



**Cannock Chase District
Local Plan Preferred Options
February 2021**



1. Non-Technical Summary

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Cannock Chase District Local Plan will guide and manage the development of the District during the period to 2038. The Local Plan will identify land to meet the needs of the economy and to ensure that a sufficient number of homes can be built. New development will be well-designed and safe, and will have good access to schools, health services, parks and green spaces, leisure facilities and other services. New development will be accommodated whilst protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.
- 1.2 The Council asked people for their views on what sort of things should be covered by the Local Plan through an 'Issues and Options Consultation' in May 2019. The responses to that consultation have been taken into account in the Local Plan 'Preferred Options' consultation document (spring 2021). The 'Preferred Options' document identifies the sites that could be suitable for new development, and sets out draft policies that could be used to guide and manage the development of the District. This document provides a summary of the Local Plan 'Preferred Options' consultation document.
- 1.3 The Council will consider the responses to the 'Preferred Options' consultation, before preparing a complete draft of the Local Plan. This will be called the 'Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Draft Local Plan', and it will be published in winter 2021 for consultation. After that, the Local Plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State (Planning Inspectorate) for independent examination, probably over the summer 2022. A planning inspector will be assigned by the Secretary of State to examine the Local Plan to see whether it can be found 'sound' and capable of adoption by the Council during 2023.
- 1.4 The Local Plan will then form part of the Development Plan for the District, together with plans for minerals and waste prepared by Staffordshire County Council, and neighbourhood plans. There is an adopted Neighbourhood Plan for Hednesford, and four designated areas (Brereton & Ravenhill, Norton Canes, Cannock Wood and Rugeley) where Neighbourhood Plans are in the early stages of preparation.
- 1.5 Throughout the preparation of the Local Plan, the Council will engage with partner organisations, statutory consultees, and other relevant Local Authorities under the legal Duty to Co-operate.

THE DISTRICT CONTEXT

- 1.6 Cannock Chase District lies within Southern Staffordshire on the northern edge of the Black Country areas. At the heart of the District lies the nationally significant Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and around 60% of the District is designated Green Belt.
- 1.7 The 'Preferred Options' document includes a 'District Profile' which sets out information about the characteristics of: the population (health, education, deprivation); the place (housing, employment, town centres, transport and infrastructure); and, the environment (Green Belt, climate change).

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1.8 The Local Plan includes eight Strategic Objectives:

- To deliver high quality development that is distinctive, attractive and safe;
- To create community infrastructure and healthy living opportunities;
- To deliver a sufficient supply of homes to provide for housing choice and ensure all people are able to live in a decent home;
- To encourage a vibrant local economy and workforce;
- To support the provision of sustainable transport and communications infrastructure;
- To create attractive Town and Local Centres;
- To protect and enhance the natural environment;
- To support a greener future.

THE SPATIAL STRATEGY

1.9 Cannock Chase District will meet the development needs arising from the district and provide a contribution towards the Housing Market Area shortfall. In order to meet these needs, the Spatial Strategy of the Local Plan proposes that:

- Development will be located the most sustainable locations, be focussed on the existing urban areas, will protect and enhance Green Belt land and the AONB;
- Adverse environmental impacts of development will be minimised and mitigated where unavoidable;
- Housing and employment requirements will be met where possible within urban areas or in accessible and sustainable expansions to the urban areas;
- The reuse of previously developed sites will be optimised, and natural assets will be protected, for example by low and zero carbon energy and heat production;
- Cultural and heritage assets will be protected and local distinctiveness and sense of place will be maintained and strengthened through quality design;
- Green Belt release in order to provide sufficient land to meet Cannock Chase District's housing need with an element of flexibility;
- A minimum 5,516 dwellings will be delivered to meet the district's housing need between 2018 and 2038 at a rate of 276 dwellings per annum;
- A further 500 dwellings will be delivered to help meet a shortfall arising from the wider housing market area, (increasing total delivery 6,016 dwellings at a rate of 301 dwellings per annum);
- Up to 50 hectares of employment land will be provided to meet the District's requirements;
- Look to meet our development needs beyond the plan period.

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: DELIVERING HIGH QUALITY DEVELOPMENT THAT IS DISTINCTIVE, ATTRACTIVE AND SAFE

1.10 The 'Preferred Options' document includes Policies that will:

- Protect, conserve and enhance our historic environment and avoid adverse impacts on our Conservation Areas, Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings, Locally Listed buildings, and Sites of Archaeological Interest (Policy SO1.1).
- Ensure that development proposals enhance the quality of the built environment by retaining and enhancing the distinct and separate character of each of the District's settlements, and deliver the highest quality of building design and layout (SO1.2).
- Create safe and secure environments by designing out crime, and the fear of crime, without detracting from attractive, high quality design (SO1.3).

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: CREATING COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND HEALTHY LIVING OPPORTUNITIES

1.11 The 'Preferred Options' document includes Policies that will:

- Safeguard existing community infrastructure (such as schools and health centres) and ensure that development contributes towards new community infrastructure which is easily accessible to the local community (SO2.1).
- Safeguard health and amenity by ensuring that new development provides for satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, and privacy, and protects residents, workers and visitors from noise, smell, litter, dust or other unacceptable impacts (SO2.2).
- Improve the provision of active leisure (including play space) and sport facilities by ensuring that development proposals contribute to meeting the demands generated by the development (SO2.3).
- Provide opportunities for healthy living and active travel by integrating walking and cycling routes, co-locating community facilities in accessible locations, and providing multifunctional open spaces (SO2.4).
- Protect existing, and provide new, allotments and community food growing sites (SO2.5).

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: DELIVERING A SUFFICIENT SUPPLY OF HOMES TO PROVIDE FOR HOUSING CHOICE AND ENSURING ALL PEOPLE ARE ABLE TO LIVE IN A DECENT HOME

1.12 The 'Preferred Options' document includes Policies that will:

- Provide for a minimum of 5,516 dwellings to meet local housing needs, and an additional 500 dwellings to meet unmet needs of neighbouring areas, and ensure a sufficient supply of deliverable and developable land is available (SO3.1).
- Deliver a wide choice of high quality homes which widen opportunities for home ownership, meet needs for social and rented housing, and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities (SO3.2).

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- Provide dwellings of sufficient size and layout to meet the needs of their occupants, and suitable housing for households with health problems or disabilities (SO3.3).
- Consider proposals for new sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople to meet assessed needs (SO3.4).

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: ENCOURAGING A VIBRANT LOCAL ECONOMY AND WORKFORCE

1.13 The 'Preferred Options' document includes Policies that will:

- Safeguard existing Employment Areas (as listed in the Explanatory Text) for non-town centre offices, industry and warehousing (SO4.1).
- Provide for up to 50 hectares of land for office, manufacturing and distribution employment development during the period to 2038, with a range of sizes and types of employment to meet business needs (SO4.2).
- Provide for the sustainable development of tourism and the rural economy (SO4.3).
- Support proposals for the development of live work spaces within residential areas (SO4.4).
- Require major employment development proposals to develop Employment and Skills Plans to support local workers (SO4.5).

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: SUPPORTING THE PROVISION OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

1.14 The 'Preferred Options' document includes Policies that will:

- Ensure development is located where it can provide convenient access for all sections of the community to work, shopping, health, education, leisure, green space and other facilities (SO5.1).
- Require development proposals to demonstrate how they will deliver digital connectivity (SO5.2).
- Ensure development contributes to the reduction of the reliance on carbon-intensive modes of transport, for example by supporting the take-up of ultra low emission vehicles, and developing electric vehicle charging networks (SO5.3).
- Continue work between the District Council and the local highway authority, transport stakeholders, other partners, business and the local community to maintain and improve the transport system (SO5.4).
- Protect the Hatherton Canal Restoration Corridor from development that would prevent the future implementation of the canal restoration project (SO5.5).
- Protect proposed recreational footpath and cycle routes from development that will prevent the future implementation of the proposed schemes (SO5.6).
- Ensure that development makes appropriate off-street parking in accordance with the relevant Local Design Code (SO5.7).

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6: CREATING ATTRACTIVE TOWN AND LOCAL CENTRES

1.15 The 'Preferred Options' document includes Policies that will:

- Ensure development proposals for Main Town Centre Uses are appropriate to the role, scale, and historic character of the settlement, and the established hierarchy of Town and Local Centres (SO6.1).
- Require proposals for Retail and Leisure Uses outside designated Primary Shopping Areas to be accompanied by an impact assessment where the floorspace exceeds the set floorspace thresholds (SO6.2).
- Safeguard existing town centre services which occupy active street frontages/ground floor level within a designated Primary Shopping Area (SO6.3).
- Create an attractive and safe environment through good design to ensure the growth and resilience of our town centres (SO6.4).
- Identify redevelopment opportunity sites in Cannock Town Centre (SO6.5).
- Identify redevelopment opportunity sites in Rugeley Town Centre (SO6.6).
- Identify redevelopment opportunity sites in Hednesford Town Centre (SO6.7).

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 7: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

1.16 The 'Preferred Options' document includes Policies that will:

- Support the protection, conservation, enhancement and restoration of designated biodiversity and geodiversity sites (SO7.1).
- Ensure development provides a net gain in biodiversity through the restoration and re-creation of priority habitats and ecological networks, and the protection and recovery of protected and priority species populations (SO7.2).
- Ensure development does not lead directly or indirectly to an adverse impact upon a Special Area of Conservation (SO7.3).
- Protect, conserve and enhance landscape character (SO7.4).
- Protect landscape areas within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) from damaging or inappropriate development (SO7.5).
- Protect the Green Belt area within the Cannock Chase District with the highest degree of protection from development (SO7.6).
- Ensure that any loss of Green Belt is suitably mitigated (SO7.7).
- Ensure that sites which form the Green Space Network within the built-up areas of the District receive protection from development (SO7.8).

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 8: SUPPORTING A GREENER FUTURE

1.17 The 'Preferred Options' document includes Policies that will:

- Support development proposals for appropriate low and zero carbon energy and heat production installations, including solar photovoltaic, wind energy, and air and water source heat pumps (SO8.1).
- Ensure that development proposals strive to achieve the highest level of building performance standards for energy use and achieve the lowest carbon emissions that can practically and viably be achieved (SO8.2).
- Require development proposals to include a Sustainability Statement to set out how the design will achieve sustainability (SO8.3).
- Manage flood risk within the Plan Area by directing development away from areas at highest risk (SO8.4).
- Require development proposals to set out how any air, water, soil, noise and light pollution that may arise will be avoided or, if not possible, mitigated (SO8.5).
- Prioritise the use of suitable brownfield land the effective use of under-utilised land and buildings (SO8.6).
- Ensure that development will maximise the contribution that substitute or secondary and recycled material can make as an alternative to primary minerals (SO8.7).
- Require development proposals to be supported by a site waste management plan demonstrating that waste prevention is the first priority (SO8.8).

CONSULTATION INFORMATION

- 1.18 We will be consulting on the Local Plan 'Preferred Options' from Friday 19th March, 2021 to 16:45 on Friday 30th April, 2021.
- 1.19 Due to the current restrictions we are providing the opportunity for you to email your questions and queries to planningpolicy@cannockchasedc.gov.uk . You can also arrange a time to discuss the plan with officers via the telephone or by using Teams. Requests can be made by via email, letter or by calling 01543 462621.
- 1.20 We have also written to and emailed everyone who is registered on the Planning Policy consultation database. If you wish your details to be added to the database for future consultations please email us at: planningpolicy@cannockchasedc.gov.uk.
- 1.21 Documents can be viewed on our website at: www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/planningpolicy

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2. Introduction

What is this document about?

- 2.1 We are consulting on a new Local plan for Cannock Chase District. The Local plan will help shape the way in which the physical, economic, social and environmental characteristics of Cannock Chase District will change until at least the year 2038.
- 2.2 It will need to ensure that we provide the right amount and type of homes, sufficient and appropriate land to provide range of local employment opportunities as well as providing the right conditions for retail, leisure and other kinds of uses. It will need to ensure the natural and built environment, especially the highest quality and most sensitive areas, are protected and enhanced.
- 2.3 The plan will also have to provide the right infrastructure for transport, open and green spaces, education and health and well being of our communities.
- 2.4 The Local Plan is a statutory document and is therefore important for informing decisions on planning applications.
- 2.5 The Local Plan we currently use was adopted by the Council in 2014 and set the strategic policies to guide development in the District up to 2028 e.g. number of new homes and employment land required.
- 2.6 Changes to the planning system mean that we need to review our plans every five years. The Council began reviewing the Local Plan in 2018 with a Scope and Issues paper. It then consulted upon an Issues and Options plan in May 2019. Responses to the previous consultations have been considered in the preparation of this plan and summarised in the relevant sections.
- 2.7 This 'Preferred Options' consultation has identified a level of growth for the district up to 2038 and where this development would go by identifying specific sites for housing and employment. It includes detailed policies to guide development and deliver sustainable development until 2038.

What does preparing a Local Plan involve?

- 2.8 Preparing a Local Plan is complex, and we set the timescales out for its preparation in the Local Development Scheme. The table below sets out the key stages we will need in order to prepare the plan, and the timing of these. The Local Plan also has to be informed by a Sustainability Appraisal which is a legal requirement, and which ensures that we are taking 'reasonable alternatives' into account for delivering the development we need whilst ensuring that we do this in a balanced way taking account of environmental, economic and social considerations.

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Table 1

PREPERATION	DESCRIPTION	TARGET DATE
Commencement of work including evidence base updating	Evidence needs to inform the plan, we gather this at the early stages and update where needed.	February 2018
Regulation 18 Scoping and Issues Consultation	We looked at the issues and scope which the plan needs to cover.	July 2018
Regulation 18 Issues & options consultation	We considered the feedback from the Issues and Scope consultation, looked at any further issues, and then suggested options for dealing with these.	May 2019.
Preferred Option Consultation	This is the stage we are currently consulting on. This is a non statutory stage where we refine the plan into a draft version, based on the feedback of the previous consultation and using the evidence available. It contains draft policies and site allocations, for example.	Spring 2021
Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) consultation	Once we have considered the feedback from the previous consultation, this is the final draft, which we have to publish for comment before submitting the plan to the Secretary of State (Planning Inspectorate) for independent examination. Feedback at this stage will need to be focused very specifically on whether the plan is 'sound', which is currently defined as: Positively prepared – does the plan allocate enough land to meet all needs for the various uses where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with placing development in the right locations? Justified – is the plan the most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives? Effective – can the proposals in the plan be delivered over its period? Consistent with national policy – is the plan in accordance with national policies?	Winter 2021
Submission	This is the stage where the plan is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.	Summer 2022
Examination in Public	A planning inspector is assigned to examine the plan to see whether it can be found 'sound' (see above) and whether it is then capable of adoption by the Council. The examination will focus on the main areas of contention and will normally involve public hearings.	Winter 2022

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Adoption	Once the plan has been confirmed as being sound then the Council can adopt it and it will set policy for making decisions on planning matters in the district.	Summer 2023
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How does the Local Plan fit with the rest of the planning process?

- 2.9 We have to prepare the Local Plan so that it is consistent with Government policy, which is set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and ministerial statements and supported by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). The Local Plan forms part of the Development Plan for the wider area. Staffordshire County Council prepare plans for minerals and waste, and Cannock Chase Council will prepare the Local Plan (as described above) for shaping development in its own District. We will also need to work alongside other Councils and agencies to ensure our plans align and deliver on the more strategic issues – even though the plans of other areas may be prepared at different times. We need to work together under the legal ‘Duty to Co-operate’.
- 2.10 Once we have adopted our new Local Plan we can also choose to provide more detail for our policies if we need to, by preparing ‘Supplementary Planning Documents’ (SPDs), Design Codes/Design Guides. For example our current Local Plan is supported by SPDs on Design, on Developer Contributions and by a development brief for the site of the closed Rugeley Power Station. As part of this process we consider whether we will make changes to any of our SPDs or whether we need to add new ones.
- 2.11 Communities can also choose to prepare their own Neighbourhood Plans should they so wish. These set planning policies at a much more local (often Parish) level. They need to broadly conform to the Local Plan, are independently examined and then voted on by the community at a referendum. If there is a majority vote in favour of the plan they are then ‘made’ (i.e. adopted) and become part of the Development Plan for the area. We currently have an adopted Neighbourhood Plan (Hednesford) and four designated areas (Brereton & Ravenhill, Norton Canes, Cannock Wood and Rugeley) where Neighbourhood Plans are in the early stages of preparation.

Consultation Information

- 2.12 We will be consulting from Friday 19th March, 2021 to 16:45 on Friday 30th, April, 2021.
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2.15 Documents can be viewed on our website at www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/planningpolicy.

How to respond

2.16 Responses can either be submitted online via the web link above (social media pages will also link to this), email or by writing to us. All information will be used in accordance with our Fair Processing procedures

3. The District Context

UPDATED DISTRICT PROFILE

What are the key features of our District and what are the key issues it faces?

Sub-national Context

Cannock Chase District lies within Southern Staffordshire on the northern edge of the Black Country areas. At the heart of the District lies the nationally significant Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and around 60% of the District is designated Green Belt, testament to its strategic role as part of the West Midlands rural-urban fringe. The District acts as a strategic link between wider Staffordshire and the West Midlands conurbation.

Internal migration has been the most numerically significant contributor to population growth in Cannock Chase during recent years. The strongest residential migration flows to and from the District have typically been with Lichfield, South Staffordshire and Walsall. The most common commuter destinations for Cannock Chase residents are Lichfield, Walsall, Stafford, South Staffordshire and Birmingham. The conurbation also offers larger-scale retail and leisure provision. In recognition of these key economic and social links the District Council is a member of both the Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP although it should be noted that the Government is currently undertaking a review of LEPs. The Council is also a non-constituent member of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) which is a body that has devolved powers from central Government to implement budgets and policy in relation to key areas such as transport and housing.

Population

Between 2018 and 2019 the population in Cannock Chase rose by 0.7% to 100,762 residents. The working age population aged 16-64 comprised 62.9% of the population, slightly above the West Midlands (61.7%) and England (62.4%) averages. 19.2% of the population of Cannock Chase were aged 65+ in Mid-2019 which was higher than the West Midlands (18.6%) and England (18.4%) averages.¹

Population density in the District, the number of people per square mile (ppsqm), is the second highest in Staffordshire after Tamworth (2486 ppsqm) at a rate of 1277 people per square mile in mid-2019. This reflects the largely urban, commercial and residential landscape of Cannock Chase.²

Over the past five years since mid-2014 Cannock Chase has experienced an increase of 2.3% in population with a higher proportion of births than deaths. However, the most numerically significant contributor to population growth has been internal migration – residential moves into the District by people from other local authorities. A large number of people who have moved into Cannock Chase in recent years have migrated from South Staffordshire, Lichfield and Walsall.³

¹ Office for National Statistics, Mid-2019 Population Estimates, June 2020.

² Office for National Statistics, Population Profiles for Local Authorities in England, December 2020.

³ Office for National Statistics, Mid-2019 Population Estimates, June 2020.

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2018-based population estimates project that the District's population will rise to 115,178 residents by 2043. The age profile of the population is forecast to change during this period, with a rise in the proportion of older residents, particularly those aged 70+.⁴

In December 2019 the Office for National Statistics published a research report Rounded estimates in their thousands suggest that of the 97,000 people in the District at this time, 95,000 were White British with an increasing proportion of residents who identified with different ethnic groups. The estimates are for 2016, based on a three-year Annual Population Survey pooled dataset 2014-2016.

Health and Education

Cannock Chase experiences a range of health inequalities which impact on the welfare of the District and its residents. These include premature mortality from a range of health conditions such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, liver disease and respiratory disease, under-75 mortality from which was above the national average in 2017-2019. The District experiences relatively high rates of adult and child obesity, as well as below average consumption of the recommended 'five-a-day'. Rates of smoking prevalence among adults aged 18+, as well as the rate of hospital admissions for alcohol-related conditions, were similarly above the national averages in recent years. Life expectancy at birth and at age 65 was below the national average during 2017-2019, with inequalities in health and life expectancy related to deprivation across the District.⁵ The Indices of Deprivation 2019 illustrates that a number of neighbourhoods in Cannock Chase were amongst the 10% and 20% most deprived nationally in relation to poor health and shorter life expectancy in 2019.

Rates of physical inactivity and excess weight continue to exceed the England average. 27.8% of adults aged 16+ were physically inactive during May 2019 to May 2020, doing less than 30 minutes of physical activity per week. This rate of physical inactivity was above the England average (25.5%).⁶ 70% of adults 18+ were overweight or obese in 2018-2019, above the West Midlands average (65.6%) and England average (62.3%).⁷ Smoking prevalence in adults aged 18+ was above the England average of 13.9% in Cannock Chase during 2019 with a local rate of 17.6%, whilst the rate of admission episodes for alcohol-related conditions in the District was above the national average in 2018-2019.⁸

Evidence and monitoring for Local Plan (Part 1) 2014 shows that access to indoor leisure facilities in the District has improved with the completion of Rugeley Leisure Centre and the major refurbishment of facilities at Cannock Leisure Centre. The updated indoor sport facilities evidence base^{9,10} notes that facilities are generally above average but will require continued investment to maintain standards and meet increased demand from housing

⁴ Office for National Statistics, *2018-Based Population Projections for Local Authorities: Table 2* (March 2020).

⁵ Public Health England, *Public Health Outcomes Framework Tool*, December 2020.

⁶ Sport England, *Active Lives Adult Survey May 2019/20 Report*, October 2020.

⁷ Public Health England, *Public Health Outcomes Framework*, December 2020.

⁸ Public Health England, *Public Health Outcomes Framework*, December 2020.

⁹ CCDC *Indoor Built Facilities Study* (May 2019)

¹⁰ CCDC *Sport and Leisure Facilities Needs Assessment* (August 2018)

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growth. The use of sports facilities could be much improved through greater partnership working. The evidence¹¹¹² for outdoor playing pitches shows that investment will be required in the quality of most pitches and to avoid a shortfall in provision to meet demand for Football, Rugby and Cricket.

Whilst the AONB is a vital asset for outdoor leisure and recreation the most recently produced evidence¹³ identified there are areas within the District deficient in access to alternative open spaces, particularly semi-natural sites. This evidence base is in the process of being updated. Monitoring of the Local Plan (Part 1) identifies there have been a number of new open and play spaces provided alongside new developments but that deficiencies are likely to still remain. Phase one of the £1.3 million development on the Stadium site in Pye Green, Hednesford was completed in September 2020. This has provided facilities including an adventure play area, green gym equipment, BMX track and more which will improve access to healthy living opportunities in this area.¹⁴

The outdoor environment in Cannock Chase proved particularly important to local residents throughout the UK Government Lockdown. 50% of the 399 Cannock Chase respondents to the Staffordshire County Council Covid-19 Resident Survey identified that enjoying more time outdoors in and around their local area had been a positive change to emerge from the pandemic. The development of a greener, sustainable community and environment will be key to the District's future. In 2020 the Thriving Places Index rated Cannock Chase as being above the England average for Place and Environment and Green Infrastructure.¹⁵

Across the 7 domains of the Indices of Deprivation 2019, Cannock Chase is most deprived in the domain of education, skills and training which measures the lack of attainment and skills in the local population. The District falls just outside the most deprived 10% of local authority districts nationally for this domain.¹⁶ GCSE attainment in the District is typically below the national average. In 2019 31.6% of students in Cannock Chase achieved grade 5 or above in English and Mathematics which was below the Staffordshire (36.9%), West Midlands (40%) and England (43.2%) averages. Across the District, rates for this level of attainment range from 17.5% in Cannock North to 46.5% in Hagley.¹⁷ In terms of qualifications among the working-age population, estimates indicate that the proportion of residents aged 16-64 qualified to NVQ Level 4 and above saw an increase to 34.3% in 2019 and is slightly above the Regional average. However, the proportion of residents employed in jobs associated with higher skills-levels and earnings are estimated to have fallen in 2019-2020. 37.2% of residents were estimated to be working in managerial and professional occupations in the period July 2019 to June 2020, below the regional and national averages.¹⁸

¹¹ CCDC Playing Pitch Strategy Assessment Report (August 2018)

¹² CCDC Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan (May 2019)

¹³ CCDC Open Space Assessment (2009)

¹⁴ CCDC Leisure Services

¹⁵ Centre for Thriving Places, Thriving Places Index, 2020.

¹⁶ Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 (IoD2019) Statistical Release (September 2019).

¹⁷ Staffordshire County Council, Children's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment: District and Ward Data Matrices (March 2020).

¹⁸ Office for National Statistics via NOMIS Labour Market Profile for Cannock Chase

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Community Deprivation

In the Indices of Deprivation 2019 Cannock Chase is ranked overall as the 126th most deprived local authority district in England. The District is the second most deprived in Staffordshire after Tamworth which is ranked 125, with Cannock Chase ranked as 13th most deprived local authority District in the West Midlands Region.¹⁹

Such deprivation can be attributed to the legacy of industrial decline in the Districts reducing access to employment, but can also be related to the need for appropriate social infrastructure.

In 2019 around 17.2% of children aged 0-15 were estimated to be living in income deprived families, although this ranged from 8.2% in Hawks Green to 30.2% in Cannock North.²⁰

The median gross weekly pay for full time workers living in the District was £517.10 in 2020 which was below both the regional (£551.70) and Great Britain (£587.10) averages.²¹

Crime

Restrictions imposed as part of the government approach to controlling the Coronavirus pandemic have resulted in significant reductions in recorded crime and disorder from mid-March 2020 onwards²². This is particularly the case with regards to crime, disorder and ASB taking place in public places.

The data for the period from April 2019 to March 2020 has shown limited significant change in most types of crime since the last assessment. Across all major crime types, levels of crime in Cannock Chase overall are statistically similar to England & Wales.

The most significant increase locally has been in recorded Stalking and Harassment offences (+19%), however this is in line with CSP areas across England & Wales (+21%). There is growing concern that the wider impact of COVID-19 will result in considerable increases in demand relating to all major vulnerabilities (alcohol, drug and substance misuse, mental health, safeguarding). Fraud is of increased and growing concern in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, especially online fraud. Monthly Fraud incidents picked up by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) increased significantly following the first UK lockdown in March 2020 and are expected to remain high into 2021.

Housing

The most recent 2014-based household projections indicate an increase from 42,828 households (2018) to 46,988 households (2038), and these are the ones the Government has chosen to utilise for its draft standard housing methodology which indicates a housing requirement of 276 dwellings per annum (2018-2038) for the District.

¹⁹ Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 (IoD2019) Statistical Release (September 2019).

²⁰ Staffordshire County Council, Children's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment: District and Ward Data Matrices (March 2020).

²¹ Office for National Statistics via NOMIS Labour Market Profile for Cannock Chase

²² Staffordshire Commissioner and CCDC Community Safety Strategic Assessment – Cannock Chase 2020

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From a detailed analysis of the market undertaken in 2019 the Cannock Chase Local Housing Needs Assessment identified a net annual need of 105²³ dwellings per year, over the 20-year period 2018-38. The study shows there will be a need for around 4% of new homes to be for nursing homes and other residential institutions. It also shows that for the types of dwellings the majority of the need is for smaller dwellings suited to younger people and small households (12% one bed and 64% two bed), whilst larger properties for families and bigger households account for (16% 3 bed and 8% 4+ bed).

Furthermore, there is a significant housing shortfall to the year 2036 across the Greater Birmingham and Black County Housing Market Area, and as one of the fourteen authorities in this area²⁴, Cannock Chase Council will need to play a role in helping to address this.

Employment

The local economic base has developed and diversified significantly from the mining heritage of the last century with expansion of the tourism sector and growth arising from businesses locating near the strategic M6 Toll/A5 corridor. The District now has a more diverse employment structure with 37.2% of District residents aged 16+ estimated to be employed in Group 1-3 occupations (including Managers, Directors, Professional, Associate Professional and Technical occupations) in 2019. Whilst this was below the West Midlands (44.5%) and Great Britain (48.6%) averages, the proportion of residents estimated to be working in administrative and skilled trades occupations was above both regional and national averages during July 2019 to June 2020.²⁵

Four business industry sectors in Cannock Chase provided relatively high proportions of GVA (Gross Value Added) and employee jobs within the District during 2018-2019: Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles, Construction, Transportation and Storage and Manufacturing. The proportion of employee jobs in Human Health and Social Work Activities also saw an increase during this period. 21.1% of business enterprises in the District were in the Construction industry in 2020.²⁶

The rate of working-age people in employment in Cannock Chase is typically above the regional and national averages, with the District ranked as 'high' above the England average for Employment in the Thriving Places Index 2020.²⁷ In March 2020, 2.6% of District residents (16–64 years) were claiming out of work benefits, a rate below both the West Midlands (4.0%) and England (3.4%) averages. Whilst 84.6% of economically active residents aged 16-64 were estimated to be in employment between July 2019-June 2020, the Coronavirus pandemic and UK Government Lockdown has caused an increase in the rate of claims for out of work benefits in Cannock Chase, particularly among young people. In November 2020 5.5% of District residents aged 16-64 were claiming out of work benefits. Whilst this was below regional and national averages, the rate of claims among

²³ For the 18 year period 2018-36 in the main body of the report, the annual need is calculated as 110 affordable dwellings per year, of which 11% one bed, 65% two bed, 16% 3 bed and 8% 4+ bed

²⁴ Local Authority areas: Birmingham, Bromsgrove, Cannock Chase, Dudley, Lichfield, North Warwickshire, Redditch, Sandwell, Solihull, South Staffordshire, Stratford upon Avon, Tamworth, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

²⁵ Office for National Statistics via NOMIS Labour Market Profile for Cannock Chase

²⁶ Office for National Statistics via NOMIS Labour Market Profile for Cannock Chase; Office for National Statistics UK Business Activity, Size and Location (October 2020).

²⁷ Centre for Thriving Places, Thriving Places Index, 2020.

3. The District Context

young people was considerably higher with 10.4% of residents aged 18-24 claiming out-of-work benefits. This reflects evidence that young people have been particularly affected by the pandemic due to the disproportionate impact of lockdown on sectors such as hospitality, retail and leisure which typically employs higher proportions of people aged under ^{25,28}

Covid-19 has had a considerable impact on the UK economy. During lockdown the economy suffered an unprecedented contraction and employment fell significantly. Consumer demand suffered given social distancing and low confidence, leading to a big drop in social consumption, especially for recreation, leisure and travel.

The near-term outlook for consumer spending is weak and despite the news of vaccines, economists do not expect pre Covid 19 pandemic levels to be reached until at least the end of 2021. In terms of the medium to longer term outlook, it is expected that the recovery will be shaped by the course of the pandemic, Brexit arrangements, and the extent of potential scarring of both to the UK's longer-term economic potential.²⁹

It should be noted that this section has been produced in light of evidence available at the time of writing and future iterations will be updated to reflect any changes.

Town Centres and Shopping

In the first half of 2020 there was a net loss of 7,834 stores across Great Britain compared with a 3,647 stores loss over the equivalent period in 2019 and 4,402 in 2018. Closures increased by 21% from 2019-2020 with 31,139 shops closing. The comparison goods sector declined the highest in H1 (January to June) 2020 with a net loss of 4,975 units. Independent businesses have been more resilient than national multiples in H1 of 2020 with the decline lower across all four sectors. This, together with consumers doing more of their shopping online, which has been compounded by Covid-19, has resulted in a large number of retailers restructuring or going into administration.

Vacancy rates in town centres have been increasing since 2017 from 11% to 13%. The vacancy rate for both retail and leisure is forecast to increase further with retail anticipated to see a higher increase. The increase in vacancies was already apparent before the Covid-19 with the pandemic accelerating the level.

Cannock Town Centre is ranked 508 against other town centres and retail parks for 2016/17. The data also shows that Rugeley is at rank 608 and Hednesford is ranked 2,815. All three Town Centres have registered a lower ranking since the previous 2014/15 analysis reflecting both a decline in the number of 'multiple retailers' (anchor stores and fashion operators) and the relative smaller settlement size on a national register of retail centres.³⁰ Cannock represents the largest town within the District's retail hierarchy and is suitable for larger scale retail and leisure developments. A Town Centre Prospectus has been published to attract new investment into Cannock and improvements have been made recently to improve the public realm. Hednesford town centre has undergone significant regeneration to deliver an improved retail and leisure offer for the area, as well as other public realm improvements e.g. at Hednesford Park. Rugeley town centre has also attracted investment in terms of new retail food stores, improvements to the public realm and a flood alleviation scheme which will enable further redevelopment projects to be taken forward. All three Town Centres will require continued investment in what is currently

²⁸ Office for National Statistics via NOMIS Labour Market Profile for Cannock Chase.

²⁹ CCDC Cannock Chase Retail and Town Centre Uses Study (January 2021)

³⁰ Venuescore UK Shopping Venue Rankings (Javelin Group) 2016-17 (also referenced in the 2021 Retail Study)

3. The District Context

a challenging and rapidly changing retail market. There continue to be a number of local centres which serve local daily shopping needs in and around the District. A new retail designer outlet village will open at Mill Green (just outside Cannock town centre boundary) in 2021.

Transport and Infrastructure

The District is located at a strategic road/rail transport crossroads between the North West and South East via the M6T/M6 and West Coast Main Line railway and East-West A5/M54 corridor, and the West Midlands and wider Staffordshire. A new M6-M54 link road is due to open by 2025³¹ and there is a long term aspiration to upgrade the A5 Trunk Road to 'Expressway' status. Rugeley benefits from the Rugeley Eastern Bypass and direct rail services to London on the West Coast Main Line.

The Rugeley-Hednesford-Cannock-Walsall-Birmingham, 'Chase Line' rail service continues to grow in its popularity and the three stations at Cannock, Hednesford and Rugeley Town carry over 700,000 passengers' per year. The Chase Line electrification and line speed improvements completed in May 2019 have enabled the introduction of faster, longer and more frequent services, including two trains per hour throughout the day to Birmingham, and new direct services to the NEC/Birmingham Airport.

The Council is also actively involved in the innovative Chase Line 'Stations Alliance', with the West Midlands Combined Authority, LEPs, Network Rail and West Midlands Trains (the new West Midlands franchise operator). Cannock station in particular is the focus of attention for a major upgrade, in view of its close proximity to the £160m, Mill Green retail designer outlet village, which will attract 3-4 million visitors per annum.

Rugeley has also benefited due to its position on the West Coast Main Line (WCML) including the introduction of hourly services to Crewe, Stafford, Milton Keynes and London. The High Speed 2 (HS2) railway from London to Crewe will not run through the District.

While there is a good core urban and inter urban bus service network from Cannock to Wolverhampton, Stafford, Lichfield, Walsall and Wolverhampton and from Rugeley to Stafford and Lichfield, these are not immune from the national trend in falling passenger numbers. County Council budget cutbacks have led to the loss of evening services and there are no longer any Sunday bus services. A new bus operator has taken over bus services operating from Cannock bus depot, which run most of the local bus routes.

In terms of the road network the A5/M6T/A460/A34 Churchbridge Junction only has a design life to 2020 and much of the A5 in the District is also designated as an Air Quality Management Area, as is the area around Five Ways junction in Heath Hayes. Congestion along the A5 has been cited as an issue for road freight and the reliability of journey times, and there is an A5 Partnership which meets to address issues in this regard.

The historical development of the District has provided a wealth of canal network assets which provide connections to neighbouring areas and potentially offer opportunities for improved linkages including cycling and walking, contributing to sustainable communities and providing a wealth of other benefits (e.g. tourism, health and wellbeing, green infrastructure and biodiversity). Ongoing initiatives by the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust, propose the phased restoration of the Hatherton Canal, partly on a new alignment.

³¹ Highways England M54 to M6 Link Road

3. The District Context

Environment

The District comprises land rising from the low lying, largely urbanised areas in the south-west and Green Belt area around Norton Canes in the south-east to the higher plateaux within the Cannock Chase AONB. These plateaux then fall to the wide valley of the River Trent with the urban area of Rugeley and Brereton bordered by Green Belt in the north. Cannock Chase AONB provides a strategic area of accessible countryside with conservation, recreation, economic and tourism benefits. The Green Belt is also important for recreation, maintaining the District's character and its wildlife and safeguarding the wider open countryside. The District supports two Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Ancient Woodland, local Sites of Biological Interest, Local Nature Reserves and a Local Geological Site. However, some elements of the District's biodiversity assets are at potential risk of decline due to development and recreational pressures unless appropriate mitigation measures are put in place³². This natural environment gives the District a valuable semi-rural landscape, which combined with the historical influence of human activities results in a distinctive landscape character.

The District's medieval origins, mining legacy and industrial/agricultural heritage provide a wealth of valuable assets, which contribute to this distinctive character and provide a range of recreation and tourism benefits. There are 8 Conservation Areas within the District (primarily focused around Rugeley), a large number of listed buildings and several Scheduled Ancient Monuments. There are also a range of non-designated heritage assets including archaeological features of interest, potential sites of national importance related to military activities and locally significant historic farmsteads. The canal network represents a key heritage asset that can contribute towards the natural and built environment including opportunities for heritage-led regeneration and high quality design. The central landscape areas of the District are in a fairly good and strong condition overall and are of high sensitivity to change; those in the weakest and poorest condition are primarily at southern and eastern parts (around Norton Canes), mainly due to the extent of change in this area; although some parts are still sensitive to further change³³

In addition, the District's mining legacy has resulted in a variety of issues and constraints. Surface hazards, such as mine entries and fissures, are present throughout the District and rising mine water is an issue that The Coal Authority is monitoring due to its potential pollution and flooding effects. Southern parts of the District are still classified as potential mineral resource areas for coal. Central and northern parts of the District are also classified as having potential mineral resources (sand and gravel).³⁴

Green Belt

Given that 60% of the District is designated Green Belt, it is a key feature of the District's overall character. It provides a range of multifunctional benefits (as outlined above) and serves to maintain the openness of the rural-urban fringe (with the West Midlands conurbation) as well as the District's separate urban areas and their identities. A Green Belt study (2016) provides an overview of the current condition of the Districts' Green Belt (in terms of how it performs against the nationally defined purposes of Green Belt) and a more detailed Green Belt³⁵ study has been undertaken to inform the preparation of the Plan.

³² CCDC Appropriate Assessments (2009 onwards) AND Cannock Chase SAC Guidance to Mitigate (2017)

³³ Landscape Character Assessment for Cannock Chase District (2016) and Addendum (2017)

³⁴ Staffordshire County Council Minerals Local Plan (2017)

³⁵ Cannock Chase Green Belt Harm Assessment (2020)

3. The District Context

Climate Change

Cannock Chase Council has declared a Climate Change Emergency with a target date for achieving Net Zero by 2030.

The impacts associated with climate change risks are already being felt. Local, regional, national and global trends for climate change will rise in line with emissions that have already been released to the atmosphere, exacerbating the hazards that occur naturally, and magnifying the impacts experienced. Policies should therefore seek to ensure that developments are 'resilient' to climate change risks and the influence that a high-emission projection scenario could have.³⁶

Safeguarding against future climate impacts is a cross-cutting issue and should be integrated with approaches to achieve a pathway towards low and zero carbon. This may include measures such as requiring on-site renewable energy generation, diversifying transportation links and ensuring development allocations are designed to be resilient to chronic and acute climate change impacts such as flooding and biodiversity migration.

Key Issues

From the profile the following key issues for the District can be identified:

- Levels of crime, and perceptions of crime, remain a concern;
- Low standards of health and educational attainment require improvement;
- Future housing needs, particularly affordable housing requirements, have to be met including a contribution to the shortfall across the wider housing market area;
- Economic growth and regeneration needs have to be met and access to employment opportunities and local labour skills require improvement;
- The natural and built environment (inclusive of indoor, built and outdoor sports) should be planned effectively to encourage opportunities for healthy and active lifestyles amongst all sections of the community.
- Educational provision will need to be provided for including school expansions or new provision where applicable
- Provision of comprehensive transport networks need to be better supported to help reduce social exclusion and unsustainable development impacts;
- The town centres need to adapt and increase their competitiveness to maintain local shopping provision, be responsive to changing consumer needs and the role and function of centres, maximise opportunity, reverse decline and contribute to regeneration;
- The highly valuable and sensitive natural environment, historic environment and landscape character, green linkages and the canal network need to be protected and enhanced whilst meeting demands and providing opportunities for housing, recreation and economic activity including heritage-led regeneration;
- The natural and built environment including indoor, built and outdoor facilities and including the role of green infrastructure, the canal networks and linked cycleways and walkways should be planned effectively to encourage opportunities for healthy and active lifestyles amongst all sections of the community
- Potential challenges posed by the need to respond to climate change need to be tackled e.g. alternative forms of energy supply, addressing flood risk, helping local wildlife to adapt, along with wider sustainable development concerns. For

³⁶ SCC Climate Change Adaption and Mitigation Report (October 2020)

3. The District Context

example, air and water quality concerns as well as more specific local issues (such as those related to minerals and the coal mining legacy).

These District-wide issues manifest in the localities of the District in different ways, reflecting local features. The key points are summarised below with brief profile characteristics.

Cannock/Hednesford/Heath Hayes

- These areas are described together as they form a continuous urban area. The combined population is 65,423, 67% of the District total (2011 Census).
- Housing provision is a mix of age, size and tenure. There have been a number of Council-led programmes to regenerate public housing estates which were of poor quality, being constructed from defective pre cast reinforced concrete.
- The urban area, particularly Cannock, provides the majority of employment opportunities for the District with particular concentrations along the A5/M6 Toll corridor, which links into the neighbouring West Midlands conurbation.
- Rail services have seen significant improvements and strong growth in passenger numbers leading to continued investment in infrastructure. Parts of the District have seen reduced levels or even loss of their bus services and are now more isolated, especially away from the main commuter routes. Social isolation is an issue for many people who do not have access to cars.
- Health provision has traditionally been via small doctors' surgeries across the area, with more recent investment in larger health centres to serve growing populations and to help retain specialist staff. There are several schools to serve both primary and secondary age pupils along with a number of community facilities, including Chase Leisure Centre.
- The area is served by a series of major open recreational spaces e.g. Hednesford Hills, a designated SSSI³⁷, and major parks at Cannock, Hednesford and Heath Hayes. Improvements to the quality of play areas/hubs have occurred including at Cannock Stadium and ongoing maintenance/improvements to the District's parks which have achieved 'Green Flag' status.³⁸ However, some residential areas do not have good access to children's play facilities. Indoor leisure provision has been improved through modernisation works at the Chase Leisure Centre.
- Since the sixteenth century, coal extraction has had a major impact on the landscape character, resulting in extensive industrialisation. Cannock Town Centre Conservation Area, with its listed buildings, requires management and investment to enhance its character whilst North Street, Bridgtown Conservation Area, illustrative of the area's growth during the late Victorian period, has benefited from recent investment and major enhancements.

Hednesford Town Council produced a Neighbourhood Plan (adopted in 2018) which sets out local issues and aspirations in more detail including a particular focus upon local regeneration and the town centre area.

Rugeley & Brereton

- The combined population of 24,650 is 25% of the District total (2011 Census).
- The former Rugeley power Station site continues to be prepared for development

³⁷ Included as part of the Chasewater and the Southern Staffordshire Coalfield Heaths SSSI

³⁸ CCDC Authority Monitoring Report 2016/17

3. The District Context

and will provide a major change to Rugeley and Brereton and a significant contribution to the growth in the district.

- Rugeley town centre has had limited new investment since the mid 1980s and is in continued need of regeneration. However, more recent investment in the form of a new supermarket, public realm enhancements and a flood alleviation scheme have brought about new opportunities and improvements to the town. The Towers Business Park (developed on the former Lea Hall Colliery site) home to major companies, such as Amazon. The now well established Eastern Bypass also provides links to nearby employment opportunities. However, some issues of out commuting and lack of access to local high quality employment opportunities remain.
- Rail services have seen significant improvements to Birmingham, London and the north-west. The off-peak Chase Line service frequency to Birmingham has been increased, while the electrification and line speed increase schemes have been completed, including the introduction of longer, faster services to Birmingham with direct services to Birmingham International (Airport/NEC).
- Bus services have followed the national trend of gradual decline in passengers and a diminishing network. County Council budget cutbacks and the resulting reduced operating hours at Cannock bus depot have led to the withdrawal of evening services and the removal of Sunday bus services in the District.
- Apart from the Victorian residential streets around Rugeley Town Centre, the historic core of Brereton village and areas of north-west Ravenhill most housing is post 1945 with several estates of public housing including the former National Coal Board Pear Tree estate, which has environmental and infrastructure problems.
- There are two health centres, 9 primary schools, and 1 secondary school. A new school will be provided on the Rugeley Power Station site with additional health infrastructure provided in the area to serve the new housing developments. There are also a number of community facilities including Rugeley Leisure Centre and swimming pool. Despite being adjacent to the AONB, there is a lack of alternative recreational sites and deficiencies in access to play areas.
- There is a wealth of historic natural and built assets in the area e.g. 6 Conservation Areas in and around Rugeley Town Centre, along the Trent and Mersey Canal and at Main Road, Brereton. Rugeley's position alongside the strategic River Trent corridor has resulted in its development since early Domesday records and the layout of the town pattern is largely unchanged from the sixteenth century

Norton Canes

- The population of 7,479 is almost 8% of the District total (2011 Census). Originating as a mining village it expanded to include estates of public and private housing during the 1960/70s. There have been more recent expansions in the form of housing developments to the south east of the urban area (at the former Greyhound Stadium) and there is a large housing development under construction to the south of the urban area (450 homes). There are 2 primary schools, a secondary school, library and community centre together with a limited range of local shops. A modern health centre opened in 2007 and three GP surgeries operate from this, however concerns about local capacity have been raised (noting that there are cross boundary linkages with Great Wyrley in South Staffordshire in terms of the local catchment). The village centre is accessible by bus, but some peripheral areas of Norton Canes have lost their services, and there are no Sunday bus services.

3. The District Context

- Access to recreational sites in the area is relatively good, particularly given the proximity to the Chasewater Country Park (in Lichfield District). Access to indoor leisure facilities is mainly outside the settlement at Cannock, Burntwood or Walsall.

The Rural Areas

The Cannock Chase AONB contains one of the largest areas of readily accessible recreational land in the West Midlands, being a statutory designation under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. It is a significant asset for nearby communities as well as comprising important heathland areas covered by the European designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The landscape is dominated by forestry plantations, however within the AONB and around its fringes there have been, and continue to be, a number of influences on its landscape and heritage e.g. hunting and military activities, mining, agriculture, equestrian activity and recreation. Modern-day activities require careful management in view of the areas sensitivities.

- Slitting Mill, Prospect Village and Cannock Wood village are all situated in the northern area outside the Green Belt. All have village halls; however Prospect Village and Slitting Mill have no shops or schools. Cannock Wood has access to a local primary school (in Lichfield District) and shop. Prospect Village, Rawnsley and Hazel Slade have a daytime and Saturday bus service to destinations such as Cannock, Hednesford, Burntwood and Lichfield. Slitting Mill and Cannock Wood have no timetabled bus service. Access to public transport and the potential for social isolation is now an issue.
- The rural area south of the M6 Toll contains the hamlet of Little Wyrley, scattered dwellings and farms, commercial developments at Watling Street, Lime Lane and a completed landfill site at the former Grove Colliery. It also contains the Cannock Extension Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC). This area contains some of the most intact rural landscape character in the District, particularly south of the A5.
- The rural areas, by their largely undeveloped nature, have a unique character by virtue of the surviving historic farmsteads and field patterns, largely from the 18th and 19th centuries. However the District also retains wealth of late medieval and early post medieval industrial sites including glass working, mining and metal working. Such sites throughout the West Midlands represent the first stirrings of what was to become the Industrial Revolution during the 19th Century, though by this time much of the industrial focus had moved away from the District. These assets are sensitive to development pressures and require careful consideration.

4. How the Local Plan fits within the Wider Context

Cannock Chase Councils' Corporate Plan

- 4.1 The Council's Corporate Plan covers the period 2018 to 2023. This states that the Councils key priorities are Promoting Prosperity and Community Wellbeing.

Figure 1



- 4.2 In terms of Promoting Prosperity there are seven strategic objectives:
- Establishing Mill Green Designer Outlet Village as a major visitor attraction and maximise the benefits it will bring to the District
 - Increased housing choice
 - Create a positive environment in which businesses in the District can thrive.
 - Increase the skill levels of residents and the amount of higher skilled jobs in the District
 - Create strong and diverse town centres to attract additional customers and visitors
 - Increase access to employment opportunities; and
 - Commencement of regeneration of the Rugeley Power Station site
- 4.3 For Community Wellbeing there are four strategic objectives:
- Opportunities for healthy and active lifestyles
 - Sustaining safe and secure communities
 - Supporting vulnerable people; and
 - Promoting attractive and healthy environments
- 4.4 The new Local Plan will therefore need to help the Council to achieve its ambitions.
- 4.5 The geography of the West Midlands is complex and Cannock Chase Council is involved in a range of different partnerships and groups formed under the Duty to Co-operate delivering a range of different functions. Some key ones include:

4. How the Local Plan fits within the Wider Context

- The Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Economic Partnership (LEP)³⁹
- Staffordshire and Stoke LEP⁴⁰
- The West Midlands Combined Authority⁴¹
- The 14 authorities comprising the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area⁴²
- The Cannock Chase AONB Partnership⁴³; and
- The Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation Partnership (SAC)⁴⁴

4.6 The Council will need to ensure that the new Local Plan helps these (and other) partnerships to deliver their ambitions and obligations. As the Local Plan develops we will need to ensure that the plan links to a range of strategies and plans, for example:

- The Government's Industrial Strategy
- The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan
- The West Midlands Engine Growth Strategy and Midlands Connect Strategy
- Strategic Economic Plans
- The West Midlands Combined Authority Spatial Investment and Delivery Plan
- Transport Strategies
- Various environmental strategies and management plans; and
- Infrastructure and delivery strategies (these can cover a range of issues such as utilities, health, education, community infrastructure and so on)

4.7 New evidence since the publication of the issues and options includes:

- Local Housing Needs Assessment (LNHA)
- Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA)
- Economic Development Needs Assessment Update July 2020
- Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA)
- Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Final Report Staffordshire County Council (AECOM October 2020).
- Cannock Chase Retail & Town Centre Uses Study (January 2021)
- Playing Pitch Strategy & Action Plan (May 2019)

³⁹ Local Authority areas: Birmingham, East Staffordshire, Lichfield, Tamworth, Bromsgrove, Cannock Chase, Redditch, Solihull, Wyre Forest

⁴⁰ Staffordshire and Stoke, list of partners at <https://www.stokestaffslep.org.uk/about-us/our-people-partners/>

⁴¹ Constituent local authorities: Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall, Wolverhampton. Non constituent local authorities: Cannock Chase, North Warwickshire, Nuneaton & Bedworth, Redditch, Rugby, Shropshire, Stratford-upon-Avon, Tamworth, Telford & Wrekin

⁴² Local Authority areas: Birmingham, Bromsgrove, Cannock Chase, Dudley, Lichfield, North Warwickshire, Redditch, Sandwell, Solihull, South Staffordshire, Stratford upon Avon, Tamworth, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

⁴³ Local Authorities involved: Cannock Chase, Lichfield, Stafford, South Staffordshire; Staffordshire County Council also working with a range of other organisations

⁴⁴ Local authorities: Cannock Chase, East Staffordshire, Lichfield, South Staffordshire, Stafford, Staffordshire County Council, Walsall, Wolverhampton also with a range of other organisations

4. How the Local Plan fits within the Wider Context

- Development Capacity Study

4.8 The Council will also need to work with neighbouring authorities on a range of strategic issues as well as a number of organisations who are listed in the National Planning Policy Framework as prescribed bodies under the statutory Duty to Co-operate. These are:

- Local Planning Authorities
- County Councils
- Local Enterprise Partnerships
- Environment Agency
- Historic England
- Natural England
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Homes England
- Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Office of Rail and Road
- Local Integrated Transport Authority
- Highways Authorities
- Local Nature Partnerships

4.9 The NPPF requires that Statements of Common Ground will need to be prepared to demonstrate how the Duty to Co-operate has been met. We will also need to be able to demonstrate how we are preparing the plan in the context of the most appropriate functional geographical/market areas for housing and the economy.

4.10 We had already identified the following cross boundary issues:

Housing Land Need

Discussions will continue with our Duty to Co-operate partners to ascertain potential assistance to meet Cannock's housing need and ongoing dialogue in relation to the wider Housing Market Area shortfall.

Cannock Chase SAC

Policies are necessary to carefully balance recreational uses and control development in order to protect these areas from any negative impacts.

Cannock Chase AONB

Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a high value protected landscape that benefits from protection against most forms of development in order to preserve the views into and across the heathland and forest habitats.

4. How the Local Plan fits within the Wider Context

Gypsy and Traveller Need

We will continue to ascertain potential assistance to meet the need arising in Cannock District and address the shortfall in the accommodation need of this community in our neighbouring authorities.

Employment Land Need

Discussions will continue with our Duty to Co-operate partners to ascertain potential assistance to meet unidentified need for employment land within the authorities which share our functional economic market area.

5. Local Plan Vision & Objectives

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Strategic Objective 1:

To deliver high quality development that is distinctive, attractive and safe by:

- Protecting, conserving and enhancing the District's historic environment, and sustaining local character and distinctiveness by managing designated and non-designated heritage assets and their townscape and landscape settings;
- Retaining and enhancing the distinct and separate character of the District's settlements and protecting and enhancing the quality of the built environment by ensuring that new development is designed to provide the highest quality of built form and public realm which will enhance the District's distinctive heritage and natural assets; and
- Creating places that are safe, inclusive and accessible which deter crime and reduce the fear of crime.

Strategic Objective 2:

To create community infrastructure and healthy living opportunities across the District by:

- Safeguarding the health and the amenity of local communities.
- Providing active leisure and sports facilities.
- Providing healthy living opportunities and increasing physical activity in everyday lives.
- Providing opportunities for allotments and local food growing.

Strategic Objective 3:

To deliver a sufficient supply of homes to provide for housing choice and ensure all people are able to live in a decent home which meets their needs by:

- Facilitating sustainable housing provision for this plan period and the next;
- Delivering sufficient housing to meet the District's own need and an appropriate and sustainable contribution to the wider housing market area shortfall where justified in adopted plans;
- Helping meet local need for affordable dwellings;
- Providing housing choices for an ageing population;
- Catering for the needs of different groups in the community.

Strategic Objective 4:

To encourage a vibrant local economy and workforce by:

- Championing clean growth principles to support a highly productive, clean and resilient economy;
- Safeguarding existing employment areas for employment uses;
- Providing employment opportunities in locations which best respond to market demands and which will attract inward investment;
- Ensuring that business locations and centres are accessible by public transport from all areas of the District, reducing travel needs where possible;

5. Local Plan Vision & Objectives

- Supporting the development of town centres as hubs for commercial uses such as offices, leisure and culture uses, residential opportunities and community activities;
- Providing a range of sizes and types of employment sites to meet modern business needs;
- Supporting sustainable tourism and the rural economy, balanced with the protection of the AONB and the District's two SACs;
- Ensuring the land based economies of the District, including agriculture and forestry, can continue to operate, diversify and prosper;
- Encouraging the development of Live Work units;
- Providing for local employment and the development of skills.

Strategic Objective: 5

To support the provision of sustainable transport and communications infrastructure by:

Managing the need to travel by:

- Providing for major new development in accessible locations that can provide access for all sections of the community to work, shopping, health, education, leisure, green space and other facilities.
- Clustering the development of services and facilities in locations that can provide convenient access to all sections of the community.
- Ensuring major new developments provide for safe pedestrian and cycle movement within the scheme and to neighbouring areas, and are designed to accommodate high quality public transport services.
- Supporting the installation of high quality and resilient digital communication technologies to facilitate business development and remote working.

Supporting low carbon transport systems:

- Supporting the provision of electric vehicle charging points, and other infrastructure that may be required for alternative low and zero carbon transport options, including hydrogen vehicles.
- Supporting changes to the road network where they are related to the reduction of environmental impacts and the enhancement of public transport.
- Supporting sustainable freight distribution by road and rail.

Maintaining and improving the transport system:

- Achieving improvements to walking and cycling routes and supporting increased use of the canal network and towpaths as part of the integrated transport network.
- Securing the continued development of the Chase Line rail services, facilities and infrastructure as the preferred means of transport.
- Safeguarding land that is required for sustainable transport schemes, including road, rail, cycle ways and footpaths.
- Supporting the safe and efficient use of the highway network through traffic management schemes.
- Establishing standards for the provision of car and lorry parking.

5. Local Plan Vision & Objectives

Strategic Objective 6:

To create attractive Town and Local Centres by:

- Enhancing the Town, and Local Centres in order to protect and improve their vitality and viability;
- Maintaining a hierarchy of Town and Local Centres;
- Supporting growth of shops, offices, business, education, leisure, arts, cultural and tourism in Town Centres, and improving access to employment and housing in order to achieve Town Centres with good vitality and viability;
- Supporting the development of Town Centres as hubs for comparison goods shopping, leisure and culture uses, residential opportunities and health and community activities;
- Supporting the development of Local Centres mainly for local food shopping and local services; and
- Supporting the direction of new investment to the Town, and Local Centres via a range of means as most appropriate to the local context.

Strategic Objective 7:

To protect and enhance the natural environment development will:

- Minimise impacts on, and provide net gains for, biodiversity, including by conserving, expanding and linking natural habitats through habitat creation and improvement to ensure a robust, establishing coherent ecological networks of sites that provides wildlife with the opportunity to prosper;
- Protect, conserve and enhance the District's natural environment assets, valued landscape and townscape, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils. The highest degree of protection will be given to the protected landscapes of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Green Belt; and
- Avoid any harmful impacts on the integrity of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Cannock Extension Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

Strategic Objective 8:

To support a greener future, development will:

- Increase production of low and zero carbon energy and heat;
- Promote sustainable building design, site layout, construction materials and increase Low and Zero Carbon development;
- Offset and mitigate any carbon emissions that cannot be avoided;
- Reduce the risk of flooding, maximise flood protection and manage the effects of flooding;
- Avoid air, water, soil, noise and light pollution;
- Ensure development makes efficient use of previously developed land and buildings;
- Safeguard potential mineral reserves;
- Minimise waste: and,
- Encourage and facilitate the use of sustainable modes of transport.

5. Local Plan Vision & Objectives

SPATIAL PRIORITIES

- 5.1 **Cannock Chase District will meet the development needs arising from the district, plan for our future needs and provide a contribution towards the Housing Market Area shortfall. To meet these needs development will focus on:**
- **Re-using of brownfield land**
 - **Supporting existing settlements and characteristics**
 - **Assisting in the rejuvenation of town centres**
 - **Ensuring infrastructure delivery to support growth**
 - **Safeguarding natural and historic assets**
 - **Assisting in the delivery of the Council's ambition to be net zero carbon by 2030, ahead of the Government's target date of 2050.**

Introduction

- 5.2 Cannock Chase District has experienced significant growth in recent years by capitalising on its location and accessibility, as well the backdrop of Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, that together provide an attractive environment for residential and commercial development. Investment in commercial and industrial development has boosted the local economy at a rate that has exceeded local and national trends, and this has been enhanced by a consistent housebuilding programme.
- 5.3 The Spatial Strategy provides the context for the future growth of Cannock Chase District and how the spatial priorities will be delivered over the lifetime of the Local Plan. It sets out the approach to the delivery of sustainable development by assessing the economic, environmental and social impacts of development and growth in the District.
- 5.4 The Local Plan sets out the amount of development that will be delivered up to 2038, as well as policies to support delivery - through supporting infrastructure including affordable and specialist housing, the protection of environmental and historic assets, climate change adaptation and mitigation etc.
- 5.5 Cannock Chase District is situated in southern part of the County of Staffordshire and is the second smallest authority in terms of land area. It is comprised of large areas of Green Belt and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which together account for over 60% of the district. Cannock Chase District's population is concentrated in the existing settlements of Cannock/Hednesford/Heath Hayes, Norton Canes, and Rugeley /Brereton which are the most sustainable development locations in the District.

National Policy Context

- 5.6 The achievement of sustainable development is a core principle at the heart of the plan making system. NPPF Chapter 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development states that the 'objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (paragraph 7). Within this objective lie '...three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways...' these are economic objectives, social objectives and environmental objectives (paragraph 8).
- 5.7 Further important NPPF references include:
- 5.8 The presumption in favour of sustainable development:
11. Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 5.9 For plan-making this means that:

5. Local Plan Vision & Objectives

- a) plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change;
- b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas unless:
 - (i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area or
 - (ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

15. The planning system should be genuinely plan-led. Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings.

20. Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for:

- a) housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;
- b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
- c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
- d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The Spatial Strategy

- New development will be located the most sustainable locations, including within and around existing town centres, neighbourhood centres and employment areas.
- Development will be focussed on the existing urban areas and will protect and enhance Green Belt land and the AONB.
- The adverse environmental impacts of development will be minimised and mitigated where unavoidable. The Local Plan will protect and enhance species, habitats and geological sites.
- Cannock Chase District's housing and employment requirements will be met as far as possible within the existing urban areas or within a planned expansion to the urban areas in accessible and sustainable locations.
- The Local Plan will optimise the reuse of previously developed sites, protect natural assets and create opportunities for low and zero carbon energy and heat production.
- The Local Plan will protect cultural and heritage assets, local distinctiveness and sense of place will be maintained and strengthened through quality design.
- Green Belt release is considered in order to provide sufficient land to meet Cannock Chase District's housing need with an element of flexibility.

5. Local Plan Vision & Objectives

- The Local Plan, will seek to deliver a minimum 5,516 dwellings to meet the district's housing need between 2018 and 2038 at a rate of 276 dwellings per annum.
 - Cannock Chase District forms part of the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area (GBBCHMA) and has resolved to contribute 500 dwellings where infrastructure permits, to meet a shortfall arising from the GBBCHMA which sets a Local Housing need of 6,016 dwellings at 301 dwellings per annum.
 - Up to 50 hectares of employment land will be provided to meet the District's employment need.
- 5.10 Residential and employment sites have been identified within the Local Plan to meet identified needs, these will be within the existing urban area or accessible and sustainable locations within the Green Belt.
- 5.11 The level of growth within the main urban centres will be predicated by the capacity of local infrastructure to accommodate growth. The availability of infrastructure and services, as well as the potential to enhance local infrastructure in mitigation, will be taken into consideration. Development will be supported that delivers sufficient infrastructure (social, physical and environmental) to support the proposals to meet identified local needs.
- 5.12 The Local Plan will promote sustainable and health promoting transport choices to access education, services and jobs. Health facilities, including GP services, will be positively planned and deficiencies in local services and facilities will be addressed through new facilities or development space made available during the Plan period. Accessibility enhancements will take the form of new walking, cycling and public transport services and infrastructure that will include an uplift in environmental quality and public realm. These measures will help to reduce the negative impacts of climate change but also promote health and well-being whilst respecting the historic environment.
- 5.13 Climate Change is a key consideration within the Local Plan. The Local Plan will deliver resilient communities and developments to mitigate climate change and minimise flood risk. Development should address the impact of climate change and incorporate measures that are deemed to be carbon neutral at the outset, or capable of being upgraded so that further carbon reduction initiatives can be implemented at a future date, in accordance with national requirements.
- 5.14 The Local Plan designates the hierarchy of centres and levels of retail growth for each centre and states the importance of our open spaces and leisure provision. The Plan also seeks to conserve and enhance the landscape of the AONB, Hednesford Hills, Green Belt and green infrastructure of the District. The Plan also protects the Cannock Chase and Cannock Extension SACs from adverse impacts from development.
- 5.15 The Local Plan review includes within it a strategic and overarching policy for the District which sets out the overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development during the plan period. It sets out where development will take place in order to deliver the Vision and Strategic Objectives set out in the document.
- 5.16 The Council's legal obligations in meeting the National Planning Policy Framework obligations will be satisfied.

The Spatial Strategy for Cannock/Hednesford/Heath Hayes

- Cannock, Hednesford and Heath Hayes will be the main priority area for new residential and commercial development.

5. Local Plan Vision & Objectives

- Previously developed land and brownfield sites will be prioritised for development, and a high quality of design reflecting the character of the area will be sought.
- Cannock Town Centre is the designated Strategic Town Centre within the District, being the principal location for shopping and leisure.
- Residential development opportunities will be promoted that will enhance the vitality of the Town Centre, increase housing choice and compliment retail and leisure opportunities.
- Opportunities to deliver net zero carbon development will be prioritised and other types of development which can contribute to the delivery of a net zero carbon District will be encouraged.
- The networks of open space will be protected and enhanced to support the natural assets and continue to provide opportunities to improve health and well-being.
- The Town Centre will be the focus for leisure and entertainment provision and provide new residential accommodation.
- Hednesford is a designated Town Centre serving the retail and service needs of residents to the north east of Cannock. Opportunities to enhance the retail, commercial and residential offer will be prioritised.
- Heath Hayes is a designated Local Centre and provides small scale services to serve local needs.

5.17 A masterplan approach to the improvements to the Town Centre will be taken forward that will take in the opportunities to integrate the train station with the Town Centre and Mill Green. The recent upgrade of rail services to Birmingham and London will be reflected in the masterplan to harness the benefits of these improved links and provide a station facility that will be a key feature of the regeneration of Cannock Town Centre.

The Spatial Strategy for Rugeley and Brereton

- Rugeley is a designated Town Centre serving the shopping needs of its hinterland
- The consolidation of the Town Centre is a priority through the redevelopment or refurbishment of the Market Hall, and the improvement of the station to provide a high-quality gateway into the Town Centre.
- The introduction of residential and commercial units that respect the historic character of the Town Centre will be prioritised.
- The provision of approx. 1,000 additional homes within Cannock Chase District will be delivered through the larger cross boundary redevelopment of the former Rugeley Power Station.
- Development must seek to achieve a net zero carbon standard.
- Improvements to Rugeley Train Station and Rugeley Trent Valley Train Station will be a priority, as well as the Rugeley bus station.
- Improvements to cycle and footpath networks will be made to enhance connectivity and encourage more active travel, health and well-being.
- A high-quality natural environment will be protected and enhanced through improved quality of the existing green space network, enabling greater use and support for wildlife
- Brereton is a designated as a Local Centre serving local needs.

5. Local Plan Vision & Objectives

5.18 The redevelopment of the power station will also deliver education facilities, greenspace and employment uses that will provide a show case for the potential to achieve net zero carbon across the district. The setting of the AONB will be enhanced through the reclamation and redevelopment of the derelict and underused power station site and the air quality improved.

The Spatial Strategy for Norton Canes

- Residential and commercial development opportunities will be prioritised within Norton Canes where they can make a positive and sustainable contribution to the growth of the district.
- Norton Canes is a designated Local Centre serving local needs.
- Improvements to transport networks will include improved links to Kingswood Lakeside via a recreational cycle/footpath route.
- The Local Plan supports the enhancement of the biodiversity link between Sutton Park and Cannock Chase as well as areas further afield.
- Enhancement of the historic landscape at Grove Colliery and support for appropriate recreation uses is supported.
- The identity of Norton Canes as a separate settlement will be safeguarded and enhanced.

The Spatial Strategy for Rural areas (Cannock Chase AONB and Rural north including Rawsley, Hazelslade, Prospect village, Cannock Wood and Slitting Mill)

- These areas have potential for local enterprises to support and contribute to the education, preservation and enhancement of the important landscape, habitat and species and history of the area. The retention of existing employment and working landscape will be important to retain the local vibrancy of the area and support local services and facilities.
- Some of the best and most sensitive areas of landscape and biodiversity within the District that are of national significance are located here. Management Plans for the AONB will provide guidance to development in this area and the scale and type of development will need to respect this and support for mitigation strategies will enable residents of the area and visitors to continue to appreciate and care for natural and historic environment.
- Housing will be identified through neighbourhood plans reflecting local need and affordable housing provision as well as respecting the local character and infrastructure of the area.
- Transport improvements will focus on the improvement of active travel methods such as cycling and walking to improve health and reduce the impact on air quality.
- The alteration to the Green Belt boundary and the safeguarding of areas of land for future development recognises the constrained nature of the District and will give permanence to the Green Belt so the revised boundaries can endure beyond the plan period.



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 1: Delivering High Quality Development that is Distinctive, Attractive and Safe

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

To deliver high quality development that is distinctive, attractive and safe by:

- Protecting, conserving and enhancing the District's historic environment, and sustaining local character and distinctiveness by managing designated and non-designated heritage assets and their townscape and landscape settings;
- Retaining and enhancing the distinct and separate character of the District's settlements and protecting and enhancing the quality of the built environment by ensuring that new development is designed to provide the highest quality of built form and public realm which will enhance the District's distinctive heritage and natural assets; and
- Creating places that are safe, inclusive and accessible which deter crime and reduce the fear of crime.

INTRODUCTION

National Policy Context

- 6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) includes the following guidance in relation to well designed places:
- 6.2 Chapter 12 'Achieving well-designed places' requires planning policies to set out design expectations and to ensure that developments:
- Function well and add to the overall quality of the area;
 - Are attractive, due to good architecture, layout and landscaping;
 - Are sympathetic to local character and history;
 - Provide a strong sense of place;
 - Sustain an appropriate mix and amount of development; and
 - Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible.
- 6.3 The Government consultation 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code' (January 2021) sought views on the draft revisions to the NPPF to implement policy changes in response to the [Building Better Building Beautiful Commission "Living with Beauty" report](#).
- 6.4 **The draft policies proposed as part of the Preferred Options have been drafted within the context of the NPPF (2019), and with regard to the draft revisions proposed in January 2021.** The 2021 consultation proposes seven amendments to chapter 12 ('achieving well-designed places') of the NPPF (2019):
- Paragraphs 124 and 126 have been amended to include the term "beautiful" in response to the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission's findings. This supports the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission's recommendation for an overt focus on beauty in planning policy to ensure the planning system can both encourage beautiful buildings and places and help to prevent ugliness when preparing local plans and taking decisions on planning applications.
 - Paragraph 125 has been amended to clarify the role that neighbourhood planning groups can have in relation to design policies.



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Objective 1: Delivering High Quality Development that is Distinctive, Attractive and Safe

- Paragraph 126 has been amended to emphasise that all local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code and which reflect local character and design preferences.
- A new paragraph 127 has been added in response to the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission's recommendations and the Government's manifesto commitment to give communities greater say in the design standards set for their area. This reflects the Government's proposals for a National Model Design Code, which will include a model community engagement process, and will create a framework for local authorities and communities to develop a more consistent approach which reflects the character of each place and local design preferences. It also clarifies that the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code should also be used to guide decisions on planning applications in the absence of locally produced guides or codes.
- A new paragraph 129 has been added to reflect the findings of the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission and the Government's ambition to ensure that all new streets are tree-lined, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.
- New paragraph 131 and footnote 50 have been updated to refer to Building for a Healthy Life; and
- New paragraph 132 responds to the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission's recommendations to make clear that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design. In addition, it clarifies that significant weight should be given to development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design.

6.5 In addition, the 2021 consultation proposes one amendment to chapter 16 ('conserving and enhancing the historic environment') of the NPPF (2019):

- New paragraph 196 has been added to clarify that authorities should have regard to the need to retain historic statues, plaques or memorials, with a focus on explaining their historic and social context rather than removal, where appropriate.

6.6 The draft NPPF revisions (January 2021) do not reflect proposals for wider planning reform set out in the Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020). The White Paper proposes to simplify the role of Local Plans, to focus on identifying land under three categories:

- Growth areas suitable for substantial development, and where outline approval for development would be automatically secured for forms and types of development specified in the Plan;
- Renewal areas suitable for some development, such as gentle densification; and
- Protected areas where – as the name suggests – development is restricted.

6.7 A fuller review of the NPPF is expected to be prepared by the government in due course, once the government has fully considered the responses to consultation on the White Paper proposals. **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 1: Delivering High Quality Development that is Distinctive, Attractive and Safe

- 6.8 The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020⁴⁵ came into force in September 2020. The Regulations create:
- Class E ‘Commercial, business and service’;
 - Class F1 ‘Learning and non-residential institutions’; and
 - Class F2 ‘Local community’.
- 6.9 Class E ‘Commercial, business and service’ incorporates the former use classes A1 ‘shops’, A2 ‘financial and professional services’ A3 ‘restaurants and cafes’, and B1 ‘offices’. Uses previously in use classes D1 and D2 area are also included in the new Use Class E. These include use *‘for indoor sport, recreation or fitness, not involving motorised vehicles or firearms, principally to visiting members of the public’* (Class E(d)).
- 6.10 Class E allows a building to be in a number of uses concurrently, or used for different uses at different times of the day. Changes to another use, or mix of uses, within this Use Class do not require planning permission.
- 6.11 Class F1 ‘Learning and non-residential institutions’ incorporates those uses from the former use class D1 ‘non-residential institutions’ which are more likely to involve buildings which are regularly in wider public use such as schools, libraries and art galleries.
- 6.12 Class F2 ‘Local community’ groups together those uses from the former D2 use class which provide for group activities of a more physical nature – swimming pools, skating rinks and areas for outdoor sports. It also includes the use of buildings where this is principally by the local community. Uses within Class F2 include:
- *‘A hall or meeting place for the principal use of the local community’*(Class F1(b));
 - *‘An area/place for outdoor sport or recreation (not involving motorised vehicles or firearms)’* (Class F1c); and
 - *‘An indoor/outdoor swimming pool or skating rink’* (Class F1 (d)).
- 6.13 Changes of use within Class F2 do not require planning permission.
- 6.14 The 25 Year Plan for the Environment⁴⁶ was published by Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in 2018. The 25 Year Plan sets out the Government’s long-term approach to protecting and enhancing natural landscapes and habitats in England.
- 6.15 The 25 Year Plan identifies the key areas around which action will be focused. These include connecting people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing by: helping people improve their health and wellbeing by using green spaces; encouraging children to be close to nature, in and out of school; and greening our towns and cities.

Local Policy Content

- 6.16 The Local Plan Part 1 (2014) Section 1 Core Strategy includes the following policies in relation to attractive, safe and well designed places:

⁴⁵ The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 ([pdf](#)) ([link](#)). (SI 2020 No. 757)

⁴⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 1: Delivering High Quality Development that is Distinctive, Attractive and Safe

- Policy CP3 Chase Shaping – Design, which sets out the key requirements of high quality design that should be addressed in development proposals, including climate change challenges;
- Policy CP5 Social Inclusion and Healthy Living, which seeks to enhance the green space network and leisure facilities and ensure that appropriate levels of infrastructure are provided (including: health facilities; education facilities; parks, open spaces and woodlands; playing pitches; cemeteries and crematoria; cycling/pedestrian routes and pathways; indoor sport and physical activity facilities, including sports halls and swimming pools; cultural and community facilities);
- Policy CP15 Historic Environment, which seeks to safeguard historic sites, buildings, features and archaeological remains and their landscape and townscape context;

6.17 The Local Plan Part 1 (2014) Section 2 Rugeley Town Centre Area Action Plan includes the following policies in relation to attractive, safe and well designed places:

- RTC2 Town Centre Land Uses, which supports the creation of new, and the enhancement of existing leisure, community, cultural and recreational facilities.
- RTC3 Urban Design Principles, which include references to the Historic Urban Character Areas, active frontages, historic skyline, the Trent and Mersey Canal, pedestrian linkages and green infrastructure.

6.18 The Design Supplementary Planning Document (2016) was prepared to help deliver design quality in new development in Cannock Chase District to enhance the best of the District's buildings, townscapes and landscapes based on a clear understanding of local character and pressures. It promotes this through a series of local design and sustainable building guidelines and recognised good practice principles to set the context for consideration of development proposals.

ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION

What you told us

6.19 The Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation (2019) set out the following Design Policy Options to be considered to help deliver Objective 1: Promote pride in attractive, safe local communities:

Option A: Strengthen the current policy to address the range of issues raised and update the Design SPD to include more detail, which reflects the increased emphasis of the NPPF of design matters

Option B: As Option A, but set minimum density standards for key areas such as town centres in Local Plan Policy and provide further guidance on optimum densities for other areas including character areas via a revised SPD

6.20 The findings of the Sustainability Appraisal were that both Policy Options are expected to have mostly minor positive, and similar, effects.

6.21 The responses to consultation demonstrated support for strengthening design policies within the Local Plan, as proposed in Option A (rather than as a separate SPD). There was also some support for including minimum density standards for key areas, as proposed in Option B, but in accordance with the NPPF.

6.22 In response to other questions:



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 1: Delivering High Quality Development that is Distinctive, Attractive and Safe

- the housebuilders view was that the emerging Local Plan should not seek to adopt minimum internal space standards for new dwellings (as set out in the Nationally Described Space Standards). It was felt that there was insufficient evidence of the need for these standards, and flexibility should be maintained to support the viability of development (question 8);
- consultees suggested the inclusion of additional design standards in the Local Plan including active design principles, and protection of the historic environment (question 9);
- the consultation demonstrated support for the inclusion of a Local List in the Local Plan, as was suggested in the Design SPD 2015 (question 10); and
- there was little support for a local policy to control the development of isolated homes in the countryside, and the NPPF policy (paragraph 79) was considered sufficient (question 11).

6.23 The Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation (2019) also set out the following Historic Environment Policy Options:

Option A: Expand existing policy CP15 to embrace the historic environment as a catalyst for positive regeneration with referenced links to related policy areas and any updates to the evidence base.

Option B: As above but also to add more specific reference to particular local heritage opportunities in town centres, canals and collieries and former mineral railway lines to help bring new life into town centres and historic commercial buildings, consider other regeneration/leisure opportunities and enhance the footway/cycleway network. This more specific reference to heritage opportunities could also refer in generic terms to the (forthcoming) Heritage Impact Assessment evidence to provide guidance for managing change at allocated sites.

Option C: As above but incorporating a District-wide Interpretation Strategy policy framework.

6.24 The findings of the Sustainability Appraisal of the Historic Environment Policy Options were that the effects ranged from minor negative to significantly positive. Option B had more significantly positive effects than Option C, which in turn had more significantly positive effects than Option A.

6.25 Responses to Consultation demonstrated general support for all the options, with a greater preference expressed for Option B. Respondents also made the following suggestions regarding Local Plan policy:

- The future of the Cannock Extension canal SAC particularly around the former Grove Colliery site is at a critical crossroads. It has been a long-standing policy aspiration to see the areas developed as a leisure and recreational centre.
- Historic England would welcome an updated approach that seeks to develop elements of local distinctiveness and protection of local assets, and would welcome a local list being prepared; and
- A review of the Historic Environment Character Area and the Extensive Urban Surveys will be required to ensure that they continue to be relevant.



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 1: Delivering High Quality Development that is Distinctive, Attractive and Safe

PREFERRED POLICY - PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE DISTINCTIVE LOCAL HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

What you told us

- 6.26 The responses to Issues and Options Consultation demonstrated support for the protection of the historic environment, and for the inclusion of a Local List in the Local Plan (as was suggested in the Design SPD 2016).
- 6.27 Respondents supported using the historic environment as a catalyst for positive regeneration with reference to specific local heritage opportunities in town centres, canals, former collieries and mineral railway lines and historic commercial buildings.
- 6.28 Historic England welcomed the proposed approach that would seek to develop elements of local distinctiveness and the protection of local assets, and would welcome a Local List being prepared.

New Evidence

- 6.29 The Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020) proposes to simplify the role of Local Plans. **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**
- 6.30 The Government consultation 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code' (January 2021) proposes that all local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code and which reflect local character and design preferences.
- 6.31 The **Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 2020** allow properties to be extended upwards. It amends the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.
- 6.32 The regulations introduce four new permitted development rights. They are:
- Class AA "which permits construction of up to two new storeys of flats on top of detached buildings in commercial or mixed use, including where there is an element of residential use";
 - Class AB which "permits the construction of new flats on top of terrace buildings (including semi-detached buildings) in commercial or mixed (including residential) use";
 - Class AC which "permits the construction of new flats on top of terrace dwelling houses (including semi-detached houses)";and
 - Class AD which "permits the construction of new flats on top of detached dwelling houses.
- 6.33 These four new rights come after the introduction of PD rights to allow free-standing blocks of flats to be extended upwards by two storeys to create new homes.
- 6.34 The new permitted development rights are subject to a number of limitations and conditions, including a requirement for prior approval from the local planning authority in relation to certain matters.



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Objective 1: Delivering High Quality Development that is Distinctive, Attractive and Safe

6.35 These relate to:

- the transport and highways impacts of the development;
- air traffic and defence asset impacts;
- contamination risks in relation to the building;
- flooding risks in relation to the building;
- the external appearance of the building, including the design and architectural features of the principal elevation and any side elevation that fronts a highway;
- the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the new dwelling houses;
- the impact on the amenity of neighbouring premises including overlooking, privacy and the loss of light; and
- whether, because of the siting of the building, the development will impact on a protected views.

6.36 New regulations introducing a further PD right allowing homeowners to extend their properties via upward extensions have also been introduced.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO1.1: PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE DISTINCTIVE LOCAL HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Development proposals will sustain local character and distinctiveness within the District by protecting, conserving and enhancing its historic environment by avoiding adverse impacts on designated and non-designated heritage assets (including sites, buildings and archaeological remains, and their landscape and townscape settings).

The designated and non-designated assets include the following:

- **Conservation Areas;**
- **Scheduled Ancient Monuments (or an archaeological site of national importance);**
- **Listed Buildings;**
- **Locally Listed buildings and features; and**
- **Sites of Archaeological Interest.**

All major development proposals and all Listed Building consent applications affecting existing, or potential, designated and non-designated assets will need to include a Design and Access Statement to demonstrate how the design of the development has considered its significance.

Where development proposals harm existing, or potential, designated and non-designated assets and their landscape and townscape settings, they must be justified by evidence of:

- **the public benefits of the development; and**
- **the action that will be taken to mitigate the harm.**



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 1: Delivering High Quality Development that is Distinctive, Attractive and Safe

Explanatory Text

- 6.37 Cannock Chase District is rich in heritage assets and these play a major role in providing a sense of place, community wellbeing and cultural identity. The distinctive historic environment plays a key part in making Cannock Chase district a diverse and special place to live, work and enjoy.
- 6.38 A strategic objective of the Local Plan is to retain and enhance the distinct and separate character of the District's settlements. This will partly be achieved through the spatial strategy which will distribute development in a way that will maintain a degree of physical separation between settlements. It will also be achieved through the Policy set out above, which aims to sustain local character and distinctiveness through the effective management of designated and non-designated heritage assets and their townscape and landscape settings.
- 6.39 The planning system recognises three types of heritage asset – those which are of international importance, those which are of national importance and those which are important locally.
- 6.40 Nationally important heritage assets are identified and given statutory protection by Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (having consulted Historic England) on the basis of nationally-set selection criteria. Locally important heritage assets are identified by local planning authorities and neighbourhood plan forums based on locally-set criteria.
- 6.41 The Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER)⁴⁷ includes records of archaeological sites, finds and buildings, historic landscape character information, designation information (including Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and Conservation Areas).

Conservation Areas

- 6.42 A Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Cannock Chase District has eight Conservation Areas within its boundary and the Council is required from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement. The concept of Conservation Areas was introduced under the Civic Amenities Act 1967 and historic areas are now extensively recognised for the contribution they make to our cultural inheritance, economic wellbeing and quality of life.
- 6.43 The Cannock Chase District Conservation Areas Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted in April 2014. The SPD sets out the package of measures available to the Council to apply to all of its Conservation Areas. It should be read in conjunction with the area-specific Management Plans relating to the individual Conservation Areas.

⁴⁷ heritagegateway.org.uk



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Objective 1: Delivering High Quality Development that is Distinctive, Attractive and Safe

- 6.44 Planning applications for development in Conservation Areas need to be supported by a Design and Access Statement which explains the design thinking behind the application and the effect on the historic and architectural interest of the Conservation Area to ensure that it has been given proper consideration. A description of the significance of the heritage assets affected, the contribution of their setting to that significance, and an assessment of the impact of the proposal on that significance should be included. Design and development briefs will be encouraged for any substantial development proposals.
- 6.45 The 'public realm' is the space between buildings that is publically accessible - including streets, squares, parks and open spaces. The enhancement of the public realm in Conservation Areas gives huge benefits and its design and management can be significant in reinforcing historic character.
- 6.46 Conservation Area designation places protection over all trees, and some trees which make a particular contribution have the additional protection of Tree Preservation Orders.
- 6.47 Legislation places a duty on the Council to draw up and publish proposals for preserving and enhancing Conservation Areas and to consult the local community on the proposals. Character Appraisals provide a basis for developing Management Plans to address issues arising from the Appraisals. Cannock Chase District Council has adopted eight Conservation Area Management Plans (SPDs).
- Main Road, Brereton (2014)
 - Rugeley Town Centre (2014)
 - Cannock Town Centre (2014)
 - North Street, Bridgtown (2014)
 - Sheep Fair/Bow Street, Rugeley (2018)
 - Trent and Mersey Canal (2019)
 - Church Street, Rugeley (2019); and
 - Talbot Street/Lichfield Street, Rugeley (2019)

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

6.48 There are 4 Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the District:

- Churchyard cross, St Luke's Churchyard, Cannock (a medieval sandstone cross);
- Castle Ring, Cannock Wood (remains of an Iron Age hill fort and of a medieval hunting lodge);
- Moated site and bloomery (a charcoal fired furnace used to produce wrought iron from iron ore), Courtbanks Covert, Cannock Wood;
- World War One Trench System, Cannock Chase.

Listed Buildings

6.49 All the District's listed buildings are listed on the Council's website. They are listed by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and special controls apply to protect them from unnecessary demolition, unsuitable and insensitive alteration. Buildings are 'listed' for their special architectural or historic interest and there is a general presumption in favour of their preservation. Listing seeks to protect them from



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Objective 1: Delivering High Quality Development that is Distinctive, Attractive and Safe unsuitable and insensitive alteration. The need to preserve the setting of a Listed Building may affect development on nearby sites.

6.50 There are currently 70 listed buildings in the District, 7 are listed at Grade II*, the remainder Grade II. These include all sorts of buildings - churches, houses, garden walls, milestones, a churchyard tomb, pubs and canal bridges. They cover buildings of all periods including medieval stone churches, 16th/17th Century timber framed buildings, and many 19th Century brick buildings, the latter dating from Cannock Chase's period of mining prosperity.

Local List

6.51 The Local List includes the non-designated historic areas, sites, buildings and archaeological remains which are valued for their local architectural or historic character, their contribution to the local scene, or their local historical associations. Locally Listed buildings and features have no statutory protection but any impact on them will be taken into account in considering planning applications and will need to be given weight in decision making. They include archaeological features of interest, potential sites of national importance related to military activities and locally significant historic farmsteads. Development proposals affecting a Locally Listed building or feature will need to demonstrate how the design of the development has considered its defined significance.

6.52 Preparation of a Local List for the District is being taken forward through the District Design Guide SPD which includes a procedure for compiling a List of local heritage assets which are valued by the community in contributing to the local distinctiveness, character and appearance of the area.

Sites of Archaeological Interest

6.53 Archaeological remains can provide irreplaceable information about our past, and hold the potential to increase our future knowledge. The Local Plan therefore seeks to preserve 'in-situ' all sites of **known or suspected** archaeological interest. Development proposals should appropriately provide for 'in-situ' preservation, or investigation and recording of archaeology, based upon significance.

QUESTION 1

Do you support the preferred policy direction to protect, conserve and enhance the distinctive local historic environment?

List of relevant evidence

- Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020);
- 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code' (January 2021)
- Cannock Chase Conservation Areas Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document 2014; and
- Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 2020



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Objective 1: Delivering High Quality Development that is Distinctive, Attractive and Safe

PREFERRED POLICY – ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

What you told us

- 6.54 The responses to the Issues and Options Consultation (2019) demonstrated support for strengthening design policies within the Local Plan. There was also some support for including minimum density standards for key areas, in accordance with the NPPF (2019).
- 6.55 Consultation respondents suggested the inclusion of additional design standards in the Local Plan including active design principles, and increased protection of the historic environment.
- 6.56 The Issues and Options Consultation preceded the Government publication of the National Design Guide and the White Paper 'Planning for the Future'.

New Evidence

- 6.57 The Better Building, Building Beautiful Commission report 'Living with Beauty' was published in January 2020. The report proposed the preparation of Local Design Codes which would provide certainty about local requirements and preferences in regard to height, roof-scape, skylines, textures, windows and doors. The Commission's report recommends that Local Design Codes should be included in Local Plan documents.
- 6.58 The National Design Guide (MHCLG October 2019) identifies the characteristics of well designed places. These characteristics are based on the objectives for design set out in the NPPF 2019 (Chapter 12).
- 6.59 The Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020) proposes to simplify the role of Local Plans. **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**
- 6.60 The Government consultation 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code' (January 2021) sought views on the draft revisions to the NPPF to implement policy changes in response to the [Building Better Building Beautiful Commission "Living with Beauty" report](#).
- 6.61 **The draft policies proposed as part of the Preferred Options have been drafted within the context of the NPPF (2019), and with regard to the draft revisions proposed in January 2021.** The 2021 consultation proposes seven amendments to chapter 12 ('achieving well-designed places') of the NPPF (2019). The amendments most important to enhancing the quality of the environment include:
- An overt focus on beauty in planning policy to ensure the planning system can both encourage beautiful buildings and places and help to prevent ugliness.
 - Emphasising that all local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code and which reflect local character and design preferences.
 - Giving communities greater say in the design standards set for their area.
 - An ambition to ensure that all new streets are tree-lined, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible; and
 - Making clear that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.



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Objective 1: Delivering High Quality Development that is Distinctive, Attractive and Safe

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO1.2: ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Development proposals will be designed to make a positive contribution to townscape and landscape to enhance the quality of the built environment and will:

- **Retain and enhance the distinct and separate character of each of the District's settlements;**
- **Deliver the highest quality of building design and layout which has been developed to enhance the District's distinctive character, heritage and natural assets in line with Local Plan Policies and the relevant Local Design Code.**

All development proposals, including extensions to existing buildings, will be of a high standard of design and layout to reflect and promote local distinctiveness.

All major development proposals and all Listed Building consent applications will include a Design and Access Statement that will set out:

- **How the design will respect the local distinctiveness and character of the surroundings in terms of heritage, biodiversity, landscape and townscape, cycleways and footpaths, public transport networks, and the road network.**
- **What would be built on the site, how the buildings and spaces will be arranged on the site, the density and mix of housing types and tenures, the services and facilities that will be provided, the details of the siting, layout, orientation, massing, height, materials and landscaping, and the provision of access to and from nearby locations and facilities.**

Explanatory Text

6.62 The Government consultation 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code' (January 2021) proposes amendments to the NPPF (2019) to ensure the planning system encourages beautiful buildings and places, and that local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code and which reflect local character and design preferences.

6.63 The Local Plan seeks to ensure that all development has regard to the design principles that will deliver high quality places. Design is about more than the architecture of the buildings. It is also about the spaces in between buildings, the relationship between the development and surrounding areas, and the appropriateness of the proposed use of the building in the location of the development.

6.64 The following paragraphs explain the Local Plan's proposed approach to Local Design Codes, and outline the purpose of a Design and Access Statement.

Local Design Codes

6.65 (Subject to the final guidance provided in the National Model Design Code), Local Design Codes may be prepared for each of (or combinations of) the Character Areas defined in the Cannock Chase Design Supplementary Planning Document (2016). These are:



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Objective 1: Delivering High Quality Development that is Distinctive, Attractive and Safe

- Brereton and Ravenhill
- Hagley
- North Rugeley and Brereton
- Rugeley Town Centre and Historic Suburbs
- Slitting Mill
- Western Rugeley – Etchinghill and Springfields
- A5 Corridor
- Bridgtown
- Cannock Town Centre and Historic Suburbs
- Cannock Wood
- Hawks Green
- Hazelslade and Rawnsley
- Heath Hayes and Wimblebury
- Hednesford Town Centre and Historic Suburbs
- North Cannock –Chadsmoor, Broomhill and Blackfords
- Norton Canes
- Outlying Buildings/Hamlets in Rural Areas
- Prospect Village
- Pye Green Valley; and
- South and West Cannock

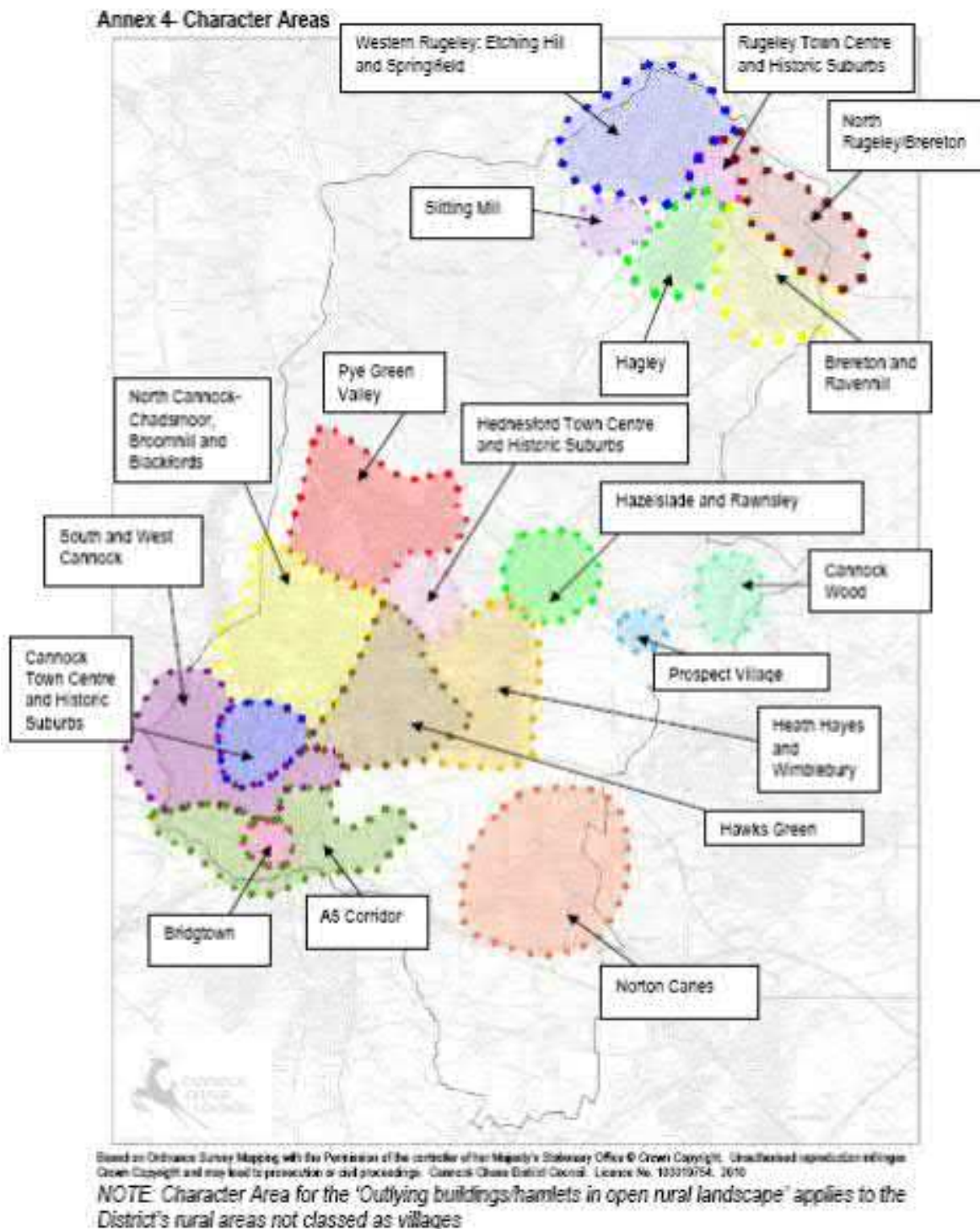
6.66 Consideration will also be given to the need for Local Design Codes for the rural parts of the District that are not included as Character Areas.



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Objective 1: Delivering High Quality Development that is Distinctive, Attractive and Safe

Figure 2



6.67 The Local Design Codes will be prepared within the context provided by the National Model Design Code and the Guidance Notes for Design Codes.

Other Relevant Local Plan Policies

6.68 Policy SO1.2: Enhancing the Quality of the Built Environment should be read alongside other directly relevant Local Plan Policies. Development proposals will also:



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- Conserve and enhance historic areas, sites, buildings and archaeological remains within the site and the surrounding area (in line with Policy SO1.1: 'Protecting the Historic Environment').
- Follow the principles of 'Secured by Design' in their layout and design to create safe and secure environments (in line with Policy SO1.3: 'Creating Safe Places which Deter Crime and Reduce the Fear of Crime').
- Safeguard the health and amenity of local communities (in line with Policy SO2.2: 'Safeguarding Health and Amenity').
- Provide easy access to well-located open spaces and community facilities (in line with Policy SO2.3: 'Provision of Active Leisure and Sports Facilities').
- Ensure development provides access for all sections of the community to work, shopping, health, education, leisure, green space and other facilities (in line with Policy SO5.1: 'Accessible Development').
- Contribute to a reduction in reliance on carbon-intensive transport (in line with Policy SO5.3: 'Low and Zero Carbon Transport').
- Create pedestrian friendly environments which provide easy to navigate and safe connections to surrounding streets, cycleways and footpaths, which encourage active lifestyles and increase accessibility to play areas, green spaces and sports facilities (in line with Policy SO5.4 'Maintaining and Improving the Transport System');
- Provide compact forms of development that are accessible to public transport connections to destinations, places and communities both within and beyond the site boundaries (in line with Policy SO5.4 'Maintaining and Improving the Transport System');
- Achieve the lowest practical and viable carbon emissions (in line with SO8.2: 'Achieving Net Zero Carbon Development').
- Include a Sustainability Statement as part of the Design and Access Statement (in line with SO8.3: 'Sustainable Design').
- Prioritise the reuse of brownfield, underused and contaminated land to help safeguard our natural assets and agricultural land (in line with Policy SO8.6: 'Brownfield and Despoiled Land and Under-Utilised Buildings'). The reuse of brownfield and other underused land for development is fundamental to sustainable land use, socio-economic regeneration and environmental protection. In the District, 68% of dwellings were built on brownfield land during 2018-19⁴⁸.
- Reduce the risk of flooding and maximise flood protection by including features such as trees and planting, water bodies, retention ponds and filter beds, and sustainable drainage systems (in line with Policy SO8.4 'Managing Flood Risk').
- Provide attractive green infrastructure to protect and enhance biodiversity features and features of geological conservation importance within the site and the surrounding area (in line with Policy SO7.1: 'Protecting, Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity'); and

⁴⁸ Planning Policy Team. Cannock Chase District Council.



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- Conserve natural resources including land, water, energy and materials, and respond to the impacts of climate change by promoting sustainable construction methods and materials (in line with the Policies under Strategic Objective 8).

6.69 Active Design, developed by Sport England and supported by Public Health England, provides a set of principles for creating the right conditions within existing and proposed development for individuals to be able to lead active and healthy lifestyles. Planning applications will be assessed against how they support healthy lifestyles by facilitating participation in sport and physical activity. The Active Design guidance, which provides further details for each of the Principles along with a set of case studies, can be found on Sport England's website.

Design and Access Statement

6.70 A Design and Access Statement (DAS) is a short report accompanying and supporting a planning application for major development – both full and outline. Listed building consent applications must also include a DAS. Where Design and Access Statements are required to support an application, they should explain how the design of the proposal reflects the principles set out in this Local Plan.

6.71 The DAS should consider:

- What would be built on the site, how the buildings and spaces will be arranged on the site, and how the site will relate to the buildings and spaces around the site.
- What the building and spaces will look like (materials, design details, landscaping etc.), and why (local environmental and heritage context).
- Why the access points and route have been chosen, the road layout and public transport provision; and
- How people can get to, and around, the site.

QUESTIONS

Question 2: Do you support the preferred policy direction to enhance the quality of the built environment?

Question 3: Should the preparation of Local Design Codes be based on the Character Areas that were included in the Cannock Chase Design SPD?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020)
- The National Design Guide (MHCLG October 2019)
- The Better Building, Building Beautiful Commission report 'Living with Beauty' (2020)
- National Model Design Code (when published)

PREFERRED POLICY – CREATING SAFE PLACES WHICH DETER CRIME AND REDUCE THE FEAR OF CRIME

What you told us

6.72 The Issues and Options Consultation (2019) did not include any policy options that were relevant to community safety.



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Objective 1: Delivering High Quality Development that is Distinctive, Attractive and Safe

New evidence

- 6.73 The priorities identified in the Community Safety Strategic Assessment (2019) include Anti-Social Behaviour and Public-Place Violence and late-night alcohol-related violence, particularly in Cannock Town Centre. These issues inhibit efforts to regenerate the town centre, and emphasise the importance of designing out crime.
- 6.74 Crime and fear of crime can have a major impact on the health and wellbeing of individuals and on communities as a whole. However, overall feelings of safety in Cannock Chase are high – local residents report that they feel very safe in Cannock Chase during the day (98.4%) and the very large majority also feel safe after dark (84.6%).
- 6.75 The Indices of deprivation (IoD) 2019 ranks Cannock Chase 171 out of the 317 local authority districts in England for crime where 1 is the most deprived and 317 the least deprived. The District is within the least deprived 50% of local authority districts for this domain.
- 6.76 The total recorded crime rate in Cannock Chase was 70 per 1,000 in 2017/18. This was above the Staffordshire average of 62.9 but below the West Midlands (76.4) and England (83) averages.
- 6.77 The rate of Anti-social behaviour in Cannock Chase was 31.4 per 1,000 in 2017/18 and was higher than the Staffordshire (26.3), West Midlands (27) and England (27.9) averages.
- 6.78 Whilst the violent crime rate in the District (25.3 per 1,000) was also above County (21.7), Regional (22) and National (23.7) averages, the rate of alcohol-related crime fell from 5.5 per 1,000 in 2016/17 to 4.1 per 1,000 in 2017/18 and was below the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent average of 4.8.
- 6.79 99% of Cannock Chase respondents to the Feeling the Difference Survey in 2017-2018 identified that they felt safe outside in their local area during daytime, although this fell to 86% after dark. Whilst 6% of respondents reported having been a victim of crime in the last 12 months, 17% felt likely to be a victim of crime. This highlights the disparity between perceptions of crime and actual crime which may reflect residents' perceptions of community safety in their local area. 49% of respondents were satisfied with local visible police presence which was similar to the Staffordshire average (48%).

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO1.3: CREATING SAFE PLACES WHICH DETER CRIME AND REDUCE THE FEAR OF CRIME

Development proposals will create safe and secure environments by designing out crime, and the fear of crime, without detracting from attractive, high quality design.

The Design and Access Statement, which will accompany all major development proposals and all Listed Building consent applications, will take account of the relevant Local Design Code and best practice guidance and set out how the design (including the buildings, road layout, footpaths, communal spaces, car parking and lighting) will:

- **Contribute to the vitality of area and improve community safety.**
- **Reduce vulnerability and increase resilience, particularly in places where people**



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Objective 1: Delivering High Quality Development that is Distinctive, Attractive and Safe

gather and in the vicinity of vulnerable uses.

Where appropriate, spaces accessible to the public will be overlooked and clearly visible from adjoining buildings, with the design and landscaping providing for clear sight lines along paths and cycle ways.

Buildings will be visually interesting at street level, with entrances and windows used to create active frontages which allow for natural surveillance and provide a sense of vitality. Ground floors will be occupied by active uses (where there is likely to be direct and regular visual connection between the rooms in the building and the areas outside) and will not turn their back on streets and other public spaces.

Public and private open space will be clearly differentiated, avoiding piecemeal and isolated spaces that have no clear purpose and that could be prone to vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

Explanatory Text

- 6.80 The Local Plan aims to achieve safe places where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life. The NPPF (2019) requires policies to promote public safety and take account of wider security and defence requirements.
- 6.81 Development proposals should be informed by the most up to date information and guidance available from the police and other agencies to ensure public safety and security. For example, 'Secured by Design'⁴⁹ has produced a series of Design Guides to assist the building, design and construction industry to incorporate security into developments. The Secured by Design Guides cover Homes, Commercial, Self Build, Sheltered Accommodation, New Schools, and Hospitals.
- 6.82 As described above, (and subject to the guidance provided in the National Model Design Code), Local Design Codes will be prepared for each of (or combinations of) the Character Areas defined in the Cannock Chase Design Supplementary Planning Document (2016). The Local Design Codes will draw on the advice and guidance from 'Secured by Design' so that the creation of safe residential, commercial, industrial and town centre environments can be delivered without compromising aesthetics and beauty.

QUESTION 4

Do you support the preferred policy direction to create safe places which deter crime and reduce the fear of crime?

List of relevant evidence

- Community Safety Strategic Assessment (2019)

⁴⁹ <https://www.securedbydesign.com/guidance/design-guides>



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 2: Creating Community Infrastructure and Healthy Living Opportunities across the District

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2:

To create community infrastructure and healthy living opportunities across the District by:

- **Safeguarding existing community infrastructure, and providing new community infrastructure to meet the needs arising from new development.**
- **Safeguarding the health and the amenity of local communities;**
- **Providing active leisure and sports facilities;**
- **Providing healthy living opportunities and increasing physical activity in everyday lives;**
- **Providing opportunities for allotments and local food growing.**

INTRODUCTION

National Policy Context

- 6.83 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019) includes the following guidance in relation to healthy communities:
- 6.84 ‘Promoting healthy and safe communities’ (Chapter 8) requires planning policies to aim to promote social interaction through mixed use developments, neighbourhood centres, pedestrian and cycle connections and active street frontages and provide safe and accessible communities through high quality spaces and routes; and support healthy lifestyles through the provision of green infrastructure, sports facilities, access to healthy food, and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.
- 6.85 The Government consultation ‘National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code’ (January 2021) sought views on the draft revisions to the NPPF to implement policy changes in response to the [Building Better Building Beautiful Commission “Living with Beauty” report](#).
- 6.86 **The draft policies proposed as part of the Preferred Options have been drafted within the context of the NPPF (2019), and with regard to the draft revisions proposed in January 2021.** The 2021 consultation proposes two amendments to chapter 8 (‘promoting healthy and safe communities’) of the NPPF (2019):
- Paragraph 91(b) includes minor changes to help to clarify Government’s expectations for attractive pedestrian and cycle routes. This supports the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission’s recommendations on supporting walkable neighbourhoods; and
 - Paragraph 96 has been amended to emphasise that access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and efforts to address climate change.
- 6.87 The draft NPPF revisions (January 2021) do not reflect proposals for wider planning reform set out in the Government White Paper ‘Planning for the Future’ (August 2020). These include the proposal that the Community Infrastructure Levy will be reformed to be charged as a fixed proportion of the development value above a threshold, with a



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Objective 2: Creating Community Infrastructure and Healthy Living Opportunities across the District

mandatory nationally-set rate or rates and the current system of planning obligations abolished.

- 6.88 A fuller review of the NPPF is expected to be prepared by the government in due course, once the government has fully considered the responses to consultation on the White Paper proposals. **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**
- 6.89 The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020⁵⁰ come into force on 1st September 2020. The Regulations create:
- Class E ‘Commercial, business and service’;
 - Class F1 ‘Learning and non-residential institutions’; and
 - Class F2 ‘Local community’.
- 6.90 Class E ‘Commercial, business and service’ incorporates the former use classes A1 ‘shops’, A2 ‘financial and professional services’ A3 ‘restaurants and cafes’, and B1 ‘offices’. Uses previously in use classes D1 and D2 area are also included in the new Use Class E. These include use *‘for indoor sport, recreation or fitness, not involving motorised vehicles or firearms, principally to visiting members of the public’* (Class E(d)).
- 6.91 Class E allows a building to be in a number of uses concurrently, or used for different uses at different times of the day. Changes to another use, or mix of uses, within this Use Class do not require planning permission.
- 6.92 Class F1 ‘Learning and non-residential institutions’ incorporates those uses from the former use class D1 ‘non-residential institutions’ which are more likely to involve buildings which are regularly in wider public use such as schools, libraries and art galleries.
- 6.93 Class F2 ‘Local community’ groups together those uses from the former D2 use class which provide for group activities of a more physical nature – swimming pools, skating rinks and areas for outdoor sports. It also includes the use of buildings where this is principally by the local community. Uses within Class F2 include:
- *‘A hall or meeting place for the principal use of the local community’*(Class F1(b));
 - *‘An area/place for outdoor sport or recreation (not involving motorised vehicles or firearms)’* (Class F1c); and
 - *‘An indoor/outdoor swimming pool or skating rink’* (Class F1 (d)).
- 6.94 Changes of use within Class F2 do not require planning permission.
- 6.95 The 25 Year Plan for the Environment⁵¹ was published by Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in 2018. The 25 Year Plan sets out the Government’s long-term approach to protecting and enhancing natural landscapes and habitats in England.
- 6.96 The 25 Year Plan identifies the key areas around which action will be focused. These include connecting people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing by: helping people improve their health and wellbeing by using green spaces; encouraging children to be close to nature, in and out of school; and greening our towns and cities.

⁵⁰ The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 ([pdf](#)) ([link](#)). (SI 2020 No. 757)

⁵¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 2: Creating Community Infrastructure and Healthy Living Opportunities across the District

Local Policy Context

- 6.97 The Local Plan Part 1 (2014) Section 1 Core Strategy includes the following policies in relation to attractive, safe and well designed places:
- Policy CP3 Chase Shaping – Design, which set out the key requirements of high quality design that should be addressed in development proposals, including climate change challenges;
 - Policy CP5 Social Inclusion and Healthy Living, which seeks to enhance the green space network and leisure facilities and ensure that appropriate levels of infrastructure are provided (including: health facilities; education facilities; parks, open spaces and woodlands; playing pitches; cemeteries and crematoria; cycling/pedestrian routes and pathways; indoor sport and physical activity facilities, including sports halls and swimming pools; cultural and community facilities); and
 - Policy CP15 Historic Environment, which seeks to safeguard historic sites, buildings, features and archaeological remains and their landscape and townscape context;
- 6.98 The Local Plan Part 1 (2014) Section 2 Rugeley Town Centre Area Action Plan includes the following policies in relation to attractive, safe and well designed places:
- RTC2 Town Centre Land Uses, which supports the creation of new, and the enhancement of existing leisure, community, cultural and recreational facilities; and
 - RTC3 Urban Design Principles, which include references to the Historic Urban Character Areas, active frontages, historic skyline, the Trent and Mersey Canal, pedestrian linkages and green infrastructure.

ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION

What you told us

- 6.99 The Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation (May 2019) included Social Inclusion and Healthy Living Policy Options A, B, C and D. These Options were being considered (alongside the current Local Plan Policy CP5 ‘Social Inclusion and Healthy Living’) to help deliver Strategic Objective 2.

Option A: Update and bolster existing Policy CP5 to include more emphasis on providing linkages and opportunities for healthy lifestyles, healthy eating, and mental health and wellbeing including reducing isolation. It could also include more on public safety issues. This would also need to include a link to the most up to date playing pitch and indoor sports strategies to inform developments on a case by case basis depending on local need. Standards for open space assessment would need to be based on updated evidence and set in Local Plan policy, and this would also include allocation of the Greenspace network at a district-wide level and any Local Green Space if appropriate.

Option B: As per Option A but with further policy elaboration via supplementary planning documents

Option C: As per Option A but make clear that the role of the greenspace network would be to allocate green spaces of strategic significance on a district scale (i.e. significant sites and sites which are key to delivering and maintaining green linkages and corridors as per updated evidence) and that it would be for local communities, through local policy i.e.



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 2: Creating Community Infrastructure and Healthy Living Opportunities across the District

neighbourhood plans, to designate smaller areas of green space which are of particular importance at the community level.

Option D: As per Option A and create separate policy for the Hatherton Branch canal restoration and seek to safeguard the canal route

6.100 The findings of the Sustainability Appraisal of the Social Inclusion and Healthy Living Policy Options identified effects ranging from 'minor negative' to 'significantly positive'. Options C and D were found to be more positive.

6.101 The consultation responses to the options proposed (Question 12) suggested most support for:

- **Option A:** more emphasis on providing linkages and opportunities for healthy lifestyles, healthy eating, and mental health and wellbeing including reducing isolation;
- **Option C:** allocate green spaces of strategic significance on a district scale (i.e. significant sites and sites which are key to delivering and maintaining green linkages and corridors as per updated evidence; and
- **Option D:** create separate policy for the Hatherton Branch canal restoration and seek to safeguard the canal route.

6.102 The consultation responses (Question 13) supported the enhancement of opportunities to walk and cycle, and the provision of adequate green space within new developments.

6.103 In regard to air quality (Question 14), respondents felt that local standards should be based on robust and proportionate evidence, and set through Local Plan policy. Comments in relation to the support for the allocation of green spaces of strategic significance on a district scale (i.e. significant sites and other sites which are required to deliver and maintain green linkages and corridors), and the support for a separate policy for the Hatherton Branch canal restoration are picked up under Strategic Objective 7 'Protecting and enhancing the natural environment'

New Evidence

6.104 The English Indices of Deprivation (IoD) 2019 ranks Cannock Chase 106 out of the 317 local authority districts in England for health deprivation and disability where 1 is the most deprived and 317 the least deprived. The District is within the more deprived 50% of local authority districts for this domain which measures the risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health⁵².

6.105 Life expectancy at birth in Cannock Chase was below the England average for both men and women between 2015 and 2017. Men living in the most deprived areas of Cannock Chase had a life expectancy 6.9 years below that of their peers living in the least deprived areas of the District during 2015-2017. This was similar for women in Cannock Chase with those living in the most deprived areas of the District estimated to have a life expectancy shorter by 6.8 years.

6.106 74% of adults aged 18+ in Cannock Chase were classified as overweight or obese in 2017-2018. This increased by more than 4% from levels in 2016-2017 and is both above the England average (62%) and close to the highest in the West Midlands (Redditch

⁵² Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 (IoD2019) (September 2019)



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Objective 2: Creating Community Infrastructure and Healthy Living Opportunities across the District

74.7%). The prevalence of excess weight (overweight and obesity) among Reception aged children (age 4-5) in Cannock Chase was 26.4% in 2017-2018.

- 6.107 Data from Sport England indicates that levels of physical inactivity in Cannock Chase – the proportion of people doing fewer than 30 minutes of physical activity per week - decreased during 2017-2018.
- 6.108 Based on responses to the Active Lives survey, Sport England estimates that 28.2% of people aged 16+ were physically inactive in 2017-2018 compared to 34.8% in 2016-2017 – a fall of nearly 7% (6.6%).
- 6.109 However, despite this annual decrease, physical inactivity in the District remains above the England average of 25.1%⁵³. The proportion of adults meeting the recommended dietary guideline of 5-a-day fruit and vegetables on a usual day was 52.3% in Cannock Chase during 2017-2018. Although an increase from 50.4% in 2016-2017, this was below the England average of 54.8% in 2017-2018.
- 6.110 Smoking prevalence in adults aged 18+ is below the England average of 14.4% and the West Midlands Region average of 14.5% in Cannock Chase with 12.2% adults currently smoking in 2018. The rate of hospital admission episodes for alcohol-related conditions in the District was 812 per 100,000 persons in 2017-2018, considerably higher than the England rate of 632.
- 6.111 Economic inactivity due to long-term sickness was above Regional and National averages in Cannock Chase during 2017-2018⁵⁴. The gap in the employment rate between those with a long-term health condition and the overall employment rate was 15% in Cannock Chase during 2017-2018, above the England rate of 11.5%.
- 6.112 The proportion of the Cannock Chase population aged 65+ is forecast to increase by nearly a fifth by 2027 (19.8%), with a rise of 37.7% estimated in residents aged 85+⁵⁵. This increase in older age people raises the profile of health conditions associated with older age, particularly dementia. The estimated dementia diagnosis rate for people aged 65+ in the District in 2019 is 73.9% - above the England average of 68.7%.

PREFERRED POLICY - SAFEGUARDING THE PROVISION OF NEW COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

What you told us

- 6.113 The consultation responses to the Issues and Options demonstrated support for the provision of linkages and opportunities for healthy lifestyles, healthy eating, and mental health and wellbeing including reducing isolation (Option A).

New Evidence

- 6.114 Educational performance has improved recently, but the District continues to have lower levels of educational attainment than regional and national rates. During 2019, 34.3% of District residents (16-64 years) were estimated to have reached a qualification level of NVQ4 and above (lower than the England average of 40.3%).

⁵³ Sport England, Active Lives survey November 2017/18 data <https://www.sportengland.org/adultnov1718tables/> (April 2019).

⁵⁴ Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey via NOMIS Local Authority Profile for Cannock Chase

⁵⁵ Staffordshire County Council, Cannock Chase Locality Profile Data Pack (September 2018).



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Objective 2: Creating Community Infrastructure and Healthy Living Opportunities across the District

6.115 The Indices of Deprivation 2019 illustrates that a number of neighbourhoods in Cannock Chase were amongst the 10% and 20% most deprived nationally in relation to health in 2019, with quality of life affected by poor health and shorter life expectancy.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO2.1: SAFEGUARDING THE PROVISION OF COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Community infrastructure includes education (nursery and early years, primary, secondary), health (GP surgeries and health centres), village halls and active leisure and sports facilities (also see Policy SO2.3 'Providing Active Leisure and Sports Facilities').

All major development will safeguard existing community infrastructure, and contribute towards new community infrastructure to meet the needs arising from the development.

Any development proposals that would result in a reduction in the provision of community infrastructure will only be supported where:

- **An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the facilities are surplus to requirements; or**
- **The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in a suitable and accessible location; or**
- **The development is for alternative community facilities.**

From an early stage, developers will be expected to engage with local authorities, statutory consultees, infrastructure providers and relevant local community groups to ensure that the new provision meets the needs of the community it will serve.

All major development will ensure that the design and layout of the community infrastructure should be easily accessible to the local community, including by walking and cycle (in line with Policy SO5.3: Low Carbon Transport).

Where practicable, the community infrastructure will be co-located with other facilities, and the provision will be planned and phased in parallel with new development.

Note: The detail of this policy will depend on further guidance from Government about the nature and scope of the reformed Community Infrastructure Levy.

Explanatory Text

6.116 National planning policy identifies infrastructure provision as a key part of sustainable development. Developer contributions will have a significant role to play in infrastructure delivery.

QUESTION 5

Do you support the preferred policy direction to safeguard the provision of community infrastructure?



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Objective 2: Creating Community Infrastructure and Healthy Living Opportunities across the District

List of Relevant Evidence

- Index of Local Deprivation (2019)
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Annual Update (2019)

PREFERRED POLICY - SAFEGUARDING HEALTH AND AMENITY

What you told us

6.117 The consultation responses to the Issues and Options demonstrated support for the provision of linkages and opportunities for healthy lifestyles, healthy eating, and mental health and wellbeing including reducing isolation (Option A).

New Evidence

6.118 The **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Annual Update (2019)** indicates that over the next 20years, the demand for health and social care services will increase. Obesity and diabetes are both set to increase by a third, and this will have a significant impact on health and social care services.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO2.2: SAFEGUARDING HEALTH AND AMENITY

Development proposals will be required to safeguard the health and the amenity of local communities by:

- **Ensuring that new development provides for satisfactory daylight, sunlight, outlook, and privacy, and protects new and existing residents, workers and visitors from noise, smell, litter, dust or other unacceptable impacts. Unacceptable impacts will be judged against the level of amenity in the locality.**
- **Ensuring that all developments and spaces are designed to be accessible to all people, including people with disabilities and people whose mobility is impaired by other circumstances.**

All major development proposals and all Listed Building consent applications will include a Design and Access Statement that will set out how the proposal will safeguard health and amenity by aligning with the relevant Local Design Code and the requirements of other relevant Local Plan Policies, particularly by:

- **Linking to, or adding to, the annotated District-wide Greenspace Network which may include landscape features, Sustainable Drainage Systems, woodlands, wildlife habitats and allotments (in line with Policy SO2.4: Providing Opportunities for Healthy Living and Activity).**
- **Ensuring that the design and layout of the development will promote walking and cycling (in line with Policy SO5.3: Low Carbon Transport).**
- **Achieving the lowest carbon emissions that can practically and viably be achieved (in line with Policy SO8.2: Achieving Net Zero Carbon Development).**
- **Avoiding unacceptable on-site or off-site risk or harm to human health or the natural environment (in line with Policy SO8.5: Avoiding Air, Water, Soil, Noise and Light Pollution).**



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Objective 2: Creating Community Infrastructure and Healthy Living Opportunities across the District

Explanatory Text

6.119 The Local Design Codes will set out the detailed design requirements for safeguarding health and amenity. These will be prepared following publication of the National Design Code by government.

QUESTION 6

Do you support the preferred policy direction to safeguard health and amenity?

List of relevant evidence

- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Annual Update (2019)

PREFERRED POLICY - PROVISION OF ACTIVE LEISURE AND SPORT FACILITIES

What you told us

- 6.120 The responses to the Issues and Options Consultation (2019) 'Policy Options for Social Inclusion and Healthy Living' demonstrated support for the provision of opportunities for healthy lifestyles, enhancement of opportunities to walk and cycle, and the provision of adequate green space within new developments.
- 6.121 There were no specific options presented in regard to the provision of education or health care facilities within the Issues and Options Consultation (2019).

New Evidence

- 6.122 The Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020) proposes to simplify the role of Local Plans. **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**
- 6.123 The **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Annual Update (2019)** indicates that over the next 20years, the demand for health and social care services will increase. Obesity and diabetes are both set to increase by a third, and this will have a significant impact on health and social care services.
- 6.124 Staffordshire has a growing older population so planning for the end of life will be increasingly important for individuals, their families, carers and the health & care services that support them.
- 6.125 The Cannock Chase District Council **Playing Pitch Strategy & Action Plan (May 2019)** provides the evidence required to help protect playing fields to ensure sufficient land is available to meet existing and projected future pitch requirements.
- 6.126 The following types of outdoor sports facilities are included in the Assessment and Strategy:



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Objective 2: Creating Community Infrastructure and Healthy Living Opportunities across the District

Table 2

PITCH SPORTS	OUTDOOR SPORTS
Cricket pitches	Tennis
Football pitches	Bowls
Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs)	Athletics
Hockey AGPs	Golf
Rugby union pitches	

- 6.127 Pitch sports were assessed using the guidance set out in Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance: An approach to developing and delivering a playing pitch strategy.
- 6.128 Outdoor sports were assessed using Sport England's Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance (2014). Non-pitch outdoor sports require a different methodology to assess demand and supply to that used for pitch sports.
- 6.129 The Strategy and Action Plan found, for all the specified sports, that demand is broadly being met or that there is a shortfall (albeit this is small in the case of football). In terms of the future position, the report indicates that new shortfalls are likely to emerge in respect of some facility types in some areas.
- 6.130 The Cannock Chase Sport and Leisure Facilities Needs Assessment (August 2018) identified a range of issues, including:
- Sports halls are generally in above average condition (although changing facilities are generally below average in quality, and the sports halls at Rugeley and Chase leisure centres are operating at near capacity);
 - Community accessible swimming pools are based in Rugeley and Cannock. Both are of above average quality;
 - There are 11 health and fitness facilities in the District, providing a total of 831 stations (which exceeds demand by 200);
 - Indoor bowls participation has been decreasing over a period of time; and
 - The two squash courts at Rugeley Leisure Centre are well used.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO2.3: PROVISION OF ACTIVE LEISURE AND SPORT FACILITIES

The local planning authority will support opportunities to improve the provision of active leisure (including play space) and sport facilities by ensuring that major development proposals will contribute to new, or enhanced, active leisure and sport facilities to meet the demands generated by the development. Where there are anticipated deficiencies, financial contributions to appropriate projects will be sought to enable the impacts of the new development to be mitigated. Where practicable, the required active leisure and sport facilities will be phased and delivered as an integral part of the development.

All major development will ensure that the design and layout of the development will promote walking and cycling (in line with Policy SO5.3: Low Carbon Transport), and create new green infrastructure within the development which links to the wider Green Space Network (as required by Policy SO7.8).



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 2: Creating Community Infrastructure and Healthy Living Opportunities across the District

Any development proposals that would result in a reduction in the provision of active leisure and sport facilities (including playing pitches) will only be supported where:

- An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the facilities are surplus to requirements; or
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in a suitable and accessible location; or
- The development is for alternative sport, physical activity and active leisure facilities, including playing pitches.

Note: The detail of this policy will depend on further guidance from Government about the nature and scope of the reformed Community Infrastructure Levy.

Explanatory Text

6.131 Providing and improving access to active leisure and sports facilities greatly improves the quality of life for residents, builds strong communities and also helps to address inequalities.

6.132 Protecting existing levels of access to high quality sport, leisure and recreation facilities is an important part of supporting healthy communities. The Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan concluded that 'there is a need to protect all existing outdoor sports provision, or to deliver an equivalent or better quantity and quality of provision to offset any loss of facility prior to the loss taking place. The only exception to the above would be in the case of existing sports provision being upgraded to provide a better facility.

QUESTION 7

Do you support the preferred policy direction to provide active leisure and sports facilities?

List of relevant evidence

- White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020)
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Annual Update (2019)
- Cannock Chase District Council Playing Pitch Strategy & Action Plan (May 2019)
- Cannock Chase Sport and Leisure Facilities Needs Assessment (August 2018)

PREFERRED POLICY – PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR HEALTHY LIVING AND ACTIVITY

What you told us

6.133 The Issues and Options Consultation (2019) included Design Policy Options. Respondents supported the inclusion of additional design standards in the Local Plan, including active design principles.

6.134 The responses to the Social Inclusion and Healthy Living Policy Options demonstrated support for:

- Provision of linkages and opportunities for healthy lifestyles, healthy eating, and mental health and wellbeing including reducing isolation; and



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Objective 2: Creating Community Infrastructure and Healthy Living Opportunities across the District

- Enhancement of opportunities to walk and cycle, and the provision of adequate green space within new developments.

6.135 The responses to the Issues and Options Consultation (2019) also demonstrated support for the allocation of a Greenspace Network at a district wide level within the Local Plan. This would include green spaces of strategic significance on a district scale (i.e. significant sites and sites which are key to delivering and maintaining green linkages and corridors as per updated evidence).

New Evidence

6.136 The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Annual Update (2019) identified that an ageing population would continue to impact on health and care services. It was also noted that around 40% of ill health is thought to be preventable through healthier lifestyles.

6.137 Tackling obesity and helping people achieve a healthy weight are key to preventing future illness. With an increasing population and rising number of people projected to live longer, helping to prevent future ill health, such as diabetes, cancer and heart disease is vitally important if health and social care services are going to be able to cope in the future.

6.138 The Council has commissioned an Open Space Assessment and Strategy for the District. The Study will:

- audit open spaces, define and assess the quantity, quality and accessibility of different types of open spaces, identify the ability of open spaces to meet community needs; and
- inform and help develop an open space vision, strategy and policy, setting locally appropriate standards for management and investment in the light of current good practice and with reference to potential innovative solutions.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO2.4: PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR HEALTHY LIVING AND ACTIVITY

Major development proposals will, in accordance with the relevant Local Design Code, set out how opportunities for healthy living and active travel would be created or enhanced, by:

- **Enabling activity for all ages and abilities by creating the conditions for active travel between all locations, prioritising safe' integrated walking and cycling routes, co-locating community and other facilities in accessible locations, and providing multifunctional open spaces;**
- **Linking to, or adding to, the annotated District-wide Greenspace Network which may include landscape features, Sustainable Drainage Systems, woodlands, wildlife habitats and allotments;**
- **Encouraging a broader variety of healthy activities by providing high quality streets and meeting spaces;**
- **Providing infrastructure that will enable sport and physical activity to take place in a variety of locations both inside and around buildings;**
- **Providing well designed, safe and convenient routes for walking and cycling which are integrated with green and blue infrastructure and connected to wider networks (in line with Policy SO5.1: Development and Transport Choice)l;**
- **Encouraging more walking and cycling through an improved public realm, way**



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Objective 2: Creating Community Infrastructure and Healthy Living Opportunities across the District

marking and convenient access to local work, shopping, health, education, leisure, green space and other facilities (in line with Policy SO5.2: Maintaining and Improving the Transport System).

Any development proposals that would result in a reduction in the Greenspace Network will only be supported where:

This supports the Open Spaces Strategy (being prepared)

- **An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the facilities are surplus to requirements; or**
- **The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in a suitable and accessible location;**

Explanatory Text

6.139 The Sport England 'Active Design' principles were published in 2015. The 10 principles of Active Design have been considered in drafting the Local Plan Policy.

6.140 'Active Travel' - walking and cycling – has obvious environmental, health, and economic benefits. Promoting active travel can contribute to reduced emissions of Nitrogen Dioxide, particulate matter and help to tackle climate change. It can also help people to meet recommended levels of physical activity and (by reducing road traffic congestion) also support local business.

6.141 The historical development of the District has provided a wealth of canal network assets which provide opportunities for cycling and walking as well as other benefits (e.g. tourism, green infrastructure and biodiversity). Ongoing initiatives by the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust, propose the phased restoration of the Hatherton Canal, partly on a new alignment.

QUESTION 8

Do you support the preferred policy direction to provide opportunities for healthy living and activity?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Annual Update (2019)
- Cannock Chase Open Space Assessment and Strategy (under preparation); and
- Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020)

PREFERRED POLICY – ALLOTMENTS AND LOCAL FOOD GROWING

What you told us

6.142 The responses to the Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation (May 2019) included support for providing more opportunities for healthy eating.

New evidence

6.143 The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Annual Update (2019) indicates that over the next 20years, the demand for health and social care services will increase. Obesity and



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Objective 2: Creating Community Infrastructure and Healthy Living Opportunities across the District

diabetes are both set to increase by a third, and this will have a significant impact on health and social care services.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO2.5: ALLOTMENTS AND COMMUNITY FOOD GROWING

Development proposals that provide, or contribute to the provision of, allotments and community food growing sites will be supported.

Development proposals that result in the loss, or reduction, of existing allotments and community food growing sites will be resisted unless there is an overriding sustainable development justification for the proposal, with replacement of the lost facilities in a location appropriate to demand.

Explanatory Text

6.144 The National Allotment Society recommends a quantitative standard of **20 plots per 1000 households** (approximately 20 plots per 2200 people). The size of an allotment plot is 250 square metres (0.025ha). This standard is equivalent to 0.23ha of allotments per 1000 people.

6.145 There is a waiting list for allotments for rent from Cannock Chase Council. The current provision is at the following locations:

- **The Stadium, Pye Green** – 14 plots;
- **Rumer Hill, Cannock** - 20 plots;
- **Burn Street, Chadsmoor** - 1 plot;
- **Girton Road, Cannock** -15 plots;
- **School Close, Norton Canes** - 4 plots;
- **Rear of St Johns Road, Cannock** - 3 plots;
- **Oaks Drive, Cannock** - 13 plots; and
- **Ravenhill, Rugeley** - 19 plots.

QUESTION 9

Do you support the preferred policy direction to protect existing, and provide additional, allotments and community food growing sites?

List of Relevant Evidence

- The National Allotment Society - www.nsalg.org.uk



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 3: Providing for Housing Choice

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

To deliver a sufficient supply of homes to provide for housing choice and ensure all people are able to live in a decent home which meets their needs by:

- Facilitating sustainable housing provision;
- Delivering sufficient housing to meet the District's own need and an appropriate and sustainable contribution to the wider housing market area shortfall where justified in adopted plans;
- Helping meet local need for affordable dwellings;
- Providing housing choices for an ageing population;
- Catering for the needs of different groups in the community.

INTRODUCTION

National Policy Context

6.146 Chapter 5 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 is concerned with 'delivering a sufficient supply of homes'. The NPPF requires:

- Strategic policies to be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account;
- The size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community to be assessed and reflected in planning policies;
- The need for affordable housing to be identified and met;
- An assessment of the land available for housing and the identification of a supply of deliverable and developable sites;
- Consideration of the contribution of small sites, windfall sites and exception sites;
- The presentation of a trajectory of expected delivery, and a five year supply of deliverable sites;
- A response to local circumstances and needs, including rural housing.

6.147 The Government consultation 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code' (January 2021)⁵⁶ sought views on the draft revisions to the NPPF to implement policy changes in response to the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission 'Living With Beauty' Report⁵⁷.

6.148 **The draft policies proposed as part of the Preferred Options have been drafted within the context of the NPPF (2019), and with regard to the draft revisions proposed in January 2021.** The 2021 consultation proposes seven amendments to chapter 5 ('delivering a sufficient supply of homes') of the NPPF (2019):

⁵⁶ Ref

⁵⁷ [Building Better Building Beautiful Commission "Living with Beauty" report.](#)



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 3: Providing for Housing Choice

- Paragraph 64 has been amended to clarify that, where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the total number of homes to be available for affordable home ownership. This is to address confusion as to whether the 10% requirement applies to all units or the affordable housing contribution.
- Paragraph 69 has been amended to remove any suggestion that neighbourhood plans can only allocate small or medium sites.
- Paragraph 72 has been amended to reflect Chapter 9: “Promoting sustainable transport” in ensuring that larger scale developments are supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities including a genuine choice of transport modes.
- Paragraph 72(c) has been amended to clarify that when planning for larger scale development, strategic policy making authorities should set clear expectations for the quality of the places to be created and how this can be maintained (such as by following Garden City principles) and ensure that masterplans and codes are used to secure a variety of well-designed and beautiful homes to meet the needs of different groups in the community.
- Paragraph 73(c), footnote 40 has been updated to reflect that the Housing Delivery Test has now come into effect.
- Paragraph 79(d) has been amended in response to legal cases in order to clarify that the curtilage does not fall within the scope of this policy.
- Paragraph 79 (e) has been amended in response to the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission’s policy proposition 1 e) that it opens a loophole for designs that are not outstanding, but that are in some way innovative, and that the words ‘or innovative’ should be removed. This change is not proposed to rule out innovative homes, rather that it will ensure that outstanding quality can always be demanded, even if an innovative approach is taken.

6.149 The draft NPPF revisions (January 2021) do not reflect proposals for wider planning reform set out in the Government White Paper ‘Planning for the Future’ (August 2020). The White Paper proposes to simplify the role of Local Plans, to focus on identifying land under three categories:

- Growth areas suitable for substantial development, and where outline approval for development would be automatically secured for forms and types of development specified in the Plan;
- Renewal areas suitable for some development, such as gentle densification; and
- Protected areas where – as the name suggests – development is restricted.

6.150 A fuller review of the NPPF is expected to be prepared by the government in due course, once the government has fully considered the responses to consultation on the White



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Objective 3: Providing for Housing Choice

Paper proposals. **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**

Local Policy Context

6.151 In summary, the policy priorities of the adopted Local Plan (Part 1) 2014 – Section 1 include:

- Housing Land (Policy CP6)
- Provision for 2,350 new houses on urban sites;
- A strategic site for 750 new houses to the west of Pye Green Road;
- An urban extension for 670 new houses south of Norton Canes;
- A strategic development to the east of Rugeley (within Lichfield District Local Plan).
- Housing Choice (Policy CP7)
- Meeting needs for Affordable Housing;
- Restoring balance to the housing market by encouraging increases in smaller dwellings suited to younger people, housing suitable for households with specific needs, and larger dwellings to meet aspirational needs.
- Providing choice for the elderly, including housing and care options;
- Providing for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION 2019

What you told us

6.152 The Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation (May 2019) presented the following Housing Growth Policy Options:

Option A: Local Housing Need alone with no unmet need. Based upon current standard methodology the Districts' local housing growth for the plan period of 2018-2036 would be 5,112 net dwellings (284 net dwellings per annum).

Option B: Local Housing Need figure plus unmet need of an additional 500 dwellings giving a total housing growth figure of 5,612 net dwellings for the District (2018-2036) or 312 net dwellings per annum.

Option C: Local Housing Need figure plus unmet need of an additional 1,500 dwellings giving a total housing growth figure of 6,612 net dwellings for the District (2018-2036) or 367 net dwellings per annum.

Option D: Local Housing Need figure plus unmet need of an additional 2,500 dwellings giving a total housing growth figure of 7,612 net dwellings for the District (2018-2036) or 423 net dwellings per annum.



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 3: Providing for Housing Choice

- 6.153 The Issues and Options Consultation identified there was existing capacity from Brownfield and Greenfield sites focused around the District's urban areas (with approximately 75% of the supply having permission or being under construction).
- 6.154 The Consultation noted that a large proportion of the potential site options available to meet the unmet need lie within the Green Belt, and that the national approach requires the Council to consider a sequential approach to the release of Green Belt land for development. To justify Green Belt release the Council must demonstrate that the Local Plan:
- Makes as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land;
 - Optimises the density of development, with significant uplift to be considered in town centres and other locations well served by public transport;
 - Has been informed by discussions with neighbouring authorities about whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development.
- 6.155 Representations to the Issue and Options consultation showed that the majority of respondents considered the higher levels of growth options C and D should be chosen, this reflects the larger number of responses from site promoters. The majority of individual responses preferred the options supporting the lower levels of growth. Representations were received from neighbouring authorities who considered that the option A was unlikely to assist in meeting the cross boundary needs that were known at the time.
- 6.156 The Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation (May 2019) presented the following Strategy for Meeting Overall Housing Growth Policy Options:
- Option A:** Urban Areas- use sites already identified for housing within the urban areas and explore opportunities for further housing on urban sites.
- Option B:** Rugeley Power Station.
- Option B1:** Urban Areas and housing-led redevelopment of former Rugeley Power Station.
- Option B2:** Urban Areas and employment-led/mixed use redevelopment of former Rugeley Power Station.
- Option C:** Green Belt Urban Extensions.
- Option C1:** In combination with the options for the Urban Areas and former Rugeley Power Station consider Green Belt urban extensions at Rugeley/Brereton urban edges.
- Option C2:** In combination with the options for the Urban Areas and former Rugeley Power Station consider Green Belt urban extensions at Cannock/Hednesford/Heath Hayes and Norton Canes urban edges.
- Option C3:** In combination with the options for the Urban Areas and former Rugeley Power Station consider Green Belt urban extensions distributed across the District.



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Objective 3: Providing for Housing Choice

- 6.157 Representations to the Issue and Options consultation supported the use of the urban areas and the redevelopment of Rugeley Power Station. Land promoters expressed support for their options in addition to this. Individuals largely expressed support for just options A and B. There was concern expressed regarding the increase in traffic levels and education arising from new development, the impact upon the Green Belt and need to protect the AONB and SAC. There was a request to note a cross boundary proposal at Pelsall from Walsall Council. There was a mixed response to altering the village settlement boundaries, with site promoters requesting alterations to the Green Belt and others considering alteration would make little contribution to the overall housing requirement.
- 6.158 The Issues and Options consultation noted that the Council would be undertaking an urban capacity study to bring together various pieces of evidence for a comprehensive picture of the development capacity available. The study would include a review of the existing employment areas and an open space assessment.
- 6.159 The Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation (May 2019) presented the following Affordable Housing Percentage Requirements Policy Options:
- Option A:** Amend strategic policy to reflect updated overall affordable housing needs (based on Housing Needs Assessment) including updated District-wide affordable housing percentage requirement. Require affordable housing provision from schemes of 10 dwellings or more (percentage subject to overall Local Plan viability assessment) with presumption this is to be on site, unless circumstances justify off site financial contributions. Continue to allow off-site financial contributions in lieu of on site provision in exceptional circumstances. Continue to require review of viability on large sites over 2 year period. Subject to Local Plan viability assessment results, consider the need for a continuation of current policy approach i.e. sites of 10-14 dwellings making off-site financial contributions.
- Option B:** In combination with Option A, implement specific affordable housing requirements for large site allocations.
- 6.160 Representations received to the Issues and Options consultation included:
- The Home Builders Federation suggested that the Council should consider rural exception and /or entry level exception sites.
 - The percentage contribution required from each site should be a number not a range and should be based upon the viability of the site.
 - The definition of affordable housing should be updated to reflect that currently in the NPPF and thus include Starter Homes.
 - Support for the inclusion of off-site contributions in exceptional circumstances.
 - Support for an uplifted housing target figure as the best way to support the delivery of affordable housing. Large sites provide the greatest level of opportunity for a mix in terms of size, type and tenure.



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Objective 3: Providing for Housing Choice

- A registered provider of affordable homes asked for consideration of a policy which seeks to provide affordable housing from sites of 5 dwellings or more for seeking delivery on-site where this is achievable and viable.
- The Home Builders Federation consider that a lower threshold of 5 dwellings for seeking affordable housing should be robustly viability tested and that affordable housing provision should not be set higher than identified to offset no contributions from residential developments of less than 10 dwellings.
- The representations advised further liaison with the registered providers.
- Representations demonstrated a variety of views on whether affordable housing should be retained 'in perpetuity'.

6.161 The Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation (May 2019) presented the following Housing Mix Policy Options:

Option A: Continue with current policy approach of encouraging appropriate mix of housing sizes, types and tenures for different groups in the community on a District wide basis, informed by the Housing Needs Assessment.

Option B: Require specific percentages for mix of housing sizes, types and tenures for different groups in the community on individual sites, informed by the Housing Needs Assessment.

Option C: In combination with Option A, require specific percentages for mix of housing sizes, types and tenures for different groups in the community on large site allocations only.

Option D: In combination with other Options, allocate specific sites for different housing needs e.g. 100% affordable housing sites, sites for care homes, self build sites.

6.162 Representations received to the Issues and Options consultation included:

- Responses to the question on the need for further local policies on rural exception or entry level exception sites over and above existing national policy were split.
- Responses to the need for further local policies on rural or agricultural workers dwellings, were split.

6.163 No rural or entry level exception sites have been delivered to date or actively promoted by local communities through Neighbourhood Plans. The adopted Local Plan considered that the District's main villages and hamlets were considered to be semi-rural and not considered to be remote from the main urban areas (and are largely covered by both Green Belt and AONB designations). Accessible, affordable housing can be provided for within the urban areas. In addition, in relation to entry level exception sites, the vast majority of the District's urban areas are built up to Green Belt and/or AONB designations which national policy identifies as constraints to the development of such sites.



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- 6.164 Monitoring of self-build and custom housebuilding within the area has not identified a great demand for this type of housing provision there is no justifiable need to provide units over and above those required by the NPPF.
- 6.165 The Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation (May 2019) presented the following Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Housing Needs Policy Options:
- Option A:** Seek to provide for the needs identified in the updated Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment within the District via a criteria-based approach to determining planning applications- do not allocate specific sites via the Local Plan.
- Option B:** Seek to provide for the needs identified in the updated Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment within the District via the allocating of sites within current 'Area of Search' identified in Local Plan (Part 1) (an area currently designated as Green Belt land in the main). Work with neighbouring authorities to identify any opportunities for meeting needs.
- Option C:** Seek to provide for the needs identified in the updated Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment within the District via the allocating of sites and expanding the current 'Area of Search' to a District wide search for sites (still likely to include consideration of Green Belt sites). Work with neighbouring authorities to identify any opportunities for meeting needs.
- Option D:** In combination with other Options, require new large housing sites to provide for gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople accommodation needs.
- 6.166 National policy requires local authorities to assess the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community and then reflect these needs in planning policies. This includes the needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling show people.

New Evidence

Housing Need (2018-38)

- 6.167 At the same time as the Issues and Options consultation the Council consulted on the findings of its Local Housing Need Assessment. This considered the population projections up to 2038 and local housing needs that would be generated during the plan period. It considered the local housing market by tenure, stock and home ownership and the cost of renting to establish the level of need for affordable housing. It considers the need for new homes for the different groups identified in the NPPF such as housing for older people and people with disabilities.
- 6.168 The Standard Method for Assessing Housing Local Need⁵⁸ provides a formula to identify the minimum number of homes expected to be planned for, in a way which addresses projected household growth and historic undersupply. The calculation of the housing requirement for Cannock Chase District is included in the evidence base

⁵⁸ Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 2a-012-20190220



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[cannock_chase_strategic_housing_land_availability_assessment_2020_ccdc_december_2020_0.pdf \(cannockchasedc.gov.uk\)](https://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/cannock_chase_strategic_housing_land_availability_assessment_2020_ccdc_december_2020_0.pdf)

- 6.169 The application of the Standard Method produces a minimum annual housing need figure of 275.8. The Local Plan is proposed to be adopted by 2023, and cover a 15 year period to 2038. The minimum housing requirement for the Cannock Chase District from 2018 to 2038 is **5,516**.

Housing Supply (2018-38)

- 6.170 The Council monitors the delivery of homes annually in its Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and its Authority Monitoring Report (AMR). The Council is required to always have a ready supply of housing sites with planning permission to enable a continual supply of housing to meet its needs of 275.8 dwelling completions per annum. It is required to have at least a 5 year supply of housing land. If provision falls below this, the Local Plan policies which provide local influence on matters such as the location, design of new homes and climate change are considered as 'out of date'. In this circumstance, only national policies (NPPF) are used to determine planning applications.
- 6.171 The SHLAA is a list of potential future residential housing sites and existing sites with planning permission or that are already under construction. The list of sites is updated annually to identify land that is suitable and available to meet future housing requirements within Cannock Chase District. Sites that are considered currently undeliverable due to land designations, unknown plans for the land or other restricting factors are listed separately.
- 6.172 The SHLAA is an important information source that enables the Council to plan for future residential housing needs through providing a trajectory of likely future development residential completions and land supply. The document does not grant planning permission but is useful in providing a working picture of residential land supply in the District, which can then be used to influence local planning policy decisions. It is also an important source of monitoring data to show which sites have been completed and part constructed in the previous year.
- 6.173 Between 2018 and 2020 1,124 dwellings were completed (See SHLAA 2020 Appendix 11: Completed Sites since SHLAA 2018). This reduces the outstanding housing requirement from 2020 to 2038 from 5,516 to 4,392.
- 6.174 The SHLAA identifies a deliverable (major and minor sites) supply of 1,359 dwellings. The District Council's Five Year Housing Land Supply Position Statement (2020-25) has adjusted the deliverable supply to 1,385 dwellings to include windfalls (+54) and non implementation discount (-28) during the 5 years from April 2020. The inclusion of the adjusted deliverable sites further reduces the outstanding housing requirement (2018 to 2038) from 4,392 to 3,007.
- 6.175 The NPPF Glossary states that *'to be considered developable, sites should be in a suitable location for housing development and there should be a reasonable prospect*



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*that the site is available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged'. The SHLAA identifies (major and minor) developable sites that could potentially accommodate 1,623 dwellings during the Local Plan period (See Schedule 2: SHLAA Developable Sites – Plan Period). The inclusion of the developable sites (Plan Period) would further reduce the shortfall in supply (2018 to 2038) from 3,007 to **1,384** dwellings.*

Neighbouring Authorities Housing Needs

- 6.176 Local Plans must contain strategic policies that make sufficient provision for housing within their area. The minimum amount of new homes Cannock has to provide to meet its own need during the plan period has been calculated using the standard methodology. Local authorities must also co-operate with each other on strategic matters that cross local authority boundaries such as meeting housing need.
- 6.177 The NPPF states that any housing needs which cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.
- 6.178 At the time of preparing the Issues and Options consultation, Birmingham City Council had identified a need for housing which it could not meet within its administrative boundary. Work had been undertaken (via the 'duty to cooperate') across the local authorities which share the same housing market as Birmingham in order to establish ways to assist Birmingham to meet the shortfall identified (up to 2031).
- 6.179 A number of authorities have contributed additional housing to help meet this identified shortfall. Our neighbouring authorities of South Staffordshire and Lichfield, who share the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area (GBBCHMA) are proposing an additional provision for 4,500 and 2,665 homes through their Local Plans. These proposals include sites being released from the Green Belt to help meet the shortfall. Our other neighbouring authority is Stafford Borough and they are not part of the GBBCHMA.
- 6.180 At present the Association of Black Country authorities (ABCA) are preparing a joint Local Plan for the areas of Walsall, Sandwell, Wolverhampton and Dudley. Studies undertaken by ABCA have identified a dwelling shortfall of 29,260 between 2019-2038. ABCA has formally requested the authorities that share their housing market, including Cannock Chase District to assist in meeting their unmet housing needs.
- 6.181 Discussions with other members of the GBBCHMA and our neighbouring authorities have also been undertaken to ascertain whether they could accommodate some of the shortfall identified. As outlined previously both Lichfield and South Staffordshire Councils are already making a contribution to the shortfall. South Staffordshire have formally written to us asking if we are able to assist with the unmet housing need of the GBHMA and if we can provide sufficient land to enable them to reduce their proposed Local Plan Review housing target, they also advised that their evidence is indicating that 'South Staffordshire will need to release further Green Belt land through the Local Plan Review



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in order to meet its own needs and to make a proportionate contribution to the GBHMA's unmet housing needs.'

- 6.182 Lichfield District Council also wrote to us advising that they were certain that in order for them to deliver their spatial strategy and make a contribution to the wider housing needs arising from the GBBCHMA then they would not be able to accommodate all of the identified housing need on sustainable sites outside of the Green Belt. They therefore wrote to their neighbouring authorities to ascertain if there were any 'sustainable non-green belt sites or areas, in neighbouring authorities which meet your spatial strategy and which could be brought forward to meet Lichfield District Council's housing needs'. Lichfield District Council are further advanced in the plan making process than ourselves and are preparing the final stages of their plan prior to submission. Their local plan does include removal of land from the Green Belt for residential development.

Assessment of Urban Capacity

- 6.183 The Cannock Chase District Development Capacity Study (2021) has been prepared and published alongside the Preferred Options Consultation. The Capacity Study identifies additional sites (capable of accommodating 10 or more units) that could be brought into the housing supply. A review of the existing employment sites has been incorporated, however the updated open space assessment has been delayed due to work pressures on our open spaces team arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 6.184 The Capacity Study also considers the potential to increase the density of developments, but found that there was limited potential to increase capacity due to many of the sites already having planning permission. However, the potential to increase the average densities that could be achieved for the proposed new site allocations will be further tested as part of the Local Plan process.

Viability Assessment

- 6.185 A Local Plan is required to deliver the levels of growth it identifies, so it needs to test if the sites within the plan and those that will be delivered through the policies in the plan are available, suitable and likely to be economically viable (NPPF paragraph 67). The draft Local Plan is therefore supported by evidence including the SHLAA, sustainability appraisal and viability assessment.
- 6.186 A viability assessment assesses if the development proposed through the Local Plan is able to be delivered given the policies which guide development. Sometimes the policies incorporated into the plan such as those requiring contributions to affordable housing provision and mitigating for the impacts of climate change involve additional costs to the developers. In order to test the impact of the policies on the delivery of the levels of growth required a viability assessment is undertaken.
- 6.187 The Viability Assessment is an iterative process and will be repeated at each stage of the local plan preparation.



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PREFERRED POLICY – PROVISION FOR NEW HOMES

What you told us

6.188 Responses states that rural exception sites for affordable housing and agricultural workers dwellings should accord with the national policy. And that there should be more policy support to facilitate the growth and development of agricultural businesses as they support the environmental management of the district.

New Evidence

6.189 The application of the Standard Method produces a minimum annual housing need figure of 275.8. The Local Plan is proposed to be adopted by 2023, and cover a 15 year period to 2038. The minimum housing requirement for the Cannock Chase District from 2018 to 2038 is **5,516**.

6.190 Local authorities must also co-operate with each other on strategic matters that cross local authority boundaries such as meeting housing need. The NPPF states that any housing needs which cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for. Discussions are continuing via the Duty to Co-operate to agree a contribution to the unmet needs of neighbouring authorities.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO3.1: PROVISION FOR NEW HOMES

The Local Planning Authority will plan, monitor and manage the delivery of housing from 2018 to 2038 in accordance with the spatial strategy and the site allocations set out in this Local Plan. Housing provision will be made for a minimum of 5,516 dwellings (net) to meet the objectively assessed local housing needs, and ensuring a sufficient supply of deliverable and developable land is available to deliver around 276 dwellings each year.

A further housing provision will be made for 500 dwellings to meet unmet needs of neighbouring areas, and ensuring a sufficient supply of deliverable and developable land is available to deliver around an additional 25 dwellings each year.

New housing allocations are concentrated within the existing urban areas, or within planned expansion to the urban areas in accessible and sustainable locations, in accordance with the Spatial Strategy.

Priority has been given to the re-use of previously developed land, including the former Rugeley Power Station site, to meet housing needs.

The allocated housing sites are shown on the Proposals Map and are listed in Tables B and C.

There is a need to identify new locations adjacent to existing settlements to accommodate the balance of dwellings which cannot be built on sites within the existing urban areas of the District. These strategic housing allocations are as follows;

- **SH1 South of Lichfield Road, Cannock approx. 875 dwellings;**



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- SH2 East of Wimblebury Road approx. 410 dwellings;
- SH3 Land to rear of Longford House, Watling Street Cannock approx. 45 dwellings;
- SH4 Land east of The Meadows and land to the north of Armitage Lane Brereton approx. 33 dwellings; and
- SH5 Land to the north of no.2 west of Hednesford Road, Norton Canes approx. 175 dwellings.

In the rural areas only the following types of dwellings will be permitted:

- Infill development within the defined settlement boundaries set out on the proposals map;
- Affordable housing for local community needs on small rural exception sites;
- Changes of Use and conversion schemes;
- Development identified in Neighbourhood Plans reflecting local need and affordable housing provision respecting the local character and infrastructure of the area; and
- Dwellings to serve the essential need for an agricultural, forestry or other occupational worker in a rural area in accordance with national guidance.

Sites under Construction

6.191 **Table A** presents a list of the sites which were under construction at 01/04/2020. These sites form part of the housing supply (2018-38) and many of these sites have already delivered some of the completions to the housing supply for the District and form part of the current housing trajectory and five-year supply. As they have planning permissions which are being implemented, they will not be having a specific site allocation policy prepared for them.

Table A: Sites under Construction

SITE REF.	LOCATION	AREA HA	CAPACITY (U/C AND N/S)
H1	Land to the West of Pye Green Road, Hednesford (Northern end of site adj. Pye Green Road)	13.40	446
H2	Former Parker Hannifin Site, Walkmill Lane, Cannock	2.90	116
H3	Land to the West of Pye Green Road, Hednesford- Common Farm (SE corner at cross roads with Lime Pit Lane)	1.50	52
H4	County Grounds Depot, Cannock Road, Cannock	0.44	49
H5	Land opposite Keys Park football ground, Keys Park Road, Hednesford	4.20	44
H6	Former Council Depot, Old Hednesford Road, Cannock	0.88	44



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H7	Land to the west of Pye Green Road, Hednesford, Cannock, (Eastern edge of main site adj. Pye Green Road)	0.68	35
H8	Land off Green Heath Road, Hednesford - Pye Green Valley Development	11.40	29
H9	Roman Court, Cannock South, Bridgtown	0.37	12
H10	The Roebuck, 54 Stafford Road, Cannock	0.11	10
H11	108, 102-106 High Green Court, Cannock	0.10	8
H12	Whitelodge, New Penkridge Road, Cannock	0.23	2
Sub-total			847
H13	Land off Norton Hall Lane and Butts Lane, Norton Canes	13.60	247
H14	Land off Walsall Road near Cherry Brook, Norton Canes	1.65	67
H15	Land off of 71 Burntwood Road, Norton Canes	3.20	40
Sub-total			354
	Minor/small sites under construction (SHLAA 2020)	--	59
TOTAL			1260

Site Allocations

- 6.192 **Table B** lists the sites allocated for housing development within the Cannock Chase District during the period to 2038. Development of these sites had not started at 1st April, 2020. Each site will have a site specific Local Plan policy drafted for them in subsequent documents.
- 6.193 The sites in Table B are considered suitable for residential development as they comprise sites which already have planning permission, are already allocated in an approved development plan for housing, form parts of larger sites which have planning permission, or are sites which the Council has already resolved to grant planning permission for housing.



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Objective 3: Providing for Housing Choice

Table B: Proposed allocations which already have planning permission, are already allocated or have a resolution to grant planning permission for housing.

SITE REFERENCE	LOCATION	CAPACITY FROM THE SHLAA
H16	Land west of Pye Green Road, Hednesford Cannock (Land Northern end of the larger site	80
H17	Land west of Pye Green Road, Hednesford Cannock (Adj.. Pye Green Road. Part of larger site)	78
H18	Land adjacent and to the rear of 419-435, Cannock Road, Hednesford	25
H19	Blocks C-D, Beecroft Court, Beecroft Road, Cannock	10
	Sub Total	193
H20	Rugeley Power Station, Rugeley	1,000
H21	Land between Wharf Road and Hardie Avenue, Rugeley WS15 1NX	79
M6	Rugeley Market Hall and Bus Station, Rugeley	50
M7	Land at Wellington Drive, Rugeley	30
H24	Market Street garages, Rugeley (incorporating BT telephone exchange)	28
H25	Main Road, Brereton (between Cedar Tree Hotel and Library)	27
H26	Pear Tree Youth Centre, Hislop Road, Rugeley, WS15 1LS	18
H27	Heron Court, Heron Street, Rugeley	10
	Sub-total	1242
	TOTAL	1432

6.194 **Table C** includes the sites which have been assessed as suitable for housing through the Cannock Chase District Development Capacity Study (2021) and which are considered as also able to provide housing during the plan period. Most are already listed in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment so previously their owners or someone acting on behalf of the owners has indicated that they would be willing to allow their site to be put forward for residential development in whole or part.



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Table C: Proposed Allocations – Additional Sites from Development Capacity Study

SITE REFERENCE	LOCATION	CAPACITY
SH2 (part)	Land to the East of Wimblebury Road, Heath Hayes	150
H29	Land at 521, Pye Green Road, Hednesford, Cannock	80
H30	Land at Rawnsley Road, Hazel Slade	60
M1	Multi Storey Car Park, Market Hall and Retail Units, Church Street, Cannock	40
H32	Avon Road/Hallcourt Lane, Cannock	40
M3	Beecroft Road Car Park, Cannock	35
H34	Land at Chapel Street, Heath Hayes	30
H35	Land at Girton Road/Spring Street, Cannock	28
H36	Park Road Offices, Cannock	25
H37	Police Station Car Park, Cannock	25
H38	Land at Walsall Road, Avon Road, Hunter Road, Hallcourt Lane, Cannock	24
H39	26 - 28 Wolverhampton Road, Cannock	21
H40	Danilo Road Car Park, Cannock	20
M4	Backcrofts Car Park, Cannock	20
M2	Park Road Bus Station, Cannock	15
H43	243, Hill Street, Hednesford, Cannock	13
H44	268 Bradbury Lane, Hednesford	13
H45	23 Walsall Road, Cannock, WS11 5BU	12
H46	St. Chad's Courtyard, Cannock Road, Chadsmoor	10
Sub-total		661
H47	Former Kodak Processing Site and Transport Depot and former Milk Depot, Redbrook Lane Industrial Estate, Brereton	93



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H48	Aelfgar School, Taylors Lane, Rugeley	85
H49	Land at The Mossley, off Armitage Road	40
H50	Nursery Fields, St Michaels Road, Brereton	38
H51	Castle Inn, 141, Main Road , Brereton	27
H52	Gregory Works, Armitage Road, Brereton	23
H53	Land off Lichfield Road, Rugeley	20
Sub-total		326
H54	Land off Norton Green lane, Norton Canes	20
TOTAL		1,007

Small Sites Contribution

6.195 Small sites form part of the housing supply. These comprise the sites of under 10 units. Delivery of these sites is monitored annually through the SHLAA. Guidance permits the capacity that these provide to be included within the trajectory for the 2018-2038 Local Plan. As the plan period is so long it is acceptable to estimate the contribution that small sites will make to meeting the housing requirement. These small sites are called windfall sites. There are some windfall sites which are currently known to us and these are listed in the SHLAA. All of the minor sites which are currently under construction are counted towards the overall housing requirement for the District during the plan period.

Explanatory Text

6.196 The Council is required to meet the requirements identified in the housing delivery test. This requires provision to be made for 5,516 dwellings within the plan period and to maintain a minimum supply of five years' worth of housing sites throughout the plan period. The Council is also currently required to meet its duty to cooperate and has made provision which enables provision of dwellings to meeting cross boundary needs within the housing market area which may arise through adopted plans within this plan period. Having considered alternative approaches and following discussions with our neighbouring authorities and HMA. In order to deliver these requirements and the Council's spatial strategy the identification of strategic sites on the edge of the urban area is necessary.

6.197 The trajectory shows that there are sufficient sites to deliver the spatial strategy and provides some flexibility and a robust plan which facilitates sustainable development across the district.



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- 6.198 The policy supports the continued delivery of housing within our urban areas and along with the policies in the rest of the development plan will focus development on the re-use of brownfield land. The delivery of the redevelopment of the former Rugeley Power Station and the opportunities identified locally through this are fundamental to the delivery of sustainable development.
- 6.199 More detailed site allocations policies will be necessary to ensure that new development can safeguard and enhance our District and its assets and contribute to the delivery of necessary infrastructure, services and facilities to deliver sustainable development.
- 6.200 Small sites and infill plots make a valuable contribution to the housing provision across the district and can help in meeting specific needs. However, within the non urban areas there is poorer provision of services and facilities as most of the essential services and facilities to meet daily needs are located within the urban areas, additional housing in non urban areas should therefore be minimised to safeguard our cherished countryside and should only be provided to support local needs where justified.
- 6.201 The Council recognises the valuable contribution made to the housing supply by those building their own homes and maintains an up to date register of those seeking plots for self-build and custom housebuilding. The Council identifies single plots for residential development within the SHLAA and this is currently in excess of the demand on the self build and custom- housebuilding register.

QUESTIONS

Question 10 Do you agree that the amount of housing proposed will meet the local needs of Cannock Chase District as required by the standard methodology?

Question 11 Do you agree that provision should be made to meet the unmet needs of neighbouring areas?

Question 12 We know the large strategic allocations at South of Lichfield Road and East of Wimblebury Road will need to address the congestion issue at Five Ways island and will require a new primary school, are there any other infrastructure requirements they or any of the other strategic allocations should address?

Question 13 Do you support the proposed allocations of the sites listed in Tables B and C?

Question 14 In the next iteration of the Plan we will develop site specific allocation policies. Are there any local infrastructure requirements the sites in Tables B and C should address?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) 2019
- Cannock Chase Green belt Harm Assessment (2020); and
- Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area (GBBCHMA) Housing Need and Housing Land Supply Position Statement (July 2020)



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Objective 3: Providing for Housing Choice

PREFERRED POLICY – HOUSING CHOICE

What you told us

- 6.202 Various options for a housing mix policy were considered in the Issues and Options Consultation, and the most favoured option retained the flexible approach to defining a housing mix for each site, which referred to the Local Housing Needs Assessment but was not overly prescriptive to it.
- 6.203 All but one of the representations received supported allocations for specific needs, such as affordable housing and older persons housing schemes.
- 6.204 Representations stated that the Local Housing Needs Assessment was inadequate and would need updating throughout the plan period, whilst the ABCA considered it complied with national guidance.
- 6.205 A specific comment was raised in regard to houseboats and their particular characteristics such as the boats having a greater susceptibility to noise which should be taken into account when developments nearby are being considered.

New Evidence

- 6.206 At the same time as the Issues and Options consultation the Council consulted on the findings of its Local Housing Need Assessment. It calculated that 37%⁵⁹ of the new housing proposed should be affordable dwellings, rented or shared ownership, provided by a registered provider/housing association.

⁵⁹ A total of 51.2% is derived from Figure 63 in Appendix A based on 2018-38 projections as the total % for housing that is affordable for those that cannot afford any form of market housing and those that aspire to home ownership; 28.9% of households that require affordable rented housing, 8.1% shared ownership housing and 14.3% of households that aspire to homeownership.



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Preferred Policy Direction

The Local Planning Authority will seek to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes which widen opportunities for home ownership, meet needs for social and rented housing, and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.

A mix of housing sizes, types and tenure appropriate to the area and as supported by local evidence should be provided, to ensure that there is a range of housing to meet the needs of existing and future residents.

For developments above 10 homes, at least 20% of the total number of dwellings should be affordable housing, with 80% for rent and 20% for intermediate housing or other routes to affordable home ownership.

On sites of 10-14 residential units and exceptionally on sites of 15 or more units financial contributions based on a formula in the evidence on viability (evidence to be prepared) which enables delivery on other sites.

The size, type and tenure of homes on sites of 15 or more units (including conversions) will be specified in the site allocation policy or where not specified will be in accordance with Table D below or its subsequent revisions. The housing mix in Table D will not be applied to developments falling within Class C2 of the Use Classes Order.

Self and custom build housing will be supported provided they meet the sustainable development, general amenity and design policies of this Local Plan.

Table D: Housing Mix⁶⁰

	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4+ bedrooms	Total
Market housing	4%	24%	72%	0%	100 %
Affordable housing (rented and shared ownership)	12%	64%	16%	8%	100%
Affordable housing/home ownership (those aspiring to homeownership)	17%	40%	38%	5%	100%

Where market housing is supported by connection to superfast broadband, a flexibility of 4% will be permitted across the dwelling sizes to facilitate homeworking.

⁶⁰ Table D contains derived data from Appendix A, figure 63, and may not sum due to rounding.



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Objective 3: Providing for Housing Choice

Explanatory Text

- 6.207 There is a need to restore the balance in the housing market by providing more smaller dwellings suited to young and older people, housing suitable for households with specific needs.
- 6.208 All affordable units shall be provided on site unless robustly justified. Where robustly justified the requirement can be met by providing an off-site provision or commuted payment in lieu of an on-site provision to deliver affordable units.
- 6.209 Where a site has been sub-divided or is not being developed to its full potential so as to fall under the affordable housing threshold the Council will seek a level of affordable housing to reflect the provision that would have been achieved on the site as a whole had it come forward as a single scheme for the allocated or identified site.
- 6.210 The tenure mix and type of affordable provision will be agreed with the Council's housing manager on a site by site basis and secured through an appropriate legal agreement. Such agreements will be expected to ensure the affordable housing will remain at an affordable price in perpetuity, or for the subsidy to be recycled to alternative affordable housing provision.
- 6.211 Self-build/custom house build ratio will be in accordance with the NPPF and monitored through the Authority Monitoring Report.
- 6.212 The LHNA does identify a need of those with aspiration to enter the housing market but who would be unable to afford normal market housing. Some of this need is met by the private rented sector and through the provision for Starter Homes. The NPPF seeks a minimum level of provision of 10% for affordable home ownership (unless local circumstances dictate otherwise.) Future iterations of the plan will consider if a higher percentage of properties for affordable home ownership is locally viable whilst continuing to prioritise and maximise the amount of social housing to meet the higher need.
- 6.213 Evidence shows the need for affordable dwellings across the district will not be met in entirety by this plan it is therefore appropriate to safeguard the provision made by the plan to ensure these dwellings remain affordable in perpetuity to deliver this strategic objective.
- 6.214 Recent evidence showed levels of homeworking below the regional and national average, with only 7.9% of persons working from home, compared to nearly 12% across the West Midlands and 13% across the UK. Homeworking supports the Council's objective to address the climate change emergency and local economy. Connection to superfast network or the latest high speed network available locally is necessary to support efficient home working as well as other household requirements.



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 3: Providing for Housing Choice

QUESTIONS

Question 15 Do you support the level of provision of affordable dwellings?

Question 16 Do you support the approach to encouraging home working?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Local Housing Needs Assessment (2019)

PREFERRED POLICY - DELIVERING HIGH QUALITY HOUSING

What you told us

6.215 The Home Builders Federation considered the evidence in the Local Housing Needs Assessment inadequate to justify the adoption of any higher optional housing standards. It was felt that there was insufficient evidence of the need for these standards, and flexibility should be maintained to support the viability of development.

New Evidence

6.216 The Local Housing Needs Assessment identifies that 60% of all new housing should be suitable for the needs of households with health problems or disabilities that affect their housing requirement. It supports the need for a target of 13% of all housing to meet M4(3) Category 3 requirements and supports the need for a target of 47% of all housing to meet M4(2) Category 2 requirements. With regard to dwellings for older people the study concludes that all specialist housing for older people should meet M4(2) Category 2 requirements and at least 25 per cent and ideally 50 percent or more of specialist housing for older people should meet M4(3) category 3 requirements.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO3.3: DELIVERING HIGH QUALITY HOUSING

Housing development should be of a high quality in terms of its design and resilience, and provide adequate space to achieve good living standards.

New dwellings (including conversions of existing properties into flats) should be of sufficient size and layout to provide good quality accommodation to meet the needs of their occupants, with developers required to meet Nationally Described Space Standards. Sufficient external amenity space or private gardens should also be provided.

Developers will be required to provide suitable housing for households with health problems or disabilities. Developments which provide a minimum of 60% of their total number of units as suitable for households with health problems or disabilities will be supported. This could be through the provision of single level accommodation such as bungalows and ground floor flats or through provision of dwellings which comply with Part M(2) or Part M(3) of the current Building Regulations (as a minimum) or can be easily adapted to meet these standards.



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 3: Providing for Housing Choice

Explanatory Text

- 6.217 The Council has sought to enhance the attractiveness of the District and increase the number of workers residing in the district from the professional, financial and managerial sectors. The nationally described space standards will assist the aim of the authority by sending a clear message to developers that poor quality housing will not be tolerated and will enhance the health and well being of its residents, the standards will encourage greater numbers of persons to work from home which will also assist the Council in achieving its ambitions of zero carbon.
- 6.218 Current standards for open space are specified in the Design SPD, changes during the last Local Plan requiring additional targeted open space to assist in mitigating the impacts of recreation upon the Cannock Chase SAC and the need to consider a standard for care homes and 1 bedroom properties and increase the density of development means it is appropriate to reconsider the local standard rather than just reflect the national standard.
- 6.219 During the plan period there will be substantial growth in households which have health problems or disabilities which affect their housing requirement. Whilst these are more prevalent amongst our older persons they are not exclusive to them.
- 6.220 The Local Housing Needs Assessment identifies that 60% of all new housing should be suitable for the needs of households with health problems or disabilities that affect their housing requirement to meet future forecasts and deficiencies in the existing housing stock. It supports the need for a target of 13% of all housing to meet M4(3) Category 3 requirements which requires dwellings to be suitable for wheelchair users and supports the need for a target of 47% of all housing to meet M4(2) Category 2 requirements, which enable dwellings to be accessible and adapted in the future for persons with reduced mobility.
- 6.221 Where conversion relates to listed buildings the protection and safeguarding of the significance of the heritage asset will be prioritised over the need to deliver accessible and adaptable dwellings.

QUESTION 17

Do you support the preferred policy direction for delivering high quality housing?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Local Housing Needs Assessment 2019



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 3: Providing for Housing Choice

PREFERRED POLICY - GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOW PEOPLE

What you told us

6.222 Through the Issues and Options consultation options A and C were favoured. The association of Black Country Authorities supported option B as they considered that the A5 corridor could provide sites that could contribute, if necessary, to meeting needs arising from the Black Country. One developer considered option D would negatively impact upon the viability of and deliverability of the plan and upon individual strategic sites. An extension to the site at Lime Lane was proposed by the owners and a further developer/owner of the site at Watling Street offered to work with the Council. Historic England advised that any site allocation may need to be supported by an appropriate site assessment.

New Evidence

6.223 The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA 2019) provides an up to date assessment of need within the District and was consulted upon with the Issues and Option consultation in may 2019. Its findings require:

Table E: Requirements for gypsy and traveller pitches and travelling show people plots.

	2019-2024	2024-2038
Gypsy and Travellers	14 pitches	11 pitches
Travelling Show people	8 plots*	2 plots

** includes 6 existing plots on a site with a temporary permission*

*** potentially a further 4 plots from undetermined households to 2038*

6.224 The GTAA 2019 offers an opinion on the broad area of search in the adopted plan, which is based around the A5 corridor. The evidence found that the majority of traveller sites within the District and identified need continues to remain within this broad area and that the preference for most households that were interviewed was to meet current and future need on or near existing sites.

6.225 A number of our neighbouring local authorities have already advised that they would be unable to help meet our needs as they too are either unable to meet their own current needs or have an existing need of their own which already requires Green Belt site options to be considered.

6.226 There remains an identified unmet demand for gypsy and traveller accommodation of 11 pitches within the 2025-2038 plan period and an unmet demand for travelling show people during the plan period. A site search has taken place and identified no sites which are suitable which are not within the Green Belt.

6.227 Recent planning permissions were approved subject to personal consents for the siting of 14 static caravans for gypsy and traveller families at 2 sites, Stokes Lane, Norton



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 3: Providing for Housing Choice

Canes and at Lime Lane, Pelsall. There is an outstanding appeal against a refusal for up to 7 caravans at Grove Colliery, Lime Lane, Pelsall. As the gypsy and traveller community have successfully secured sites the approach is thus to identify a criteria based policy to consider future applications.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO3.4: GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOW PEOPLE

Existing authorised sites for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show people will be safeguarded from development which would preclude their continued occupation by these groups, unless acceptable replacement accommodation can be provided or the site is no longer required to meet an identified need.

To meet the longer term need (identified in the GTAA 2019) for a further 11 residential plots, proposals for new sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show people outside of the Green Belt will be supported provided that:

- **The site is suitable in terms of highway safety, vehicular access , parking, turning and has access to essential services such as water supply, sewerage, drainage, and waste disposal;**
- **There is adequate provision for on-site facilities including storage, play, and on-site utility/amenity blocks for the number of pitches or plots proposed;**
- **The site is well designed to ensure that a high standard of residential amenity is maintained for the occupiers of the site and the occupiers of existing neighbouring properties.**
- **The site is landscaped to give privacy between pitches for satisfactory residential amenity both within the site and with neighbouring occupiers.**
- **The site does not detrimentally affect the amenity of local residents by reason of on-site business activities, noise, disturbance, or loss of privacy.**
- **Proposals for sites accommodating Travelling Show people should additionally allow for a mixed use yard with areas for residential provision and the storage and maintenance of equipment. All other proposals for mixed residential and business activities will be assessed on a site specific basis, taking the above criteria into account.**

Proposals for new sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show people in the Green Belt will not be allowed unless the applicant has demonstrated that very special circumstances exist that clearly outweigh the harm to the Green belt and any other harm having had regard to the criteria set out above, national policy requirements and any other material planning considerations, including being:

- **Proportionate to the scale of the nearest settlement, its local services and infrastructure.**
- **Located with reasonable access to a range of services, such as shops, schools, welfare facilities or public transport.**
- **Compatible with landscape, environment, heritage and biodiversity as well as physical and visual character of the area.**

Any development granted planning permission under this policy will be subject to a condition limiting occupation to Gypsies and Travellers or Travelling Show people, as appropriate.



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 3: Providing for Housing Choice

Explanatory Text

- 6.228 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling show people are recognised as having specific housing needs. The GTAA 2019 has identified that the A5 is still a main travelling route. In recent years the gypsy and travelling community have been successful in securing sites in the District and the Council has given planning permissions to sufficient sites to meet the needs identified within the GTAA 2019 until 2024. Due to the need to be flexible to enable the gypsy and travelling show persons community to meet their needs in the long term a criteria based policy is considered appropriate at this time.
- 6.229 Local circumstances have resulted in sites being located beyond the urban areas and settlement boundaries of the District, much of which is Green Belt. The policy has been established through work undertaken to inform the Council's Design SPD and GTAA. The Design SPD provides further detailed guidance for example in relation to the size of on-site facilities, lighting and boundary treatments. The policy will enable the gypsy and travelling show people's community to maintain their nomadic lifestyle and safeguards their health and well being. The SPD will be updated as appropriate and delivery of sufficient pitches/plots will be monitored through the Authority Monitoring Report.
- 6.230 Other policies will be relevant to the consideration of proposals, such as Cannock Chase SAC and sites which are prone to flooding.

QUESTION 18

Will the proposed policy assist in meeting the needs arising for gypsy, traveller and travelling show people within the District?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show people Accommodation Assessment 2019
- Green Belt review Part 1



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 4: A Vibrant Local Economy and Workforce

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4:

To encourage a vibrant local economy and workforce by:

- **Championing clean growth principles to support a highly productive, clean and resilient economy;**
- **Safeguarding existing employment areas for employment uses;**
- **Providing employment opportunities in locations which best respond to market demands and which will attract inward investment;**
- **Ensuring that business locations and centres are accessible by public transport from all areas of the District, reducing travel needs where possible;**
- **Supporting the development of town centres as hubs for commercial uses such as offices, leisure and culture uses, residential opportunities and community activities;**
- **Providing a range of sizes and types of employment sites to meet modern business needs;**
- **Supporting sustainable tourism and the rural economy, balanced with the protection of the AONB and the District's two SACs;**
- **Ensuring the land based economies of the District, including agriculture and forestry, can continue to operate, diversify and prosper;**
- **Encouraging the development of Live Work units;**
- **Providing for local employment and the development of skills.**

INTRODUCTION

National Policy Context

6.231 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019) requires Local Plans to make sufficient provision for employment development within the area and set out an overall strategy for that development. Strategic policies should address the strategic priorities of the area, and any relevant cross boundary issues. Chapter 6 'building a strong, competitive economy' requires planning policies to:

- support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future;
- positively and proactively encourage sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration;
- set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to meet anticipated needs over the plan period;



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Objective 4: A Vibrant Local Economy and Workforce

- address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or housing, or a poor environment; and
- allow for new and flexible working practices and enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.

- 6.232 Planning policies should also support a prosperous rural economy by enabling sustainable growth, diversification, tourism and leisure, and accessible local services.
- 6.233 The Government consultation ‘National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code’ (January 2021) sought views on the draft revisions to the NPPF to implement policy changes in response to the [Building Better Building Beautiful Commission “Living with Beauty” report](#).
- 6.234 **The draft policies proposed as part of the Preferred Options have been drafted within the context of the NPPF (2019), and with regard to the draft revisions proposed in January 2021.** The 2021 consultation does not propose any amendments to chapter 6 (‘building a strong, competitive economy’) of the NPPF (2019).
- 6.235 The draft NPPF revisions (January 2021) do not reflect proposals for wider planning reform set out in the Government White Paper ‘Planning for the Future’ (August 2020). These include the proposal that the Community Infrastructure Levy will be reformed to be charged as a fixed proportion of the development value above a threshold, with a mandatory nationally-set rate or rates and the current system of planning obligations abolished.
- 6.236 A fuller review of the NPPF is expected to be prepared by the government in due course, once the government has fully considered the responses to consultation on the White Paper proposals. **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**
- 6.237 The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020⁶¹ come into force on 1st September 2020. The Regulations created a new Class E ‘Commercial, business and service’, which incorporates the former use classes A1 ‘shops’, A2 ‘financial and professional services’ A3 ‘restaurants and cafes’, and B1 ‘offices’. Uses previously in use classes D1 and D2 area are also included in the new Use Class E. These include use *‘for indoor sport, recreation or fitness, not involving motorised vehicles or firearms, principally to visiting members of the public’* (Class E(d)).

⁶¹ The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 ([pdf](#)) ([link](#)). (SI 2020 No. 757)



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Objective 4: A Vibrant Local Economy and Workforce

- 6.238 Class E allows a building to be in a number of uses concurrently, or used for different uses at different times of the day. Changes to another use, or mix of uses, within this Use Class do not require planning permission.
- 6.239 The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)⁶² requires strategic policy-making authorities to prepare a robust evidence base to understand existing business needs, and take account of the Local Industrial Strategy.
- 6.240 The Government's Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future (2017) set out a vision to drive productivity improvements across the UK, and identified four 'Grand Challenges': Artificial Intelligence and Data Economy; Clean Growth; Future of Mobility; and Ageing Society.
- 6.241 Cannock Chase District is within the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Local Enterprise Partnership (SSLEP). The SSLEP Draft Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) was published in January 2020. The LIS proposes to: ensure greater collaboration between skills providers and businesses; support provision for digital skills and retraining at all ages; improve pathways for the changing skills; seek greater local control over funding and investment; support school leaders to work with businesses.
- 6.242 Cannock Chase District is also a member of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP (GBSLEP). The GBSLEP (together with the Black Country and Coventry & Warwickshire LEP's) has prepared a West Midlands Combined Authority Local Industrial Strategy. The WMCA LIS proposes to support the development of higher technical education; improve opportunities for disadvantaged communities; and strengthen early intervention and preventative services to support economic inclusion and social change.

Local Policy Context

- 6.243 The Cannock Chase Economic Prosperity Strategy sets out an ambitious vision for the District whereby the District will be a leader in the West Midlands in championing clean growth principles to support a highly productive, clean and resilient economy – local residents will benefit from a strong skills base which supports the District's highly productive clean growth economy.
- 6.244 The Local Plan Part 1 (2014) Section 1 Core Strategy includes the following policies in relation to employment and the economy:
- Policy CP8 – Employment Land, which supports the delivery of employment land to assist the delivery of at least 88 hectares of new and redeveloped land, primarily for non-town centre B class uses. New and redeveloped land was identified as being available at Kingswood Lakeside, the A5 corridor Bridgtown, Towers Business Park/Rugeley Power Station, Cannock and Norton Canes.

⁶² Paragraph Reference: 2a-025-20190220



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 4: A Vibrant Local Economy and Workforce

- Policy CP11 – Centres Hierarchy, which directed office developments towards the town centres.

6.245 The Local Plan Part 1 (2014) Section 2 Rugeley Town Centre Area Action Plan includes a Regeneration Strategy for the Town Centre.

ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION

What you told us

6.246 The Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation (May 2019) included the following Policy Options for Meeting Overall Employment Needs:

Option A: Urban areas- use sites already identified for employment developments within the urban areas and explore opportunities for further supply on urban sites.

Option B: Rugeley Power Station

Option B1: Urban Areas and employment-led/mixed use redevelopment of former Rugeley Power Station

Option B2: Urban Areas and housing-led redevelopment of former Rugeley Power Station

Option C: Green Belt sites

Option C1: In combination with the options for the Urban Areas and former Rugeley Power Station consider_Green Belt sites. Prioritise extensions to Kingswood Lakeside followed by extensions to other existing employment sites.

Option C2: In combination with the options for the Urban Areas and former Rugeley Power Station consider all Green Belt site options across the District with no prioritisation to Kingswood Lakeside.

6.247 The Sustainability Appraisal of the Policy Options for Meeting Overall Employment Needs found effects range from 'significantly negative' to 'significantly positive'. Options A and B were found to be in general more positive than Option C. Both Option C1 and C2 were found to be 'significantly negative' in terms of Biodiversity and Geodiversity, and Historic Environment. Option C2 was also assessed to have a 'significantly negative' effect on Landscape and Townscape.

6.248 The following Policy Options for Other Employment Land were presented in the Issues and Options Consultation:

Option A: Alongside preferred option for District wide strategy, continue with criteria based policy to loss of employment sites. Continue support for redevelopment of existing sites in the Green Belt and continue to specify criteria for considering out of town office developments, reflecting local circumstances.

Option B: Alongside preferred option for District wide strategy, allocate existing employment areas to be protected and do not allocate those that have potential for



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Objective 4: A Vibrant Local Economy and Workforce

reallocation for any protection. Continue support for redevelopment of existing sites in the Green Belt and continue to specify criteria for considering out of town office developments, reflecting local circumstances.

- 6.249 The findings of Sustainability Appraisal of the Other Employment Land Policy Options showed effects ranging from minor 'negative/positive' to 'significantly positive'. Option A was found to be marginally more positive.
- 6.250 Respondents to the Issues and Options Consultation made the following suggestions in regard to Local Plan policy:
- Options – there was a range of support for each of the options proposed;
 - Ensure sufficient land is provided to meet economic development needs;
 - B Class Uses - important to provide flexibility and not be too prescriptive;
 - A number of sites have been proposed through the EDNA/EAA process.
- 6.251 The following Policy Options for Economy and Skills were presented in the Issues and Options Consultation:
- Option A:** Update current Local Plan Policy CP9 in order to ensure the Local Plan continues to set out a clear economic vision for the District.
- Option B:** In combination with Option A, set out specific requirements from developments.
- 6.252 The findings of Sustainability Appraisal of the Economy and Skills Options ranged from minor 'negligible' to 'significantly positive'.
- 6.253 Responses to consultation included the following suggestions in regard to Local Plan policy:
- Support for Option A ('Urban Areas'), Option B1 ('Urban Areas and employment-led/mixed use redevelopment of former Rugeley Power Station'), and Option C1 ('Urban Areas and former Rugeley Power Station together with Green Belt sites, with priority given to extensions to Kingswood Lakeside').
 - The employment land requirement recommended in the EDNA 2019 Report should be set at a significantly higher level (site promoter).
 - A proportion of employment land need arising from the Black Country may need to be accommodated in Cannock District (Association of Black Country Authorities).
 - Employment sites should be allocated for broad B Class uses to ensure flexibility in future employment land supply. Certain sites are more suited to particular elements of B class employment uses (e.g. B1a office uses).
 - B1a offices are a main town centre use, and are not appropriate for general employment land and a split 75%/25% would over exaggerate the need for future



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Objective 4: A Vibrant Local Economy and Workforce

offices. Allocations should be made for broad 'B-Class Uses' rather than being overly prescriptive.

- Current proposals for the Power Station site fail to provide sufficient employment land.
- The economic benefits of housebuilding should be acknowledged, and community based employment schemes could be encouraged.

New Evidence

- 6.254 Trends show expansion into the tourism sector and growth arising due to the proximity of the M6Toll/A5 corridor. There is still an over reliance on manufacturing, skilled trades and elementary occupations in comparison to regional and national averages and an over reliance upon jobs in distribution and constructions sectors, with potential for greater growth in the service-based sectors such as health, residential care and social work, transport and storage.
- 6.255 The Council's Economic Prosperity strategy seeks economic growth for the district championing clean growth principles to support a highly productive, clean and resilient economy. It recognises the locational advantages and entrepreneurial spirit in the District and the outstanding environmental assets. It seeks to grow existing high value firms and diversify the local economy to achieve higher levels of productivity and a strong skill base. It supports the Council's aim to be zero carbon by 2030.
- 6.256 There are some underused sites and areas of brownfield land which have been prioritised for use as all land outside the urban areas is Green Belt (approximately 60% of the District overall) with a significant proportion of this also being designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 6.257 At the time of preparing the Issues and Options document there was no identified shortfall in employment land in our neighbouring authorities and those which share our 'functional economic market area'. More recent developments include:
- The Association of Black Country Authorities (ABCA) has advised, even following the approval of the West Midlands Interchange strategic rail freight depot, that there is a potential shortfall of employment land. ABCA has asked Cannock Chase to clarify whether the District could deliver employment land in excess of local needs on non-Green Belt land that could meet part of the employment needs of the Black Country.
 - South Staffordshire District has identified a potential over supply of employment land within their District as part of their issues and options consultation in 2018, and further work is being undertaken to see if this is still the case.
- 6.258 The EDNA (2019) considered a range of scenarios and these have been updated in light of the COVID-19 implications for the economy. It is recommended that a



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Objective 4: A Vibrant Local Economy and Workforce

range of employment land of 46 to 66 hectares (net) including flexibility is made available during the period 2018-38 split between the following uses:

- 80% industrial/distribution and warehousing;
- 20% office Class E (g) (i)/(ii) office/ and D and Class E (g) (iii) light industrial.

- 6.259 The EDNA study states that it is important to provide:
- Large sites which are attractive to end-users and which are well connected to the strategic motorway network;
 - Opportunities for smaller premises to meet the needs of the indigenous and highly localised SME companies which help insulate the District from economic down turns. (para 7.46 EDNA 2019)
- 6.260 Planning permission has been secured at Rugeley Power station and the West Midlands Interchange. The permission at Rugeley Power Station will provide 5 hectares of land for employment at Rugeley Power Station. The West Midlands Interchange will provide over 74 hectares of rail linked warehousing in South Staffordshire District.
- 6.261 A review of the existing employment areas was undertaken and published in the Existing Employment Areas Study (2019). This considered 77 sites and assessed the scope for these sites to contribute to future employment need. The Study found that there were relatively low vacancy rates and that all sites perform an important role in terms of jobs for local residents and should be protected although a number of sites were identified where alternative future use may be justified.
- 6.262 The Cannock Chase Economic Prosperity Strategy sets out an ambitious vision for the District whereby the District will be a leader in the West Midlands in championing clean growth principles to support a highly productive, clean and resilient economy.
- 6.263 The District's outstanding environmental assets, locational advantages and entrepreneurial spirit will define Cannock Chase as a vibrant place to live, work and visit which will benefit the local residents by providing a strong skill base. growing existing high value firms and achieving further diversification of the local economy to achieve higher levels of productivity.

PREFERRED POLICY – SAFEGUARDING EXISTING EMPLOYMENT AREAS FOR EMPLOYMENT USES

What you told us

- 6.264 The findings of Sustainability Appraisal of the Other Employment Land Policy Options showed effects ranging from minor 'negative/positive' to 'significantly positive'. Option A (continue with criteria based policy to loss of employment sites to other uses) was found to be marginally more positive.



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Objective 4: A Vibrant Local Economy and Workforce

6.265 There was also some support for Option B 'allocating existing employment sites to be protected'. (This approach is considered under Preferred Policy SO4.2).

New Evidence

6.266 The Existing Employment Areas Study (2019) found that there were relatively low vacancy rates and that all sites perform an important role in terms of jobs for local residents and should be protected although a number of sites were identified where alternative future use may be justified.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO4.1: SAFEGUARDING EXISTING EMPLOYMENT AREAS FOR EMPLOYMENT USES

The existing Employment Areas (listed in the Explanatory Text) will be safeguarded for non-town centre offices, industry and warehousing (formerly Class B of the Use Classes Order).

Proposals for the change of use of the existing and future Employment Areas (including vacant sites with a lawful use for employment purposes) will only be permitted if:

- There are overriding and demonstrable economic, regeneration and sustainable community benefits from doing so;**
- There is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for employment use in the future, due to the poor quality of the site/unit, the extent to which the site/unit is no longer viable for use or redevelopment for employment use.**
- There is a demonstrable ongoing availability of land supply at other suitable locations for employment use.**
- The redevelopment of part of the site for other uses does not affect the viability of existing businesses in the remainder of the site.**
- There are demonstrable benefits arising from the proposal, including improvements to local residential and environmental amenity.**
- There is evidence of comprehensive marketing of the site for at least 12 months which demonstrates that there is no reasonable prospect of a manufacturing or warehousing use continuing.**
- All employment sites will be protected from inappropriate neighbouring development that will adversely affect the employment operations taking place on the site.**

Explanatory Text

6.267 The Council seeks to retain primarily employment generating uses on sites where evidence demonstrates that the sites is still viable for employment use and that redevelopment will not provide any benefits, as defined above. The Council wishes to support inward investment, economic development and regeneration and have a balanced portfolio of employment land and recognises this will include a variety of size, type, location and quality of employment sites.

6.268 The assessment of the existing employment areas, EDNA update 2021, ELAA and a review of the sites for the development capacity work identified that the Districts



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Objective 4: A Vibrant Local Economy and Workforce

employment areas are still performing important economic roles and providing a mixture of land and premises for a range of users. Evidence suggests they can currently contribute approximately 16 hectares of land to the employment land supply. For sites where there are quality issues to be addressed elements of these areas may be appropriate for non-employment uses, particularly those listed in policy SO4.2 which can support the enhancement and attractiveness of the employment area.

6.269 The Existing Employment Areas (at February 2021) are listed below:

6.270 Cannock, Hednesford and Heath Hayes Employment Areas:

- Kingswood Lakeside;
- A5 Corridor North;
- A5 Corridor South;
- Bridgtown Business Area;
- Hawks Green North;
- Hawks Green South;
- Hollies Business Park;
- Intermodal Site;
- Keys Business Park;
- Park Plaza/Heritage Park;
- Walsall Road;
- Anglesey Business Park;
- Watling Street Business Park;
- Chasewood Park Business Centre;
- Cannock Wood Industrial Estate; and
- EDS Couriers, Wimblebury Road.

6.271 Rugeley and Brereton Employment Areas:

- Towers Business Park;
- Brereton Business Park; and
- Power Station Road Business Area.

6.272 Norton Canes Employment Areas:

- Norton Canes Business Area; and
- Lime Lane.

QUESTION 19

Do you support the preferred policy direction to safeguard existing provision for employment use?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Economic Development Needs Assessment (2019)



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Objective 4: A Vibrant Local Economy and Workforce

- Economic Development Needs Assessment Update July 2020
- Employment Land Availability Assessment 2020

PREFERRED POLICY – PROVISION FOR NEW EMPLOYMENT USES

What you told us

- 6.273 The consultation responses to the Issues and Options demonstrated support for Option A ('Urban Areas'), Option B1 ('Urban Areas and employment-led/mixed use redevelopment of former Rugeley Power Station'), and Option C1 ('Urban Areas and former Rugeley Power Station together with Green Belt sites, with priority given to extensions to Kingswood Lakeside').
- 6.274 Respondents felt that B1a offices are a main town centre use, and are not appropriate for general employment land, and that a split 75%/25% would over exaggerate the need for future offices. Allocations should be made for broad 'B-Class Uses' rather than being overly prescriptive.
- 6.275 There was also some support for Other Employment Land Policy Option B 'allocating existing employment sites to be protected'.

New Evidence

- 6.276 The EDNA (2019) recommends that a range of employment land of 46 to 66 hectares (net) including flexibility is made available during the period 2018-38 split between the following uses:
- 80% industrial/distribution and warehousing;
 - 20% office Class E (g) (i)/(ii) office/ and D and Class E (g) (iii) light industrial.
- The Employment Land Availability Assessment 2020 (ELAA) monitors the supply of employment land in the district. It provides a list of sites which are readily available for employment such as sites which have planning permission and also includes sites put forward for consideration for employment purposes. The ELAA identified that there have been 12.47 hectares of employment land completed since 2018.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO4.2: PROVISION FOR NEW EMPLOYMENT USES

A flexible supply of employment land and premises will be maintained to support investment and expansion of existing businesses as well as for new inward investment by businesses.

The Local Planning Authority will provide for up to 50 hectares of land for office, manufacturing and distribution employment development during the period to 2038. This will provide for a range of sizes and types of employment to meet business needs and encourage inward investment, resilience and new investment and create a balanced portfolio of employment land. It will grow sectors which promote clean growth principles and renewable technologies.

The following employment sites (27 hectares) are allocated to protect them for



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Objective 4: A Vibrant Local Economy and Workforce

employment uses and are shown on the Proposals Map.

Table F: Employment site allocations

Site Ref.	Site
E1	Land at Lakeside Boulevard, Cannock
E2	110 Walsall Road, Cannock, WS11 0JB
E3	Former Rumer Hill Industrial Estate, Cannock
E4	Former Power Station off A51 (adjacent to Towers Business Park), Rugeley
E5	Rugeley Power Station, Rugeley
E6	Land at the Academy Early Years Childcare (Former Talbot Public House), Main Road, Brereton
E7	Power Station Road (Land South of Rugeley Eastern By-pass), Rugeley
E8	Power Station Road, Rugeley
E10	Turf Field, Watling Street
E12	Site between A5 and M6 Toll, Norton Canes

Proposals for new employment development should safeguard and enhance active travel and sustainable travel opportunities, and accessibility to the green space network.

Proposals for new employment development within Use Class E will be directed to the town centres. Proposals for office uses in non-town centre locations will need to demonstrate that sites in the town centre are not suitable and viable.

Proposals for new employment development providing new units of between 1,000-3,000sqm for manufacturing and distribution will be encouraged.

Proposals for new employment development involving distribution (B8) uses and large numbers of HGV movements will be directed to areas with good access to the parts of the Strategic Road Network where impacts upon air quality can be avoided and mitigated.

Proposals which enhance the existing employment areas through provision of supporting infrastructure including nurseries, afterschool clubs and other uses which enable the working population to have easily accessible network of family care and support will be encouraged.

Explanatory Text

- 6.277 The Local Plan will support the District Council's Economic Growth Strategy in providing opportunities for inward investment by new employers. This will widen the economic base and strengthen the resilience of the area.
- 6.278 Evidence shows a need for small units to support economic development of the small scale manufacturing and indigenous businesses to help insulate the District from future economic downturns.
- 6.279 Enhancements to and the development of infrastructure can assist employment areas adapt to change and support the health and well being of employees and their families and support the move to zero carbon.



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 4: A Vibrant Local Economy and Workforce

6.280 Sites are available for offices and other Class E uses within the town centres in sustainable and accessible locations and footfall will increase vitality and viability of centres. For the purposes of this policy offices are classed as those falling within Class E (g) (i)/(ii) office/ Rand D and Class E (g) (iii) light industrial.

6.281 The following sites are considered able to contribute to the employment land supply within the existing employment areas and further land is likely to become available during the plan period, the sites below total approx. 16 hectares.

Table G Sites within the existing employment areas

Ridings Park (plots 8-10), Eastern Way, Hawks Green, Cannock
Plot D, Blakeney Way, Cannock, WS11 8LD
Former Hawkins Works, Watling Street, Bridgtown, Cannock (2 sites)
Land adjacent to, Unit 2, West Cannock Way, Cannock Chase Enterprise Centre, Hednesford
Gestamp, Watling Street/Wolverhampton Road, Cannock
Delta Way Business Park, Longford Road, Cannock, WS11 0LJ
Albion Works, Gestamp Tallent, Wolverhampton Road, Cannock, WS11 1LY
Towers Business Park Phase II, Wheelhouse Lane, Rugeley (2 sites)
Granurite Ltd and Rugeley Tyre Service, Bostons Industrial Estate, Power Station Road, Rugeley
Norton House, Norton Canes Business Park, Norton Green Lane, Norton Canes
The Lead Mill, Rolling Mill Road, Cannock, WS11 9UH
Former JCB, Rugeley
Former Porcelain Works, Old Hednesford Road, Hednesford
Former ATOS Origin Site, Walsall Road, Cannock
Northwood Court, Hollies Avenue, Cannock
Unit 12, Conduit Road, Norton Canes

QUESTION 20

Do you support the preferred policy direction to provide land for new employment uses?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Economic Development Needs Assessment (2019)
- Economic Development Needs Assessment Update July 2020
- Employment Land Availability Assessment 2020



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 4: A Vibrant Local Economy and Workforce

PREFERRED POLICY - SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND THE RURAL ECONOMY

What you told us

6.282 Although there were no specific questions related to this policy theme in previous consultations, relevant comments were made. Representations from the National Farmers Union sought to enable rural businesses in the Green Belt to invest in new infrastructure in order to meet environmental and animal welfare standards.

6.283 Other representations were received in regard to business needs in the AONB.

6.284 In addition, respondents raised the economic contribution housebuilding, canal based employment and community based employment.

New Evidence

6.285 Cannock Chase AONB is a nationally important landscape and a designated protected habitat of European importance. Evidence shows that through careful management of visitors and investment, the Cannock Chase AONB can be shared without harming its special qualities

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO4.3: SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND THE RURAL ECONOMY

Support will be given to development proposals in suitable locations within the rural areas of the District which support the rural economy and which safeguards and/ or enhances the character and openness of the rural area.

Subject to the provisions of this Local Plan, proposals in the rural areas for the following types of development will be considered favourably:

- **Appropriate and proportionate expansion of existing employment sites in order to support the retention of existing employment opportunities;**
- **Proposals to reuse suitable buildings for employment uses and tourist accommodation;**
- **Development which assists in the sustainable diversification and development of agriculture, forestry and other land based rural businesses;**
- **Visitor and recreational facilities of an appropriate scale and nature which contribute positively to the long term sustainability and vitality of the rural economy;**
- **The use of the local canal network and the abandoned canal network to support economic growth that is proportionate to the scale and nature of their location.**

The canal network and the abandoned canal network will be safeguarded along with sufficient space to enable the associated infrastructure such as locks and bridges to be reinstated so the long term potential can be realised.

Development proposals should demonstrate that:

- **There are no adverse impacts on designated environmental assets (as defined in Policy SO7.1: Protecting, Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity, and Policy SO7.3: Special Areas of Conservation);**
- **The development would protect, conserve and enhance the Cannock Chase Area**



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 4: A Vibrant Local Economy and Workforce

of Outstanding Natural Beauty, (as required by Policies SO7.4, SO7.5) and the Green Belt SO7.6);

- All tourism and visitor developments will display educational material on how visitors can access local attractions and use the Cannock Chase in ways that respect the natural beauty, biodiversity and history of the area as part of the mitigation package required to meet the objectives of the habitat regulations.**

Explanatory Text

- 6.286 Around 40 % of the area is designated as part of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and attracts many visitors each year. Agriculture and forestry are an integral part of the District landscape and economy and around 60% of the District is designated Green Belt.
- 6.287 The preferred policy supports the growth of sustainable tourism and the rural economy and balances this with the protections and enhancement of the AONB, the District's 2 SAC's and its other natural and historic assets, including the canal network and historic landscapes.
- 6.288 The reuse of rural buildings can support the rural economy, and the retention of attractive buildings which respect the local vernacular enhances the landscape and providing opportunities for local employment.
- 6.289 Opportunities exist in the district such as at the former Grove colliery which offer longer term opportunities for restoration of landscapes and other historic assets through the development of open recreation uses, leisure and tourism focused activities appropriate within the Green Belt.

QUESTION 21

Do you support the preferred policy direction to develop sustainable tourism and the rural economy?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan 2019-2024

PREFERRED POLICY – LIVE WORK UNITS

What you told us

- 6.290 No specific question was asked in the Issues and options consultation.
- 6.291 The Local Plan (2014) Policy CP 9 stated that proposals for appropriately located live/work units would be considered favourably. Since the adoption of the Local Plan, a number of developments have received consent and have been built, particularly in the Bridgtown area, and the variety of uses has added to the vibrancy of the neighbourhood.



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 4: A Vibrant Local Economy and Workforce

New Evidence

- 6.292 The EDNA (2019) identified that within Cannock Chase District there are a large number of small employment sites and that much of the economy is indigenous and highly localised.
- 6.293 There has been a growth in working from home, but Cannock Chase District has a lower rate than surrounding areas (para 5.28 EDNA 2020).
- 6.294 The changes to the Use Classes Order created the new Class E Commercial, business and service. Class E (g) lists the following categories:
- (i) an office to carry out any operational or administrative functions,
 - (ii) the research and development of products or processes, or
 - (iii) any industrial process,

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO4.4: LIVE WORK UNITS

Within residential areas, proposals for the development of live work spaces for residential (Use Class C3) and operational or administrative functions (Use Class E g (i)) will be supported to encourage entrepreneurship and regeneration. Residential amenity in the surrounding areas will be protected.

Explanatory Text

- 6.295 Whilst Class E uses will in general be directed towards our town centres, within the District there are instances of isolated buildings in employment use often within largely residential areas which can provide opportunities for live/work space.
- 6.296 Much of the economy is indigenous to Cannock and highly localised. By enabling a variety of workspaces and ways of working such as live work units, the Local Plan will encourage entrepreneurship and inward investment and reduce the need to travel for work. There has been an increase in the levels of working from home and creation of local employment opportunities can provide support to the wider local economy and local centres.
- 6.297 The combination of uses has the potential to cause conflict with regard to hours of operation and visits to the site so will need to be carefully considered to ensure a safe and attractive environment for existing and future residents.

QUESTION 22

Do you support the preferred policy direction to support the development of live/work units?

List of Relevant Evidence

- EDNA (2019 and 2020)



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 4: A Vibrant Local Economy and Workforce

PREFERRED POLICY – PROVISION FOR LOCAL EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS

What you told us

- 6.298 The Issues and Options Consultation asked if the Council should require developers to demonstrate how all new development schemes or some should address the economic issues identified, perhaps by requiring an Employment and Skills plan, using locally sourced materials or full fibre broadband. The responses felt that the suggested figure of developments of over 1,000sqm should be applied flexibly, but this could be accompanied by evidence based on good practice guidance.
- 6.299 Staffordshire County Council commented that policy should encourage employers to invest in training and development and take up available assistance such as Apprenticeships and other ESF funded programmes.

New Evidence

- 6.300 The District Profile identifies there is a skills imbalance and a low level of educational achievement and the pandemic has had a disproportionate effect on the employment rate on younger workers.
- 6.301 Cannock Chase District Council, Staffordshire County Council and South Staffordshire College work in partnership with employers to develop employment and skills plans to help local people get into work or access training opportunities to upskill/reskill.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO4.5: PROVISION FOR LOCAL EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS

Proposals for major development where over 50 full time equivalent (FTE) jobs will be created (during the construction phase and/or by the proposed occupiers of the development) will be accompanied by an Employment and Skills Plan.

The Employment and Skills Plan will demonstrate how the development will contribute to the training and employability of local residents, especially young people.

This requirement will apply to changes of use as well as new build development, and includes temporary jobs such as those during the construction phase and permanent jobs/apprenticeships. The delivery of the Employment and Skills Plan will be secured through a legal agreement.

Explanatory Text

- 6.302 Many large companies already engage with the District Council when creating jobs within the District and actively encourage local training and employment creation. The District Council wants to work positively with employers and developers in the area to deliver a local skilled workforce (and consequently support the contribution



6. Local Plan Policy Options

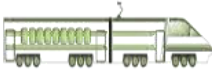
Objective 4: A Vibrant Local Economy and Workforce

to achieving net zero carbon development by reducing the need to travel for employment during the construction and occupancy stage of the development).

- 6.303 Employment and Skills Plans provide opportunities to provide local people with available vacancies, through mechanisms such as Jobs Fairs, and enable the FE colleges to ensure that relevant training opportunities and apprenticeships can be promoted.
- 6.304 It is an aim of the Council to support economic recovery and improve employability and training opportunities for local people to increase skill levels in order to reduce poverty and contribute positively to the health and well being of the population. The area currently has a high proportion of young people with poor skills and educational attainment levels.
- 6.305 Further good practice guidance will be prepared by the Council.

QUESTION 23

Do you support the preferred policy direction to provide for local employment and skills?



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5

To support the provision of sustainable transport and communications infrastructure by:

Managing the need to travel by:

- **Providing for major new development in accessible locations that can provide access for all sections of the community to work, shopping, health, education, leisure, green space and other facilities;**
- **Clustering the development of services and facilities in locations that can provide convenient access to all sections of the community;**
- **Ensuring major new developments provide for safe pedestrian and cycle movement within the scheme and to neighbouring areas, and are designed to accommodate high quality public transport services;**
- **Supporting the installation of high quality and resilient digital communication technologies to facilitate business development and remote working.**

Supporting low carbon transport systems:

- **Supporting the provision of electric vehicle charging points, and other infrastructure that may be required for alternative low and zero carbon transport options, including hydrogen vehicles;**
- **Supporting changes to the road network where they are related to the reduction of environmental impacts and the enhancement of public transport;**
- **Supporting sustainable freight distribution by road and rail.**

Maintaining and improving the transport system:

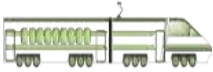
- **Achieving improvements to walking and cycling routes and supporting increased use of the canal network and towpaths as part of the integrated transport network;**
- **Securing the continued development of the Chase Line rail services, facilities and infrastructure as the preferred means of transport;**
- **Safeguarding land that is required for sustainable transport schemes, including road, rail, cycle ways and footpaths;**
- **Supporting the safe and efficient use of the highway network through traffic management schemes;**
- **Establishing standards for the provision of car and lorry parking.**

INTRODUCTION

National Policy Context

6.306 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019) requires that the Local Plan should:

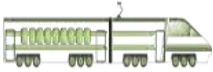
- identify those development options that can be made sustainable by limiting travel
- address the impacts of development, including mitigation of adverse environmental effects
- widen transport choice and promote walking, cycling and public transport
- consider parking requirements of residential and non-residential developments; and
- seize opportunities to improve air quality and mitigate impacts



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

- 6.307 Paragraph 102 states that transport issues should be considered at the earliest stages of plan making to address impacts of development; maximise opportunities from transport infrastructure and changing technology; promote walking, cycling and public transport use; take account of the environmental impacts and mitigate for adverse effects / achieve net environmental gains accordingly; ensure patterns of movement, streets, parking etc. are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places.
- 6.308 NPPF Paragraph 103 states that the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Development locations 'should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes'.
- 6.309 NPPF Paragraph 104 states that planning policies should:
- '(a) support an appropriate mix of uses across an area, and within larger scale sites, to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities;
 - (b) be prepared with the active involvement of local highways authorities, other transport infrastructure providers and operators and neighbouring councils, so that strategies and investments for supporting sustainable transport and development patterns are aligned;
 - (c) identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice and realise opportunities for large scale development;
 - (d) provide for high quality walking and cycling networks and supporting facilities such as cycle parking (drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans);
 - (e) provide for any large scale transport facilities that need to be located in the area, and the infrastructure and wider development required to support their operation, expansion and contribution to the wider economy. In doing so they should take into account whether such development is likely to be a nationally significant infrastructure project and any relevant national policy statements; and
 - (f) recognise the importance of maintaining a national network of general aviation airfields, and their need to adapt and change over time – taking into account their economic value in serving business, leisure, training and emergency service needs, and the government's General Aviation Strategy.'
- 6.310 The NPPF does not insist that parking standards must be set but states (in paragraph 105) that if this option is pursued then they should take into account the accessibility of the development, its type, mix and use; the availability of / opportunities for public transport; local car ownership levels and the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug – in and other ultra low-emission vehicles. Paragraph 106 states that maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network.

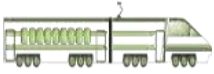


6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

- 6.311 NPPF Paragraph 107 states that the importance of overnight lorry parking facilities needs to be recognised, and that ‘proposals for new or expanded distribution centres should make provision for sufficient lorry parking to cater for their anticipated use’.
- 6.312 NPPF Paragraph 181 states that planning policies should contribute towards compliance with national objectives for pollutants, taking account of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and Clean Air Zones, and that ‘opportunities to improve air quality and mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement’.
- 6.313 The Government consultation ‘National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code’ (January 2021) sought views on the draft revisions to the NPPF to implement policy changes in response to the [Building Better Building Beautiful Commission “Living with Beauty” report](#).
- 6.314 **The draft policies proposed as part of the Preferred Options have been drafted within the context of the NPPF (2019), and with regard to the draft revisions proposed in January 2021.** The 2021 consultation proposes two amendments to chapter 9 (‘promoting sustainable transport’) of the NPPF (2019):
- Paragraph 104(d) has been amended to support the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission’s recommendations on encouraging walking and cycling; and
 - Paragraph 108(c) and footnote 45 has been amended to prevent reliance on outdated highways guidance. The proposed amended wording states that site assessments (of plan allocations or applications) should ensure that the design of schemes and standards applied reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code.
- 6.315 The draft NPPF revisions (January 2021) do not reflect proposals for wider planning reform set out in the Government White Paper ‘Planning for the Future’ (August 2020). The White Paper proposes to simplify the role of Local Plans, to focus on identifying land under three categories:
- Growth areas suitable for substantial development, and where outline approval for development would be automatically secured for forms and types of development specified in the Plan;
 - Renewal areas suitable for some development, such as gentle densification; and
 - Protected areas where – as the name suggests – development is restricted.
- 6.316 A fuller review of the NPPF is expected to be prepared by the government in due course, once the government has fully considered the responses to consultation on the White Paper proposals. **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**
- 6.317 The 25 Year Plan for the Environment⁶³ was published by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in 2018. The 25 Year Plan sets out the Government’s long-term approach to protecting and enhancing natural landscapes and habitats in England.

⁶³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>



6. Local Plan Policy Options

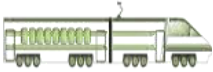
Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

- 6.318 The Government's Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future (2017) sets out a vision to drive productivity improvements across the UK. The objective of the UK Industrial Strategy White Paper is to deliver increased prosperity across society and for the whole of the UK. The Industrial Strategy identifies the need for 'a major upgrade to the UK's infrastructure', including support for electric vehicles through charging infrastructure investment.
- 6.319 In the context of the UK's legal requirements under the Climate Change Act, the UK's approach to reducing emissions is set out in the National Clean Growth Strategy 2017. The key actions that the government will take as part of the Clean Growth Strategy include accelerating the shift to low carbon transport – 24% of UK emissions – by: ending the sale of new conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2040; supporting the take-up of ultra low emission vehicles (ULEV); developing electric vehicle charging networks; accelerating the uptake of low emission taxis and buses; transitioning to zero emissions vehicles; investing in cycling and walking; shifting more freight from road to rail; supporting research and innovation.
- 6.320 The Environment Bill 2020⁶⁴ sets out how the Government plans to protect and improve the natural environment in the UK. The Environment Bill will help deliver the vision set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan. The Environment Bill includes proposals for: environmental governance; the clean air strategy; biodiversity net gain; trees; conservation covenants; extended producer responsibility for packaging; recycling; a deposit return scheme for drinks containers; and water.

Local Policy Context

- 6.321 In summary, the existing policy priorities in the adopted Local Plan (Part 1) 2014 – Section 1 include:
- 6.322 **Sustainable Transport** (Policy CP10)
- Work in partnership to help develop and promote sustainable transport modes that provide realistic alternatives to the car, and which help to achieve national climate change targets and reduce air pollution.
 - Secure, where appropriate, developer contributions to support sustainable transport solutions.
 - Retain and develop conventional and demand responsive bus services.
 - Continue to develop and improve the Birmingham-Walsall-Cannock-Hednesford-Rugeley, Chase Line rail service.
 - Support the development of rail freight within the District, in particular, the promotion of the Mid-Cannock site as a road/rail interchange depot, and safeguarding inland waterways and wharfage.
 - Seek development contributions to support key road infrastructure improvements including the Churchbridge A5/M6T/A460/A34, and North St/A5 junction upgrade; the A460 dualling and Five Ways Island, Heath Hayes.
 - Support the improvement and provision of facilities for pedestrians that are safe, secure, direct, convenient and attractive.
 - Work in partnership to complete and add to the District's strategic cycle network, and introduce measures to improve and provide facilities for cyclists.
 - Support provision of on-street parking places for Hackney Carriage vehicles; and

⁶⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-bill-2020>



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

- Develop local parking standards and servicing standards.

6.323 There has been considerable progress to many of these priorities.

6.324 In summary, the policy priorities of the adopted Local Plan (Part 1) 2014 – Section 2 Rugeley Town Centre Area Action Plan are to:

- Improve key footpath/cycle links in and around the town centre.
- Enhance cycle storage facilities in the town centre.
- Provide a new bus station and accessible taxi ranks as part of the redevelopment of the existing Market Hall/Bus Station site.
- Provide bus only access between the Pear Tree and Upper Brereton residential areas, reducing the operating costs of the existing local service.
- Investigate an improved pedestrian route to Rugeley Town railway station from Horsefair; and
- Provide appropriate alternative public car parking.

6.325 The Rugeley Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) was prepared ‘to set out a planning framework to encourage future development for retail, commercial, leisure, tourism, housing and transport purposes’. The key objective for Movement and Access was to provide ‘a centre which is accessible to all and benefits from increased pedestrian and cycle linkages.’

ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION

What you told us

6.326 The following Sustainable Transport Options were presented in the Issues and Options Consultation:

Option A: Update existing Policy CP10 to ensure the most up to date situation is reflected, retaining the current sub-themes (Rail, Roads, Walking, Cycling, Taxi Ranks and Servicing) and adding in strategic references to opportunities from canals / the canal network (including towpaths), lorry parking and electric vehicle charging for example.

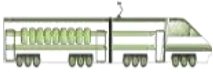
Option B: As per Option A, but with the addition of standards for parking, access and servicing, lorry parking and electric vehicle charging set in Local Plan Policy.

Option C: As per Option A, but with standards for parking, access and servicing, lorry parking and electric vehicle charging being set in a supplementary planning document.

6.327 The findings of Sustainability Appraisal of the Sustainable Transport Policy Options show effects ranging from ‘negligible’ to ‘positive’. Options B and C were found to be more positive, as they included standards for parking, access and servicing, lorry parking, and electric vehicle charging, either through Local Plan policy or a supplementary planning document.

6.328 There was general support for all the options, with a spread of preferences expressed for each option. Respondents made the following suggestions regarding Local Plan policy:

- Canals: promote the use of towpaths, as well as other walking and cycling routes. The potential of the canal network (including towpaths) should be clearly referenced



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

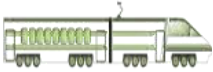
within the revised Policies. The restored Hatherton Canal would form part of the network for sustainable transport.

- **Bus Services:** There needs to be a review of bus routes and services (lessening the frequency of service and stopping entirely on a Sunday). People are either relying on personal transport or not travelling.
- **Electric Vehicles:** Requirements (quantum and type) for electric vehicle charging infrastructure (including on-street and off-street parking) need to be addressed, and fully considered in the viability assessment work/evidence base to the Local Plan. Also, require confirmation of engagement with the main energy suppliers to determine network capacity to accommodate any adverse impacts if all or a proportion of dwellings have electric vehicle charging points.
- **Fossil fuels:** Although there is an assumption that there will be no fossil fuel vehicles after 2040, need flexibility to adapt to the best available solution.
- **Parking:** The setting of any minimum or maximum (and flexible) car parking standards for residential development should be undertaken in accordance with Paragraphs 105 and 106 of the NPPF. Also address need for HGV parking facilities.
- **Supplementary Guidance:** Transport standards should be set within a Local Plan Policy rather than via SPD, but only where the NPPF allows such standards to be considered, and if robustly evidenced and justified. (Alternative view: set standards for parking, access and service, lorry parking and electric vehicle charging in a supplementary document).
- **Cycling:** Support for cyclists is required, as the cycle network through the district is poor. Create safe and comfortable cycling route.
- **Impact of development:** Consider the potential impact of development on walking, cycling and recreational uses beyond the development site upon such infrastructure, and request a financial contribution from developers to mitigate this impact.
- **Integrated Transport Strategy.** A new Cannock Chase Integrated Transport Strategy will be produced by the County Council to support the emerging new Local Plan; and
- **Enhanced telecommunications:** Consider in terms of reducing the need to travel, particularly in AM and PM peak commuter periods. Developers of residential sites need to be strongly encouraged to make the necessary arrangements for the provision of superfast broadband services.

PREFERRED POLICY: ACCESSIBLE DEVELOPMENT

What you told us

- 6.329 The responses to the Issues and Options Consultation (2019) supported planning policies that addressed the themes of rail, roads, walking, cycling, taxi ranks and servicing, the canal network (including towpaths), lorry parking and electric vehicle charging.
- 6.330 Respondents made a number of suggestions regarding Local Plan policy to improve transport choices. These included:



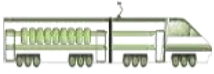
6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

- **Bus Services:** There needs to be a review of bus routes and services (lessening the frequency of service and stopping entirely on a Sunday). People are either relying on personal transport or not travelling.
- Transport standards should be set within a Local Plan Policy rather than via SPD, but only where the NPPF allows such standards to be considered.
- **Cycling:** Support for cyclists is required, as the cycle network through the district is poor. Create safe and comfortable cycling route; and
- **Impact of development:** Consider the potential impact of development on walking, cycling and recreational uses beyond the development site upon such infrastructure, and request a financial contribution from developers to mitigate this impact.

New Evidence

- 6.331 The Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020) proposes to simplify the role of Local Plans. In regard to transport, the White Paper states that planning policies should:
- ensure that new development brings with it the transport local communities need,
 - reduce our reliance on carbon-intensive modes of transport.
 - consider the ability of development land to maximise walking, cycling and public transport opportunities.
- 6.332 **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**
- 6.333 The Government consultation 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code' (January 2021) proposes two amendments to chapter 9 ('promoting sustainable transport') of the NPPF (2019):
- Paragraph 104(d) has been amended to support the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission's recommendations on encouraging walking and cycling; and
 - Paragraph 108(c) and footnote 45 has been amended to prevent reliance on outdated highways guidance. The proposed amended wording states that site assessments (of plan allocations or applications) should ensure that the design of schemes and standards applied reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code.
- 6.334 Local Plan policy should therefore ensure that new development is able to provide a choice of transport which favours more sustainable and less carbon intensive modes of travel.
- 6.335 A new Cannock Chase Integrated Transport Strategy will be produced by the County Council to support the emerging new Local Plan.



6. Local Plan Policy Options

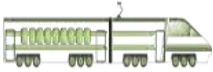
Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO5.1: ACCESSIBLE DEVELOPMENT

All major development proposals will be located in locations that can provide convenient access for all sections of the community to work, shopping, health, education, leisure, green space and other facilities. Proposals should set out, as appropriate, how and when the development will contribute to the delivery of:

- **A reduction in the reliance on private cars, by locating the development where it can provide a full choice of viable, sustainable travel options, including walking, cycling and public transport, to access community services and facilities;**
- **Co-located shopping, education, and leisure facilities at convenient ‘hubs’ within a network of footpath and cycle routes;**
- **Well designed, safe and convenient routes for walking and cycling within the scheme and to neighbouring areas, and which are integrated with green and blue infrastructure and linked with wider networks;**
- **Sustainable and frequent public transport services to nearby Town and Local Centres which are accessible to all people, including people with disabilities and people whose mobility is impaired by other circumstances;**
- **Layouts which have the capacity for public transport access along with high quality and well sign-posted walking connections to safe boarding points;**
- **Layouts which provide for safe traffic movement and vehicular access to, from and within the development, including the delivery of goods and access by service and emergency vehicles;**
- **The use of technology and innovation to inform those travelling and provide integrated travel options in line with Policy SO5.2: Communication Technologies;**
- **The infrastructure required to support the use of low and zero carbon emission vehicles (in line with Policy SO5.3: Low and Zero Carbon Transport);**
- **A design and layout of the development which will promote walking and cycling (in line with Policy SO5.3: Low Carbon Transport), and create new green infrastructure within the development which links to the wider Green Space Network (as required by Policy SO7.8);**
- **The provision of appropriate community infrastructure within the development in line with Policies SO2.1: Safeguarding the Provision of Community Infrastructure and SO2.3: Provision of Active Leisure and Sports Facilities;**
- **Developments which, individually or cumulatively, cause an unacceptable impact on the highway network in terms of safety, air quality, capacity or congestion will not be supported;**
- **All major developments will set out how the development will meet the requirements of this Policy as part of a Design and Access Statement. Larger developments will be required to submit Transport Assessments and Travel Plans to set out clearly how the proposals they include will be implemented, monitored and evaluated.**



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

Explanatory Text

- 6.336 The Local Plan policies will guide significant development to locations which are (or which can be made) sustainable. This means that the locations are better able to:
- Provide an inclusive network of transport options and choices so that everyone (including the one fifth of people who identify as having some sort of disability) is able to access the economic and social opportunities that are essential to physical and mental well-being;
 - Widen transport choice including the provision of high quality walking and cycling networks;
 - Mitigate the impacts that the development has on the transport network (in terms of capacity, safety, pollution and congestion); and
 - Minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities.
- 6.337 The meaning of the terms 'Transport Assessment' and 'Travel Plan' areas are defined in the glossary of the NPPF (2019) and reproduced in the Glossary of this document.
- 6.338 The thresholds for preparing Transport Assessments and Travel Plans will be set out in the relevant Local Design Code.

QUESTION 24

Do you support the preferred policy direction for Accessible Development?

List of Relevant Evidence

- National Planning Policy Framework (2019)
- Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020); and
- Government Consultation 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code' (January 2021)

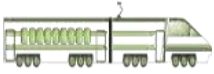
PREFERRED POLICY: COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

What you told us

- 6.339 The responses to the Issues and Options Consultation (2019) demonstrated general support for all the options presented. Respondents suggested that the Local Plan policy should consider ways of reducing the need to travel, particularly during peak commuter periods. Respondents also felt that the developers of residential sites needed to be strongly encouraged to make the necessary arrangements for the provision of superfast broadband services.

New Evidence

- 6.340 The Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire LEP Local Industrial Strategy (January 2020) proposes to establish a programme of technology demonstration and hands-on innovation support, particularly to businesses focusing on energy, low carbon transition and manufacturing. The Strategy also proposes to create new flexible provision for



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

digital skills and retraining at all ages, and to secure investment and then roll out next generation digital connectivity.

- 6.341 The National Industrial Strategy (2017) also identified ‘putting the UK at the forefront of the artificial intelligence and data revolution’ forward as one of four ‘Grand Challenges’. The ambition was to boost digital infrastructure with public investment, including 5G and roll out of full-fibre networks.
- 6.342 Cannock Chase Economic Prosperity Strategy 2020-2030 (January 2020) identified anecdotal evidence of poor digital connectivity that compromises business performance.
- 6.343 The response to the Covid-19 Pandemic has enabled those who are able to work from home to do so. This has highlighted the importance of reliable and effective broadband connections. Many ‘temporary home workers’ have expressed an interest in more permanent home-working arrangements continuing once the Covid-19 Pandemic has been brought under control. There are likely to be longer term changes in how businesses operate in the future, and these are expected to present economic, social and environmental opportunities and challenges.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO5.2: COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

All major development proposals will demonstrate how they will deliver digital connectivity by:

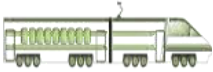
- **Supporting the installation of new communications infrastructure that is required to serve the development at the point of first occupation;**
- **Facilitating technologically advanced methods of communication for businesses and residents to allow remote working and reduce the need to travel;**
- **Providing and future proofing the infrastructure that is required to enable access to high quality and resilient digital connectivity;**
- **Increasing the use of technology to establish integrated journey planning and travel information to enable residents and visitors to plan journeys using real-time information for any mode.**

Explanatory Text

- 6.344 Connectivity between people and communities can be achieved through physical connections between different areas, usually by transport modes, but also by digital means such as broadband connections. An increase in the distribution and effectiveness of digital connectivity can often reduce the need to travel – for example by remote working and virtual meetings. High speed digital connectivity is an important facility for business and residential property occupants, as well as those on the move. It is therefore essential that development supports the provision and improvement of a communications infrastructure that can serve local businesses, including town centre services.

QUESTION 25

Do you support the preferred policy direction to improve communications technologies?



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

List of relevant evidence

- National Industrial Strategy (2017)
- Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire LEP Local Industrial Strategy (January 2020)
- Cannock Chase Economic Prosperity Strategy 2020-2030 (January 2020)

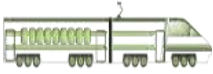
PREFERRED POLICY: LOW AND ZERO CARBON TRANSPORT

What you told us

- 6.345 There was general support for all the Sustainable Transport Options presented in the Issues and Options consultation (2019) with a spread of preferences expressed for each option. Respondents made the following suggestions regarding Local Plan policy:
- Electric Vehicles: Requirements (quantum and type) for electric vehicle charging infrastructure (including on-street and off-street parking) need to be addressed, and fully considered in the viability assessment work/evidence base to the Local Plan. Also, require confirmation of engagement with the main energy suppliers to determine network capacity to accommodate any adverse impacts if all or a proportion of dwellings have electric vehicle charge points; and.
 - Cycling: Support for cyclists is required, as the cycle network through the district is poor. Create safe and comfortable cycling routes.

New Evidence

- 6.346 The Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020) proposes a range of changes to Local Plans. In regard to transport, the White Paper states that planning policies should reduce our reliance on carbon-intensive modes of transport.
- 6.347 **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**
- 6.348 'Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation' Staffordshire County Council (AECOM October 2020) was commissioned to support the develop of an evidence base for new energy and sustainability policies being considered for Staffordshire County Council and its eight constituent Local Authorities.
- 6.349 The Report found that the main source of emissions is related to heating buildings and transport. The report also identified a number of opportunities for reducing the carbon emissions that are caused by transport. These include:
- Enhancing the provision of electric vehicle charge points across the District;
 - Monitoring any significant changes in hydrogen vehicle markets as they continue to develop, to ensure that policies, spatial strategies and infrastructure provision respond appropriately; and
 - Securing opportunities to co-locate solar photovoltaic (PV) canopies with existing or future parking provision, an approach that would contribute towards increasing electric vehicle infrastructure.



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

Preferred Policy Option

POLICY SO5.3: LOW AND ZERO CARBON TRANSPORT

All major development proposals will contribute to the reduction of the reliance on carbon-intensive modes of transport, for example by supporting the take-up of ultra low emission vehicles, hydrogen vehicles, developing electric vehicle charging networks, accelerating the uptake of low emission taxis and buses investing in cycling and walking, and moving freight from road to rail.

All major developments will set out as part of the Design and Access Statement how they will:

- Ensure that the design and layout of the development will reduce reliance on private vehicles while promoting walking, cycling and public transport;
- Support changes to the road network where they are related to the reduction of environmental impacts and the enhancement of public transport;
- Include the provision of electric vehicle charge points, and other infrastructure that may be required for alternative low and zero carbon transport options, designate parking spaces for low emission vehicles, and facilitate low emission bus service operations;
- Support, as appropriate, sustainable freight distribution by road and rail;
- In line with Policy SO5.1: 'Accessible Development' and the relevant Local Design Code, provide well designed, safe and convenient routes for walking and cycling within the scheme and to neighbouring areas which are integrated with green and blue infrastructure and connected to wider networks.

Explanatory Text

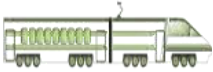
6.350 Evidence has shown that emissions from transport are a major factor which detrimentally impacts upon the health and well being, economy, and environment of our District and beyond. The District is part of not only a local transport network but also part of the strategic highway network. By facilitating low carbon transport the District will be able to benefit from the improvement to the health and wellbeing of our residents, environment, and economy which can be secured through the delivery of low carbon transport in the short term and beyond the plan period. The development of low carbon infrastructure will enable the sustainable regeneration of the District and deliver a resilient economy as we move towards the national target of net zero carbon by 2050, and achieving the Council's ambition of net zero carbon by 2030.

QUESTION 26

Do you support the preferred policy direction to deliver low and zero carbon transport?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020); and
- 'Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation' Staffordshire County Council (AECOM October 2020)



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

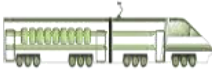
PREFERRED POLICY: MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING THE TRANSPORT SYSTEM

What you told us

- 6.351 The responses to the Issues and Options consultation demonstrated general support for all the options, with a spread of preferences expressed for each option. Respondents made the following suggestions regarding Local Plan policy:
- **Bus Services:** There needs to be a review of bus routes and services (lessening the frequency of service and stopping entirely On a Sunday). People are either relying on personal transport or not travelling;
 - **Canal:** The potential of the canal network (including towpaths) should be clearly referenced within the revised Policies. The restored Hatherton Canal would form part of the network for sustainable;
 - **Cycling:** Support for cyclists is required, as the cycle network through the district is poor. Create safe and comfortable cycling route; and
 - **Impact of development:** Consider the potential impact of development on walking, cycling and recreational uses beyond the development site upon such infrastructure, and request a financial contribution from developers to mitigate this impact.

New Evidence

- 6.352 The Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020) proposes a range of changes to Local Plans. In regard to transport, the White Paper states that planning policies should:
- Ensure that new development brings with it the transport local communities need;
 - Reduce our reliance on carbon-intensive modes of transport; and
 - Consider the ability of development land to maximise walking, cycling and public transport opportunities.
- 6.353 **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**
- 6.354 The draft policies proposed as part of the Preferred Options have been drafted within the context of the NPPF (2019), and with regard to the draft revisions proposed in January 2021. The 2021 consultation proposes two amendments to chapter 9 ('promoting sustainable transport') of the NPPF (2019):
- Paragraph 104(d) has been amended to support the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission's recommendations on encouraging walking and cycling; and
 - Paragraph 108(c) and footnote 45 has been amended to prevent reliance on outdated highways guidance. The proposed amended wording states that site assessments (of plan allocations or applications) should ensure that the design of schemes and standards applied reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code.



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

Preferred Policy Direction

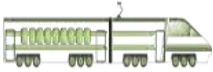
POLICY SO5.4: MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING THE TRANSPORT SYSTEM

The District Council will work with the local highway authority, transport stakeholders, other partners, business and the local community to maintain and improve the transport system. The following measures will be supported:

- Improved public realm and wayfinding signage, an education and awareness raising programme, and development of partnerships to provide opportunities for walking and to create a walking culture;
- Safeguarding existing and achieving improvements to cycling routes and enhancing facilities, including cycle storage;
- Promoting an increased use of the canal network and towpaths as part of the integrated transport network;
- Facilitating strategic partnerships with bus operators to deliver a high quality, high frequency bus services which leads to an increase bus patronage and a sustainable, commercial operated network wherever achievable;
- Securing the continued development of the rail services and facilities and associated public transport infrastructure as the preferred means of transport to other areas, including Walsall, Birmingham, Stafford and Lichfield;
- Safeguarding land that is required for sustainable transport schemes, including road, rail, cycle ways and footpaths;
- Enabling demand responsive transport services, including taxis and minibuses, to provide mobility at times and in locations where timetabled public transport services are not sustainable;
- Ensuring that schools, higher education, GP & Hospital services and key employment locations are accessible by sustainable transport;
- Supporting traffic management schemes that will provide for the safe and efficient use of the local highway network;
- Reducing transport pollution and carbon emissions, protect the natural environment, and promote improved public health and wellbeing;
- Supporting improvements that will meet the transport needs of business - including the storage, distribution and delivery of goods – in more environmentally sustainable ways.

Explanatory Text

- 6.355 Good accessibility is key to delivering sustainable development. By requiring development to maintain the current functioning of the transport system and supporting improvements to it the Local Plan will deliver economic, environmental and social net gain. In accordance with national planning policies and guidance, the Local Plan favours the development and improvement of sustainable modes of travel to services and facilities.
- 6.356 Walking and cycling (which also have obvious health benefits) are the most desirable and environmentally sustainable method of travel. There is potential to make better use of the canal network to increase the footpath and cycleway networks.
- 6.357 The next best option is to use public transport – rail and bus. The plan will facilitate the transformation of our current facilities to increase their accessibility, quality,



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

attractiveness, distribution and frequency of public transport services as these are key to reducing dependence on the private car to access jobs, shops, leisure and recreation and services .

QUESTION 27

Do you support the preferred policy direction to maintain and improve the transport system?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020)

PREFERRED POLICY: HATHERTON CANAL RESTORATION CORRIDOR

What you told us

- 6.358 The responses to the Issues and Options consultation demonstrated general support for all of the transport options, with a spread of preferences expressed for each option. Respondents supported the suggestion that the canal network (including towpaths) should be clearly referenced within the revised Policies. The restored Hatherton Canal would form part of the network for sustainable transport.
- 6.359 The consultation responses to the Healthy Living options (Question 12) suggested support for creating a separate policy for the Hatherton Canal restoration and seek to safeguard the canal route.

New evidence

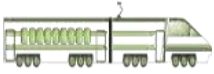
- 6.360 Staffordshire Wildlife Trust was commissioned by Cannock Chase District Council to carry out a strategic assessment of the District's biodiversity and habitat networks. The Cannock Chase District Nature Recovery Network Mapping report (2020) outlines the existing picture of the District's nature network and describes key locations where habitats may be created or enhanced to contribute to nature's recovery (the Nature Recovery Network), as well as delivering against objectives set out in national planning policy legislation.
- 6.361 The Nature Recovery Network study highlights the importance of canal routes to increasing biodiversity, access and recreational use and increase understanding of the area's rich industrial heritage.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO5.5: HATHERTON CANAL RESTORATION CORRIDOR

The proposed Hatherton Canal Restoration Corridor, as shown on the Proposals Map, will be protected from development that would prevent the future implementation of the canal restoration project.

The Restoration Corridor will be protected to enable the development of the canal waterway and associated infrastructure, including locks, bridges, boat turning areas and towpaths.



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

The implementation of the restoration project will provide opportunities for sustainable transport links and improved biodiversity along the length of the safeguarded route.

Proposals for development adjacent to the protected Corridor will respect and enhance the setting of the canal. Development will be designed to use the canal frontage in order to reduce fear of crime and achieve good design in an attractive and safe environment.

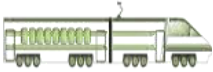
The implementation of the restoration project will need to take into account the advice of statutory bodies on water quality, water supply and environmental issues.

Explanatory Text

- 6.362 Cannock Chase Council has protected the alignment of the Hatherton Canal since 1997 through a safeguarded route policy in the Cannock Chase Local Plan 1997 and publication of the route (with amendments) in the Key Diagram of the Cannock Chase Local Plan (Part 1) 2014.
- 6.363 The routes is being promoted and developed by the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust who have land ownership and substantial infrastructure in place along parts of the route, in and adjacent to Cannock Chase District. The route corridor is also protected via cross boundary co-operation with the neighbouring Council areas of South Staffordshire and Walsall Metropolitan Borough.
- 6.364 The Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust and the Inland Waterways Association supported the continued protection of the route during the Local Plan Review - Issues and Options Consultation and in previous Local Plan consultations. The original restoration route is set out in a Feasibility Study commissioned by the Trust, with the later route amendments incorporated within a supplementary study.
- 6.365 The Canal Restoration is a long term project and the continuing protection of the corridor has the potential to provide interlinked journeys for sustainable and healthy modes of transport including boaters, walkers and cyclists. The route is adjacent, but largely segregated from the busy A5 east to west transport corridor.
- 6.366 There are a number of broader economic benefits to be derived from the restoration of the canal, including heritage-based tourism visits. It will also enable the creation of a green corridor to benefit wildlife and associated habitats. Cannock Chase Council has a series of green spaces and corridors, which can link into this route and the wider countryside.
- 6.367 The Cannock Chase District Nature Recovery Network Mapping denotes the line of the canal restoration route on the combined habitat connectivity opportunity area map as an opportunity area for wetland habitats.

QUESTION 28

Do you support the preferred policy direction to safeguard the route of the Hatherton Canal?



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Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

List of Relevant Evidence

- [Hatherton Canal Restoration Feasibility Report](#) (Ove Arup & Partners Ltd, September 2006) - commissioned by British Waterways on behalf of the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust (LHCRT)
- [Hatherton Canal Restoration Supplementary Feasibility Report](#) (Atkins Ltd, February 2009) – Produced for the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust (LHCRT)
- Cannock Chase District Nature Recovery Network Mapping (Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, 2020)
- Cannock Chase District Nature Recovery Network Mapping report (2020)

PREFERRED POLICY: SAFEGUARDING PROPOSED RECREATIONAL FOOTPATH AND CYCLE ROUTES

What you told us

- 6.368 The responses to the Issues and Options Consultation (2019) supported planning policies that addressed the themes of rail, roads, walking, cycling, taxi ranks and servicing, the canal network (including towpaths), lorry parking and electric vehicle charging.
- 6.369 Respondents made a number of suggestions regarding Local Plan policy to improve transport choices, including more support for cyclists through the creation of safe and comfortable cycling routes.

New Evidence

- 6.370 The Government consultation 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code' (January 2021) proposes amendments to chapter 9 ('promoting sustainable transport') of the NPPF (2019). These include an amendment to Paragraph 104(d) in support the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission's recommendations on encouraging walking and cycling.
- 6.371 The Cannock Chase District Nature Recovery Network Mapping shows the potential for improving links between types of habitat and emphasises the importance of cross boundary habitat linkages. Woodland and wetland corridors linking habitats often follow existing recreational routes along green lanes and canal towpaths while open spaces contain grassland and heathland which are also crossed by many recreational routes. This provides opportunities for recreational and habitat improvements to be undertaken together.

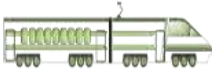
Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO5.6: SAFEGUARDING PROPOSED RECREATIONAL FOOTPATH AND CYCLE ROUTES

The proposed recreational footpath and cycle routes, as shown on the proposals map, will be protected from development that will prevent the future implementation of the proposed schemes.

The corridors will be protected to enable the development of the footpaths and cycle routes, including any related infrastructure such as highway crossing points.

Implementation will provide opportunities for sustainable transport links and



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

improved biodiversity along the length of the safeguarded route.

The routes should provide an attractive and safe environment that will link the rural villages and countryside to the main urban areas to provide opportunities for healthy living and enhance well being.

Explanatory Text

- 6.372 Cannock Chase Council has protected the alignment of the potential off road footpath and cycle routes since 1997 through a safeguarded route policy in the Cannock Chase Local Plan 1997 and publication of the routes on the Key Diagram of the Cannock Chase Local Plan (Part 1) 2014. There is a well established network of local and national walking and cycling routes across the district which is expanding.
- 6.373 These routes are largely former mineral railway lines that carried coal from the coalfields on Cannock Chase to the main line railway for onward distribution to local customers and markets further away. Some routes have been restored as opportunities allow, but the remaining protected routes provide an opportunity for a wider network of off road sustainable transport corridors. They also link with other local off road routes including the Cannock Chase Heritage Trail from Cannock to Rugeley via Hednesford and phase 1 of the Brereton and Ravenhill Way from Rugeley Town Railway Station to Brereton.
- 6.374 Many of the routes are now unsurfaced green lanes bordered with hedgerows and trees that form linear green corridors to connect the urban areas with the wider countryside. Many are wide and have a relatively flat gradient. The routes provide opportunity to enhance the health and well being for all residents and sustainable economic tourist growth which promotes the heritage and biodiversity of our district.

QUESTION 29

Do you support the preferred policy direction to safeguard the proposed routes of recreational footpath and cycleways?

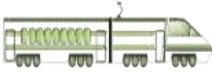
List of Relevant Evidence

- [Cannock Chase Heritage Trail](#)
- Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Plan/ Trail Booklet

PREFERRED POLICY: PARKING PROVISION

What you told us

- 6.375 There was general support for all the options proposed in the Issues and Options consultation (2019), with a spread of preferences expressed for each option. Respondents made a number of suggestions regarding Local Plan policy, including that the setting of any minimum or maximum (and flexible) car parking standards for residential development should be undertaken in accordance with Paragraphs 105 and 106 of the NPPF, and that HGV parking facilities needed to be addressed.



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Objective 5: Supporting the Provision of Sustainable Transport and Communications Infrastructure

New Evidence

- 6.376 The Government consultation 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code' (January 2021) proposes two amendments to chapter 9 ('promoting sustainable transport') of the NPPF (2019):
- Paragraph 104(d) has been amended to support the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission's recommendations on encouraging walking and cycling; and
 - Paragraph 108(c) and footnote 45 has been amended to prevent reliance on outdated highways guidance. The proposed amended wording states that site assessments (of plan allocations or applications) should ensure that the design of schemes and standards applied reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO5.7: PARKING PROVISION

All major development proposals will make appropriate off-street parking in accordance with the relevant Local Design Code and an assessment of the:

- **Anticipated demand for lorry, car, and cycle parking arising from the use proposed, or the other purposes that the development might be used for under Permitted Development Rights;**
- **Scope for encouraging alternative means of travel to the development that would reduce the need for on-site parking, particularly in areas well served by public transport;**
- **Provision that will be made for private and public charging points for electric vehicles;**
- **Impact that parking might have on road safety and residential amenity; and,**
- **Provision of adequate and conveniently placed parking for people who are disabled or have restricted mobility.**

Explanatory Text

- 6.377 National planning policy identifies a number of issues to consider when setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, including the accessibility of the development, the type, mix and use of the development, the availability of public transport, local car ownership levels and the need to reduce the use of high emission vehicles.
- 6.378 The provisions of Policy SO5.7 'Parking Provision' will be used to guide further guidance that will be included in the Local Design Codes.

QUESTION 30

Do you support the preferred policy direction for parking provision?

List of Relevant Evidence

- National Model Design Code (2021); and
- Guidance notes for Design Codes (2021)



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 6: Creating Attractive Town and Local Centres

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6

To create attractive Town and Local Centres by:

- **enhancing the Town, and Local Centres in order to protect and improve their vitality and viability;**
- **maintaining a hierarchy of Town and Local Centres;**
- **supporting growth of shops, offices, business, education, leisure, arts, cultural and tourism in Town Centres, and improving access to employment and housing in order to achieve Town Centres with good vitality and viability;**
- **supporting the development of Town Centres as hubs for comparison goods shopping, leisure and culture uses, residential opportunities and health and community activities;**
- **supporting the development of Local Centres mainly for local food shopping and local services; and**
- **supporting the direction of new investment to the Town and Local Centres via a range of means as most appropriate to the local context.**

INTRODUCTION

- 6.379 Our Town, District and Local Centres are the heart of our District, and they provide a focus for our communities and visitors. Our centres provide the retail, administrative support to our economy and enable our communities to function on a daily basis as well as providing our visitors with shopping and entertainment opportunities and an insight into our history.
- 6.380 Our centres are a dynamic environment which constantly needs to evolve to remain relevant and be able to respond to rapid change. Cannock Chase District has a large proportion of small businesses and the ability to showcase these vibrant and variable businesses to a wider audience and support their resilience and ability to adapt should be celebrated alongside the regional and national retailers and entertainment providers. Further work will be undertaken to guide the change to our town centres to maximise opportunities and extend the time people wish to spend visiting them whilst ensuring good design and their functionality is retained.
- 6.381 Our centres show the passage of time our District has gone through and their historic fabric should not be forgotten. Its protection and enhancement can support not only local well being but also enrich our visitors experience with our unique and varied history and encourage links to other areas and places of interest in our District. Our centres will need the ability to adapt and change in order to keep reflecting their role in the history of our District. Through the policies in this Plan and the opportunities available there is scope for this without impacting upon the best of our historic environment.

National Policy Context

- 6.382 The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) includes guidance in Chapter 7 to 'ensure the vitality of town centres': Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.
- 6.383 Planning policies should (paragraph 85):



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 6: Creating Attractive Town and Local Centres

- Define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability.
- Define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas.;
- Retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones.
- Allocate a range of suitable sites in town centres to meet the scale and type of development likely to be needed.
- Where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available, allocate appropriate edge of centre sites that are well connected to the town centre; and
- Recognise that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres.

- 6.384 Local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan (paragraph 86).
- 6.385 When assessing applications for retail and leisure development outside town centres, which are not in accordance with an up-to-date plan, local planning authorities should require an impact assessment if the development is over a proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold (if there is no locally set threshold, the default threshold is 2,500m² of gross floorspace).
- 6.386 The Government consultation 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code' (January 2021)⁶⁵ sought views on the draft revisions to the NPPF to implement policy changes in response to the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission 'Living with Beauty' Report⁶⁶.
- 6.387 **The draft policies proposed as part of the Preferred Options have been drafted within the context of the NPPF (2019), and with regard to the draft revisions proposed in January 2021.** The 2021 consultation did not propose any amendments to chapter 7 ('ensuring the vitality of town centres') of the NPPF (2019):
- 6.388 A fuller review of the NPPF is expected to be prepared by the government in due course, once the government has fully considered the responses to consultation on the White Paper proposals. **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**

Local Policy Context

- 6.389 In summary, the policy priorities of the adopted Local Plan (Part 1) 2014 – Section 1 include:
- 6.390 Centres Hierarchy (Policy CP11)
- Defining the centres hierarchy (Strategic Sub-regional Centre; Town Centres; District Centre; and Local Centres.
- 6.391 The policy priorities of the adopted Local Plan (Part 1) 2014 – Section 2 include:

⁶⁵ Ref

⁶⁶ [Building Better Building Beautiful Commission "Living with Beauty" report.](#)



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 6: Creating Attractive Town and Local Centres

- A Regeneration Strategy for Rugeley Town Centre, and identification of development sites.

ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION

What you told us

- 6.392 The Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation (May 2019) proposed the following town centres hierarchy policy options:
- Option A:** Retain the existing centres hierarchy as set out in Policy CP11 with some minor updates to wording ensure the policy is up to date, and set clear town centre boundaries and development quanta where appropriate based on updated evidence base.
- Option B:** As per Option A, but introduce a local policy on local thresholds which would trigger the need for an impact test for town centre uses which are proposed in out of town locations.
- Option C:** Produce separate Area Action Plans (AAPs) for the larger town centres, including the retention and updating of the adopted Rugeley AAP and the continued pursuance of the emerging AAP for Cannock Town Centre.
- Option D:** Support the preparation of local policy and guidance to direct investment to centres / town centres via a range of means as most appropriate to the local context e.g. Masterplan, prospectus, Supplementary Planning Documents, Neighbourhood Plan etc.
- 6.393 The Sustainability Appraisal of these Policy Options indicated effects ranging from 'negligible' to 'significantly positive'. Option B (impact test for town centre uses which are proposed in out of town locations) and Option D (preparation of local policy and guidance to direct investment to town centres) were found to be the most positive.
- 6.394 Option B is to retain the existing centres hierarchy (as set out in Policy CP11) with some minor updates to wording to ensure the policy is up to date, sets clear town centre boundaries and development quanta where appropriate based on an updated evidence base. Option B would also introduce a local policy on local thresholds which would trigger the need for an impact test for town centre uses which are proposed in out of town locations.
- 6.395 The consultation responses (to Question 44) demonstrated support for Option D, which is to prepare local policy and guidance to direct investment to the town and other centres via a range of means as most appropriate to the local context (e.g. Masterplan, prospectus, Supplementary Planning Documents, Neighbourhood Plan etc.). This option will provide an alternative to the more rigid framework afforded by an Area Action Plan and could provide the adaptability and flexibility needed to keep up with fast paced change.
- 6.396 The consultation responses (to Question 45) also demonstrated support for using historic characterisation and heritage led regeneration to create attractive town centres. There was also support for further development of Rugeley Town Centre and the role of Village Centres.



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 6: Creating Attractive Town and Local Centres

PREFERRED POLICY - HIERARCHY OF TOWN AND LOCAL CENTRES

What you told us

- 6.397 The Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation provides support for the development of Local Plan Town Centre Policy on the basis of Options B (retain centres hierarchy with some minor updates, set town centre boundaries and introduce local thresholds) and D (local policy and guidance to direct investment to centres), together with additional emphasis of the role of heritage assets in driving regeneration.

New Evidence

- 6.398 The Council's Economic Prosperity Strategy (2020) sets out an ambitious vision for the District to 2030 based on clean growth principles to support a highly productive, clean, and resilient economy. The vision will be delivered through 5 themes, which reference the important role of the new Mill Green Designer Outlet to enhance the District's reputation and profile; the need to create a positive and entrepreneurial environment in which businesses can grow and thrive, and the need to ensure that the District's main towns are more vibrant and sustainable and act as hubs for leisure and culture uses, residential opportunities and community activities.
- 6.399 The Cannock Chase Retail and Leisure Study (2015) identified strengths and opportunities, and an updated Retail and Town Centre Services Study (2020) has been prepared. The purpose of the Retail and Town Centre Services Study is to provide a comprehensive assessment of the performance of the three town centres within Cannock Chase District regarding retail and other service provision.
- 6.400 The 2020 Study finds that the District's town centres continue to face a number of challenges, which have been compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic. Centre Strategies need to be able to support the continued development/changes in the 'high street' if they are to successfully compete. Such strategies may seek to:
- provide a good mix/variety of retail and leisure uses;
 - attract a mix of additional land uses beyond retail/leisure, including residential, educational, community and office uses;
 - support and improve existing cultural/heritage/tourist attractions;
 - enhance existing town centre markets and speciality retailing;
 - provide a high quality shopping/leisure experience;
 - provide convenient, affordable and accessible town centre parking;
 - promote and encourage events in the town centre;
 - embrace, and not compete against, multi-channel retailing; and
 - be responsive to changes in technology (the 'digital high street').
- 6.401 The key purpose of Town Centre Strategies should be to seek to promote the existing individuality of centres, ensuring centres are a focus/hub for their communities, and extend the 'dwell time' and spend of visitors/residents visiting the town centre which in turn will support their vitality and viability.
- 6.402 The hierarchy of centres is appropriate and should be perpetuated. Cannock is the principle centre and serves the widest catchment for retail, other services and facilities. Rugeley and Hednesford have a more localised catchment serving local residents. All centres are following national trends of a shrinking retail sector and will need to diversify to attract investment and maximise their assets and advantages. Cannock town centre has the greatest potential for this.



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 6: Creating Attractive Town and Local Centres

- 6.403 The Study reviewed the existing evidence to enable a hierarchy of centres to be identified and the town centre first approach as required by the NPPF.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO6.1 HIERARCHY OF TOWN AND LOCAL CENTRES

Development proposals for Main Town Centre Uses will be appropriate to the role, scale, and historic character of the settlement, and not conflict with other policies within this Plan.

- **Cannock Town Centre is designated, and shown on the Proposals Map, as the strategic Town Centre, with the role to provide the focus for District Town Centre Services and be the District focus for a night time economy;**
- **Rugeley and Hednesford, are designated, and shown on the Proposals Map as Town Centres with the role to provide Town Centre Services to serve their local catchments and providing for main weekly food shopping;**
- **Hawks Green, Norton Canes, Heath Hayes, Chadsmoor, Bridgtown, Fernwood Drive and Brereton, are designated as Local Centres with the role to provide small scale Town Centre Services to serve the local needs in their catchment.**

The Primary Shopping Areas of Cannock, Rugeley and Hednesford are designated and shown on the Proposals Map.

Explanatory Text

- 6.404 The designated hierarchy of centres represent the District's most sustainable locations which include many assets, infrastructure and services which should be safeguarded. The hierarchy reflects the needs of the settlements they serve. Central Cannock provides the focus for administration of the District and is able to accommodate sustainably the largest number of visitors to the area.
- 6.405 Maintaining the designated hierarchy will promote the long term vitality and viability of the centres and sustainability of the area.
- 6.406 Increased residential use within the town centre can add to its vibrancy and vitality, although the principle role of our centres is to provide a concentration of a variety of uses such as comparison and convenience retailing, services and facilities to visiting members of the public. Our centres have evolved to meet these needs and have the infrastructure such as bus interchanges and attractive and safe environments with civic spaces and the opportunity to enjoy our heritage in use for large visiting members of the public in a sustainable way. The authority supports the wider range of town centre services and the diversification of the centres however will monitor through the AMR the impact of these changes and may seek an Article 4 Directions to safeguard the vitality and viability of its centres.
- 6.407 Local Design Codes will be prepared for each of the centres.
- 6.408 'Town Centre Services', as defined in the Glossary, include:
- 'Commercial, Business and Service' (Class E);
 - 'Learning and Non-Residential Institutions' (Class F1);
 - 'Local Community' (Class F2) Uses;



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 6: Creating Attractive Town and Local Centres

- 'Hotels' (Class C1) ; and
- Other town centre uses which fall outside the defined use classes, including drinking establishments, hot food takeaways, cinemas, concert halls, dance halls and bingo halls.

QUESTION 31

Is the proposed hierarchy of centres appropriate, and do you support the range of uses described in the Policy for each tier within the hierarchy?

List of Relevant Evidence

- 'Planning for the Future' White Paper (August 2020); and
- Cannock Chase Retail & Town Centre Uses Study (January 2021)

PREFERRED POLICY - THRESHOLDS AND IMPACT TESTS FOR TOWN CENTRE SERVICES

What you told us

- 6.409 The Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation provides support for the development of Local Plan Town Centre Policy on the basis of Options B and D, together with additional emphasis of the role of heritage assets in driving regeneration, and a continued focus on Rugeley and the village centres.
- 6.410 Option B is to retain the existing centres hierarchy (as set out in adopted Local Plan Policy CP11) and also introduce a local policy on local thresholds which would trigger the need for an impact test for town centre uses which are proposed in out of town locations. Option D, proposed the preparation of local policy and guidance to direct investment to the town and other centres via a range of means as most appropriate to the local context.

New Evidence

- 6.411 The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020⁶⁷ came into force on 1st September 2020. The Regulations created a new Use Class E 'Commercial, business and service'. Use Class E 'Commercial, business and service' incorporates the former use classes A1 'shops', A2 'financial and professional services' A3 'restaurants and cafes', and B1 'offices'. Uses such as gyms, nurseries and health centres (previously in use classes D1 'non-residential institutions' and D2 'assembly and leisure') and other uses which are suitable for a town centre area are also included in the new Use Class E.
- 6.412 The Cannock Chase Retail and Town Centre Uses Study (2020) reviewed the existing evidence and the current health, performance, unit and floor space composition of each of the town centres; increasing competition from the internet; and availability of units in the main shopping areas capable of meeting potential national multiple occupiers in each of the centres which accords with the criteria set out in the NPPF. The Study recommended a more cautious approach than previously recommending an assessment of impact be undertaken for proposals of over 500sqm which lie beyond

⁶⁷ The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 ([pdf](#)) ([link](#)). (SI 2020 No. 757)



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Objective 6: Creating Attractive Town and Local Centres

Cannock, Rugeley and Hednesford Town centre boundaries and for the local centres and elsewhere in the District a threshold of 200sqm is recommended.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO6.2: PROVISION OF MAIN TOWN CENTRE USES AND TOWN CENTRE SERVICES

Proposals for Main Town Centre Uses which are located outside the designated Strategic Town Centre and Town Centres should be supported by a sequential test that demonstrates that there are no other sequentially preferable, suitable and available sites within or on the edge of an appropriate centre within the hierarchy of centres.

Proposals for Retail and Leisure Uses which are located outside designated Primary Shopping Areas must be accompanied by an impact assessment where the floorspace exceeds the thresholds set out below. Any proposal that is likely to have a significant adverse impact on the investment in and/or the vitality and viability of an existing centre will not be permitted.

- **Development proposals creating new or additional floorspace greater than 500 square metres (gross) outside of the designated Primary Shopping Areas within the Strategic Town Centre of Cannock and the Town Centres of Rugeley and Hednesford.**
- **Development proposals creating new or additional floorspace greater than 200 square metres (gross) outside of the Local Centres.**

The thresholds shall apply to all new developments requiring planning permission including applications for new floorspace, changes of use and variations of condition.

The impact assessment will be proportionate to the scale of the development proposed and undertaken by a suitably qualified person to enable the Council to have confidence in the findings.

Explanatory Text

- 6.413 The designated hierarchy of centres provide important services and facilities for their communities, and their vitality and viability will be safeguarded. The NPPF permits local thresholds to be set within Local Plans where these can be justified. Evidence has shown that Cannock, Rugeley, Hednesford and the District and Local Centres are relatively small centres compared to national town centre policy and their consequent position at the lower end of the retail hierarchy means they have a greater susceptibility to likely significant adverse effects from alternative out of centre provision.
- 6.414 The cumulative impact of the West Midlands Designer Outlet village⁶⁸ is as yet not fully known and the existing centres are experiencing considerable pressure to retain their vitality and viability; it is therefore important to safeguard the existing levels of retail and leisure uses within the town centres. The Town Centres have a range of opportunities available within them and considerable assets which need to be safeguarded and

⁶⁸ Planning permission CH/15/0048



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Objective 6: Creating Attractive Town and Local Centres

infrastructure which should continue to be utilised to support the sustainability of the communities they serve.

- 6.415 In order to take a proportionate approach where a retail assessment is required the scope of the assessment should be discussed with the planning authority to ensure it is of the appropriate scale and nature and identifies any specific local issues or cross boundary centres which may need to be considered.
- 6.416 'Town Centre Services' are defined in the Glossary.
- 6.417 Within the broader Use Class E 'Commercial, Business and Service Uses', a building can be in a number of uses concurrently, or used for different uses at different times of the day. Changes to another use, or mix of uses, within this Use Class do not require planning permission. At present the sequential test and threshold can only be applied to retail and leisure uses.

QUESTION 32

Do you support the thresholds set within the policy?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020; and
- Cannock Chase Retail & Town Centre Uses Study (January 2021)

PREFERRED POLICY - SAFEGUARDING EXISTING TOWN CENTRE SERVICES

What you told us

- 6.418 No representations were received. The amended Use Classes E, F1 and F2 were introduced in September 2020, and consequently these changes did not feature in previous consultations.

New Evidence

- 6.419 The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020⁶⁹ came into force on 1st September 2020. The Regulations created:
- Use Class E 'Commercial, business and service';
 - Use Class F1 'Learning and non-residential institutions'; and
 - Use Class F2 'Local community'.
- 6.420 The Regulations remove the former use classes A4 'drinking establishments' and A5 'hot food takeaway'. However, these uses have been included in the list of uses (Use Classes Order Article 3(6)) as uses which do not now fall within any use class (sui generis uses). The same approach has been taken with cinemas, concert, dance and bingo halls which fell within the former D2 use class. Any material change of use from a sui generis use, or to a sui generis use, will require planning permission.

⁶⁹ The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 ([pdf](#)) ([link](#)). (SI 2020 No. 757)



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Objective 6: Creating Attractive Town and Local Centres

- 6.421 The Cannock Chase Retail & Town Centre Uses Study (January 2021) considers the potential for growth in retail and other town centre uses across the district and its centres and considers the role of the centres and the potential within the centres to enhance their vitality and viability.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO6.3: SAFEGUARDING EXISTING TOWN CENTRE SERVICES

Proposals for changes of use to retail uses (Class E (a)) within the primary shopping area will be supported.

Where they occupy active street frontages/ground floor level within a designated Primary Shopping Area, proposals for changes of use from:

- **Commercial, Business and Service Uses (Use Class E);**
- **Learning and Non-Residential Institutions (Use Class F1);**
- **Local Community Uses (Use Class F2);**
- **Hotel (Use Class C1); or**
- **Drinking establishments, hot food takeaways, cinemas, concert halls, dance halls, bingo halls (Sui Generis).**

will only be supported where they support the strategy set out in this Plan for the centre and where;

- **there is no significant adverse harm to the level of service, role and vitality of the centre; or**
- **there is no reasonable prospect of the current use continuing or other alternative town centre service uses occupying the unit/site; or**
- **the proposal supports the delivery of an approved masterplan/design code for the area.**

Evidence which demonstrates that there is no reasonable prospect of a town centre service use (a-e above) continuing will be an assessment showing details of comprehensive marketing of the site for at least 12 months and appropriate prevailing market conditions.

Explanatory Text

- 6.422 Town Centre retail is changing and our town centres are some of our greatest assets. They provide an attractive environment which has evolved to provide a sustainable location for people to visit and shop which can be accessed by sustainable transport options and provides opportunities for many entrepreneurs offering goods and services. Uses within Class E(a) thrive when similar uses are in close proximity to them, hence the name comparison goods. Whilst there is almost 30 % of retailing undertaken online there is still a need for high street shopping and growth in sectors such as 'brick and click' retailing. Town centres have evolved to enable local entrepreneurs and large scale multi-national operators to have equal access to local markets and town centres need to be given opportunity to adapt to meet the changing demands.
- 6.423 Encouraging active frontages especially at ground floor level safeguards accessibility for persons with restricted mobility and aids legibility of the centre to those who are new visitors or need familiarity to their environment. Inclusion of some sui generis uses encourages their location into centres which have adapted to provide sustainable



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 6: Creating Attractive Town and Local Centres

access to large numbers of visiting members of the public and adds vitality to the town centre.

- 6.424 The Council will prepare a masterplan for Cannock Town Centre and work with local communities to develop Design Codes or Neighbourhood Plan policies to support the vitality and vibrancy of Rugeley and Hednesford Town Centres.
- 6.425 **'Commercial, Business and Service Uses'** are defined as use, or part use, for all or any of the following purposes—
- (a) for the display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food, principally to visiting members of the public,
 - (b) for the sale of food and drink principally to visiting members of the public where consumption of that food and drink is mostly undertaken on the premises,
 - (c) for the provision of the following kinds of services principally to visiting members of the public—
 - (i) financial services,
 - (ii) professional services (other than health or medical services), or
 - (iii) any other services which it is appropriate to provide in a commercial, business or service locality,
 - (d) for indoor sport, recreation or fitness, not involving motorised vehicles or firearms, principally to visiting members of the public,
 - (e) for the provision of medical or health services, principally to visiting members of the public, except the use of premises attached to the residence of the consultant or practitioner,
 - (f) for a crèche, day nursery or day centre, not including a residential use, principally to visiting members of the public,
 - (g) for—
 - (i) an office to carry out any operational or administrative functions,
 - (ii) the research and development of products or processes, or
 - (iii) any industrial process,being a use, which can be carried out in any residential area without detriment to the amenity of that area by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust or grit.
- 6.427 **'Learning and non-residential institutions'** are defined as any use not including residential use—
- (a) for the provision of education,
 - (b) for the display of works of art (otherwise than for sale or hire),
 - (c) as a museum,
 - (d) as a public library or public reading room,
 - (e) as a public hall or exhibition hall,
 - (f) for, or in connection with, public worship or religious instruction,
 - (g) as a law court.
- 6.428 **'Local Community Uses'** appropriate to Town Centres are defined as:
- (a) a hall or meeting place for the principal use of the local community,
 - (b) an area or place for outdoor sport or recreation, not involving motorised vehicles or firearms,
 - (c) an indoor or outdoor swimming pool or skating rink.



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Objective 6: Creating Attractive Town and Local Centres

QUESTION 33

Do you support the preferred policy direction safeguarding existing town centre services?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020

TOWN CENTRE DESIGN GUIDE

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO6.4: TOWN CENTRE DESIGN

Creating an attractive and safe environment is vital to ensuring the growth and resilience of our town centres. Development within the Strategic Town Centre, Town and Local Centres will be of high quality and consider:

- The Local Historic Environment including Conservation Areas and the proximity to Listed Buildings to ensure that local heritage is preserved and enhanced whilst enabling new, vibrant and attractive uses;
- Shop fronts and adverts, preserving historic shop fronts and design respects historic context where appropriate
- Navigable features for those with visual, mobility or other disabilities;
- Create attractive gateways between centres and nearby public transport interchanges to encourage greater use of sustainable transport;
- Use of different spatial characteristics, including building typologies and building to street relationships to differentiate principal and minor streets to help people find their way around a place;
- Security measures required by businesses whilst ensuring they provide an attractive and interesting visual appearance and do not make an area appear unappealing and unsafe at night-time;
- The wide mix of uses within a town centre, enabling them to co-exist and form a busy, vibrant area whilst not being of detriment to extant or future occupiers;
- Accessibility of streets, pathways and buildings for those with visual, mobility or other disabilities;
- Active frontages, which where appropriate, may include front doors, balconies and terraces to enliven and add interest, and provide natural surveillance opportunities to the streetscene;
- Promoting well-lit streets and areas to ensure a feeling of safety for both day and night-time users;
- Streets for people, sharing street space fairly between pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles;
- Servicing of properties and storage of refuse;
- Clear windows along the ground floor of non-residential buildings (avoid



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obscured windows); and,

- **Frequent benches to assist those with mobility difficulties to walk more easily between places.**

Local Design Guides should be used in conjunction with other relevant policies within the Local Plan.

TOWN CENTRE POLICIES

Introduction

- 6.429 Traditional town centre retailing is undergoing structural change with the growth of the internet fuelled by the coronavirus pandemic and pressure on the fashion industry to become more environmentally aware. However our centres still offer the greatest potential for supporting concentrations of retailers selling comparison goods in an attractive and sustainable location. The potential of our town centres to provide a focus for convenience and comparison retailers and the variety of facilities they offer should thus be protected and enhanced. Accessibility and legibility will be fundamental factors in supporting the town centres. Providing sufficient and easily accessible car parks and active travel links with attractive, safe routes and signposting will help to make the town centres attractive and promote our District as a place where people will want to live, work and visit.
- 6.430 More residential uses in the town centres can increase access to the housing market and secure a greater variety in accommodation, for example by providing accommodation for residents with reduced mobility in close proximity to services. More town centre accommodation means more footfall and people utilising the town centres for day to day shopping and service needs alongside the office workers and visitors and supporting food and beverage venues. Increased residential use within the town centre will be supported, especially on upper floors and where this will not lead to a fragmentation of town centre uses.
- 6.431 The West Midlands Designer Outlet village will provide a specialist retail offer and support the town by encouraging greater visitors to Cannock town centre. The new town centre boundary will enable flexibility in uses and land prices to encourage our dynamic small businesses access to a variety of sites. Our primary shopping area will be safeguarded to protect the retail function of Cannock town centre. Careful design to provide safe and attractive environments throughout the day and night. The historic environment will play an integral part in supporting the town centre.
- 6.432 Sites are available within the town centre boundary which can meet the growth need identified for town centre services and are of the scale and type of development required to deliver a vibrant and vital town centre.

CANNOCK TOWN CENTRE– STRATEGIC TOWN CENTRE

What you told us

- 6.433 No specific comments were made.

New Evidence

- 6.434 The draft policies proposed as part of the Preferred Options have been drafted within the context of the NPPF (2019), and with regard to the draft revisions (January 2021) to



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 6: Creating Attractive Town and Local Centres

implement policy changes in response to the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission “Living with Beauty” report. However, the 2021 consultation does not propose any amendments to chapter 7 (‘ensuring the vitality of town centres’) of the NPPF (2019).

- 6.435 The draft NPPF revisions (January 2021) do not reflect proposals for wider planning reform set out in the Government White Paper ‘Planning for the Future’ (August 2020). The White Paper proposes to simplify the role of Local Plans, to focus on identifying land under three categories:
- Growth areas suitable for substantial development, and where outline approval for development would be automatically secured for forms and types of development specified in the Plan;
 - Renewal areas suitable for some development, such as gentle densification; and
 - Protected areas where – as the name suggests – development is restricted.
- 6.436 A fuller review of the NPPF is expected to be prepared by the government in due course, once the government has fully considered the responses to consultation on the White Paper proposals. The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.
- 6.437 The Cannock Chase Economic Prosperity Strategy (2020-30)⁷⁰ seeks to ensure that the District’s main towns are more vibrant and sustainable and act as hubs for leisure and culture uses, residential opportunities and community activities. The role of the McArthur Glen designer Outlet is seen to enhance the District’s reputation and profile.
- 6.438 The Economic Prosperity Strategy identifies a number of opportunities within Central Cannock including:
- development opportunities in and around Cannock Town Centre, which is designated as the Strategic Town Centre;
 - benefits of investment at the adjacent West Midlands Designer Outlet development, which is identified as a Strategic Retail Outlet;
 - potential transformation of Cannock Railway Station;
 - potential to develop the visitor economy offer;
 - developing Cannock Campus of South Staffordshire College; and
 - repurposing the town centre to become a hub for leisure and cultural uses, residential opportunities and community activities.
- 6.439 The Economic Prosperity Strategy identifies a number of priorities for action, including:
- Cannock Town Centre Regeneration & Prospectus;
 - The Retail Outlet and Retail Training Academy;
 - Skills and Innovation Hub & Engineering Skills Academy; and
 - Station Improvements / Upgrades. Long term transformational upgrade of Cannock Railway Station and short term enhancements to Cannock Town.

⁷⁰ <https://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/business/economic-development/cannock-chase-economic-prosperity-strategy-2020-2030>



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Objective 6: Creating Attractive Town and Local Centres

- 6.440 The Cannock Culture and Leisure Hub Development Prospectus (2019)⁷¹ was prepared to provide an opportunity for developers to see how Cannock Town Centre is changing and to promote development opportunities.
- 6.441 Cannock is the principal shopping and leisure destination in Cannock Chase and is located in the south west of the District. The town centre provides a mixture of retail, service and leisure facilities including some 31,960sq m gross retail floorspace, 4,130sq m retail service floorspace, 10,300sq m leisure service floorspace and 4,850sq m financial and business service floorspace (source: Experian Goad Survey).
- 6.442 The Cannock Chase Retail & Town Centre Uses Study (January 2021) includes a Cannock town centre health check. The health check considers the town centre is currently displaying relatively poor levels of vitality and viability. It has a good convenience goods offer, with several large foodstores located on its edge. A reasonable retail service and financial and business offer, a hospital, college, library and theatre and several attractive historic buildings. Several opportunities for investment and potential for more commercial office space, a hotel, cinema and/or other key leisure uses, more retail including an anchor store and more national multiple operators.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO6.5: CANNOCK TOWN CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT AREAS:

The following sites in Cannock Town Centre are suitable for redevelopment for the purposes outlined:

- **Church Street (0.78ha) – retail, leisure use, food and beverage uses, upper floors could also provide residential apartments, hotel or office space. Site ref M1**
- **Bus Station (0.11ha) –hotel and conferencing facilities or residential uses and supporting an improved intermodal interchange. Site ref M2**
- **Beecroft Road Car Park (0.68ha) –mixed use including residential, retail or commercial office use, and a new car park Site ref M3**
- **Backcrofts Car Park (0.26ha) –offices, ancillary retail and leisure or residential. Site ref M4**
- **Avon Road / Hallcourt Lane – (0.37ha) - leisure facilities, retail, food and beverage uses and/or residential. Site ref M5**

The Conservation Areas and important green spaces within Cannock Town Centre will be protected from redevelopment.

Active travel links will be promoted to the rail station and the West Midlands Designer Outlet Village.

Explanatory Text

- 6.443 Cannock town centre is the principle town centre of the District and has a variety of renewal opportunities within its boundary. The redevelopment of these sites will support the viability and vitality of the town centre.

⁷¹ <https://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/business/economic-development/cannock-town-centre-development-prospectus>



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- 6.444 The sites available within the town centre can meet the identified growth needs and offer opportunities to diversify the town centre which will increase its resilience. Their development will be guided by a masterplan or design guide or design guide as appropriate and site allocation policies will be prepared for future iterations of the Local Plan.
- 6.445 Active travel links between the rail station and the West Midlands Designer Outlet will facilitate sustainable active travel methods which support the health and well being of existing and future residents and the support the economy and the vitality and viability for the town centre.

QUESTIONS

Question 34: Do you support the proposed redevelopment areas in Cannock Town Centre? If not, what amendments would you like to see?

Question 35: Are there aspects of design you think should be included in a design guides/design code?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Town Centre Prospectus
- Retail and Leisure Study 2015
- Cannock Chase Retail & Town Centre Uses Study (January 2021)
- Cannock Town Centre master plan (awaiting commissioning)

Cannock Town Centre Design Code:

- Setting of St Luke and St Thomas Church
- Setting to The Whitehouse
- Prince of Wales theatre is a key asset
- Cannock College, Library, hospital
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to the north of the town and train station
- Improve the public realm
- Increase the food and drink and leisure offer in the town centre
- Redevelop the multi storey car park
- Define active frontages
- Encourage a bricks and clicks environment
- Consider provision of ULEV taxi rank

RUGELEY TOWN CENTRE

What you told us

- 6.446 Representation to the Issues and Options sought development of the bus station and market hall sites and an expansion of Elmore Park.

New Evidence

- 6.447 Rugeley is situated in the north of the District, some 10km from Cannock. The centre contains 198 retail and commercial leisure units, accommodating a total of 32,870sq m gross floorspace. Of the retail floorspace in the town centre, 6,520sq m is occupied by convenience retailers, 9,560sq m by comparison retailers and 3,670sq m by retail



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Objective 6: Creating Attractive Town and Local Centres

service providers. Additionally, 8,090sq m of floorspace is occupied by commercial leisure providers and 1,720sq m by financial and business service providers.

Cannock Chase Retail & Town Centre Uses Study (January 2021)

- 6.448 The Study includes a health check for Rugeley town centre. The health check shows that Rugeley has reasonably good levels of vitality and viability. It is an attractive centre with a good range of independent businesses, bricks and clicks digital offer and good provision for leisure facilities for both daytime and night – time. It has opportunities for investment and redevelopment and a vacancy rate below the national average, although this is currently increasing in response to the impact upon retail habits from increased on-line shopping and the Coronavirus. It has good connectivity to nearby residential areas and potential to improve connectivity to the railway stations, canal towpath and to the north of the town.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO6.6: RUGELEY TOWN CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

The following sites in Rugeley Town Centre are suitable for mixed use development:

- Rugeley Market Hall/Bus Station and Surrounding Area Site ref M6
- Land at Wellington Drive Site ref M7
- Leathermill Lane/Trent and Mersey Canal Corridor Site ref M8

The Conservation Areas and important green spaces within Rugeley Town Centre will be protected from redevelopment.

Active travel links will be promoted to the rail stations, canal and the allocation at the former Rugeley Power Station (Policy H20).

Explanatory Text

- 6.449 Considerable public investment has been delivered within Rugeley Town Centre and recent retail developments have enhanced the convenience retail market. Safeguarding of the existing town centre whilst changing shopping habits are accommodated will ensure the public investment and existing opportunities for redevelopment which are currently detracting from the attractive nature of this important centre for tourists and residents are deliverable within the plan period.
- 6.450 Active travel links between the rail stations, canal and the Rugeley Power Station site will facilitate sustainable active travel methods which support the health and well being of existing and future residents and the support the economy and the vitality and viability for the town centre.
- 6.451 A design guide and design code will enable the town centre to respond to change more rapidly and enable community engagement.
- 6.452 Site Allocation Policies included in Section 2 of the Rugeley Town Centre Action plan will be carried forward:
- Aelfgar Centre/Former Squash Courts, Taylors Lane
 - Market Street Garages
 - Rugeley Market Hall/Bus Station and Surrounding Area
 - Land at Wellington Drive



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 6: Creating Attractive Town and Local Centres

- Leathermill Lane/Trent and Mersey Canal Corridor

QUESTIONS

Question 36: Do you support the proposed Local Plan annotations of Renewal areas and Protection areas in Rugeley Town Centre? If not, what amendments would you like to see?

Question 37: Are there aspects of design you think should be included in a design guides/design code?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Cannock Chase Retail & Town Centre Uses Study (January 2021)

RUGELEY TOWN CENTRE DESIGN CODE

- Safeguard and deliver active travel links to the rail station, canal towpath, edge of centre convenience food store, power station site.
- Canal conservation area
- Encourage provision of ULEV parking points.

HEDNESFORD TOWN CENTRE

What you told us

6.453 No specific questions were asked and no responses received.

New Evidence

- 6.454 Hednesford is the smallest of the main centres in Cannock Chase District. It is situated within the same urban area as Cannock and lies approximately 3km to the north-east. Hednesford Town Centre has a total of 117 retail and commercial leisure units, accommodating a total 26,209sq m (gross) floorspace. 10,674sq m of this floorspace is given over to convenience retailing, 4,070sq m to comparison shopping and 2,150sq m to retail service providers. The town centre accommodates 5,395sq m of commercial leisure floorspace and 830sq m of financial and business service floorspace.
- 6.455 The Cannock Chase Retail & Town Centre Uses Study (January 2021) includes a Hednesford town centre health check. The health check considers the town centre serves an important retail and service centre for residents in the north eastern part of Cannock. It currently has a reasonable level of vitality and viability and has benefited from investment over the past decade. It is a compact town with a small catchment area and currently has a good range of retail services and leisure offer with a ball room/function room and a bingo hall. It has an attractive built form with numerous buildings of historical interest.



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Objective 6: Creating Attractive Town and Local Centres

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO6.7: HEDNESFORD TOWN CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

The following sites in Hednesford Town Centre are suitable for mixed use development:

- **Corner of Uxbridge Street and Market Street Site ref M9**
- **Former co-op supermarket building, Anglesey Street Site ref M10**

The important green spaces within Hednesford Town Centre will be protected from redevelopment.

Explanatory Text

- 6.456 Recent retail developments have enhanced the retail offer. Restricting the levels of convenience and comparison goods will safeguard the existing town centre whilst changing shopping habits are accommodated will ensure inward investment in this important centre for tourists and residents is deliverable within the plan period safeguarding the vitality and viability of this centre. Limited opportunities exist for redevelopment in the town centre, however opportunities for town centre uses exist on redevelopment sites in Rugeley and Cannock and given the close proximity and shared catchment consideration of these sites should be given before out of centre locations are considered.
- 6.457 A design guide and design code will enable the town centre to respond to change more rapidly and enable community engagement.

QUESTIONS

Question 38: Do you support the proposed redevelopment areas in Hednesford Town Centre? If not, what amendments would you like to see?

Question 39: Are there aspects of design you think should be included in a design guides/design code?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Cannock Chase Retail & Town Centre Uses Study (January 2021)
- Neighbourhood Plan

HEDNESFORD DESIGN CODE

- 6.428 To be added following consideration of responses to Question 39 above.



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 7

To protect and enhance the natural environment, development will:

- minimise impacts on, and provide net gains for, biodiversity, including by conserving, expanding and linking natural habitats through habitat creation and improvement to ensure a robust and coherent ecological network of sites that provides wildlife with the opportunity to prosper;
- protect, conserve and enhance the District's natural environment assets, valued landscape and townscape, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils. The highest degree of protection will be given to the protected landscapes of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Green Belt; and
- avoid any harmful impacts on the integrity of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Cannock Extension Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

INTRODUCTION

National Policy Context

- 6.429 The National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF, paragraph 136) states that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered, through the preparation of plans, where there are exceptional circumstances. The need to release Green Belt land to provide for housing choice is being considered under the growth options presented in Strategic Objective 3. To justify Green Belt release, the Council will need to demonstrate that the Local Plan: makes as much use as possible of brownfield land; optimises the density of development; and has been informed by discussions with neighbouring authorities.
- 6.430 Planning Practice Guidance PPG⁷² states that, where it has been demonstrated that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, strategic policy-making authorities should set out policies for compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of the remaining Green Belt land. These may be informed by supporting evidence of landscape, biodiversity or recreational needs and opportunities including those set out in local strategies, and could for instance include:
- new or enhanced green infrastructure;
 - woodland planting;
 - landscape and visual enhancements (beyond those needed to mitigate the immediate impacts of the proposal);
 - improvements to biodiversity, habitat connectivity and natural capital;
 - new or enhanced walking and cycle routes; and
 - improved access to new, enhanced or existing recreational and playing field provision.
- 6.431 The NPPF (paragraph 170) requires planning policies to contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural and local environment, for example by:

⁷² Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 64-002-20190722



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Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

- protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils;
- recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services;
- minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
- preventing development from contributing to, or being put at risk from, or affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability; and
- remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land.

- 6.432 Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries (paragraph 171).
- 6.433 The NPPF gives great weight to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (paragraph 172). The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited.
- 6.434 With reference to habitats and biodiversity, the NPPF (Paragraph 174) requires plans to:
- Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and
 - promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.
- 6.435 The Government consultation 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code' (January 2021)⁷³ sought views on the draft revisions to the NPPF to implement policy changes in response to the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission 'Living With Beauty' Report⁷⁴.
- 6.436 **The draft policies proposed as part of the Preferred Options have been drafted within the context of the NPPF (2019), and with regard to the draft revisions proposed in January 2021.** The 2021 consultation proposes three amendments to chapter 15 ('conserving and enhancing the natural environment') of the NPPF (2019):
- New paragraph 174 has been amended in response to the [Glover Review of protected landscapes](#), to clarify that the scale and extent of development within the settings of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty should be

⁷³ Ref

⁷⁴ [Building Better Building Beautiful Commission "Living with Beauty" report.](#)



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Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

sensitively located and designed so as to avoid adverse impacts on the designated landscapes.

- New paragraph 175 has been separated from the preceding paragraph to clarify that this policy applies at the development management stage only.
- New paragraph 178(d) has been amended to clarify that development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around other developments should be pursued as an integral part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity and enhance public access to nature.

6.437 In addition, the 2021 consultation proposes one amendment to chapter 13 ('protecting Green Belt land') of the NPPF (2019):

- New paragraph 148(f) has been amended slightly to set out that development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order, is not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided it preserves its openness and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

6.438 The draft NPPF revisions (January 2021) do not reflect proposals for wider planning reform set out in the Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020). The White Paper proposes to simplify the role of Local Plans, to focus on identifying land under three categories:

- Growth areas suitable for substantial development, and where outline approval for development would be automatically secured for forms and types of development specified in the Plan;
- Renewal areas suitable for some development, such as gentle densification; and
- Protected areas where – as the name suggests – development is restricted.

6.439 A fuller review of the NPPF is expected to be prepared by the government in due course, once the government has fully considered the responses to consultation on the White Paper proposals. **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**

Local Policy Context

6.440 In summary, the policy priorities of the adopted Local Plan (Part 1) 2014 – Section 1 include:

6.441 Social Inclusion and Healthy Living (Policy CP5)

- providing infrastructure to support social inclusion and healthy living; and
- identifying the green space network on the Proposals Map'.

6.442 Biodiversity and Geodiversity (Policy CP12)

- safeguarding ecological and geological sites, priority habitats and species and areas of importance for enhancing biodiversity;
- supporting the protection, conservation and enhancement of existing green infrastructure to facilitate robust wildlife habitats and corridors at a local and regional scale;
- supporting proposals that assist the delivery of Biodiversity and Geodiversity Action Plan targets;



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Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

- enhancing local strategic assets, including the Hednesford Hills and Local Nature Reserves, and Etchingill Local Geological Site;
- supporting the Local Biodiversity Action Plan, the Forest of Mercia, and other initiatives aiming for improved green infrastructure provision; and
- protecting internationally and nationally important sites or species and locally designated sites, ancient woodland, veteran trees and priority biodiversity habitats.

6.443 Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (Policy CP13)

- retaining the integrity of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC); and
- developing a Mitigation and Implementation Strategy (SPD).

6.444 Landscape Character and Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Policy CP14)

- considering landscape character in all development proposals to protect and conserve locally distinctive qualities, rural openness and sense of place;
- maximising opportunities for restoring, strengthening and enhancing distinctive landscape features including trees, woodland, canal corridors, sensitive edges of the rural areas and creating green infrastructure links in conjunction with new development;
- supporting development proposals within the AONB that are compatible with the AONB Management Plan;
- supporting development proposals across the rest of the District that help to facilitate the AONB Management Plan; and
- promoting effective stewardship of key areas of green infrastructure, such as Local Green Space.

ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION

What you told us

6.445 The Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation (2019) included Social Inclusion and Healthy Living policy options to review the Local Plan (2014) Policy (CP5 'Social Inclusion and Healthy Living') which proposed that the green space network on the policies map would be updated (as part Local Plan Part 2).

6.446 The consultation responses to the options proposed (Question 12) suggested most support for:

Option A: giving more emphasis to providing linkages and opportunities for healthy lifestyles. This would link to the most up to date playing pitch and indoor sports strategies, updated evidence for open space, and would include allocation of the Green Space Network at a district-wide level.

Option C: allocate green spaces of strategic significance on a district scale (i.e. significant sites and sites which are key to delivering and maintaining green linkages and corridors as per updated evidence), and designating smaller areas of green space which are of particular importance at the community level through local policy i.e. neighbourhood plans.

6.447 The following Biodiversity and Geodiversity Options were presented in the Issues and Options Consultation:



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Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Option A: Update existing Policy CP12: biodiversity and geodiversity which sets out the Council's approach to ensuring the district's biodiversity assets will be protected, conserved and enhanced. The policy follows national policy and guidance and makes reference to supporting key local strategies and plans. It highlights key local assets which should be protected, conserved and enhanced. It sets out criteria based policies to aid decision making.

Option B: As above but also introducing a new policy for Cannock Extension Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

6.448 The Sustainability Appraisal of the Biodiversity and Geodiversity Policy Options indicated effects ranging from 'minor negative' to 'significantly positive'. Option B was found to be marginally more positive.

6.449 The consultation responses demonstrated general support for Option B.

6.450 Respondents also made the following suggestions regarding Local Plan policy:

- The inclusion of a country park as part of the proposals for land south of Cannock Road, Heath Hayes will be able to ensure significant net gains in terms of biodiversity.
- Farmers and landowners must be fully engaged with discussions on biodiversity and geodiversity as they own and manage many of the districts key natural capital assets.
- Would like to see more focus on the Chasewater and Southern Staffordshire Coalfield Heaths SSSI.
- District contains very little ancient woodland; an additional policy to protect this, including creation of buffering habitat would be helpful.

6.451 The following Cannock Chase SAC Options were presented in the Issues and Options Consultation:

Option A: Update the Cannock Chase SAC policy CP13 as necessary to reflect the updated evidence.

6.452 The findings of Sustainability Appraisal of the Cannock Chase SAC Policy Option range from a minor negative to significantly positive effect.

6.453 The consultation demonstrated general support for the proposed Cannock Chase SAC policy option, and agreement that mitigation will be required in line with up to date National Policy and local evidence. Respondents made the following suggestions regarding Local Plan policy:

- The site of Brownhills Rd, Norton Canes, lies within a designated 15km radius of Cannock Chase SAC. The site has the potential to provide on-site green infrastructure and is conveniently situated close to Chasewater Country Park.
- The SAC forms a key part of the AONBs special qualities.
- (Land at Upper Birches Farm, Rugeley lies within a designated 15km radius of Cannock Chase SAC. The site has potential to provide on-site green infrastructure to provide an alternative, local and attractive alternative destination for walkers and, in particular dog walkers.



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Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

6.454 The following Options relating to Landscape Character and the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) were presented in the Issues and Options Consultation:

Option A: Retain current policy wording with minor amendments to update and reflect the most up to date evidence base and national policy context if applicable.

Option B: Include detailed criteria in policy for assessing suitability of different types of application, including retaining the current criteria for extensions / replacement buildings in the Green Belt.

Option C: Retain current policy wording (with minor modifications to update) and provide further elaboration if required via an updated design SPD.

6.455 The findings of Sustainability Appraisal of the Landscape Character and Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Policy Options included effects ranging from significantly negative (in Option B) to significantly positive. Options A and C were assessed to have very similar effects.

6.456 There was support from respondents for Options C and A, but less for Option B. Respondents made the following suggestions regarding Local Plan policy:

- Within the AONB policy provision should be made, exceptionally, for new development, particularly on brownfield land.
- The Council should stand firm on a policy of no AONB development.
- The AONB is '*a haven in tranquillity and wildness.*' Some policy wording around protecting that quality and avoiding impacts on tranquillity, such as that potentially arising from increased user pressure, would be welcomed.
- It is important that some provision is made to support rural businesses when they need to invest in new infrastructure and modern agricultural buildings.

New Evidence

6.457 The Environment Bill 2020⁷⁵ sets out how the Government plans to protect and improve the natural environment in the UK. The Environment Bill will help deliver the vision set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan. The Environment Bill includes proposals for: environmental governance; the clean air strategy; biodiversity net gain; trees; conservation covenants; extended producer responsibility for packaging; recycling; a deposit return scheme for drinks containers; and water.

6.458 The 25 Year Plan goals are to achieve:

- Clean air;
- Clean and plentiful water;
- Thriving plants and wildlife;
- A reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards such as flooding and drought;
- Using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently; and
- Enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment.

6.459 The 25 Year Plan identifies the key areas around which action will be focused. These include:

- Using and managing land sustainably by: embedding an 'environmental net gain' principle for development, including housing and infrastructure; improving how we

⁷⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-bill-2020>



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manage and incentivise land management; improving soil health and restoring and protecting our peatlands; focusing on woodland to maximise its many benefits; and reducing risks from flooding and coastal erosion.

- Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes by: protecting and recovering nature; conserving and enhancing natural beauty (including reviewing National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty); and respecting nature in how we use water.
- Connecting people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing by: helping people improve their health and wellbeing by using green spaces; encouraging children to be close to nature, in and out of school; greening our towns and cities; and making 2019 a Year of Action for the environment.
- Increasing resource efficiency, and reducing pollution and waste by: maximising resource efficiency and minimising environmental impacts at end of life; and reducing pollution.

PREFERRED POLICY - PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY

What you told us

6.460 The Issues and Options consultation responses demonstrated general support for updating existing Local Plan policy to ensure the district's biodiversity assets are protected, conserved and enhanced. There was also support for the introduction of a new policy for Cannock Extension Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

New Evidence

6.461 The draft revisions to the NPPF to implement policy changes in response to the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission "Living with Beauty" report include an amendment to paragraph 174 in response to the [Glover Review of protected landscapes](#), to clarify that the scale and extent of development within the settings of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty should be sensitively located and designed so as to avoid adverse impacts on the designated landscapes.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO7.1: PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY

Development proposals will support the protection, conservation, enhancement and restoration of designated biodiversity and geodiversity sites.

The existing, or potential, international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity or geodiversity are shown on the Proposals Map.

The designated sites include:

- **Special Areas of Conservation;**
- **Ancient Woodland**
- **Sites of Special Scientific Interest;**
- **Local Sites of Biological Interest;**
- **Local Nature Reserves; and**
- **Local Geological Sites.**



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Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Development which has a harmful impact on the designated biodiversity and geodiversity sites will not be permitted unless there are exceptional circumstances. These circumstances will only apply where:

- **There are no suitable alternatives; and**
- **Necessary compensatory provision can be secured.**

Development which results in loss or harm to SAC, Ancient Woodland, Ancient trees or Veteran trees will need to also need to demonstrate there are ‘imperative reasons for overriding public interest’.

Development proposals will provide net gains to biodiversity through the creation and restoration of wildlife corridors and the stepping stones to connect them.

Explanatory Text

- 6.462 For the purposes of applying this Policy, ‘imperative reasons of overriding public interest’ are defined in the Glossary as including:
- the requirement to maintain the nation’s health, safety, education, environment (sustainable development, green energy, green transport);
 - complying with planning policies and guidance at a national, regional and local level;
 - requirements for economic or social development (Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, employment, regeneration, mineral extraction, housing, pipelines, .etc.).
- 6.463 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are protected areas which aim to conserve the high quality habitats and species which are considered to be most in need of conservation at the European level. The District includes two Special Areas of Conservation: Cannock Chase; and the Cannock Extension Canal.
- 6.464 Ancient Woodland, ancient or veteran trees provide irreplaceable habitat and their loss should be avoided unless there are wholly exceptional reasons.
- 6.465 The District also includes three Sites of Special Scientific Interest. The importance of Cannock Chase for wildlife was recognised when it was designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in 1951. The area is therefore protected from harm and neglect under UK law. The other SSSI’s partly or wholly in the District are the ‘Chasewater and the Southern Staffordshire Coalfield Heaths’, and the ‘Cannock Extension Canal’.
- 6.466 There are also over thirty local Sites of Biological Interest, three Local Nature Reserves, and one Local Geological Site.
- 6.467 Some elements of the District’s biodiversity assets are at potential risk of decline due to development and recreational pressures unless appropriate mitigation measures are put in place.

QUESTION 40

Do you support the preferred policy direction to protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity?



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

List of Relevant Evidence

- White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020)
- Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC EU Code UK0030107)
- Cannock Extension Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC EU Code UK0012672)

PREFERRED POLICY – BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

What you told us

6.468 The Issues and Options consultation responses demonstrated general support for updating existing Local Plan policy to ensure the district's biodiversity assets are protected, conserved and enhanced.

New Evidence

- 6.469 An Urban Forestry Strategy 2019-2024 has been adopted by the Council which seeks to maintain, improve and expand the quality of the existing tree and woodland cover, in a sustainable way across the district and enhance the retention of tree planting and landscaping. It recognises the benefits of tree planting and its contribution to addressing climate change, biodiversity, social and health benefits and economic benefits. It considers the management of Council's stock, protected trees and new tree planting and landscaping offering advice on locations and the type of trees to be planted so the right trees are planted in the right place.
- 6.470 The Nature Recovery Network Mapping (March 2020) outlines the existing picture of the District's nature network and describes key locations where habitats may be created or enhanced to contribute to nature's recovery as well as delivering against objectives set out in national planning policy legislation. It looks at a strategic scale, including cross boundary and uses biodiversity metrics to identify areas which have good habitat connectivity, and where has the potential for future habitat creation or restoration to contribute to a more successful nature recovery network. It identifies 6 habitat connectivity opportunity areas in the district.
- 6.471 The Government consultation 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code' (January 2021) sought views on the draft revisions to the NPPF to implement policy changes in response to the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission 'Living With Beauty' Report. The proposed amendments to the NPPF (2019) include paragraph 178(d), which has been amended to clarify that opportunities to improve biodiversity should be pursued as an integral part of design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity and enhance public access to nature.
- 6.472 The Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020) proposes that Local Plans will identify Areas that are Protected (including Conservation Areas, Local Wildlife Sites, and important areas of green space). **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**
- 6.473 The Environment Bill 2020⁷⁶ sets out how the Government plans to protect and improve the natural environment in the UK. The Environment Bill will help deliver the vision set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan. The 25 Year Plan identifies the key areas around which action will be focused. These include embedding an 'environmental net gain'

⁷⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-bill-2020>



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

principle for development, including housing and infrastructure, and protecting and recovering nature.

- 6.474 'Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation' Staffordshire County Council (AECOM October 2020) was commissioned to support the develop of an evidence base for new energy and sustainability policies being considered for Staffordshire County Council and its eight constituent Local Authorities. The report identifies a number of opportunities for offsetting and mitigating the carbon emissions that are caused by existing developments. These include offsetting emissions through more tree planting, enhanced biodiversity provision, and increasing sequestration on Council-owned land (e.g. areas of greenspace).

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO7.2: BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

Major development proposals will provide a net gain in biodiversity through the restoration and re-creation of priority habitats and ecological networks, and the protection and recovery of protected and priority species populations.

The delivery of net gains in biodiversity will be designed to support the delivery of a District-wide biodiversity network based on the designated biodiversity sites.

The level of biodiversity net gain required will be proportionate to the type scale and impact of development.

Enhancements for wildlife within the built environment will be sought where appropriate form all scales of development.

Major development schemes will provide for the long term management of biodiversity features retained and enhanced within the development site and of those features created off site to compensate for development impacts.

Explanatory Text

- 6.475 Biodiversity and geodiversity are protected through the hierarchy of European, national and locally designated sites, which are the subject of Policy SO7.1: Protecting, Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity. The development of a wider biodiversity network is consistent with the Government's commitment to halt the decline in biodiversity and the NPPF requirement to create biodiversity or ecological networks.
- 6.476 There is a considerable body of evidence which identifies the district wide biodiversity network, whilst studies such as the nature recovery network mapping look to strategic level and delivery of long term projects such as Midlands Heartland Heathland, the cross authority Community Forest of Mercia and small projects such as those deliverable in the urban areas to increase canopy cover also contribute to biodiversity net gain. Further work will be undertaken to set priorities to facilitate delivery, resilience and so the long term protection of the biodiversity network can be realised.

QUESTION 41

Do you support the preferred policy direction to achieve net gains in biodiversity through development?

List of Relevant Evidence

- White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020)



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Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

- Environment Bill 2020
- Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation' Staffordshire County Council (AECOM October 2020)
- Nature Recovery network Mapping (March 2020)
- Urban Forestry Strategy 2019-2024 (2019)

PREFERRED POLICY - SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

What you told us

- 6.477 The Issues and Options consultation demonstrated general support for the proposal to update the Local Plan Cannock Chase SAC policy to reflect up to date evidence base and mitigation strategy. There was agreement that mitigation will be required in line with up to date National Policy.
- 6.478 The Issues and Options consultation responses also demonstrated support for the introduction of a new policy for Cannock Extension Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

New Evidence

- 6.479 Cannock Chase Council area contains two Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), which were both designated in April 2005 - Cannock Chase SAC and Cannock Extension Canal SAC.
- A part (1,244 ha) of Cannock Chase is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC)⁷⁷. The Cannock Chase SAC is one of the best areas in the UK for European dry heath land and is the most extensive in the Midlands. The Council is part of a SAC Partnership which works together to prevent damage to the Cannock Chase SAC; and
 - The Cannock Extension Canal SAC (5 ha)⁷⁸ is an example of anthropogenic, lowland habitat supporting floating water-plantain (*Jurionium natans*) at the eastern limit of the plants natural distribution in England.
- 6.480 In order to protect the Cannock Chase and Cannock Extension SACs the effective avoidance and/or mitigation of any impacts will need to be demonstrated in accordance with the habitat regulations. In order to permit development it must be demonstrated that alone or in combination with other development it will not have an adverse effect, whether direct or indirect upon the integrity of the SAC having regard to avoidance or mitigation measures.
- 6.481 For both SACs monitoring is taking place to enable plans to be implemented to manage any increase in Nitrogen levels as a result of the impact of new development. This may include energy use and production, agriculture and increased motorised vehicle use. Any development that would have an adverse impact on a SAC prior to a partnership mitigation scheme being implemented will need to address this issue via a case specific action plan. The permitted scheme at Rugeley Power Station provides a case study example.
- 6.482 Other matters which may arise through the life of the plan period and development may prompt a requirement to undertake further assessment in order to meet the requirements of the habitat regulations.

⁷⁷ SAC EU Code UK0030107

⁷⁸ SAC EU Code UK0012672



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

6.483 This will also apply to any new SAC designated during the lifetime of the Local Plan.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO7.3: SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION

Development will not be permitted where it would lead directly or indirectly to an adverse impact upon a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the effects cannot be mitigated.

The effective avoidance and/or mitigation of any identified adverse effects must be demonstrated to the Council as competent authority, and secured by means of a suitable mechanism (for example, a legal agreement) prior to the approval of the development.

Cannock Chase SAC

To ensure the Cannock Chase SAC is not harmed, all development that results in a net increase in dwellings within a 15km radius (or any subsequent distance as a result of updated evidence and agreed by Cannock Chase SAC Partnership) of any boundary of Cannock Chase SAC must take all necessary steps to avoid or mitigate any adverse effects upon the SAC's integrity.

This may include:

- **contributions to habitat management and creation;**
- **access management and visitor infrastructure;**
- **publicity, education and awareness raising;**
- **provision of additional recreation space within development sites where they can be accommodated, and where they cannot by contributions to off-site alternative recreation space; and measures to encourage sustainable travel.**

Cannock Extension Canal SAC

Any development within the water catchment area of the Cannock Extension Canal SAC will be deemed to have an adverse impact on the Cannock Extension Canal SAC. Mitigation for any identified adverse effects must be demonstrated and secured prior to approval of development and on going monitoring of impact on the SAC will be required.

Developments outside the water catchment area may be required to demonstrate that they will have no adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC.



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Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Explanatory Text

- 6.484 Regulation 63 (1) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 requires that a competent authority (such as the Council) must undertake and complete a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA), including Appropriate Assessment (AA), where it is considered that approving an application, plan or project which will, or may potentially, result in a negative impact upon the reasons of designation of a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- 6.485 Following the CJEU ruling (case C 323/17, April 12th, 2018), the Council is unable to take into account any avoidance and mitigation measures as part of the application at the first stage of HRA (screening). As such applications deemed likely or potentially to significantly impact upon the reasons for designation of the SAC (sans mitigation) must now progress to Appropriate Assessment.
- 6.486 In order to undertake HRA and Appropriate Assessment an applicant is likely to be required to comply with their responsibilities as stated in Regulation 63(2) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 it that they must: “provide such information as the competent authority may reasonably require for the purpose of the assessment”.
- 6.487 The evidence shows that any development which would increase the human population, tourism or visitor use within 15km of the Cannock Chase SAC may have a significant impact on the site, this covers all of Cannock Chase District. The Council must ensure that decisions made on planning applications will not have a negative impact on Cannock Chase SAC. If there are any potential negative impacts, the Council must either refuse development, or ensure there are appropriate mitigation measures in place. To assist developers Cannock Chase Council is part of the Cannock Chase SAC Partnership, which works jointly with Staffordshire County Council, Lichfield District Council, South Staffordshire District Council, Stafford Borough Council, East Staffordshire District Council, Birmingham and the Black Country authorities to prevent damage to the SAC by delivering work to mitigate this harm. This works focus on improving visitor management by installing better infrastructure and increasing the level of environmental education and understanding among visitors to Cannock Chase. This work is funded by developer contributions.
- 6.488 Evidence identifies that recreation use is much higher when local residents are able to walk directly onto the SAC. This results in numerous small paths and urban impacts such as dumping of garden waste and increased fire incidence. As access is obtained in informal routes away from main paths and car parks so visitors are not likely to pass rangers, interpretation panels, dog bins and opportunities to engage are limited and are harder to address because the impacts can occur spread over a wider front. Evidence shows that people living very close to the site will use the space as their de facto green space and are likely to use it in a very different way to those who make a choice to visit and travel some distance.
- 6.489 The habitat which Cannock Chase SAC is designated for (European Lowland Heathland) is also known to be harmed by increases in the level of atmospheric deposition of Nitrogen Oxide, Nitrite & Nitrate (collectively referred to as NO_x). A number of different types of development can increase the levels of NO_x deposition on Cannock Chase SAC; both directly (via increasing industrial emissions) or indirectly (via increasing traffic usage on main roads than run within 200m of the boundary of the



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Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

SAC). Where it is possible that a development may result in harm to Cannock Chase SAC via significantly increasing the level of NO_x deposition (directly or indirectly, alone or in combination with other developments) then the Council will be required to conduct a Habitats Regulations Assessment prior to determining upon the application. If it is determined that the application will cause harm to the SAC then the developer will need to avoid their impact and/or provide mitigation proportional to their harm or else the application will need to be refused. Guidance will be provided by the Council to the developer on a case by case base where NO_x deposition is determined to be an issue.

QUESTION 42

Do you support the preferred policy direction for the Special Areas of Conservation?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017
- Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation Site User Implementation Plan March 2020
- Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation Car Parking Implementation Plan March 2020

PREFERRED POLICY – PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

What you told us

6.490 The Issues and Options Consultation demonstrated support from respondents for updating the Landscape Character policy to reflect changes to evidence and national policy, and for further elaboration as necessary through an updated Design SPD.

New Evidence

- 6.491 The Environment Bill 2020 will help deliver the vision set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan. The 25 Year Plan identifies the key areas around which action will be focused. These include recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes by protecting and recovering nature, and conserving and enhancing natural beauty.
- 6.492 The Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020) proposes a range of changes to Local Plans. These include the identification of Protected Areas (including important areas of green space and locally important features such as protected views). **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO7.4: PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

All development proposals in the District will protect, conserve and enhance landscape character by:

- Protecting and conserving local distinctiveness, scenic qualities, rural openness and sense of place;
- Maximising opportunities to conserve and enhance existing landscape features



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Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

of the site including trees, hedgerows, woodlands, and watercourses;

- **Locating and designing the development to respect the surrounding scenic quality and providing sensitive edges to the adjacent areas;**
- **Locating and designing the development to avoid impacts on tranquillity and dark landscapes;**
- **Protecting, conserving and enhancing the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, as required by Policies SO7.5, SO7.6 and the Green Belt;**
- **Creating new green infrastructure within the development which links to the wider Green Space Network (as required by Policy SO7.8).**

All major development proposals must be supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

Explanatory Text

- 6.493 Cannock Chase District includes a wide range of landscapes and townscapes, including the nationally designated AONB and Green Belt. Without adequate planning controls over development, these assets could be diminished.
- 6.494 Development proposals should be designed to make a positive contribution to townscape and landscape (as required by Policy SO1.2: Enhancing the Quality of the Built Environment). Additional guidance will be included in the relevant Local Design Code

QUESTION 43

Do you support the preferred policy direction to protect, conserve and enhance landscape character?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Environment Bill 2020
- White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020)

PREFERRED POLICY - PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE CANNOCK CHASE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

What you told us

- 6.495 The responses to the Issues and Options Consultation (2019) demonstrated strong support for the continuation of Local Plan protections for the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). It was acknowledged that policy provision should be made, exceptionally, for new development, particularly on brownfield land. It is also important that some provision is made to support rural businesses when they need to invest in new infrastructure and modern agricultural buildings. The AONB role as 'a haven in tranquillity and wilderness' should be protected.

New Evidence

- 6.496 The Government consultation 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code' (January 2021) sought views on the draft revisions to the NPPF to implement policy changes in response to the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission 'Living With Beauty' Report. The proposed amendments to the NPPF (2019) include paragraph 174, which has been amended in response to the Glover Review of protected landscapes to clarify that the scale and extent of development



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Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

within the settings of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty should be sensitively located and designed so as to avoid adverse impacts on the designated landscapes.

- 6.497 The Government White Paper ‘Planning for the Future’ (August 2020) proposes that Local Plans will identify Areas that are Protected (including Conservation Areas, Local Wildlife Sites, and important areas of green space). **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO7.5: PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE CANNOCK CHASE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

The protected landscape areas of Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) are shown on the Proposals Map and will receive the highest degree of protection from damaging or inappropriate development.

Development proposals within or on land forming the setting of the AONB will be expected to positively contribute to the setting of the AONB. Development proposals which, individually or cumulatively, adversely impact on the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB or its setting will be resisted.

All development proposals within the AONB will set out how the development would contribute to meeting the objectives of the AONB Management Plan (2019-2024 and subsequent plans) in regard to:

- **Landscape character;**
- **Wildlife and nature;**
- **Historic environment and culture;**
- **Experience and enjoyment; and**
- **Communities and business.**

Explanatory Text

- 6.498 The Cannock Chase AONB was designated in 1958 to conserve and enhance its natural beauty. There are many special sites within the AONB that are recognised as being important internationally, nationally and locally including; 1,237 ha of the heathland which is designated as a Special Area for Conservation (SAC).
- 6.499 Around 40% of the District is designated as part of the AONB, which extends into the adjacent districts of Lichfield, South Staffordshire and Stafford. The part of the AONB that is in the District lies within the boundary of the Green Belt. The AONB provides a strategic area of accessible countryside with conservation, recreation, economic and tourism benefits.

QUESTION 44

Do you support the preferred policy direction to protect, conserve and enhance the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty?

List of Relevant Evidence

- White Paper ‘Planning for the Future’ (August 2020)
- Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan 2019-2024



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

PREFERRED POLICY - PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE GREEN BELT

What you told us

- 6.500 The policy options for Green Belt sites presented in the Issues and Options Consultation (2019) included:
- Urban extensions focused on areas to the north of the District at Rugeley/Brereton, which could assist in reducing pressures upon infrastructure in the south of District (including the A5/A460/M6 Toll (Churchbridge) and Five Ways (Heath Hayes/Norton Canes) junctions, and air quality issues in the Cannock/Hednesford/Heath Hayes area). It could also help to support the regeneration of Rugeley Town Centre by providing additional customers and investors to the town.
 - Urban extensions focused on areas to the south of the District at Cannock/Hednesford/ Heath Hayes and Norton Canes, where there is a wider range of sites to consider. However, a substantial part of the urban area at Cannock/Hednesford lies adjacent to the AONB, and there are a number of nationally and internationally protected ecological sites in the vicinity (e.g. Hednesford Hills, Bleak House, and Cannock Extension Canal).
 - Considering all site options suggested to date across the District. This would included suggested sites which lie adjacent to the existing village boundaries e.g. at Cannock Wood and Slitting Mill. However, the sustainability of such development could be relatively limited.
- 6.501 The options proposed in the Issues and Options Consultation are summarised below.
- Option A:** Urban Areas- use sites already identified for housing within the urban areas and explore opportunities for further housing on urban sites.
- Option B1:** Urban Areas and housing-led redevelopment of former Rugeley Power Station
- Option B2:** Urban Areas and employment-led/mixed use redevelopment of former Rugeley Power Station
- Option C1:** In combination with the options for the Urban Areas and former Rugeley Power Station consider Green Belt urban extensions at Rugeley/Brereton urban edges
- Option C2:** In combination with the options for the Urban Areas and former Rugeley Power Station consider Green Belt urban extensions at Cannock/Hednesford/Heath Hayes and Norton Canes urban edges
- Option C3:** In combination with the options for the Urban Areas and former Rugeley Power Station consider Green Belt urban extensions distributed across the District
- 6.502 In relation to the Options that considered development within the Green Belt (Options C1, C2 and C3), consultation responses included the following comments:
- A consensus of opinion that non-Green Belt options should be exhausted before allocating land within the Green Belt for housing development.
 - Quite limited support for Option C1 from residents and development interests.
 - Support for Option C2, particularly by development interests.
 - Support for Option C3 by the HBF, some development interests and some residents.



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

- Strong opposition to the Green Belt options from residents.

New Evidence

- 6.503 The Government consultation 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code' (January 2021) sought views on the draft revisions to the NPPF to implement policy changes in response to the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission 'Living With Beauty' Report. The proposed amendments to the NPPF (2019) include paragraph 148(f), which has been amended slightly to set out that development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order, is not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided it preserves its openness and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
- 6.504 The Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020) proposes that Local Plans will identify Areas that are Protected (including Conservation Areas, Local Wildlife Sites, and important areas of green space). **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**
- 6.505 A Green Belt Part 2 Assessment study has been commissioned by Cannock Chase District Council, and this will feed into the further development of Local Plan policy.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO7.6: PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE GREEN BELT

The Green Belt area within the Cannock Chase District, as shown on the Proposals Map, will receive the highest degree of protection from development. Development will protect the character and openness of the Green Belt.

Inappropriate development proposals within the Green Belt will be refused, except in 'very special circumstances'. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Opportunities to enhance the beneficial uses of the Green Belt will be supported. This may include opportunities to provide access, for outdoor sport and recreation, to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity, or to improve damaged and derelict land.

In association with the large strategic site allocations at South of Lichfield Road, Cannock land indicated on the proposals map will be safeguarded for the delivery of a country park.

Explanatory Text

- 6.506 Around 60% of the District is designated Green Belt as part of the larger West Midlands Green Belt that extends to around 580 square miles around the Black Country, Coventry, Birmingham and Solihull. The Green Belt contains 2 SAC and plays an important role in providing for recreation, maintaining the District's character and its wildlife, and safeguarding the wider open countryside.
- 6.507 The Green Belt area within the Cannock Chase District Council area is shown on the Proposals Map. This designation will be confirmed at the point that the Cannock Chase



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Local Plan is adopted. The Local Plan policies relating to Green Belt will apply to the boundaries that are designated in the Local Plan.

- 6.508 The country park proposed to be delivered alongside the strategic housing site on land south of Lichfield Road is an example of enhancing the Green Belt and provides opportunities to link open spaces and habitat and deliver large scale tree planting which will help address climate change. It is therefore important that this opportunity is protected.

QUESTION 45

Do you support the preferred policy direction for protecting, conserving and enhancing the Green Belt?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Cannock Chase Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation (2019)

PREFERRED POLICY – AMENDMENTS TO THE GREEN BELT

- 6.509 The Government consultation 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code' (January 2021) sought views on the draft revisions to the NPPF to implement policy changes in response to the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission 'Living with Beauty' Report. The proposed amendments to the NPPF (2019) include paragraph 148(f), which has been amended slightly to set out that development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order, is not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided it preserves its openness and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
- 6.510 The Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' (August 2020) proposes that Local Plans will identify Areas that are Protected (including Conservation Areas, Local Wildlife Sites, and important areas of green space). **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO7.7: AMENDMENTS TO THE GREEN BELT

Amendments to the Green Belt boundary are proposed in this Local Plan to accommodate the growth requirements of the District, these are shown on the proposals map and are at:

- South of Lichfield Road, Cannock;
- East of Wimblebury Road;
- Land to rear of Longford House, Watling Street Cannock;
- Land east of The Meadows and land to the north of Armitage Lane Brereton;
- Land to the north of no.2 Hednesford Road, Norton Canes;
- Site Between A5 and M6Toll, Norton Canes;
- Turf Field, Watling Street.

Suitable mitigation and detailed boundaries will be identified through further stages of the plan in detailed site specific policies and master plans.



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Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Further changes to the Green Belt boundary, if required, will be made through a formal review of the Local Plan policies, or through a Neighbourhood Plan.

In all cases, appropriate mitigation will be made to compensate for the loss of Green Belt land. This would include:

- **new or enhanced green infrastructure;**
- **woodland planting;**
- **landscape and visual enhancements (beyond those needed to mitigate the immediate impacts of the proposal);**
- **improvements to biodiversity, habitat connectivity and natural capital;**
- **new or enhanced walking and cycle routes; and**
- **improved access to new, enhanced or existing recreational and playing field provision.**

Explanatory Text

- 6.511 Evidence has shown that the Green Belt still performs well and meets the purposes set out in the NPPF (checking urban sprawl, preventing the merging of towns, safeguarding the countryside, preserving the setting of historic towns, and assisting urban regeneration).
- 6.512 The Green Belt performs many functions within Cannock. Much of it is part of our historic mining legacy and large tracts of it have been reclaimed to provide an attractive setting to our settlements, strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place, enhancing access to the natural open space, health and well being. The Green Belt also provides opportunities to protect and enhance the SAC and other important habitats and deliver long term biodiversity networks as identified in the network recovery mapping.
- 6.513 The NPPF makes clear that changes should only be made to the Green Belt in exceptional circumstances and they should set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the green belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green belt land. The large site allocation at land south of Lichfield Road proposes a country park to be delivered alongside the development. This land has been identified in the plan (SO7.6)as an area to be safeguarded for this purpose and will be incorporated into the master plan and detailed allocation policy for this site.
- 6.514 The Green Belt Part 2 Assessment study, commissioned by Cannock Chase District Council, will feed into the further development of Local Plan policy.

QUESTION 46

Do you support the preferred policy direction to amendments to the Green Belt?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Cannock Chase Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation (2019)



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Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

PREFERRED POLICY - PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE GREEN SPACE NETWORK

What you told us

- 6.515 The Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation (2019) included Social Inclusion and Healthy Living policy options to review the Local Plan (2014) Policy (CP5 'Social Inclusion and Healthy Living') which proposed that the green space network on the policies map would be updated (as part Local Plan Part 2).
- 6.516 The consultation responses to the options proposed (Question 12) suggested most support for:
- Option A:** giving more emphasis to providing linkages and opportunities for healthy lifestyles. This would link to the most up to date playing pitch and indoor sports strategies, updated evidence for open space, and would include allocation of the Green Space Network at a district-wide level.
- Option C:** allocate green spaces of strategic significance on a district scale (i.e. significant sites and sites which are key to delivering and maintaining green linkages and corridors as per updated evidence), and designating smaller areas of green space which are of particular importance at the community level through local policy i.e. neighbourhood plans.

New Evidence

- 6.517 The Council has commissioned an Open Space Assessment and Strategy for the District. The Study will:
- audit open spaces, define and assess the quantity, quality and accessibility of different types of open spaces, identify the ability of open spaces to meet community needs; and
 - inform and help develop an open space vision, strategy and policy, setting locally appropriate standards for management and investment in the light of current good practice and with reference to potential innovative solutions.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO7.8: PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE GREEN SPACE NETWORK

The sites which form the Green Space Network within the built-up areas of the District are shown on the Proposals Map and will receive the highest degree of protection from development. Development in these areas will normally be only permitted where it enhances the value of the green space, for example through sports, allotment and play provision, cafes, educational uses and sustainable transport routes.

Development that would result in an unacceptable conflict with the functions or characteristics of the Green Space Network will be resisted except where:

- Where this supports the Open Spaces Strategy (being prepared)
- An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the green space network is surplus to requirements; or
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in a suitable and accessible location.



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Objective 7: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Additional areas of green space of particular importance to local communities which have been allocated in neighbourhood plans will be afforded the same level of protection as the Green Space Network sites.

The development of new homes should contribute to the delivery of provision for sports, physical activity and leisure (as required by Policy SO2.3: Providing Active Leisure and Sports Facilities).

Development proposals will, in accordance with the relevant Local Design Code, set out how opportunities for healthy living and active travel would be created or enhanced, by linking to, or adding to, the Green Space Network, shown on the policies map (as required by Policy SO2.3: Providing Opportunities for Healthy Living and Activity).

Development proposals will, in accordance with the relevant Local Design Code, set out how opportunities for healthy living and active travel would be created or enhanced, by linking to, or adding to, the Green Space Network, shown on the policies map (as required by Policy SO2.3: Providing Opportunities for Healthy Living and Activity).

Development proposals will provide well designed, safe and convenient routes for walking and cycling which are integrated with green and blue infrastructure and connected to wider networks (in line with Policy SO5.1: Accessible Development).

Explanatory Text

- 6.518 Open space is an essential part of the built environment and is important to the character, appearance and identity of an area. Such areas may not necessarily be directly accessible to the public but are important both visually and in providing habitats for wildlife.
- 6.519 They provide access to the wider countryside by linking open spaces within the urban areas to open countryside – particularly the AONB and can contribute to reducing the impacts associated with climate change.

QUESTION 47

Do you support the preferred policy direction to the Green Space Network?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Cannock Chase Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation (2019)



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 8: Support a Greener Future

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 8

To support a greener future, development will:

- **Increase production of low and zero carbon energy and heat;**
- **Promote sustainable building design, and increase Low and Zero Carbon development;**
- **Offset and mitigate any carbon emissions that cannot be avoided;**
- **Reduce the risk of flooding, maximise flood protection and manage the effects of flooding;**
- **Avoid air, water, soil, noise and light pollution;**
- **Ensure development makes efficient use of previously developed land and buildings;**
- **Safeguard potential minerals reserves;**
- **Minimise waste: and,**
- **Encourage and facilitate the use of sustainable modes of transport.**

INTRODUCTION

National Policy Context

- 6.520 The 25 Year Plan for the Environment⁷⁹ was published by Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in 2018. The 25 Year Plan sets out the Government's long-term approach to protecting and enhancing natural landscapes and habitats in England.
- 6.521 The goals of the 25 Year Plan are to achieve:
- Clean air
 - Clean and plentiful water
 - Thriving plants and wildlife
 - A reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards such as flooding and drought
 - Using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently
 - Enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment
- 6.522 The 25 Year Plan identifies a number of actions, including:
- embedding an 'environmental net gain' principle for development;
 - reducing risks from flooding and respecting nature in how we use water; and
 - increasing resource efficiency, and reducing pollution and waste.
- 6.523 The Environment Bill 2020⁸⁰ sets out how the Government plans to protect and improve the natural environment in the UK. The Environment Bill will help deliver the vision set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan.
- 6.524 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) requires plans to take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures.

⁷⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

⁸⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-bill-2020>



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Objective 8: Support a Greener Future

6.525 The NPPF requires plans to provide a positive strategy for renewable and low carbon energy and heat.

- 6.526 With regard to flood risk, the NPPF states that development should be directed away from areas at highest flood risk, and that strategic policies should be informed by a strategic flood risk assessment. Plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development and manage any residual risk, by: applying the sequential test (and if necessary, the exception test).
- 6.527 The NPPF requires planning policies to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, including preventing development from contributing to, or being put at risk from, or affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability, and by remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land.
- 6.528 Addressing climate change is one of the core land use planning principles which the National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) expects to underpin plan-making. The PPG⁸¹ states that, to be found sound, Local Plans will need to reflect this principle and enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF.
- 6.529 The Government consultation 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code' (January 2021)⁸² sought views on the draft revisions to the NPPF to implement policy changes in response to the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission 'Living with Beauty' Report⁸³.
- 6.530 **The draft policies proposed as part of the Preferred Options have been drafted within the context of the NPPF (2019), and with regard to the draft revisions proposed in January 2021.** The 2021 consultation proposes a number of amendments to chapter 14 ('meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change') of the NPPF (2019).
- 6.531 The changes proposed are in part, an initial response to the emergent findings of the government's joint review with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) of planning policy for flood risk. The government's [Policy Statement on flood and coastal erosion risk management](#) sets out a number of actions to maintain and enhance the existing safeguards concerning flood risk in the planning system. Informed by this, the government will consider what further measures may be required in the longer term to strengthen planning policy and guidance for proposed development in areas at risk of flooding from all sources when our review concludes. Other amendments proposed are:
- On planning and flood risk, new paragraphs 159 and 160 have been amended to clarify that the policy applies to all sources of flood risk.
 - New paragraph 159(c) has been amended to clarify that plans should manage any residual flood risk by using opportunities provided by new development and improvements in green and other infrastructure to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding (making as much use as possible of natural flood management techniques as part of an integrated approach to flood risk management).

⁸¹ Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 6-001-20140306

⁸² Ref

⁸³ [Building Better Building Beautiful Commission "Living with Beauty" report.](#)



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Objective 8: Support a Greener Future

- The Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification has been moved from planning guidance into national planning policy (set out in Annex 3 and referred to in paragraph 161). It is considered that this classification is a key tool and should be contained in national policy.
- New paragraph 162 has been amended to clarify the criteria that need to be demonstrated to pass the exception test.
- New paragraph 165(b) has been expanded to define what is meant by “resilient”.
- New paragraph 207(c) has been amended to refer to Mineral Consultation Areas in order to clarify that this is an important mechanism to safeguard minerals particularly in two tier areas, and to reflect better in policy what is already defined in Planning Practice Guidance.
- New paragraph 208(f) has been amended to reflect that some stone extraction sites will be large and serve distant markets.

6.532 In addition, the 2021 consultation proposes two amendments to chapter 17 (‘facilitating the sustainable use of minerals’) of the NPPF (2019):

- New paragraph 207(c) has been amended to refer to Mineral Consultation Areas in order to clarify that this is an important mechanism to safeguard minerals particularly in two tier areas, and to reflect better in policy what is already defined in Planning Practice Guidance.
- New paragraph 208(f) has been amended to reflect that some stone extraction sites will be large and serve distant markets.

6.533 The draft NPPF revisions (January 2021) do not reflect proposals for wider planning reform set out in the Government White Paper ‘Planning for the Future’ (August 2020). A fuller review of the NPPF is expected to be prepared by the government in due course, once the government has fully considered the responses to consultation on the White Paper proposals. **The Local Plan will be amended as required to conform to future revisions to the NPPF when they are made.**

What you told us

6.534 The following options to support the delivery of a Greener Future were presented in the Issues and Options Consultation:

Option A: Update current Local Plan (Part 1) Policy CP16 to reflect up to date evidence base work. Include reference to potential role of canal network in contributing to low carbon technologies and surface water drainage; measures to protect ‘controlled waters’; matters to consider in relation to regulated sites; such as waste processing facilities, reflecting the ‘agent of change’ principle. Enhance links to the role of green/blue infrastructure in supporting a green future.

Option B: In combination with Option A, continue current policy approach of encouraging sustainable construction standards, but not requiring them.

Option C: In combination with Option A, require developments to meet specific building standards, including sustainable construction standards such as water efficiency, energy efficiency, low carbon/renewable technologies and include in local plan policy.



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- 6.535 The findings of Sustainability Appraisal of the Greener Future Policy Options ranged from an equal mixture of minor positive and negative effects to significantly positive effect. Options B and C had more positive effects than Option A.
- 6.536 Respondents made the following suggestions regarding Local Plan policy:
- Council should set standards for energy efficiency through the Building Regulations.
 - It is the HBF'S opinion that the Council should not be setting different targets or policies outside of Building Regulations.
 - The Practice Guidance makes clear that local requirements should form part of a Local Plan following engagement with appropriate partners and will need to be based on robust and credible evidence and pay careful attention to viability.
 - The Plan should include consideration of the existing requirements of policies 2.4 and 2.5 of the Waste Local Plan relating to safeguarding waste management facilities as well as policy 3 of the Minerals Local Plan relating to safeguarding important mineral resources and mineral infrastructure sites.
 - A water cycle study and supporting evidence from both the EA and water and waste water service providers could be used to set site specific policies on high sustainability or construction targets.

New Evidence

- 6.537 The Staffordshire County 'Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation' Study (AECOM October 2020)⁸⁴ was commissioned to support the development of an evidence base for new energy and sustainability policies being considered for Staffordshire County Council and its eight constituent Local Authorities. The Report identified a number of opportunities for development to support low and zero carbon energy and heat production.

PREFERRED POLICY – LOW AND ZERO CARBON ENERGY AND HEAT PRODUCTION

What you told us

- 6.538 In response to the Issues and Options consultation, respondents suggested that the Council should set standards for energy efficiency through the Building Regulations. It is the Home Builders Federation's view that the Council should not be setting different targets or policies outside of Building Regulations. However, others thought that local requirements should form part of a Local Plan following engagement with appropriate partners and will need to be based on robust and credible evidence and pay careful attention to viability.

New Evidence

- 6.539 The Staffordshire 'Climate Change Adaptation & Mitigation' Study (AECOM October 2020) recommends that Local Authorities should consider adopting a policy stance with a presumption in favour of appropriate low and zero carbon (LZC) technologies - onshore wind and PV farms. The report has confirmed the findings of earlier studies

⁸⁴ [Report Final Report 2020-06-17 \(cannockchasedc.gov.uk\)](https://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk)



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which found that there is considerable wind resource across the County. However, due to the constrained land area in Cannock Chase (and Tamworth) these areas will inevitably rely on renewable energy generated elsewhere. However, the opportunities to incorporate solar photovoltaic (PV) arrays into existing built infrastructure, including industrial sites and car parks should be investigated.

- 6.540 The Study recommends that Local Authorities should support the use of efficient heating technologies powered by renewable electricity (e.g. heat pumps), and identifies that there may be opportunities to utilise water source heat pumps (WSHPs) in wastewater treatment works, legacy mining assets, and rivers or other waterbodies (although a detailed assessment was outside the scope of the report).

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO8.1: LOW AND ZERO CARBON ENERGY AND HEAT PRODUCTION

Development proposals for appropriate low and zero carbon (LZC) energy and heat production installations (including solar photovoltaic (PV), wind energy, and air and water source heat pumps) will be supported where they can demonstrate that:

- **The impacts arising from the construction, operation and de-commissioning of solar and wind farms and other LZC energy and heat generating installations (both individually and cumulatively) can be mitigated;**
- **The impacts of the development proposals (both individually and cumulatively) on designated landscapes and heritage assets, the natural environment, and on local amenity have been assessed and shown to be acceptable;**
- **The development proposal has been informed by the outcome of consultation with the communities that would be affected by the development; and,**
- **There are appropriate plans in place for the removal of the installations at the end of their lifetime and for the restoration of the site to an acceptable alternative use.**

Development proposals to install LZC energy and heat production into existing built infrastructure, including housing estates, employment areas, retail sites and car parks, will be supported where they can demonstrate that:

- **The installation promotes good design and is in line with the relevant Local Design Code;**
- **The installation has been designed to allow for adaptability to new LZC technologies that may emerge.**
- **The installation has been informed by the outcome of consultation with the communities that would be affected by the installation; and,**
- **There are appropriate plans in place for the removal of the installation at the end of its lifetime and for the restoration of the site to an acceptable condition.**

Explanatory Text

- 6.541 National Planning Policy Guidance supports the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, and the Local Plan provides a positive response to development proposals which increase the production of renewable and low carbon energy and heat within the District.



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QUESTION 48

Do you support the preferred policy direction to low and zero carbon energy and heat production?

List of Relevant Evidence

- 'Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation' Staffordshire County Council (AECOM October 2020).

PREFERRED POLICY – ACHIEVING NET ZERO CARBON DEVELOPMENT

What you told us

6.542 In response to the Issues and Options consultation, respondents expressed support for the requirement that developments should meet specific building standards, including sustainable construction standards such as low carbon/renewable technologies (Option C), and that these should be included in local plan policy.

New Evidence

- 6.543 The Staffordshire 'Climate Change Adaptation & Mitigation' Study (AECOM October 2020) made a number of recommendations about reducing CO2 emissions in the built environment. In relation to Local Plans, these included:
- Setting the highest level of building performance standards for energy use and CO2 emissions that can practically and viably be achieved, and looking to implement an Energy and Heat Hierarchy. In addition to regulated emissions, which are covered by Building Regulations, policies should also seek to reduce unregulated emissions and embodied carbon.
 - Considering establishing a Carbon Offset Fund that developers can contribute to in lieu of on-site mitigation. This fund would be used to deliver carbon offsetting and reduction projects such as large-scale LZC installations and / or installations on existing built infrastructure (e.g. solar car parks), afforestation, and peatland restoration.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO8.2: ACHIEVING NET ZERO CARBON DEVELOPMENT

All development proposals should strive to achieve the highest level of building performance standards for energy use and achieve the lowest carbon emissions that can practically and viably be achieved.

All major development proposals will deliver, in priority order:

- **Zero carbon emission development;**
- **Low carbon emission development with on-site mitigation to achieve net-zero carbon emissions;**
- **Low carbon emission development with off-site mitigation to achieve net-zero carbon emissions;**
- **Low carbon emission development with compensatory contributions to an appropriate carbon offsetting fund to achieve net-zero carbon emissions.**



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All major development proposals will include evidence in a Sustainability Statement (part of the Design and Access Statement) that the development has achieved the lowest carbon emissions that can practically and viably be achieved.

Explanatory Text

- 6.544 The NPPF sets out that planning plays a key role in delivering reductions to greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to climate change. In order to contribute towards the national and local carbon targets, mitigation and carbon offsetting will be required in addition to new low and zero carbon development.
- 6.545 Accredited UK offset schemes are currently run by the Woodland Carbon Code (WCC) and the Woodland Trust. The District Council will also consider establishing a Cannock Chase Carbon Offset Fund as part of a reformed Community Infrastructure Levy.
- 6.546 The offset schemes will be used to support initiatives to increase carbon sequestration in the District. These initiatives may include:
- Woodland creation, green infrastructure, and 'rewilding' underutilised land;
 - Developing carbon management and reduction plans, including promoting energy efficiency measures and the increasing the uptake of low and zero carbon technologies;
 - Retrofitting existing housing stock with low and zero carbon energy and heating systems, and enhancing existing performance of the stock;
 - Projects that achieve a reduced use of energy, supply energy more efficiently, and increase the use of renewable energy;
 - Introduction of carbon storage technologies.

QUESTION 49

Do you support the preferred policy direction to achieve net-zero carbon development?

List of Relevant Evidence

- 'Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation' Staffordshire County Council (AECOM October 2020).

PREFERRED POLICY – SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

What you told us

- 6.547 In response to the Issues and Options consultation, respondents suggested that the Council should set standards for energy efficiency through the Building Regulations. It is the Home Builders Federation's opinion that the Council should not be setting different targets or policies outside of Building Regulations. However, other respondents thought that local requirements should form part of the Local Plan following engagement with appropriate partners and will need to be based on robust and credible evidence and pay careful attention to viability.



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Objective 8: Support a Greener Future

New Evidence

6.548 The Staffordshire 'Climate Change Adaptation & Mitigation' Study (AECOM October 2020) made a number of recommendations about reducing carbon emissions in the built environment. In relation to Local Plans, these included:

- Setting the highest level of building performance standards for energy use and carbon emissions that can practically and viably be achieved, and looking to implement an Energy and Heat Hierarchy. In addition to regulated emissions, which are covered by Building Regulations, policies should also seek to reduce unregulated emissions and embodied carbon.
- Ensuring that proposals are 'futureproofed' to facilitate the uptake of LZC technologies; particularly those that deliver low carbon heat (such as air source heat pumps - ASHPs) and providing on-site renewable electricity generation and storage (such as PV and battery technologies).
- Considering requiring applicants to undertake a BREEAM or HQM assessment (or similar).
- Requiring applicants to describe their sustainability strategy in a standalone Sustainability Statement or as part of the Design and Access Statement.
- Identifying opportunities for holistic sustainability interventions (for example: co-locating green corridors with pedestrian and cycle routes, and integrating these with sustainable drainage systems and blue infrastructure; and integrating LZC technologies with the built environment).
- Incorporating circular economy principles such as: designing out waste; lean design; designing for flexibility and adaptability; and designing for deconstruction and reuse.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO8.3: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

All major development proposals will include a Sustainability Statement (as part of the Design and Access Statement) to set out how the design will:

- **Meet the requirements of Policy SO8.2: 'Achieving Net Zero Carbon Development';**
- **Maximise opportunities for on-site production and use of low and zero carbon energy and heat (including air and water source heat pumps and solar photovoltaic arrays);**
- **Incorporate, and/or link to, low and zero carbon energy and heat systems;**
- **Take account of projected changes in temperature, rainfall and wind to ensure that the development remains resilient to the effects of climate change;**
- **Protect, improve and enhance existing woodlands and habitats, and integrate new green and blue infrastructure with sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and pedestrian and cycle routes;**
- **Provide a contribution to the creation of urban forests, woodlands and street trees as an integral part of the development or as part of a linked off-site scheme.**
- **Conform to the relevant Local Design Code;**
- **Make efficient use of previously developed land, existing buildings and**



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infrastructure (in line with Policy SO8.6: Brownfield and Despoiled Land and Under-Utilised Buildings).

- **Use materials with a low environmental impact, minimise the use of non-renewable natural resources, and maximise the reuse and recycling of materials in construction and deconstruction (in line with Policy SO8.8 'Managing Waste'); and**
- **Provide electric vehicle recharging infrastructure within new development, designate parking spaces for low emission vehicles; provide opportunities for local walking and cycling, and facilitate low emission bus service provision (in line with Policy SO5.3 'Low and Zero Carbon Transport').**

All residential development proposals should meet or exceed the standards set out by the Home Quality Mark, or equivalent.

All non-residential development proposals of more than 500m² gross (new build and conversions) should meet or exceed BREEAM 'excellent' rating, and be accompanied by an independent and validated assessment of the net carbon emissions or reductions that are expected to result from the development, together with details of the monitoring system that will be put into place to monitor impacts.

Explanatory Text

- 6.549 National Planning Policy Guidance supports appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts.
- 6.550 Partnership working will be required to deliver the aspiration to achieve the national target to achieve net zero carbon by 2050, and the Council's ambition to be net zero carbon by 2030. An important part of the partnership effort will be to ensure that all new developments make a contribution by minimizing their impacts during their lifetimes, including construction. All new development must therefore achieve the standards set out in the Local Plan and the Local Design Codes as a minimum.
- 6.551 The Home Quality Mark is one way of demonstrating the standard of a new residential dwelling, which includes measures for low carbon dioxide, sustainable materials, good air quality and natural daylight. If HQM is replaced or amended during the lifetime of the plan, the equivalent replacement requirements will be applied
- 6.552 The BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) applies to non-residential developments, non-self-contained housing and residential development arising from conversions and changes of use. This method provides an assessment of the environmental sustainability of a development. If BREEAM is replaced or amended during the lifetime of the plan, the equivalent replacement requirements will be applied.

QUESTION 50

Do you support the preferred policy direction to secure Sustainable Design Development?



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List of Relevant Evidence

- 'Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation' Staffordshire County Council (AECOM October 2020).

PREFERRED POLICY - MANAGING FLOOD RISK

What you told us

6.553 In response to the Issues and Options consultation, respondents suggested that a water cycle study and supporting evidence from both the Environment Agency and water and waste water service providers could be used to set site specific policies on high sustainability or construction targets.

New Evidence

- 6.554 Several indicators in the latest UK State of the Climate Report show that the UK's climate is getting wetter. A Met Office study⁸⁵ has shown that an extended period of extreme winter rainfall in the UK is seven times more likely due to human-induced climate change.
- 6.555 Government amendments to the NPPF (2019) published in 2021 propose that plans should manage any residual flood risk by using opportunities provided by new development and improvements in green and other infrastructure to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding (making as much use as possible of natural flood management techniques as part of an integrated approach to flood risk management).
- 6.556 It is also proposed to make amendments to clarify the criteria that need to be demonstrated to pass the exception test.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO8.4: MANAGING FLOOD RISK

The Local Planning Authority will manage flood risk within the Plan Area by directing development away from areas at highest risk.

Development proposals on sites known to be at risk from any form of flooding will be resisted if alternative sites are available for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding.

Where it is not possible for the development to be located in areas with a lower probability of flooding, an Exception Test must be undertaken to demonstrate that there are overriding sustainability benefits to the community to be gained from allowing the development.

All major development proposals will:

- **Incorporate sustainable water management measures to reduce water use, and increase its reuse, minimise surface water run-off, and ensure that it does not increase flood risks or impact water quality elsewhere.**
- **Reduce the risk of flooding and maximise flood protection by including features such as trees and planting, water bodies, retention ponds and filter beds, and**

⁸⁵ Environmental Research Letters 13.024006 (2018)



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permeable paving. Surface drainage requirements should work with the local topography to create low maintenance sustainable drainage systems.

All major development proposals at sites which fall into Flood Zones 2 or 3 (in whole or in part) will as a minimum:

- **Be supported by a comprehensive and deliverable strategy to minimize flood risk.**
- **Be resilient to flooding through design and layout, incorporating sensitively designed mitigation measures. These may take the form of on-site flood defence works and/or a contribution towards, or a commitment to undertake such off-site measures as may be necessary to meet required flood protection standards, for example, as set out in the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.**
- **Provide sufficient space for drainage and flood alleviation schemes.**
- **Promote the safety of people in consultation with emergency planning services.**

Explanatory Text

6.557 Staffordshire County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority and has produced a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. Both Cannock and Rugeley feature in the list of the top 10 communities at risk of flooding from surface water and small watercourses (Cannock 1292 and Rugeley 729 properties at risk). The County Council's 'Sustainable Drainage Systems Handbook' (2017) includes advice on the planning process, and design guidance incorporating national and local standards and best practice examples.

QUESTION 51

Do you support the preferred policy direction to managing flood risk and water quality impacts?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Staffordshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2015)
- Staffordshire Sustainable Drainage Systems Handbook (2017)

PREFERRED POLICY - AVOIDING AIR, WATER, SOIL, NOISE AND LIGHT POLLUTION

What you told us

- 6.558 In regard to air quality, respondents to the Issues and Options Consultation felt that local standards should be based on robust and proportionate evidence, and set through Local Plan policy.
- 6.559 In response to the Issues and Options consultation, respondents suggested that a water cycle study and supporting evidence from both the Environment Agency and water and waste water service providers could be used to set site specific policies on high sustainability or construction targets.

New Evidence

- 6.560 The Environment Bill 2020 sets out how the Government plans to protect and improve the natural environment in the UK. The Environment Bill will help deliver the vision set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan. The goals of the 25 Year Plan include clean air,



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Clean and plentiful water, a reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards, and using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently.

- 6.561 The District has three Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's) to address elevated nitrogen dioxide concentrations primarily caused by road traffic. These are on the A5 Watling Street and A5190 Cannock Road, Heath Hayes. Air quality at these locations is showing some signs of improvement. Air Aware Staffordshire was launched in 2019 to raise awareness about air quality and influence commuting behaviour for businesses and schools near to the AQMA's.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO8.5: AVOIDING AIR, WATER, SOIL, NOISE AND LIGHT POLLUTION

Development proposals which will cause unacceptable on-site or off-site risk or harm to human health or the natural environment (either individually or cumulatively) will not be permitted.

All major development proposals will:

- **Set out how any air, water, soil, noise and light pollution that may arise from the development will be avoided (or, if it is not possible to avoid the pollution, mitigated);**
- **Set out (where relevant) how they will avoid any adverse impacts on an Air Quality Management Area. If it is not possible to avoid adverse impacts, the proposals will set out how the impacts on the Air Quality Management Area will be mitigated through the implementation of measures contained within air quality action plans and transport plans, and through green infrastructure provision and enhancements, or building layout and design which will help to minimise harmful air quality impacts.**
- **Protect (and where appropriate enhance and restore) water quality. Development will not be permitted without confirmation that the existing or improved sewage and wastewater treatment facilities can accommodate the new development;**
- **Protect and conserve soil resources, and safeguard the best and most versatile agricultural land;**
- **Ensure that public lighting and signage is designed and maintained in a way that will limit the impact of light pollution on local amenity, nature conservation, wildlife habitats, and intrinsically dark landscapes and skies; and**
- **Maintain and improve the noise environment through good design which takes account of the acoustic environment (in line with the Noise Policy Statement for England).**

Explanatory Text

- 6.562 The NPPF requires planning policies to ensure that development takes account of its likely effects on health, living conditions and the natural environment. Impacts can include reduced air and water quality, soil pollution, increased noise, and artificial light pollution.
- 6.563 Air quality mitigation can include: providing electric vehicle recharging infrastructure within new development; designating parking spaces for low emission vehicles; contributing to low emission vehicle refuelling infrastructure; supporting local walking



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and cycling initiatives; providing emission bus service provision or waste collection services.

- 6.564 Any additional contribution of emissions from new development may worsen air quality and cause the creation of a new Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and therefore a small change in pollutant concentration can be as much a cause for concern as a large one. The areas of concern to consider are:
- Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs);
 - Areas near to or adjacent to AQMAs and candidate AQMAs; and
 - Developments that require Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA).
- 6.565 The Council undertakes air quality monitoring through an air quality monitoring station, currently located on the A5190 Cannock Road in Heath Hayes, and diffusion tubes that are located across the District. Site details and summary of monitoring data can be viewed [here](#).
- 6.566 The Council has declared three Air Quality Management Areas within the District. This is because levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) in those areas exceed the national air quality objectives, mainly due to road traffic on the A5 Watling Street and A5190 Cannock Road. Maps of the three Air Quality Management Areas can be found [here](#), and more general information is available [here](#).
- 6.567 The District Air Quality Action Plan is available [here](#).
- 6.568 National Planning Practice Guidance⁸⁶ requires noise to be considered when development may create additional noise or would be sensitive to the prevailing acoustic environment. The Noise Policy Statement for England (2010) sets out the long term vision of national noise policy to promote good health and a good quality of life through the management of noise.
- 6.569 The Cannock Chase AONB in particular includes a largely intact landscape which offers a haven of tranquillity and wildness. The AONB and the other areas designated as protected areas are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of air, water, soil, noise and light pollution.

QUESTION 52

Do you support the preferred policy direction to avoid air, water, soil, noise and light pollution?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan 2019-2024

⁸⁶ Paragraph 30-001-20190722



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PREFERRED POLICY – BROWNFIELD AND DESPOILED LAND AND UNDER-UTILISED BUILDINGS

What you told us

6.570 In response to the Issues and Options consultation, respondents supported the idea of 'brownfield' sites first to meet housing needs.

New Evidence

6.571 The government consultation 'Supporting housing delivery and public service infrastructure' (December 2020) proposes to introduce new Permitted Development Rights (PDR) to allow a change of use from Use Class E (commercial, business and service) to C3 (dwelling houses). These changes allow greater flexibility in uses in town centres allowing for units to be re-occupied quicker and to change use quickly without requiring planning permission.

6.572 The proposed changes take control away from Local Planning Authorities and give more freedom to allow the market to decide about alternative uses, and could encourage an increase in the provision of dwellings in the urban areas.

6.573 Other Permitted Development Rights have recently been introduced by the Government, including:

- demolishing and rebuilding vacant and redundant buildings of a footprint of up to 1,000 square metres as new residential developments within the footprint of the original building, up to a maximum height of 18 metres, including up to 2 storeys higher than the former building;
- building an extra two storeys on top of freestanding blocks of flats (of at least 3 storeys) without other services below, up to a maximum of 30 metres (if the building was constructed between 1948 and 2018);
- building an extra two storeys on top of existing 2-story homes for new homes or as an extension, up to a maximum of 18 metres and no more than 3.5 metres above the highest part of the terrace or the adjoined semi; one storey on top of bungalows and other single storey homes; an extra two storeys on top of 2-storey buildings in a terrace in commercial uses and in mixed uses, up to a maximum of 18 metres and no more than 3.5 metres above the highest part of the terrace; one extra storey on top of single storey buildings in a terrace in commercial uses and in mixed use with residential; or an extra two storeys on freestanding buildings in commercial uses (of at least 3 storeys) and in mixed use with residential, up to a maximum height of 30 metres.

6.574 A Cannock Chase Development Capacity Study has been prepared to set out evidence about the need for, and supply of, land for housing in the District over the period from 2020 to 2038. The Study will be kept under continuous review. The Study will inform the preparation of the Local Plan and meet the requirements set out in the NPPF (2019) regarding the release of land from the Green Belt for development.



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Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO8.6: BROWNFIELD AND DESPOILED LAND AND UNDER-UTILISED BUILDINGS

Development proposals, where appropriate and in line with the provisions of the relevant Local Design Code, will:

- **Prioritise the use of suitable brownfield land for homes and other uses, particularly within designated settlement boundaries, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled (degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable) land; and,**
- **Make effective use of under-utilised land and buildings, particularly within designated settlement boundaries, through building renovations and conversions, the demolition and rebuilding of vacant and redundant buildings, and building on or above existing buildings, service yards, carparks or other infrastructure.**

Explanatory Text

6.575 Brownfield sites are those available for reuse which have previously been developed and are either abandoned or underused. The definition covers the curtilage of the development. The Brownfield Land Register includes all the brownfield sites that the local planning authority has assessed as appropriate for development. This includes sites with extant full planning permission, outline planning permission and permission in principle as well as sites without planning permission. Sites on the Brownfield Land Register have been sourced from the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA 2020) which includes all known potential residential development sites across the District.

QUESTION 53

Do you support the preferred policy direction to brownfield and despoiled land and under-utilised buildings?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Cannock Chase District Brownfield Land Register;
- Cannock Chase District Development Capacity Study (2021);
- Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) (No.3) Order 2020 (S.I. 2020.No. 756);
- Town and Country Planning (Permitted Development and Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 (S.I. 2020.No. 632);
- Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) (No.2) Order 2020 (S.I. 2020.No. 755);

PREFERRED POLICY - SAFEGUARDING MINERAL RESERVES.

What you told us

6.576 Options to support the delivery of a Greener Future were presented in the Issues and Options Consultation. Respondents suggested the Local Plan should include



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consideration of Policy 3 of the Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire relating to safeguarding important mineral resources and mineral infrastructure sites.

New Evidence

6.577 No relevant new evidence has been reviewed in relation to mineral reserves since the Issues and Options consultation.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO8.7: SAFEGUARDING MINERAL RESERVES

In support of the delivery of the objectives of the Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire, all development will maximise the contribution that substitute or secondary and recycled material can make as an alternative to primary minerals.

The Local Planning Authority will consult the Minerals Planning Authority as required where development falls within the Mineral Safeguarding Areas defined in the Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire.

All major development proposals will:

- **Provide, where appropriate, for the extraction of mineral resources of local and national importance;**
- **Ensure that the development does not sterilise known locations of mineral resources of local and national importance by safeguarding the Mineral Safeguarding Areas defined in the Mineral Local Plan for Staffordshire; and the associated Safeguarded Mineral Infrastructure sites used for mineral processing, handling, and transportation.**

Explanatory Text

6.578 Minerals are a finite resource and best use need to be made of them. The NPPF requires relevant local authorities to ensure there is a sufficient supply of minerals to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy and goods needed. This involves the protection of areas for minerals workings.

6.579 Planning applications for the extraction and working of minerals are determined by Staffordshire County Council. The County Council adopted the [Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire](#) (2015-2030) in February 2017. The Minerals Local Plan Policy 4 'Minimising the Impact of Mineral Development' sets out the environmental considerations that will be taken into account in assessing the impact of proposals for minerals development (including Green Belt, the Cannock Chase AONB, and the natural environment).

6.580 An objective of the Minerals Local Plan is to provide minerals to support sustainable economic development by: achieving an acceptable balance between the adequate supply of minerals and the impact of mineral operations on local communities and the environment; taking account of the contribution that substitute or secondary and recycled material can make as an alternative to primary minerals; and ensuring that important economic mineral resources are not needlessly sterilised.

6.581 Policy 3 of the Minerals Local Plan 'Safeguarding Minerals of Local and National Importance and Important Infrastructure' defines criteria for the assessment of planning



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applications for non-mineral related development within Mineral Safeguarding Areas and zones for Safeguarded Mineral infrastructure sites.

- 6.582 The Minerals Local Plan Policy 3 'Safeguarding Minerals of Local and National Importance and Important Infrastructure' identifies Mineral Safeguarding Areas, including an area of (surface coal and associated fireclays in the southern part of Cannock Chase District). This area will be safeguarded against needless sterilisation by non-mineral development. Prospective development will not be permitted unless it has been demonstrated that either: that the development does not permanently sterilise the mineral; or, the benefits of the development outweigh the benefits of the mineral; or, it is not environmentally acceptable to extract the mineral.
- 6.583 District Planning Authorities are required to consult the Minerals Planning Authority where the development falls within the Mineral Safeguarding Areas (unless the development is exempted).
- 6.584 The Local Planning Authority will follow the relevant standing advice (October 2018 or subsequent revisions) provided by the County Council in processing planning applications in respect of the County's mineral safeguarding policy.

QUESTION 54

Do you support the preferred policy direction to safeguarding mineral reserves?

List of Relevant Evidence

- The [Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire](#) (2015-2030) - February 2017

PREFERRED POLICY – MANAGING WASTE

What you told us

- 6.585 Options to support the delivery of a Greener Future were presented in the Issues and Options Consultation. Respondents suggested the Local Plan should include consideration of the existing requirements of policies 2.4 and 2.5 of the Waste Local Plan relating to safeguarding waste management facilities.

New Evidence

- 6.586 No relevant new evidence has been reviewed in relation to waste management since the Issues and Options consultation.

Preferred Policy Direction

POLICY SO8.8 MANAGING WASTE

All major development proposals will:

- **Be supported by a site waste management plan demonstrating that waste prevention is the first priority and how the demolition, construction and operational phases of the development will minimise the generation of waste.**
- **Provide integrated facilities for the storage of recyclable and non-recyclable waste, and have regard to the operational needs of the relevant waste collection authorities in their design and access arrangements.**



6. Local Plan Policy Options

Objective 8: Support a Greener Future

Development proposals for waste management facilities will need to demonstrate that the proposals:

- **Are compatible with the objective of moving the management of waste up the Waste Hierarchy.**
- **Will not result in unacceptable direct or indirect impacts on the amenity of existing or proposed neighbouring uses.**
- **Have good access to the principal road network, and where practicable, other modes of transport.**

Non-waste related development proposals on or in the vicinity of the permitted waste management facilities will not be supported, unless there are overriding planning reasons why the non-waste related development should be permitted, including the relocation of waste facilities to alternative sites.

Explanatory Text

- 6.587 The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Waste Local Plan (2010-26) was adopted in March 2013. Following a First Review during 2018, the County Council resolved in March 2019 that the Waste Local Plan did not need to be revised, and that the Plan would continue to carry weight in the determination of planning applications.
- 6.588 The Waste Hierarchy, as adopted in the National Waste Strategy, is a method of sustainable waste management which ranks waste management options in a way that protects human health and the environment. The hierarchy runs from the most to least effective solution: prevention; preparing for re-use; recycling; other recovery; and disposal.

QUESTION 55

Do you support the preferred policy direction to manage waste?

List of Relevant Evidence

- Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Waste Local Plan (2010)

7. Monitoring Framework

- 7.1 The delivery of the policies of the Cannock Chase Local Plan by the District Council and its partners will require proactive management and the co-ordinated investment of private and public resources. Delivery progress will be monitored closely through a variety of mechanisms, and will be summarised in the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) prepared by the District Council.
- 7.2 Once the Local Plan has been adopted, the AMR will assess the extent to which the Strategic Objectives of the Local Plan are being achieved by monitoring the delivery of the Local Plan policies.
- 7.3 The Monitoring Framework presented on the following pages includes the proposed Indicators that will be used in the AMR to assess the progress in delivering each Local Plan policy.

Infrastructure

- 7.4 An important part of Local Plan delivery is enabling infrastructure and investment in the right place, at the right time. This will be achieved by:
- Assessing the needs for infrastructure and investment to enable delivery;
 - Co-ordinating the delivery of infrastructure and investment;
 - Identifying risks to delivery of infrastructure and investment, and contingencies to deal with those risks.
- 7.5 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is a supporting document to the Local Plan. It identifies the physical, green and social and community infrastructure that will be required to support the delivery of the Local Plan. The IDP will be published alongside the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) consultation draft of the Local Plan (in Winter 2021), and subsequently reviewed regularly. IDP progress will be reported in the AMR.
- 7.6 The Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) provides a summary of the financial and non-financial developer contributions (planning obligations) that will be sought by the District Council and its partners to deliver infrastructure. The developer contributions will be confirmed through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 agreements (S106). The IFS will be prepared and subsequently reviewed alongside the IDP.
- 7.7 The 'Planning for the Future' White Paper consultation (August 2020) proposes reforms of the planning system, including the following proposals to 'improve the system of developer contributions to infrastructure':
- Proposal 19: The Community Infrastructure Levy should be reformed to be charged as a fixed proportion of the development value above a threshold, with a mandatory nationally-set rate or rates and the current system of planning obligations abolished;
 - Proposal 20: The scope of the Infrastructure Levy could be extended to capture changes of use through permitted development rights;
 - Proposal 21: The reformed Infrastructure Levy should deliver affordable housing provision;
 - Proposal 22: More freedom could be given to local authorities over how they spend the Infrastructure Levy.

Appropriate amendments will be made to the Local Plan policies and the Monitoring Framework if reforms are made to the CIL.

7. Monitoring Framework

Draft Monitoring Framework

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: DELIVERING HIGH QUALITY DEVELOPMENT THAT IS DISTINCTIVE, ATTRACTIVE & SAFE

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency	Data Source
SO1.1 Protecting, Conserving and Enhancing the Distinctive Local Historic Environment	Design and Access Statements secured for major development and listed building applications. Heritage at Risk Register. Local List.	Proportion of Design and Access Statements protecting designated and non-designated assets. Positive impacts on historic environment.	Review pre-application guidance and advice. Prepare/review Local Design Codes. Review policy if necessary.	In house monitoring of Design and Access Statements through development management process.
SO1.2 Enhancing the Quality of the Built Environment	Design and Access Statements secured. Major developments meeting National/Local Design Code standards.	Proportion of Design and Access Statements addressing design quality. Proportion of applications meeting National/Local Design Code standards.	Review pre-application guidance and advice. Prepare/review Local Design Codes. Review policy if necessary.	In house monitoring of Design and Access Statements & conformity to Design Codes through development management process.
SO1.3 Creating Safe Places which Deter Crime and Reduce the Fear of Crime	Design and Access Statements secured. Developments meeting National/Local Design Code standards. Levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, and fear of crime.	Proportion of Design and Access Statements addressing crime and community safety. Proportion of applications meeting National/Local Design Code standards.	Review pre-application guidance and advice. Prepare/revise Local Design Codes. Review policy if necessary.	In house monitoring of Design and Access Statements & conformity to Design Codes through development management process. Crime and disorder statistics.

7. Monitoring Framework

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: CREATING COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND HEALTHY LIVING OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS THE DISTRICT

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency	Data Source
SO2.1 Safeguarding the Provision of New Community Infrastructure	Provision of Community Infrastructure: Education; Health Community Infrastructure accessible by walking and cycling.	Net increase in provision (by type of infrastructure). Proportion of residents who are able to access Community Infrastructure by walking and cycling (by type of infrastructure and location).	Prioritise use of Community Infrastructure Levy to address shortfalls in provision. Review Infrastructure Delivery Plan.	In house monitoring through development management process. Baseline study of accessibility to Community Infrastructure & programme of regular review.
SO2.2 Safeguarding Health and Amenity	Design and Access Statements secured. Major developments meeting the National/Local Design Code standards.	Proportion of Design and Access Statements addressing Health and Amenity. Proportion meeting National/Local Design Code standards.	Review pre-application guidance and advice. Prepare/revise Local Design Codes.	In house monitoring of Design and Access Statements & conformity to Design Codes through development management process.
SO2.3 Providing Active Leisure and Sport Facilities	Provision of Active Leisure and Sports Facilities. Participation in sports and active leisure. Health inequalities.	Net increase in number of Active Leisure and Sports Facilities.	Prioritise use of Community Infrastructure Levy to address shortfalls in provision. Review Infrastructure Delivery Plan.	In house monitoring of Active Leisure & Sports Facilities (numbers & participation). Health statistics.
SO2.4 Providing Opportunities for Healthy	Provision of walking and cycling routes & open space.	Net increase in provision of cycling routes and open	Prioritise use of Community Infrastructure Levy to address	In house monitoring of Design and Access

7. Monitoring Framework

Living and Activity	Major developments meeting the National/Local Design Code standards. Usage of leisure facilities.	space. Proportion meeting National/Local Design Code standards.	shortfalls in provision. Review Infrastructure Delivery Plan.	Statements & conformity to Design Codes through development management process. In house monitoring of Open Spaces Strategy.
SO2.5 Allotments and Community Food Growing	Provision of new allotments and community food growing sites. Allotments and community food growing sites protected through planning decisions, or replaced.	Net increase in provision of allotments and community food growing sites.	Review pre-application guidance and advice.	In house monitoring of Open Spaces Strategy.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: PROVIDING FOR HOUSING CHOICE

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency	Data Source
SO3.1 Provision for New Homes	The number of new homes completed against the targets set out in the Spatial Strategy and allocations set out in local Plan.	Achieve the required level of housing completions and maintain 5 year supply.	If delivery falls below the (MHCLG set) percentage of the housing requirement, an Action Plan will set out the ways that delivery will be boosted.	Housing Completions. Housing Delivery Test. SHLAA.
SO3.2 Housing Choice	The mix of housing size, type & tenure. Affordable housing units delivered.	Meet policy targets for housing mix. Increase the provision of affordable housing.	Review pre-application guidance and advice.	In house monitoring of housing completions & permissions.

7. Monitoring Framework

SO3.3 Delivering High Quality Housing	Homes meeting Nationally Described Space Standards. Provision for people with health problems or disabilities	Proportion of homes meeting space standards. Proportion of homes providing for people with health problems or disabilities.	Review pre-application guidance and advice.	In house monitoring of housing completions & permissions.
SO3.4 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People	Provision of additional pitches and plots required by need set out in GTAA.	Number of additional pitches and plots provided.	Reassess site allocations and baseline data on the number of pitches and plots required	In house monitoring of provision.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: CREATING A VIBRANT LOCAL ECONOMY AND WORKFORCE

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency	Data Source
SO4.1 Safeguarding Existing Employment Areas for Employment Uses	Employment sites protected through planning decisions.	No unjustified loss of safeguarded employment sites. Sufficient supply and variety of employment areas (hectares, units and jobs).	Identify further allocations for employment use to compensate for losses of existing sites through a Local plan review.	In house monitoring through development management process. ELAA. SHLAA.
SO4.2 Provision for New Employment Uses	Employment sites completed against the targets set out in the Spatial Strategy and allocations set out in local Plan.	New provision employment (type, floorspace, hectares, units and jobs).	Site promotion. Identify alternative allocations to compensate for anticipated slippage.	In house monitoring through development management process. ELAA.
SO4.3 Sustainable Tourism and the Rural Economy	Development proposals that will contribute to the development of Tourism and the Rural Economy.	Number of planning applications approved for rural enterprises.	Economic development and promotion.	In house monitoring through development management process.
SO4.4	Development	Increase in	Economic	In house

7. Monitoring Framework

Live Work Units	proposals for new Live Work Units.	number of Live Work Units.	development and promotion	monitoring through development management process.
SO4.5 Provision for Local Employment and Skills	Employment and Skills Plans secured by major developments.	Proportion of major development proposals with Employment & Skills Plans.	Review pre-application guidance and advice.	In house monitoring through development management process.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: SUPPORTING THE PROVISION OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency	Data Source
SO5.1 Accessible Development	Numbers of Transport Assessments, Travel Plans, and Design and Access Statements secured with relevant provisions. Mode of transport to work.	Secure Travel Plans for all developments of 50+ dwellings. Secure Design and Access Statements for all major developments of 10+ dwellings.	Review pre-application guidance and advice.	In house monitoring of Travel Plans & Design and Access Statements through development management process.
SO5.2 Communication Technologies	Provision of communications infrastructure to facilitate digital connectivity to business and residential occupiers of major developments.	Provision of digital connectivity at the point of first occupation.	Review pre-application guidance and advice.	In house monitoring through development management process.
SO5.3 Low and Zero Carbon Transport	Design and Access Statements secured.	Proportion of Design and Access Statements addressing Low and Zero Carbon Transport.	Review pre-application guidance and advice.	In house monitoring of Design and Access Statements through development management

7. Monitoring Framework

				process.
SO5.4 Maintaining and Improving the Transport System	To be identified in the Cannock Chase Integrated Transport Strategy (to be produced by the County Council to support the Local Plan).	TBD	TBD	Staffordshire County Council.
SO5.5 Hatherton Canal Restoration Corridor	Route protected to safeguard the restoration of the Canal.	Route protected.	Consider alternative options.	In house monitoring of planning applications through development management process.
SO5.6 Safeguarding Proposed Recreational Footpath and Cycle Routes	Recreational Footpath and Cycle Routes safeguarded.	Routes protected.	Consider alternative options.	In house monitoring of planning applications through development management process.
SO5.7 Parking Provision	Numbers of Design and Access Statements secured with relevant provisions. Major developments meeting the parking standards set out in the National/Local Design Code.	Secure Design and Access Statements for all major developments of 10+ dwellings.	Review pre-application guidance and advice.	In house monitoring through development management process.

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6: CREATING ATTRACTIVE TOWN AND LOCAL CENTRES

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency	Data Source
SO6.1 Hierarchy of Town and Local Centres	Outcome of applications for uses deemed inappropriate to the designated role of the Centre within the hierarchy.	Very low proportion of approvals of inappropriate uses.	Review pre-application guidance and advice.	In house monitoring through development management process.
SO6.2 Thresholds and Impact Tests for Town Centre Services	Impact Assessments secured to accompany proposals above the thresholds for Primary Shopping Areas and Local Centres.	Proportion of required Impact Assessments secured.	Review pre-application guidance and advice.	In house monitoring through development management process.
SO6.3 Safeguarding Existing Town Centre Services	Town centre service uses in the Primary Shopping Areas safeguarded from changes of use.	Number of proposed changes of use from the specified town centre service uses in the Policy resisted.	Review pre-application guidance and advice.	In house monitoring through development management process and health checks
SO6.4 Town Centre Design Guide	Major development proposals take account of design policy guidance.	Proportion of proposed town centre development proposals that provide evidence that the design policy guidance has been considered.	Review pre-application guidance and advice. Issue Local Design Guides.	In house monitoring through development management process.
SO6.5 Cannock Town Centre Redevelopment Areas	Redevelopment proposals for identified areas.	Amount of new development achieved by use class.	Consider partnership schemes.	Town centre Health Check
SO6.6 Rugeley Town	Redevelopment proposals for	Amount of new development	Consider partnership	Town centre Health Check

7. Monitoring Framework

Centre Redevelopment Areas	identified areas.	achieved by use class.	schemes.	
SO6.7 Hednesford Town Centre Redevelopment Areas	Redevelopment proposals for identified areas.	Amount of new development achieved by use class.	Consider partnership schemes.	Town centre Health Check

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 7: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency	Data Source
SO7.1 Protecting, Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Development permitted which has a harmful impact on designated sites of importance for biodiversity & geodiversity.	No development permitted if it impacts on designated sites unless exceptional circumstances apply.	Ensure that necessary compensatory provisions are applied.	In house monitoring through development management process.
SO7.2 Biodiversity Net Gain	Biodiversity net gain provided by development.	Development proposals include plans for the restoration & recreation of priority habitats.	Off-site provision of habitats that will provide for compensatory biodiversity.	In house monitoring through development management process.
SO7.3 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)	Development permitted which has an adverse impact on the SAC.	No planning permissions granted contrary to policy which would have an adverse impact on the SAC.	Refer to the Cannock Chase SAC Partnership and Natural England to advise on avoiding or mitigating impacts.	In house monitoring through development management process and SAC condition survey.
SO7.4 Protecting, Conserving and Enhancing Landscape Character	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment secured.	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment secured for all major development proposals.	Review pre-application guidance and advice.	In house monitoring through development management process.
SO7.5 Protecting,	Cannock Chase AONB	No planning permissions	Review pre-application	In house monitoring

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Conserving and Enhancing the Cannock Chase AONB	protected from damaging and inappropriate development through development management process.	granted that would have detrimental impact. All major proposals to meet the objectives of the AONB Management Plan.	guidance and advice.	through development management process.
SO7.6 Protecting, Conserving and Enhancing the Green Belt	Green Belt character and openness protected from development.	No planning permissions granted that would have detrimental impact unless exceptional circumstances demonstrated.	Compensatory provision secured.	In house monitoring through development management process.
SO7.7 Amendments to the Green Belt	Compensation from development within the Green Belt	No planning permissions granted that would have detrimental impact.	Amendments to the Green Belt boundary only secured via formal review of Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan.	In house monitoring through development management process.
SO7.8 Protecting, Conserving and Enhancing the Green Space Network	Development within the Green Space Network.	Development that conflicts with the functions & characteristics of Green Space Network will be resisted.	Development permitted will provide compensatory provision of Green Space.	In house monitoring through development management process.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 8: SUPPORTING A GREENER FUTURE

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency	Data Source
SO8.1 Low and Zero Carbon Energy and Heat Production	Proposals for LZC Energy and Heat Production, and LZC installations	Increased number of proposals for LZC Energy and Heat Production	Review pre-application guidance and advice.	In house monitoring through development management process.

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	into built infrastructure.	submitted and approved.		
SO8.2 Achieving Net Zero Carbon Development	Delivering the highest performance that can be practically and viably achieved.	Increased proportion of development achieving the higher levels set out in the hierarchy.	Review pre-application guidance and advice.	In house monitoring through development management process.
SO8.3 Sustainable Design	Sustainability Statement secured for major development proposals (as part of the Design and Access Statement).	Proportion of major applications where a Sustainability Statement has been secured.	Review pre-application guidance and advice.	In house monitoring through development management process.
SO8.4 Managing Flood Risk	Major development proposals avoid areas of highest flood risk, and incorporate sustainable water management measures.	Reduced proportion of development within areas of highest flood risk.	Review pre-application guidance and advice. Complete exception test to demonstrate overriding sustainability benefits of development.	In house monitoring through development management process.
SO8.5 Avoiding Air, Water, Soil, Noise and Light Pollution	Major development proposals avoid air, water, soil, noise and light pollution.	Development proposals to set out how air, water, noise and light pollution will be avoided.	Ensure that mitigation measures are suitable to compensate for potential impacts.	In house monitoring through development management process.
SO8.6 Brownfield and Despoiled Land and Under-Utilised Buildings	Major development proposals maximise use of brown field land and under-utilised land and buildings.	Proportion of available brown field land and under-utilised land and buildings used in major development.	Review pre-application guidance and advice.	In house monitoring through development management process. Brownfield Land Register. SHLAA & ELAA.

7. Monitoring Framework

SO8.7 Safeguarding Mineral Reserves	Major development proposals minimise use of primary mineral resources, and safeguard mineral reserves.	Use of substitute or secondary and recycled materials in construction.	Review pre-application guidance and advice.	In house monitoring through development management process. Minerals Local Plan monitoring process.
SO8.8 Managing Waste	Site Waste Management Plan secured with all major development proposals.	Proportion of major development proposals that include a Site Waste Management Plan.	Review pre-application guidance and advice.	In house monitoring through development management process.

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Appendix I: Glossary

Phrase	Abbreviation	Definition
Air Quality Management Area	AQMA	An area designated by the local authority which is not meeting the national air quality objectives.
Local Air Quality Action Plan		A plan to tackle air pollution, particularly focused on AQMAs designated within a local authority.
Area Action Plan	AAP	An optional Development Plan Document. It is aimed at establishing a set of proposals and policies for the development of a specific area (such as a town centre or an area of new development).
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	AONB	A statutory National Landscape designation to provide special protection to defined areas of natural beauty.
Authority Monitoring Report	AMR	An annual report produced by the local authority that monitors the effectiveness of Local Plan policies e.g. number of new houses built, amount of new open spaces.
Birmingham City Council		The local Government body responsible for managing the City of Birmingham, including the Planning services.
Brownfield Land		Brownfield (also known as Previously Developed Land) is a previously developed site that is available for re-use, usually due to abandonment or under use.
Brownfield Development		Site available for re-use which has been previously developed and is abandoned or underused.
Brownfield Registers		A statutory list of previously developed sites that could be suitable for residential development.
Building Better Building Beautiful Commission		An independent body that advised government on how to promote and increase the use of high-quality design for new build homes and neighbourhoods
Call for Sites		The process of collecting and collating information on potential development sites.
Cannock Chase District Council	CCDC / CCC	The Local Planning Authority for Cannock, Rugeley, Hednesford, Norton Canes and neighbouring villages.
Community Infrastructure		The facilities and services – including education, transport, health, emergency services, leisure and sports – that are needed to support new homes and businesses.
Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL	A charge on new developments that can be levied by local authorities (or other authorities with charging powers e.g. Mayor of London) to fund infrastructure projects. The charging rates are set locally and vary from one area to another e.g. on the types of development charged and the value of those charges. In

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Phrase	Abbreviation	Definition
		Cannock Chase, the charges are currently £40 per sqm for residential development and £60 per sqm for out of town and all large foodstore retail development (subject to increases due to indexation).
Comparison		Comparison goods relate to items not obtained on a frequent basis, these include clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods.
Conservation Area		Protected areas of special architectural or historic interest.
Conservation Area Management Plans		Plans that set out how Conservation Areas should be managed to protect their historic assets and integrity.
Convenience		Convenience goods relate to everyday essential items including confectionary, food, drinks, newspapers and magazines.
County Council	CC	The upper tier of two-tier authorities covering a county wide area.
Density		The amount of development that a site can accommodate (often measured in dwellings per hectare for residential development)
Dwellings Per Hectare	DPH	Unit of land measurement relative to the amount of dwellings it could accommodate.
Design Supplementary Planning Document	Design SPD	A document providing additional planning information and guidance on design issues for development in Cannock Chase District.
Development Plan Document	DPD	Sets out the Local Planning Authority's policies and proposals for the development and status of land. It can include a Local Plan, Site Allocations and Area Action Plan documents amongst others.
Developer Contributions and Housing Choices SPD		A document providing additional planning information and guidance on developer contributions and housing provision within Cannock Chase District.
District Council	DC	The lower tier of two-tier authorities, responsible for local services.
Duty to Cooperate		This is a legal test that requires cooperation between local planning authorities and other public bodies to ensure Local Plan policies effectively address strategic issues e.g. infrastructure, housing. It is separate from but related to the Local Plan test of soundness.
Economic Development Needs Assessment	EDNA	An assessment of the amount and type of employment land required in the District, taking into account a range of factors including the existing and potential future economic trends in the District and several forecast models for future needs.
Employment Land	ELAA	A database of sites put forward by stakeholders

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Phrase	Abbreviation	Definition
Availability Assessment		including the Council and land owners to be assessed for their suitability for future employment uses.
The Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future'	The White Paper	Planning consultation document which proposes reforms of the planning system to streamline and modernise the planning process.
Greater Birmingham & Black Country Housing Market Area	GBBCHMA	A housing market area is a geographical area defined by household demand and preferences for all types of housing, reflecting the links between places where people live and work. This HMA is based on the wider Birmingham & Black Country (Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall, Wolverhampton) area.
Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership	GBSLEP	The Local Enterprise Partnership (see definition below) for this area, covering a number of local authorities including Cannock Chase District.
Green Belt		A policy and land use designation used to retain areas of largely undeveloped, wild, or agricultural land surrounding or neighbouring urban areas.
Green Belt Review		A process that sets out the methodology and mechanism for potential possible alterations to the Green Belt boundaries.
Green Space Network		A network of linked green infrastructure within Cannock Chase District that links urban areas to the countryside.
Gross Value Added	GVA	The value generated by any unit engaged in the production of goods and services. GVA per head is a useful way of comparing regions of different sizes.
Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople	GTTS	National Planning Policy defines 'Gypsies and Travellers' as 'persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or family's or dependents' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group or travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such'. 'Travelling Showpeople' are defined as 'members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependents' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and travellers as defined above'.
Gypsy, Traveller and	GTAA	An assessment of the accommodation needs of

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Phrase	Abbreviation	Definition
Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment		gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople for the plan period. This is then used to identify how many new sites may be needed for such accommodation in the District.
H1		A monitoring period for the first half of the year, January to June.
Habitats Regulation Assessment	HRA	The Habitats Regulations Assessment is a tool to identify whether there are likely to be any harmful effects from minerals and waste policies and development proposals on internationally important nature sites. The HRA considers how significant any impacts are likely to be, and identifies whether they can be reduced (mitigated) to protect these sites or whether it is not possible to offset any likely adverse effects. Internationally important nature sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) which have important habitat features, Special Protection Areas (SPAs) which relate to important bird populations and Ramsar sites which are internationally important wetlands. Collectively, these are often referred to as Natura 2000 sites.
Hectare	HA	A unit of land measurement.
Housing and Planning Act 2016		An Act of Parliament that introduced changes to housing policy and the planning system.
Housing Delivery Test		An annual test (by central Government) of the extent to which a local authority is meeting its local housing requirements. Where the amount of new homes being built does not meet requirements there are different penalties dependent upon the level of under delivery.
Housing Needs Assessment		An assessment of the amount and type of housing accommodation required in the District, focused particularly upon affordable needs.
Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment		An assessment of the current quantity and quality of the local authority areas' facilities and an assessment of the future needs for indoor and outdoor sports provision (in quantity and quality terms), taking account of future population changes.
Industrial Strategy		A strategy document which aims to boost productivity by backing businesses to create good jobs and increase the earning power of people throughout the UK with investment in skills, industries and infrastructure

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Phrase	Abbreviation	Definition
Infrastructure Delivery Plan	IDP	A plan to identify and aid implementation of the necessary social, physical and green infrastructure required to create sustainable communities.
Imperative reasons of overriding public interest		Imperative reasons of overriding public interest include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the requirement to maintain the nation's health, safety, education, environment (sustainable development, green energy, green transport); complying with planning policies and guidance at a national, regional and local level; requirements for economic or social development (Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, employment, regeneration, mineral extraction, housing, pipelines, .etc.)
Landscape Character Assessment		A detailed study that analyses and sets out different types of landscape within an area and their historical context.
Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP	A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, established for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in an area.
Local Design Codes		A set of design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area.
Local Green Space	LGS	Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection for green areas of particular importance to local communities.
Local List		A list of buildings or sites that make a positive contribution to an areas character. These may not be nationally designated.
Local Nature Reserve	LNR	Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. There are over 1280 LNRs in England covering almost 40,000 ha
Local Plan		The Development Plan for a Local Planning Authority area. It can include Development Plan Documents such as Site Allocations and Area Action Plans.
Local Planning Authority	LPA	The authority responsible for planning functions within a District, County or any other type of administrative area.

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Phrase	Abbreviation	Definition
Local Plan (Part 1)	LPP1	The adopted 2014 Development Plan Document that sets out the strategic planning policies and context for Cannock Chase District.
Mineral Safeguarding Areas		An area of land protected from development due to the presence of minerals within a site that could be required for future extraction.
Minerals Plan		A planning document that sets out future minerals needs within an area and protects mineral extraction sites to meet that demand.
Mitigation and Implementation Strategy		A framework that aims to provide protection against a potential threat and provide practical solutions or alternatives to solve the problem.
The National Design Guide		This guide illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.
National Planning Policy Framework	NPPF	This document sets out the Governments planning policies for England and how they should be applied.
National Planning Practice Guidance	NPPG	The Government planning advice that accompanies the National Planning Policy Framework.
Nationally Described Space Standards		This sets out requirements for the Gross Internal (floor) Area of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home.
Neighbourhood Plans		A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular designated Neighbourhood Area.
Open Space Assessment		An assessment of the current quantity and quality of the local authority areas' open spaces and an assessment of the future needs for open space provision (in quantity and quality terms),
Parking Standards, Travel Plans and Developer Contributions for Sustainable Transport SPD		A document providing additional planning information and guidance on transport related matters within Cannock Chase District.
Playing Pitch Strategy & Action Plan		The document provides guidance and support to local authorities who are looking to understand and assess the need for playing pitches and improve provision.
Proposals Map		A map that shows the location of planning designations, which are usually also set out in written planning policies.
Partner Authorities		The Government bodies working together as a team on a contract or project.
Retail and Leisure Study		A study on retail and leisure uses within Cannock Chase District, including existing and future capacity.

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Phrase	Abbreviation	Definition
Safeguarded Land		Land that is protected for a specific future, often longer term, land use.
SAC Zone of Influence		An area within which new residential development must provide mitigation measures to avoid harm to Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation.
Self Build Register		A register of people who are interested in building their own dwelling within Cannock Chase District.
Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015		An Act of Parliament that sets out legislation on self build and custom house building.
Site Assessment Matrix		A framework for assessing whether a site is suitable for a proposed use or designation.
South Staffordshire District Council	SSDC	The Local Planning Authority for South-West Staffordshire. It covers areas including Great Wyrley, Cheslyn Hay and Huntington.
Special Area of Conservation	SAC	Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are protected sites under the European Community Habitats Directive. They provide increased protection to a variety of wild animals, plants and habitats and are a vital part of global efforts to conserve the world's biodiversity.
Stafford Borough Council	SBC	The Local Planning Authority for the Stafford area. It includes the northern part of Cannock Chase AONB, Brocton and Great/Little Haywood.
Staffordshire County Council	SCC	The upper- tier in a two tier Local Authority system County wide Planning Authority for Highways, Minerals and Waste planning matters.
Statement of Community Involvement	SCI	A statement of how Cannock Chase Council will consult the local community when preparing planning documents and consulting on planning applications.
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Water Cycle Study	SFRAWCS	SFRA – An assessment of flood risk across the District taking into account the most up to date data on flooding from various sources e.g. rivers and surface water. WCS- An assessment of water resources across the District to identify if there is sufficient supply to support future developments and/or what upgrades to infrastructure may be required.
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	SHLAA	A database of sites put forward by stakeholders including the Council and land owners to be assessed for their suitability for future residential

Appendices

Appendix I: Glossary

Phrase	Abbreviation	Definition
		uses.
Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership	SSLEP	The economic body for the Staffordshire County Council and Stoke On Trent Government areas. See LEP definition.
Supplementary Planning Document	SPD	A local document that may cover a range of issues, thematic or site-specific, and provides further detail of policies and proposals in the local plan.
Sustainability Appraisal	SA	An appraisal of the economic, environmental, and social effects of a plan.
Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012		Regulatory framework
Town Centre Services		Commercial, Business and Service' (Class E), Learning and Non-Residential Institutions' (Class F1), Local Community' (Class F2) Uses, Hotels (Class C1); drinking establishments, hot food takeaways, cinemas, concert halls, dance halls and bingo halls.
Transport Assessment		An assessment which sets out the transport issues relating to a proposed development. It identifies measures required to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport, and measures that will be needed to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of development
Travel Plan		A long-term management strategy for integrating proposals for sustainable travel based on evidence of the anticipated transport impacts of development. They set measures to promote and encourage sustainable travel (such as promoting walking and cycling).
Viability Assessment		An assessment of whether or not development is likely to be financially viable, taking into account a range of relevant factors including land values and costs, development costs, financing costs and developer profit. These assessments can be undertaken at a Local Plan level (i.e. how will Local Plan policies affect the financial viability of developments in the District generally) and at a site-specific/development level.
West Midlands Combined Authority	WMCA	A recently constituted authority formed of local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) chaired by the Mayor for the West Midlands. It enables the transfer of powers on decision making and funding from central

Appendices

Appendix I: Glossary

Phrase	Abbreviation	Definition
		Government to the West Midlands on specified areas (as set out within devolution agreements) e.g. transport, housing.