

Mr Matthew Hardy  
Cannock Chase Council  
Planning Policy  
PO Box 28  
Cannock  
Staffordshire  
WS11 1BG

**Our ref:**UT/2006/000190/OR-05/PO1-L01

**Date:** 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018

Dear Mr Hardy

### **Hednesford Neighbourhood Plan, Submission Version, January 2018**

Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency on the submission version of the Hednesford Neighbourhood Plan.

The Environment Agency are the main body providing advice on improving resilience and adaptation to the effects of climate change, with particular regard on flood risk, water resources, water quality and aquatic biodiversity.

We strive to make a positive contribution through our Statutory Consultee role and are happy to provide comments at this stage of the plan making process.

There appears to be very little changed from the pre-submission version of this document which was reviewed in September 2017. The flood risk comments made then are therefore still relevant.

We support the retention of the public open space alongside Ridings Brook from Nuffield Health Club to town boundary, as listed in Appendix 6 and would support any enhancements. We welcome the addition of paragraph 11.5 regarding the maintenance and enhancement of open spaces which function as water storage/conveyance. This could be improved further by including a requirement to retain and enhance river habitats and taking opportunities to improve connectivity. Where possible opportunities should be taken to open up any existing culverts to reduce the associated flood risk and danger of collapse as well as enhancing biodiversity and green infrastructure.

The Ridings Brook (main river downstream of plan area) drains the southern part of the plan area. Further downstream on the Ridings Brook in Cannock there are existing flooding problems some of which are mitigated by flood defences including a flood storage area at Mill Green. The northern part of the plan area drains (via ordinary

Environment Agency  
Sentinel House 9 Wellington Crescent, Fradley Park, LICHFIELD, WS13 8RR.  
Customer services line: 03708 506 506  
[www.gov.uk/environment-agency](http://www.gov.uk/environment-agency)

Cont/d..

watercourses) to the Rising Brook (main river) at Rugeley where there is an existing flooding problem.

Due to its location in the upper reaches of the Ridings Brook and Rising Brook catchments all proposals for new development must demonstrate that existing flood risk will not be increased elsewhere (downstream), ideally by managing surface water on site and limiting runoff to the greenfield rate or better. The use of sustainable drainage systems and permeable surfaces will be encouraged where appropriate. Consideration should also be given to the impact of new development on both existing and future flood risk. Where appropriate, development should include measures that mitigate and adapt to climate change.

There are also areas at risk from surface water flooding across the plan area. Staffordshire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) should be consulted on these matters.

In line with national planning policy we would wish to see all new development, directed away from those areas at highest flood risk, i.e. towards Flood Zone 1. In addition all new development, including infill development and small scale development, should incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to reduce flood risk and manage surface water and to ensure that runoff does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. Planning applications for development within the Neighbourhood Plan area must be accompanied by site-specific flood risk assessments in line with the requirements of national policy and advice. These should take account of the latest climate change allowances.

The Environment Agency hopes you find the above comments useful and we look forward to being consulted in the next stage of your consultation process.

Yours sincerely

**Mr Kazi Hussain**  
**Planning Specialist**