference (Appendix 3).

7.0 Governance

7.1 The following governance arrangements and protocols will be maintained to ensure that the requirements of the programme of mitigation and therefore the Habitats Regulations are satisfied. It is proposed that the following governance arrangements are established, with the partnership management structure to be reviewed on a 12 month basis:

- Cannock Chase SAC Joint Strategic Board to meet, or receive reports a minimum of quarterly or as required, with an annual rotating chair from each local authority (as listed in the table at Appendix 1), and supported by the Cannock Chase SAC Project Officer. It will consist of senior representatives from each of the organisations listed in this MoU. Advisory members may be co-opted to represent a specific area of interest or issue of consideration. Terms of Reference have been agreed and are at Appendix 3¹⁰.

¹⁰ Terms of Reference including membership and voting powers agreed through supporting documents at Appendix 3.

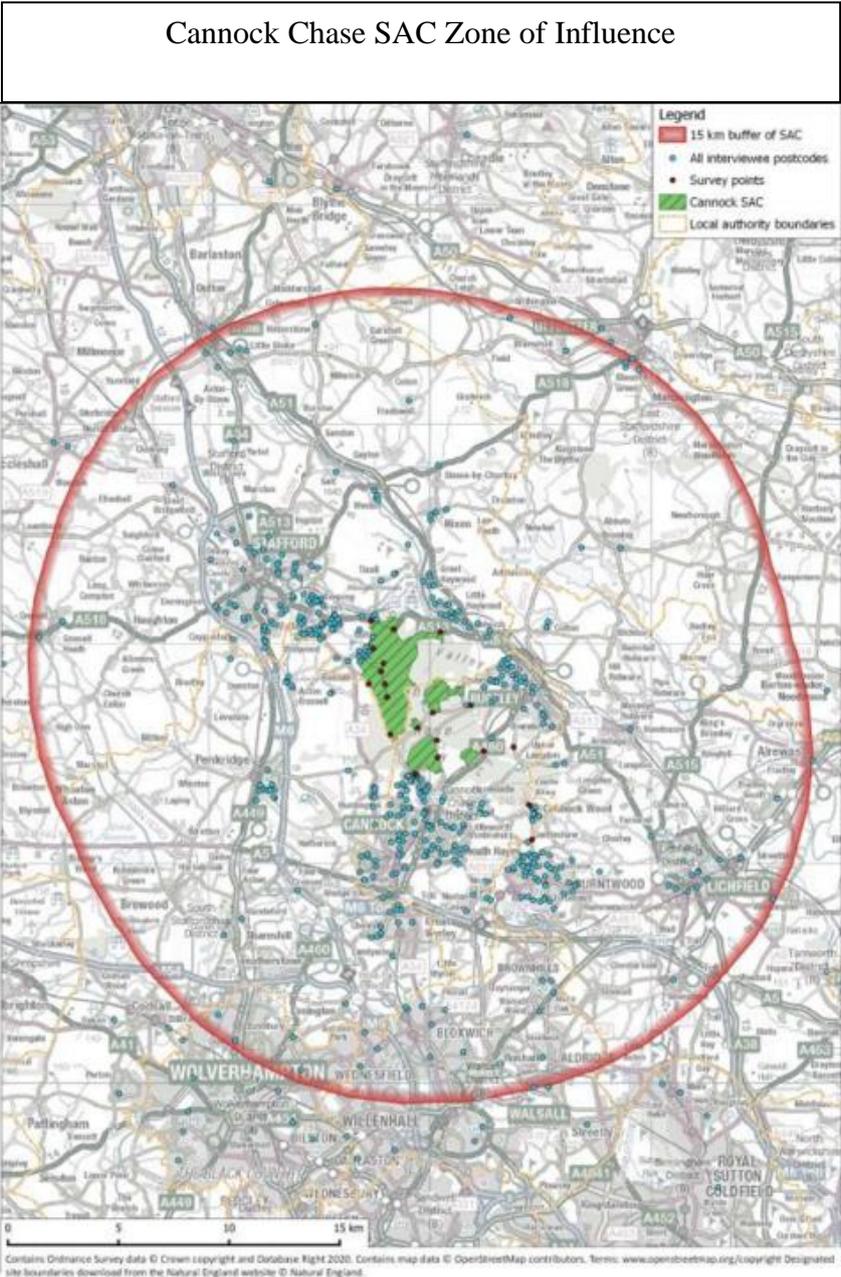
- Cannock Chase SAC Project Group will meet monthly or as required, to coordinate and quality assure project delivery, i.e. what is being delivered, where, when and by whom to avoid duplication of effort. This Group will be supported by the Cannock Chase SAC Project Officer and consist of officers from each of the organisations listed in this MOU along with representatives from appropriate organisations in advisory roles. Terms of Reference have been agreed and are at Appendix 3¹¹.

8.0 Commencement and Termination

8.1 This MOU will take effect when it has been signed by all Partners or agreed by the Joint Strategic Board. It is anticipated that this MOU will operate for a period of five years when it will be reviewed. It may be amended by agreement in writing between all Partners. A Partnership member may withdraw from the Partnership at any time by giving 12 months' notice in writing to all Parties.

¹¹ Terms of Reference including membership and voting powers agreed through supporting documents at Appendix 3.

Map 1



The Level of Contributions

- A1.1 The total cost of the programme of measures required to mitigate for the impact on Cannock Chase SAC of residential development within 15km of the Cannock Chase SAC proposed in current and emerging Local Plans over their Relevant Period is £6,297,104. The details of this programme are provided in the DIPs at Appendix 2.
- A1.2 To provide certainty for the Development Plan process and for developers within the Zone of Influence, and to ensure transparency and accountability, a formulae approach has been adopted that sets out a mechanism for the calculation of developer contributions.
- A1.3 The total cost of the DIPs has been divided between the Partner Authorities in proportion to the number of homes proposed within the 15km ZOI of Cannock Chase SAC (as illustrated on Map 1) from 1st April 2022 onwards (excluding those which are likely to have planning permission as of end March 2022). The table below sets out the housing numbers, percentage split and proportion of funding which each Partner Authority falling within the 15km ZOI is required to contribute.

Table 1

Local Authority in the 15km ZOI of the Cannock Chase SAC	Housing Numbers proposed in the 15km ZOI from April 2022 (excluding sites with planning permission)	Percentage (%) of total housing delivery	Monies to collect for the DIPs*
Cannock Chase	2,378	11	£690,993
City of Wolverhampton	1,364	6.3	£396,348
East Staffordshire	155	0.7	£45,040
Lichfield	851	3.9	£247,281
South Staffordshire	4,205	19.4	£1,221,878
Stafford	5,412	25	£1,572,605
Walsall	7,306	33.7	£2,122,959
TOTAL	21,671		
DIPs Cost	£6,297,104		

- A1.4 These contributions will be index linked and subject to an annual review each April in line with the 'All Items Group' (Item reference CHAW) of the Retail Prices Index.

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- A1.5 It is at the discretion of individual Partner Authorities how to collect their total contribution from developments with the 15km ZOI. These contributions systems will be set out in each Partner Authority's 'Guidance to Mitigate the Impact of New Residential Development'. These documents and the calculations they contain may be subject to review. Other types of development and windfall housing sites not included in the calculations within the aforementioned guidance have the potential to impact upon Cannock Chase SAC, and these will need to be assessed and mitigation provided on an individual basis through discussions with Natural England and/or the relevant local authority. The estimated costings in the DIPs will be monitored and may be reviewed and rates recalculated when the MOU is reviewed.
- A1.6 The option remains for developers to undertake a Habitats Regulations screening assessment and, where necessary, a full appropriate assessment to demonstrate that a proposal will not, either alone or in combination, adversely affect the integrity of the Cannock Chase SAC.
- A1.7 In order for the Developer Contributions Scheme to mitigate the negative effects of development, it is important that the mitigation measures are implemented in a timely manner which reflects the rate at which development comes forward. Each local planning authority will agree the timescale prior to granting planning consent for the collection of developer contributions, which are required to ensure that mitigation is in place prior to occupation to prevent additional harm arising to the Cannock Chase SAC.
- A1.8 The new mitigation programme relates to the delivery of 21,671 homes¹² (which did not have planning permission as of 1st April 2022) within the 15km ZOI from 1st April 2022 onwards. Monitoring of housing delivery and housing numbers proposed will be undertaken on an annual basis by the SAC Partnership. Where monitoring shows that delivery of any of the housing numbers proposed for a Partner authority, as set out in Table 1, are being approached, a review of this MOU will be triggered and new housing numbers and new mitigation measures will be considered.
- A1.9 The monies that have and will contribute to the DIPs, previously referred as the SAMMM are outlined in Table 2.

¹² Table 2 Cannock Chase SAC Planning Evidence Base Review Stage 2 (2021)

Table 2

Local Authority in the ZOI of the Cannock Chase SAC	Housing Numbers proposed in the Zoi	Percentage (%) of total housing delivery	Monies to collect for the DIPs, previously SAMMMs*
Cannock Chase	1700	20.0	£394,232
City of Wolverhampton	0	0.0	£0
East Staffordshire	30	0.4	£6,957
Lichfield	1715	20.2	£397,710
South Staffordshire	150	1.8	£34,785
Stafford	4900	57.7	£1,136,315
Walsall		0	£0
TOTAL	8495		
DIPs Cost	£1,970,000		

A1.10 Developer contributions provided prior to the start date of the new mitigation programme (Table 3) will contribute to the 2011 – 2021 Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Measures plan (SAMMMs) relating to the 0-8km Zone of Payment, outlined in the 2011 MoU and subsequent update in 2017¹³. It should be noted that the monies collected for the DIPs, previously the SAMMMs, or committed before April 2022 both exceed the original budget of £1,970,000.

Table 3

Local Authority in the ZOI of the Cannock Chase SAC	Monies already collected or committed before April 2022
Cannock Chase	£816,374.00
City of Wolverhampton	£0
East Staffordshire	£1,610.00
Lichfield	£247,896.80
South Staffordshire	£90,480.00
Stafford	£896,283.00
Walsall	£0
TOTAL	£2,052,643.80

A1.11 As shown in Table 3, a supplementary £82,643.80 is expected to be collected prior to the commencement of the new DIPs from April 2022, because of higher number of homes being built than originally planned within the ZOI. Any supplementary monies that are to be collected through the previous SAMMM will be reallocated in order to finance mitigation measures in the new DIPs, as the SAMMM has been subsumed into the DIPs.

¹³ Memorandum of Understanding for the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation Partnership 2011-2021. 2011

Detailed Implementation Plan

A2.1 The following table of mitigation measures and estimated costings has been prepared by independent consultants in collaboration with the Cannock Chase SAC Partnership to set out Detailed Implementation Plans relating to the Cannock Chase SAC.

Item of Works	Amount remaining to be funded
Resources/events for Engagement Key Stages 1-2 (2020-2040)	£99,195
Resources/events for Engagement Key Stages 3-4 (2020-2040)	£99,195
Resources/events for Engagement with key visitor groups (2020-2040)	£30,000
Creation of Central Website and hosting until 2040	£10,500
Special Project, Forestry England Visitor/mountain bike centre south of A460	£25,000
Special Project, Marquis Drive Masterplan	£25,000
Special Project, Museum of Cannock Chase, Community Hub	£25,000
Circular routes created at each main Car Park: pathworks	£90,000
Orientation panel in each main car-park showing main promoted routes, replacement after 10 years	£15,800
Additional staffing to increase face-to face engagement, (equivalent to 3 full time posts 2020-2040)	£2,364,000
Special Project. Chase Rd	£25,000
Close Car Parks	£150,000
Material (temporary signs etc.) to close damaging habitat fragmentation desire lines	£10,000
New road signs to replace existing ones	£75,000
Installation of Car Park Charging Machines	£70,000
Cost to maintain improved car-parks 2020-2040	£704,900
Circular routes created at each main Car Park: way-markers, replacement after 10 years	£18,750

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Circular routes created at each main Car Park: finger posts, replacement after 10 years	£30,300
Orientation panel in each main car-park showing main promoted routes, replacement after 10 years	£22,000
CC SAC Team Admin Assistant (part time, 2020-2040)	£420,000
CC SAC SAMMM Delivery Officer (2020-2030)	£400,000
Project manager/Project officer post	£765,000
Monitoring: visitor survey at 5 year intervals	£160,000
Monitoring: Automated counters (15 counters)	£90,000
Contingency (10%)	£572,464
	£6,297,104

Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference

Cannock Chase SAC Joint Strategic Board

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Partnership provides a framework for coordination between statutory bodies having land use planning responsibilities in Cannock Chase SAC. These Terms of Reference set out how the Cannock Chase SAC Joint Strategic Board (JSB) will work together to coordinate the delivery of a programme of mitigation, prepare and implement common plans and policies to protect the SAC, promote its understanding and appreciation to help to deliver sustainable development.
- 1.2 The objective of the Partnership is to use statutory planning processes and specific site and visitor management measures to secure appropriate mitigation for the impacts on the Cannock Chase SAC through Development Plan policies and proposals contained in individual planning applications and projects, thereby ensuring that the integrity of the Cannock Chase SAC is maintained.
- 1.3 The Cannock Chase SAC Partnership as a whole will provide a vehicle for the agreement of mitigation measures, collection and use of planning obligation monies and monitoring of work carried out.

2.0 Status

Competent Authorities include any statutory body or public office exercising legislative powers, whether on land or sea.

- 2.1 Each Competent Authority is individually responsible for meeting its duties under the Habitats Regulations. However by jointly preparing, implementing and reviewing the Detailed Implementation Plans (DIPs), it is anticipated that the Competent Authorities will be able to more effectively achieve the aims of the Habitats Regulations in relation to the Cannock Chase SAC, than if they acted alone. This will also relieve individual applicants from the burden of preparation of evidence for Habitats Regulations Assessment and will streamline this aspect of the development management process. To this end the Competent Authorities for the Cannock Chase SAC have formed this legal partnership overseen by this JSB with the Project Group coordinating the delivery, the accumulation of funds and undertaking additional works as directed. The JSB has no additional powers but serves to ensure that all Competent Authorities contribute to the implementation of the mitigation measures.

3.0 Composition

- 3.1 The membership of the JSB will comprise representatives of all the Competent Authorities, as defined in the Habitats Regulations, for the Cannock Chase SAC and who have signed the Memorandum of Understanding.
 - The JSB will comprise one senior representative or their delegated officer representative from each of the Competent Authorities. Additional representatives may attend at the discretion of the Chairman.

4.0 Board Structure and Procedures

- No Competent Authority will have authority over any of the other JSB members.
- The JSB will meet, or receive reports produced by an officer in a project management role, a minimum of quarterly or when required;
- Meetings of the Board will be chaired by each Competent Authority in turn annually.
- Officer support and secretariat services will be provided by the Cannock Chase SAC Project Officer (as defined in the DIPs)
- Agendas, reports and minutes of meetings will be circulated to relevant facilitators.
- The Project Group will be represented at meetings of JSB.
- Wherever possible, decisions made at the JSB will be by means of consensus. A quorum of 50% attendance plus one member will be required for decisions to be ratified. Where a decision is needed urgently, the incoming Chair has delegated authority to make the decision. This must then be reported to the next meeting for retrospective agreement.
- Where a member of the Partnership has proposed a project outside the agreed measures (SAMMM) that body is not entitled to vote on that item.
- Voting rights are limited to the full members of Cannock Chase SAC Partnership, one vote per full member authority.
- The Cannock Chase SAC Project Officer is not entitled to vote.
- With the agreement of members of the JSB members, advisory members may be co-opted to represent a specific area of interest or issue of consideration

5.0 Remit

5.1 The JSB:

- Will exercise its function to secure compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Regulations.
- Will provide a forum for discussion of issues and coordination of activity in a private and confidential setting due to commercial sensitivity of the projects but make relevant reports available to the public where appropriate.
- Will oversee the development, implementation and monitoring of the DIPs, and agree an annual work programme and milestones based upon future projections in order to work towards achieving the Conservation Objectives for the SAC.
- Will collaborate with key facilitators when required on individual projects within the programme.
- Receive and review an annual report on the collection, management and spending of the planning obligations funding.
- Expects that representatives will commit to the actions for delivery within their respective organisations;
- Will review performance and delivery of actions within the plan and make decisions to ensure timely corrective action can be taken where necessary.
- Will advise/steer the Project Group on changing priorities based on evidence and commit to new actions where there is a shortfall in a timely manner.
- Will approve a working budget for the Cannock Chase SAC Project Officer or the officer undertaking this role whilst the post is vacant.

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- Will assess projects outside the DIPs over £10,000 for evidence that they are cost effective and provide greater additional mitigation than those within the SAMMM.
- Will rely on input from the Project Group to help inform their decisions and will direct the Project Group where additional/different actions are required.
- Will agree the frequency of the Project Group meetings.
- Will act on behalf of the Partnership organisations in commissioning studies, surveys and reports or other work on relevant matters (with landowner collaboration, where required), including making bids for joint funding and grants relating to the objectives of the body.
- Represent the Cannock Chase SAC and its objectives at public meetings, events, workshops and conferences as and when necessary and, promote and champion the work of the Partnership.
- Will review its Terms of Reference as may be appropriate.

Cannock Chase SAC Project Group

Terms of Reference

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Partnership provides a framework for coordination between statutory bodies having land use planning responsibilities in Cannock Chase SAC. These Terms of Reference set out how the Cannock Chase SAC Project Group will work together to coordinate the delivery of a programme of mitigation, prepare and implement common plans and policies to protect the SAC, promote its understanding and appreciation to help to deliver sustainable development.
- 1.2 The objective of the Partnership is to use statutory planning processes and specific site and visitor management measures to secure appropriate mitigation for the impacts on the Cannock Chase SAC of Development Plan policies and proposals contained in individual planning applications and projects, thereby ensuring that the integrity of the Cannock Chase SAC is maintained.
- 1.3 The Cannock Chase SAC Partnership as a whole will provide a vehicle for the agreement of mitigation measures, collection and use of planning obligation monies and monitoring of work carried out.

2.0 Status

Competent Authorities include any statutory body or public office exercising legislative powers, whether on land or sea.

- 2.1 Each Competent Authority is individually responsible for meeting its duties under the Habitats Regulations. However by jointly preparing, implementing and reviewing the Detailed Implementation Plans (DIPs), it is anticipated that the Competent Authorities will be able to more effectively achieve the aims of the Habitats Regulations in relation to the Cannock Chase SAC, than if they acted alone. This will also relieve individual applicants from the burden of preparation of evidence for Habitats Regulations Assessment and will streamline this aspect of the development management process. To this end the Competent Authorities for the Cannock Chase SAC have formed this legal partnership overseen by the Joint Strategic Board (JSB) with the Project Group coordinating the delivery, the accumulation of funds and undertaking additional works as directed. The JSB has no additional powers but serves to ensure that all Competent Authorities contribute to the implementation of the mitigation measures.

3.0 Composition

- 3.1 The membership of the Project Group will comprise all of the Competent Authorities, as defined in the Habitats Regulations, for the Cannock Chase SAC and who have signed the Memorandum of Understanding.
 - The Project Group will comprise appropriate officers of the Competent Authorities
 - Officers or technical / professional representatives of stakeholder organisations, by invitation.

4.0 Structure and Procedures

- The Project Group will meet a minimum of quarterly.
- Meetings of the Project Group will be chaired by each Competent Authority in turn.
- Officer support and secretariat services will be provided by Cannock Chase SAC Project Officer (as defined in the DIPs) when in post.
- A minimum of 1 member of the Project Group will represent the group at the JSB meetings.
- A quorum of 50% attendance plus one member will be required for decisions to be ratified. Where a decision is needed urgently, the incoming Chair has delegated authority to make the decision. This must then be reported to the next meeting for retrospective agreement.
- Where a member of the Partnership has proposed a project outside the agreed DIPs that body is not entitled to vote on that item.
- Voting rights are limited to the representatives of the Competent Authorities, one vote per full member authority.
- The Cannock Chase SAC Project Officer will not be entitled to vote.
- With the agreement of members of the Project Group, advisory members may be co-opted to represent a specific area of interest or issue of consideration.

5.0 Remit

5.1 The Project Group will be responsible, with external support where agreed, for undertaking the following:

- Advise the JSB as necessary on issues relating to and impacting upon the SAC
- Will coordinate the implementation of the DIPs.
- Provide technical support to the JSB, prepare reports for the JSB's consideration and carry out such actions as may be instructed by the JSB.
- Undertake work identified in the annual work programme or as otherwise prioritised.
- Agree an annual monitoring report for the year ending 31st March prepared by the Cannock Chase SAC Project Officer, together with regular updates on progress for the Board.
- Prepare, agree and maintain a five-year rolling project plan, based upon the objectives of the Partnership.
- The Project Group may establish small project or working groups, resourced as necessary, to progress issues related to delivering the agreed annual work programme.
- Use of delegated authority to consider project substitution up to a value of £10K where projects outside of the DIPs can be proved to provide greater or additional mitigation to those within the DIPs.
- Identification of alternative mitigation projects
- Represent the Cannock Chase SAC and its objectives at public meetings, events, workshops and conferences as and when necessary and, promote and champion the work of the Partnership.
- Annually review the collection, management and spending of the planning obligations funding and prepare an annual report for the JSB.
- Provide information to allow the levels of residential development, spend and outcomes of project work to be monitored.
- Will review its Terms of Reference as may be appropriate.

Memorandum of Understanding

Signatories:

Signed for and on behalf of
CANNOCK CHASE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Authorised signature: 

Name: Dean Piper
Position: Head of Economic Prosperity
Date: 26th April 2022

Signed for and on behalf of
EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Authorised signature: 

Name: George Allen
Position: Deputy Leader of the Council
Date: 2nd March 2022

Signed for and on behalf of
LICHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL 

Authorised signature: _____

Name: Iain Eadie
Position: Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Leisure & Local Plan
Date: 18/03/2022

Memorandum of Understanding

Signed for and on behalf of
SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Authorised signature: _____


Name: Councillor Terry Mason
Position: Cabinet Member for Planning & Business Enterprise
Date: 1 March 2022

Signed for and on behalf of
STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Authorised signature: _____


Name: Cllr R. Mike Smith
Position: Cabinet Member - Resources Portfolio
Date: 1 March 2022

Signed for and on behalf of
WOLVERHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

Authorised signature: _____


Name: Tracey Christie
Position: Head of Legal Services
Date: 03.03.2022

Memorandum of Understanding

Signed for and on behalf of
WALSALL BOROUGH COUNCIL

Authorised signature: _____

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

