



Stafford Borough
Local Development
Framework



The Plan for Stafford Borough

Draft Publication

Consultation
September & October 2011



Stafford
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Planning and Regeneration | www.staffordbc.gov.uk

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Suggested locations are being put forward in this document following previous consultations. No conclusions have been drawn and a final decision on the development locations will take place after this consultation exercise, taking into account responses received. Now is the time to have your say so please respond by **12 noon on Friday 21 October 2011**.

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What is the Local Development Framework?

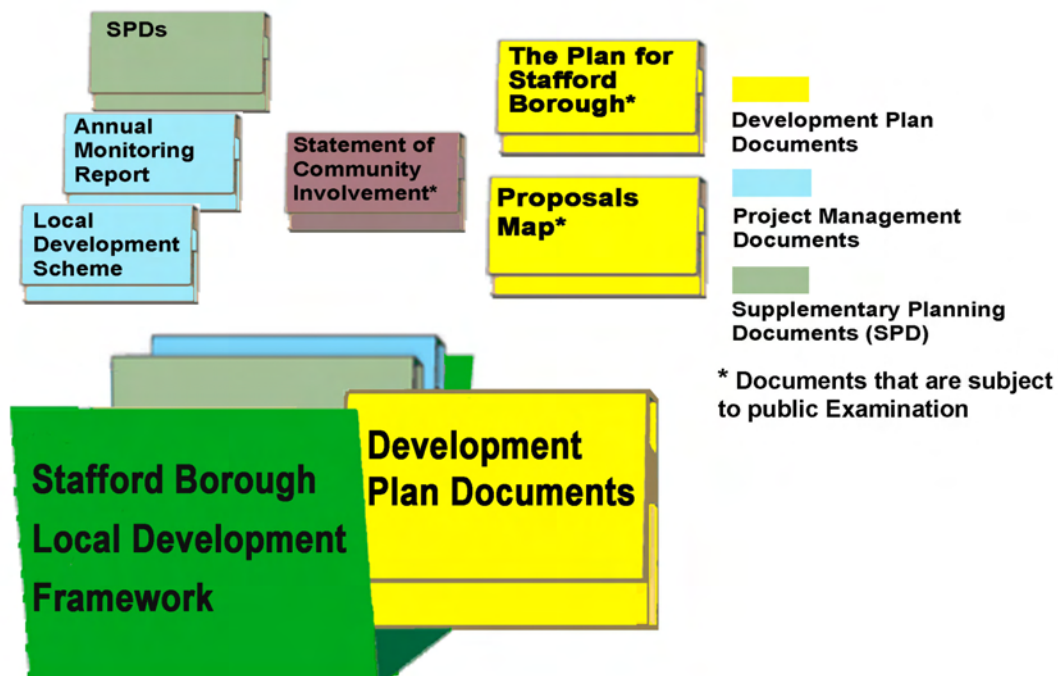
1.1 Stafford Borough Council is currently preparing the Local Development Framework (LDF) to plan for future development across the Borough area. The LDF is a suite of documents providing the planning framework through until 2031 for implementing the Council's aims and objectives that affect the use of land and buildings. It will replace the Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001.

What is the Plan for Stafford Borough?

1.2 This document is the 'Plan for Stafford Borough' which sets out the overall future direction for the area to deliver the strategic planning approach across the Stafford Borough area. The purpose of the document is to set out a vision, place-shaping objectives, targets and policies to make sure that new development meets local needs in line with national policy whilst protecting and enhancing the existing high quality of life in the Borough.

1.3 Suggested locations are being put forward in this document following previous consultations. No conclusions have been drawn and a final decision on the development locations will take place after this consultation exercise, taking into account responses received. Now is the time to have your say so please respond by **12 noon on Friday 21 October 2011**.

1.4 A number of other Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents could also be included within the LDF suite of documents:



1 Introduction

Consultation so far

1.5 Between 2008 and 2010 Stafford Borough Council carried out a series of consultation and information gathering exercises to prepare a vision, establish key issues and objectives, consider strategic options for Stafford Borough and alternative development strategies together with key policies through the following documents:

- January & February 2008 - Borough wide Development Strategy
- June & July 2008 - Principles for Settlement Development
- September 2008 - Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment - Initial Findings
- February & March 2009 - Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough issues & options
- February & March 2010 - Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough draft core policies
- November 2010 to January 2011 - Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough Local Choices

1.6 The Borough-wide Development Strategy identified six alternative development strategy options for Stafford Borough ranging from all development focused on Stafford town to widespread dispersal across many settlements. The key recommendation from this consultation was for new development to be focused on Stafford, Stone and one or more of the principal settlements. The subsequent Principles for Settlement Development document established three key categories of settlements across the Borough in relation to existing services and facilities. Furthermore the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2008 identified all of the potential housing land that could be made available across Stafford Borough both within and outside of existing settlements with Residential Development Boundaries. This document has subsequently been updated annually.

1.7 Having considered a significant range of alternative development options and available land presented by the landowners and developers a detailed consultation entitled 'Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough - issues and options' took place in February and March 2009, based on the key recommendation from the Borough-wide Development Strategy document. The issues and options document included a spatial vision and key objectives, national and regional policy requirements through the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy process, key development principles and two growth scenarios, a range of development location options including provision around Stafford, Stone and settlements categorised through the Principles for Settlement Development process as well as details for key policy areas ranging from climate change to housing and transport to design together with implementation and monitoring processes. These key policy areas were subsequently consulted upon during February and March 2010 providing detailed policies and the supporting evidence base.

1.8 In May 2010 the coalition Government signalled its intention to abolish the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy including the Borough specific development requirements for the period 2006 to 2026 through the Localism agenda. As a result of this significant policy change the Borough Council consulted upon the 'Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough - Local Choices' at the end of 2010 setting out the authority's approach for the development strategy, new housing, employment and retail provision as well as preferred employment locations at Stafford town.

1.9 The Plan for Stafford Borough, described by Government as the Draft Publication, follows on from these consultations by using the responses received together with the local evidence base and higher level national policy, to detail the approach for future planning of the Borough. The document is seeking your views on delivering the future development strategy for the Borough together with policies on a range of matters including where new development could be located to provide future housing, employment, office development and retail as well as tourism, leisure, education, health, transport and green open spaces.

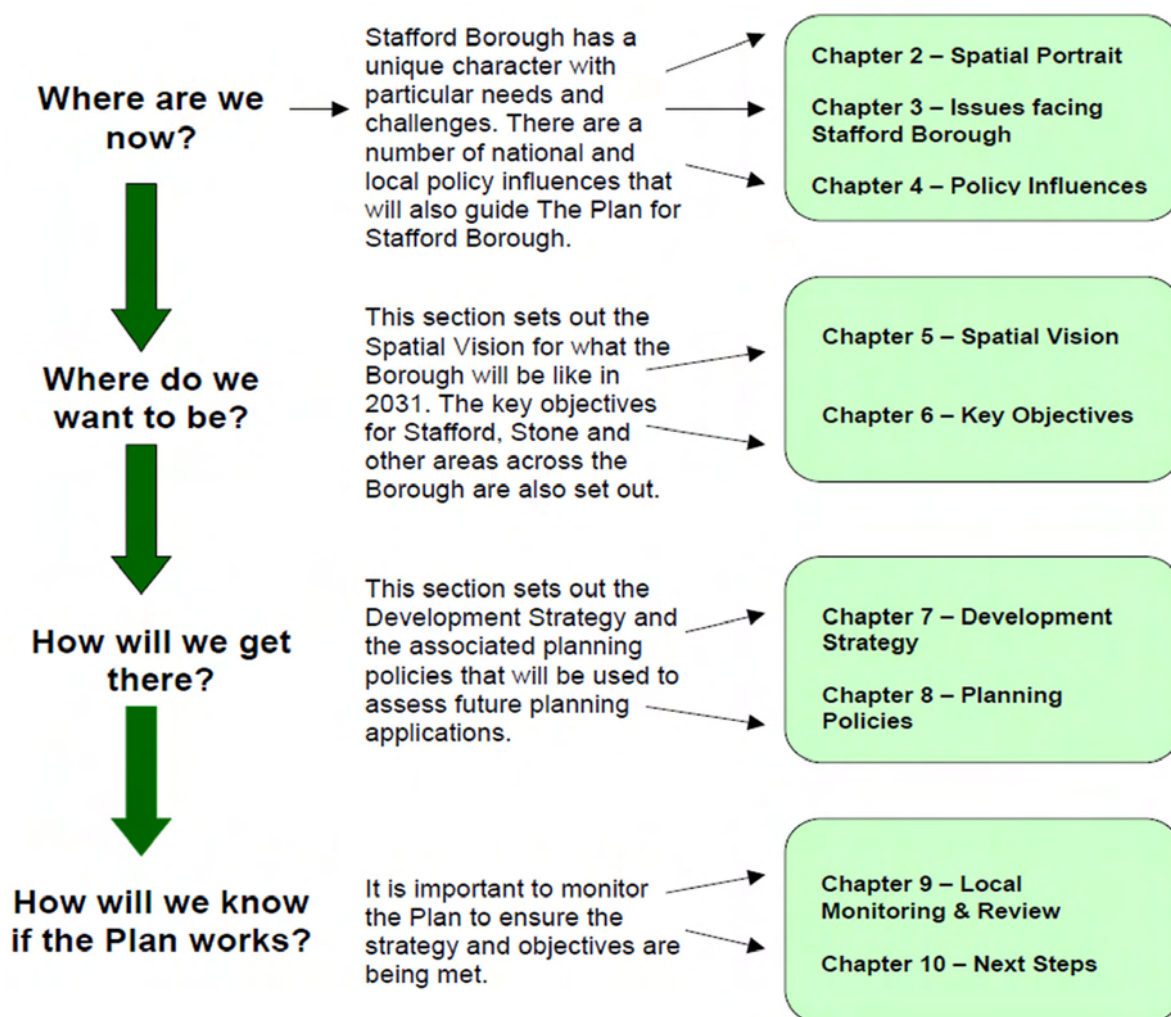
Sustainability Appraisal

1.10 The Council is required to ensure that documents prepared for the Local Development Framework are subject to a Sustainability Appraisal, which incorporates the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment. The purpose of sustainability appraisal is to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of the strategies and policies in the Local Development Framework from the outset of the plan preparation process. This will ensure that decisions are made that accord with the principles of sustainable development.

1.11 A Sustainability Appraisal has been prepared which has identified relevant sustainability objectives for the Borough and provided an assessment throughout the preparation of the Plan for Stafford Borough. The Sustainability Appraisal has therefore informed the spatial strategy, vision, objectives and policies of the plan. Further information can be found at www.staffordbc.gov.uk/sustainability-appraisal-

Structure of the document

1.12 The following diagram introduces the Stafford Borough story to date and looks to the future:



Questions

1.13 You are invited to make your comments on the content of any paragraph and policy in the document. If you are doing this using the on-line consultation you can click to the right of each paragraph. If you choose to use e-mail or letter we would ask you to identify the paragraph number, policy or question to which your comments refer. All comments received, with the name of the respondent, will be published and made available to view on-line by clicking on the 'View Comments' tabs above the paragraphs.

1 Introduction

Next Steps

1.14 Following the consultation period on this document, the Council will assess the comments received and produce a Publication / Proposed Submission version of the Plan for Stafford Borough. This document will also be subject to public consultation before it is submitted to the Secretary of State and assessed at an Examination in Public. The Plan for Stafford Borough will then be adopted by the Council.

Responses & Further Information

1.15 If you wish to respond or gain further information about this document or any other part of the LDF, please contact the Forward Planning section using the details below:

| |
|--|
| Forward Planning section |
| Stafford Borough Council |
| Civic Centre |
| Riverside |
| STAFFORD |
| ST16 3AQ |
| Telephone: 01785 619000 |
| Fax: 01785 619473 |
| E-mail: forwardplanning@staffordbc.gov.uk |

All documents relating to the LDF are available on the Borough Council's web-site at www.staffordbc.gov.uk/forwardplans

Question 1

Would you like this document in another format, such as large print? If so please telephone the Forward Planning team on 01785 619000 or e-mail: forwardplanning@staffordbc.gov.uk

Spatial Portrait for Stafford Borough (Where are we now?) 2

2.1 Stafford Borough's Area

2.1 Stafford Borough covers an area of over 230 square miles and is centrally placed within Staffordshire County. Staffordshire is a large County between the conurbations of Manchester, 50 miles to the north, and Birmingham, 30 miles to the south. The Borough shares boundaries with Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire Moorlands, East Staffordshire, Lichfield, Cannock Chase, South Staffordshire, Telford and Wrekin, and Shropshire. Stafford Borough is well located within the West Midlands region and nationally in terms of the transport network.

2.2 The Stafford Borough area is locally distinctive in terms of character, landscape and natural resources. The area is home to more than 120,000 people. Over 60% of the population live in Stafford and Stone whilst the remainder live in the rural area where there are a number of larger villages such as Eccleshall, Gnosall, Hixon, Barlaston, Great Haywood and Little Haywood as well as smaller villages and hamlets. To the north of the Borough are parts of the suburban fringes of Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent at Clayton, Blythe Bridge, Trentham and Meir Heath.

2.3 Within Stafford Borough there are more than 50 villages and hamlets, which vary in size, from a population of over 3,500 at Gnosall to under 200 people at Adbaston. Whilst these settlements do have a limited range of services, they are economically and functionally linked to other larger centres including Stafford.

Demography

2.4 The resident population of Stafford Borough, as measured in the 2001 Census, was 120,670 of which:-

- 50% were male and 50% were female
- 8.4% were under 16 years and 22.5% were over 60 years
- 56.7% were married and were 25.2% had never married

2.5 The average household size in Stafford Borough, according to Census information, is 2.4 people. The Census identifies a higher proportion of those in the older age groups, in particular a significant projected increase in people over 85 years old, and a higher proportion of single households than the national average.

2.6 Stafford Borough currently performs very well in terms of achieving sustainable growth, with 73% of the Borough's economically active population living and working within its boundary. ⁽¹⁾

2.7 In comparison with regional statistics Stafford Borough has a relatively small percentage of ethnic minorities as 97.4% of the population are white.

2.8 Census information shows that just over 69% of people within Stafford Borough described their health over the preceding 12 months as 'good'. This figure compares favourably with the West Midlands region, England and Wales.

2.9 Census information states that approximately 63% of the population is in employment, with a further 15% being retired and 4% being permanently sick or disabled. Stafford Borough is home to an economically active population of 97% in comparison to a Great Britain average of 94.9% ⁽²⁾ Unemployment levels are relatively low in Stafford Borough at below 3% annually.

Green Belt

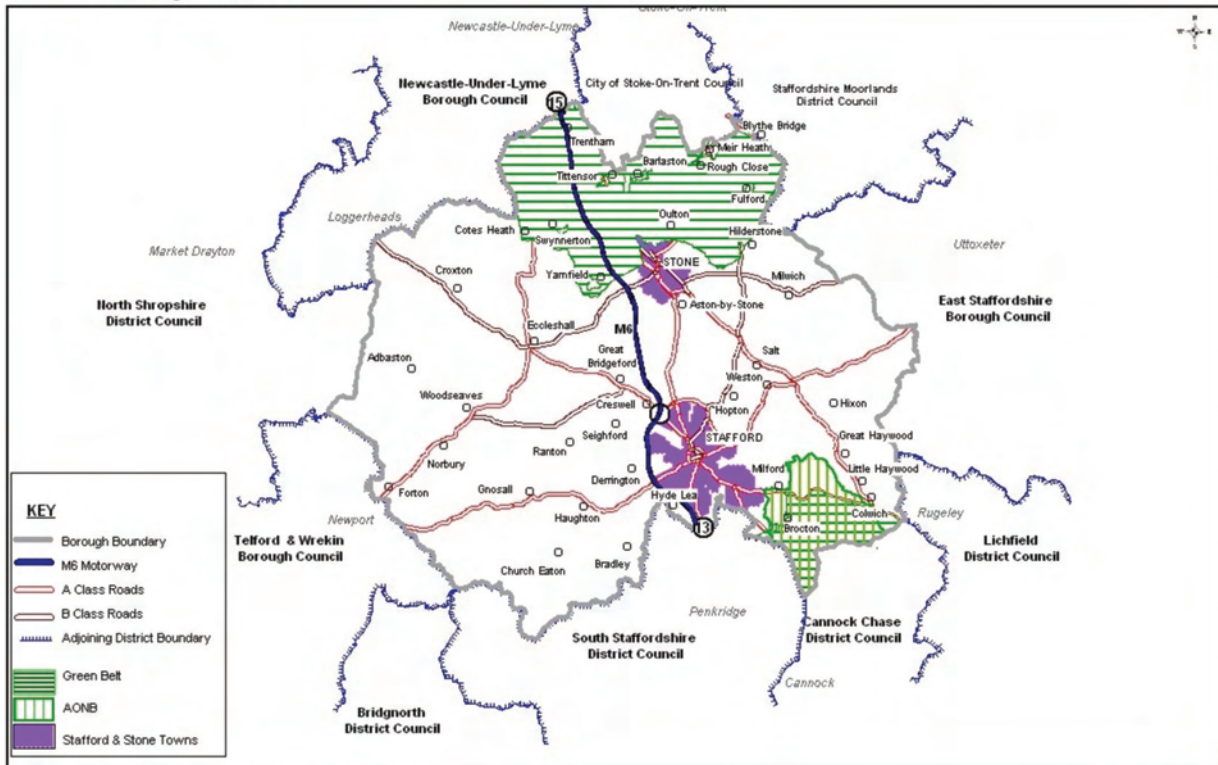
2.10 In Stafford Borough there are two areas of Green Belt; around the North Staffordshire conurbation and in the south eastern area of the Borough which includes the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, as shown below.

1 West Midlands Regional Observatory Lifestyle Survey published in 2005

2 National Statistics Labour Force Survey, May 2002

2 Spatial Portrait for Stafford Borough (Where are we now?)

Stafford Borough Council



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Not To Scale

Car ownership

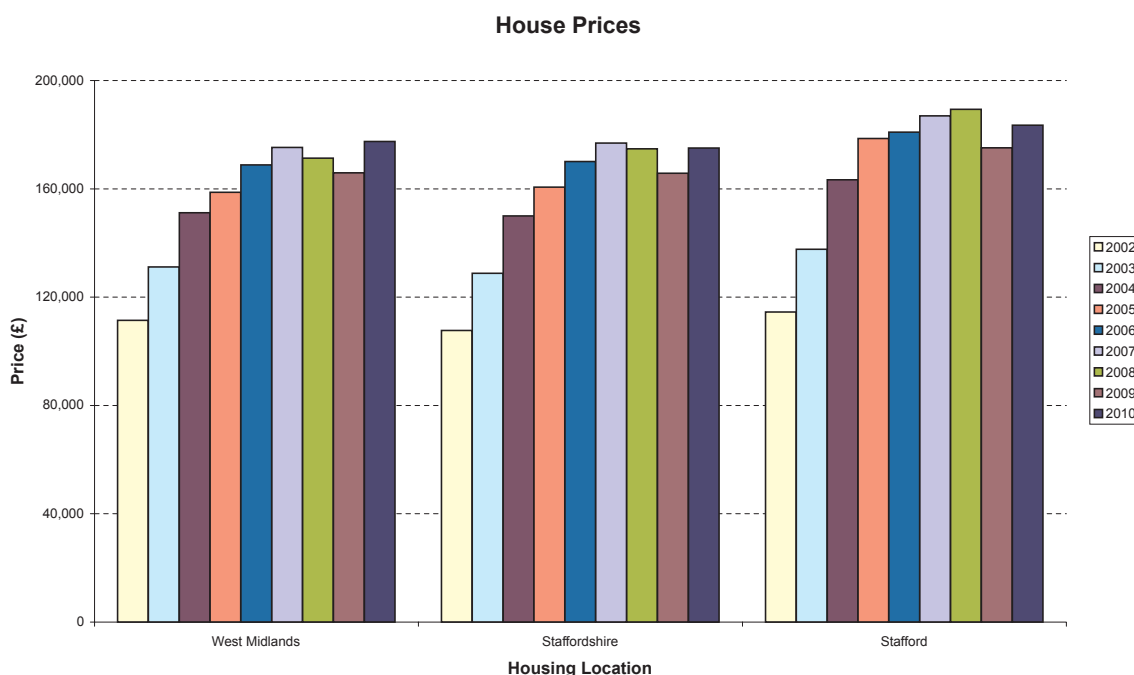
2.11 Car ownership rates are high in the Borough with 1.29 cars per household, falling to 1.09 in Stafford town. In rural Parishes it exceeds 1.5 and rises to more than 2 in some cases. In the Borough as a whole, over 70% of the people in employment travel to work by car or motor cycle, 5% by public transport or taxi, 10% walk or cycle and 10% work from home ⁽³⁾.

Housing

2.12 In 2001 there were 50,025 households in Stafford Borough of which 26.1% were one person households. 76.1% were owner occupied. In housing terms 39% were detached houses, 34% were semi-detached, 17% were terraced and 10% were flats.

2.13 House price levels within Stafford Borough have been monitored since 2001, as set out in the table below, together with further evidence set out in the North Staffordshire Housing Market Area Assessment, which was completed in 2008. The trends generally show a steady rise in house prices across all housing types which have impacted on the affordability ratio. However the 'credit crunch' and housing market downturn which started in 2007 / 2008 has caused prices to stabilise following price reductions across the Borough.

Spatial Portrait for Stafford Borough (Where are we now?) 2



The housing stock of Stafford Borough is relatively good according to the Census 2001 with fewer than 25 unfit homes per 1,000 dwellings compared to other districts in Staffordshire (a County average of over 40) and an English average of 60 per 1,000. Overcrowding is relatively low at 3%. For further information refer to the Housing Stock Condition survey as part of the evidence base.

Deprivation

2.14 Stafford Borough has a relatively low level of deprivation, apart from a number of wards in the north and south west of Stafford town.

Employment

2.15 Marginally more people commute into Stafford Borough than those who commute outside the Borough to work. However over 39,000 people both live and work in the Borough⁽⁴⁾. The population of the Borough is generally skilled and well educated. The unemployment rate in the Borough remains relatively low and levels of prosperity higher than national averages.

2.16 Within Stafford Borough the largest proportion of land is used for agriculture, second is residential, followed by industrial uses. Industrial uses vary from large international manufacturing sites such as the Alstom and Evode sites in Stafford to the small - medium sized uses to be found on the Borough's industrial estates. Staffordshire University and Technology Park play a significant role in the Borough as a major employer and a location for innovation. The Borough is also home to significant Ministry of Defence sites. There are two prisons in the Borough; Stafford Prison north of Stafford town centre and Drake Hall near Eccleshall.

2.17 Inward investment has always been an important source of job growth to the local area, assisted by good location, site availability, labour skills and costs. For further information refer to the evidence base study entitled 'Employment Land Review' and associated documentation.

2 Spatial Portrait for Stafford Borough (Where are we now?)

Biodiversity

2.18 In biodiversity terms the Borough is rich and varied with internationally and nationally designated areas which have the highest level of planning policy protection including 3 internationally designated sites under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites), ⁽⁵⁾ 17 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), 4 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and 2 National Nature Reserves (NNRs). In addition there are more than 100 sites identified locally as Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs).

2.19 The four Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) in Stafford Borough are Cannock Chase, Chartley Moss, Motte Meadows and Pasturefields Salt Marsh, although some parts of Cannock Chase SAC extend into other local authority areas and only a very small part of Motte Meadows falls within the boundary of the Borough. Aqualate Mere, Chartley Moss and Cop Mere are Ramsar sites, with Chartley Moss, which is a floating bog, and Aqualate Mere, the largest of the natural meres that can be found throughout Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire also being National Nature Reserves.

2.20 Habitats that are particularly important for wildlife within the Borough include ancient (veteran) trees, old semi-natural woodlands, various types of wetland such as Doxey and Tillington Marshes, lowland heath on Cannock Chase and Rough Close Common and a few remaining flower-rich meadows on neutral grassland. These habitats often occur in isolated patches in urban locations or between larger areas of intensively farmed land, which makes them very susceptible to degradation or loss.

2.21 Several species have already become extinct from Stafford Borough including the red squirrel, marsh helleborine and *Cryptocephalus decemmaculatus*, a very rare and distinctive leaf beetle of wetlands.

Historic Environment

2.22 The term 'Historic Environment' is used throughout this document to include scheduled monuments and other archaeological remains; historic buildings, both statutorily listed and those of more local importance; conservation areas; historic landscapes, including registered parks and gardens; cemeteries and registered battlefields; and historic elements of the wider public realm, including publicly-owned and managed spaces and recreational parks.

2.23 The historic environment is a precious and irreplaceable asset which must be conserved for future generations. Stafford Borough is steeped in history, from its Stone Age origins, through Roman and medieval times to modern industrial life. Its network of towns and villages with picturesque churches, castles and stately homes reflects the unique identity of this part of the North Midlands. Buildings such as the Ancient High House, the largest timber framed town house in England, and Shugborough, home to the Earls of Lichfield, attract visitors from across the world.

2.24 Within Stafford Borough there are 819 listed buildings of which 18 are Grade I (3%), 57 are Grade II* (7%) and 712 are Grade II (90%). Whilst the majority of the listed buildings in the Borough are in good or reasonable repair, a number of buildings are in severe disrepair threatening loss of historic detail and fabric. Six of these buildings are Buildings at Risk as registered by English Heritage ⁽⁶⁾. To supplement the national Buildings at Risk register, Stafford Borough maintains a local Grade 2 Buildings at Risk register.

2.25 The Borough has four designated Historic Parks and Gardens these being Trentham Gardens, Sandon Park, Shugborough Park and the German Military Cemetery at Cannock Chase. Other designed landscapes contribute to the character of the local historic environment, such as village greens, public parks and country estates. Furthermore there is one Historic Battlefield at Hopton Heath.

2.26 There are 43 Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the Borough including Bury Bank Hillfort, bowl barrows in Swynnerton, and moated sites and fishponds at Hilderstone Hall, Hextall and Norbury Manor. Scheduled Ancient Monuments are of national importance and are subject to an enhanced level of protection. However not all important remains that merit preservation are necessarily scheduled. Archaeological sites of national,

5 This is an intergovernmental treaty that aims to stem the progressive encroachment on and loss of wetlands now and in the future; generally known as the Ramsar Convention after the place where it was signed

6 Heritage Counts 2007

Spatial Portrait for Stafford Borough (Where are we now?) 2

regional or local importance are registered on the County's Historic Environment Record (HER) (formerly known as the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)). The HER is continually updated to record new information as it becomes available.

2.27 The Borough has 30 Conservation Areas with a review programme currently taking place. Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans for Stafford and Stone town centres have recently been undertaken. In the future further Conservation Area Appraisals will take place, prioritised to areas with the greatest development pressure.

Air Quality

2.28 In Stafford Borough there are no areas of such poor air quality that an Air Quality Management Scheme is required. ⁽⁷⁾ While this is the case, one of the most significant contributors of air pollution in Stafford Borough is traffic from the M6 and A34 road corridor, which bisects the Borough north-south.

Water

2.29 The Rivers Trent, Sow and Penk are the principal rivers flowing through Stafford Borough with water quality identified as being relatively good. The quality of water is important for domestic, industrial and agricultural uses, and general amenity. The Environment Agency has published ground water vulnerability maps for Stafford Borough, which identify areas requiring protection from potentially polluting activities. The Environment Agency has a lead role in providing advice on ground water vulnerability and on the impact of development upon ground and surface water quality.

2.30 River quality testing allows the quality of one river to be compared to another. Testing also helps to set conditions on licences provided to industry and commerce for their discharges of water into rivers, and is used in decisions to protect rivers and canals from the impacts of the use of land for agriculture, leisure and housing. River quality in Stafford Borough is generally assessed as being fair, although there has been an improvement in the biological water quality in recent years to nearer the national average. However the chemical water quality is relatively poor for the Borough area.

2.31 Flooding is affected not only by the changing weather conditions but also by urbanisation. One of the easiest ways to minimise flood risk is for new buildings to be located away from areas likely to flood. Stafford Borough's floodplain areas are identified in the [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment](#) which will guide where new development can be located, taking into account the effects of climate change.

Education

2.32 The Borough as a whole has 47 primary schools and 7 high schools, with one of the highest levels of educational attainment in Staffordshire. To achieve stable and sustainable growth Stafford Borough needs a well educated, well equipped and adaptable labour force. Learning also promotes active citizenship and helps to combat social exclusion. In 2001, 76% of people at age 19 in England had level 2 qualifications.

Sport and recreation

2.33 Stafford Borough Council provides a wide range of sport and recreation facilities and services within the area including the following:

- Parks and Open Spaces - including 3 town parks at Victoria Park, Stafford; Stonefield Park and Westbridge Park, Stone; protected open spaces and areas of nature conservation, recreation grounds and allotments.
- Indoor and outdoor Recreation Centres - including Rowley Park, Stafford Leisure Centre, Westbridge Park (Stone) and Stone Alleyes
- Community Events – including Stafford Half Marathon and the Family Fun Run.

*It should be noted that several of the sports halls in the Borough only have limited facilities such as a single badminton court and therefore can not be used for large court activities such as basketball or netball.

2 Spatial Portrait for Stafford Borough (Where are we now?)

2.34 The total identified provision of playing pitch and non-pitch space within the Borough is just less than 132 hectares. Given the 2001 population figure for Stafford Borough is estimated at 120,670 people, 132 hectares of playing pitch space equates to 1.1 hectare per 1,000 population which is less than the national average.

2.35 The Borough Council published a [PPG17 Assessment and Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy](#) in October 2008 as part of the evidence base.

Energy

2.36 The Eccleshall Biomass power plant at Raleigh Hall Industrial Estate is a 2 mega watt power plant for the generation of electricity, fuelled by energy crops, and provides electricity for up to 2,000 households. In addition, there are a number of smaller scale projects in the Borough. The monitoring of renewable energy is problematic, especially with the installation of smaller scale units (such as solar panels) on residential properties that do not always require planning permission.

Minerals

2.37 In terms of aggregate mineral workings there are two existing sites in Stafford Borough identified by Staffordshire County Council for the extraction of sand and gravel: an operational site on the border of Stafford Borough and Cannock Chase District within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty at Rugeley Quarry; and a non-operational site at Weavers Hill near to the internationally important nature conservation Ramsar site at the Aqualate Estate. There are no working or permitted sites of clay or silica sand within the Borough.

2.38 Staffordshire County Council are currently in the process of preparing a [Minerals Core Strategy](#) which deals with mineral issues including for the Stafford Borough area.

2.39 A key issue for the Minerals Core Strategy is a shortfall of sand and gravel in Staffordshire over the next 20 year period. Strategic sites will need to be identified by the Minerals Core Strategy to provide sand and gravel for the production of concrete and mortar. Sustainable construction techniques and types of developments such as apartments may require less use of aggregates in the future but, due to the scale of potential new housing development in Stafford Borough, the local availability of sand and gravel will also be important.

Waste

2.40 In terms of waste facilities there are a number of waste transfer sites / material recycling facilities across the Borough, a large landfill site at Meece close to Swynnerton with a maximum capacity to receive 300,000 tonnes of waste per year, three smaller landfill sites, a household waste recycling centre at Stafford, a composting facility close to Eccleshall and a thermal treatment site at Gnosall. Waste to energy incinerator plants are located outside of Stafford Borough in Stoke-on-Trent and Wolverhampton, which provide facilities to deal with waste generated in the area.

2.41 There are requirements for the tonnages of waste requiring management in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent from the municipal and commercial & industrial waste streams. A [Waste Core Strategy](#) is being prepared by the County Council.

2.42 In terms of issues for Stafford Borough it is anticipated that the scale of development may require a waste management facility at Stafford as a strategic site, as well as further waste transfer sites / material recycling facilities to be identified. These types of waste management facilities are required to meet the challenge of reducing waste disposal at landfill sites.

Spatial Portrait for Stafford Borough (Where are we now?) 2

2.2 The County Town of Stafford

Population

2.43 Stafford is the main population centre of the Borough, with the urban population exceeding 60,000 people.

Transport

2.44 The town of Stafford is the main hub for public transport in the Borough and has a range of services serving the town, its surrounding area and a variety of other destinations including Lichfield, Cannock, Wolverhampton, Newport, Uttoxeter, Stone and the Potteries. Stafford is a principal rail station on the West Coast Main Line with services to the south-west via Birmingham, to London, the north-west and Scotland. Two M6 motorway junctions are located adjacent to the town which enjoys good accessibility to the North West, the rest of the West Midlands region and beyond via the M6 and M6 Toll. There is also good accessibility to the East Midlands via the improved A50 link and the Welsh borders via the M54.

2.45 Investment in the West Coast mainline means that Stafford is 1 hour & 20 minutes from London, 35 minutes from Birmingham and 1 hour from Manchester by train.

Employment

2.46 Stafford is the principal administrative centre for the County and Borough Councils, acting as a sub-regional centre of governance for a number of County-wide services including Police and Ambulance services, the local Health Authority, a range of Government bodies and other agencies.

2.47 Stafford Town is a net importer of labour (1,824 people) with the total number of people employed in the town being 31,002 and only 1,281 people (net) travelling to the West Midlands conurbation to work ⁽⁸⁾ despite the town being on the edge of the commuter belt.

2.48 The town is the Borough's major employment centre with a range of 'stand alone' employers and a number of industrial estates / business parks. Further details are set out in the [Employment Land Review](#).

2.49 There have been significant job losses in recent years at the former GEC / Alstom / Areva sites on Lichfield Road and St Leonard's Avenue, Stafford. This was previously the town's major employer. Structural employment problems resulting from the down-sizing of Alstom were recognised through the Single Regeneration Budget 6 programme which secured a total of £5 million of funding. Further job losses have continued at a number of other manufacturing companies in Stafford. Despite these setbacks there has been a considerable fight back in recent years to provide a strong and prosperous local economy for the future.

Defence

2.50 The 22 Signals Regiment and the retained Tactical Support Wing are currently based at the former RAF Stafford site, now known as Ministry of Defence (MoD) land at Stafford. This is a major landholding on the north eastern edge of the town, adjacent to Beaconside along with a number of freestanding sites in the rural area beyond the main site. The West Midlands Super Garrison Working Group, a multi agency task force, is currently considering the future of the site and the potential for expansion of military activities. A significant increase of Army presence in the Town would reinforce Stafford as a major area for new growth. The location of MOD Stafford within the town would also complement the Army's ambition for their personnel to be more integrated into local communities.

2 Spatial Portrait for Stafford Borough (Where are we now?)

Shopping

2.51 Retailing within the Borough is primarily concentrated at Stafford. Stafford's role as a retail centre is gradually improving with new developments of a significant scale within and adjacent to the town centre. Currently Stafford has three modern, predominantly food, superstores, each located adjacent to the town centre. Stafford town is the major comparison goods retail centre in the Borough and the only centre with warehouse / retail parks.



Health

2.52 The major health care facility, Stafford District General Hospital, is located in the town.

Education

2.53 The Stafford Campus of Staffordshire University is located on the eastern edge of the town. The Stafford College of Further Education is located in the town centre. Six of the seven State Secondary Schools in the Borough are situated in Stafford together with a large number of Primary Schools. Currently some of this education infrastructure is under-utilised with spare capacity in some schools.

Culture and leisure

2.54 Stafford town centre is the principal cultural centre of the Borough, offering facilities which include a theatre, cinema and art gallery. Stafford is the principal location for sporting, leisure and indoor recreational uses in the Borough. Tourism and hotel facilities are focused, but are not exclusively located, at Stafford. Victoria Park in Stafford consists of 3.7 hectares of accessible open space and is managed to Green Flag Standard. In addition there are currently 20 allotments sites in Stafford that are owned by the Borough Council and managed by the Trustees of the Stafford Horticultural Committee. There are other allotments within the Borough that are not owned by the Council.

Recent and future town centre development

2.55 A new leisure centre adjacent to the town centre opened in March 2008 releasing capacity on the previous leisure centre site for a major new town centre scheme. In addition, the Borough Council has worked closely with Staffordshire County Council to bring forward proposals for land at Tipping Street for a mixed use scheme comprising retail and offices. The Council is also working jointly with Staffordshire County Council on proposals for further car parking and a retail development at Kingsmead.

Spatial Portrait for Stafford Borough (Where are we now?) 2



2.3 The Market Town of Stone

2.56 Stone has a population of around 14,500 people (2001 Census) and has a significant town centre providing both comparison and convenience retailing, together with a range of local office-based services including banking. It also has an ‘edge of centre’ superstore. A choice of medical, dental and other health services are found at Stone. Further information is available in the Settlement Assessment: Services and Facilities in Stone

2.57 Stone is a significant location of employment with a total of 7,846 people employed of whom 3,037 also live in the town (2001 Census Special Workplace Statistics). A number of employers are situated in Stone, both on ‘stand alone’ sites and the town’s industrial estates / business park. Primary and middle schools as well as the Borough’s only State secondary school outside of Stafford are located at Stone. Local social, cultural, leisure and indoor recreational facilities are provided at Stone. Funding for regeneration at Stone has been received through the Market Towns Initiative.

2.4 Areas outside Stafford and Stone

2.58 44,600 people (37% of the Borough’s population) reside in areas outside of Stafford and Stone, which comprise most of the Borough’s area of around 230 square miles. A range of services and facilities are found throughout the smaller towns and villages in Stafford Borough. For more information refer to the evidence base study entitled [Revised Settlement Assessment of Services and Facilities](#).

2.59 Identified settlements in the Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 with Residential Development Boundaries (boundaries around settlements within which housing development will generally be permitted) are set out below with the respective populations from the 2001 Census .

Table 1 Settlement Populations

| Settlement | 2001 census | Settlement | 2001 Census |
|----------------|-------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| Adbaston | 154 | Hixon | 1,713 |
| Aston by Stone | 137 | Hopton | 280 |
| Barlaston | 2,434 | Hyde Lea | 355 |
| Barlaston Park | | Little Haywood and Colwich | 2,431 |
| Blythe Bridge | 1,462 | Meir Heath and Rough Close | 2,278 |
| Bradley | 395 | Milford | 296 |

2 Spatial Portrait for Stafford Borough (Where are we now?)

| Settlement | 2001 census | Settlement | 2001 Census |
|------------------|-------------|------------------------|---------------|
| Brocton | 1,052 | Milwich | 140 |
| Brocton A34 | | Norbury | 170 |
| Church Eaton | 628 | Oulton | 537 |
| Clayton | 468 | Ranton | 385 |
| Cotes Heath | 208 | Salt | 186 |
| Creswell | 359 | Seighford | 409 |
| Croxton | 159 | Swynnerton | 517 |
| Derrington | 660 | Tittensor | 657 |
| Eccleshall | 2,541 | Trentham / Dairyfields | 667 |
| Fulford | 690 | Weston | 849 |
| Gnosall | 3,783 | Woodseaves | 634 |
| Great Bridgeford | 681 | Yarnfield | 1,218 |
| Great Haywood | 1,854 | | |
| Haughton | 852 | TOTAL | 32,149 |
| Hilderstone | 515 | | |

Source: 2001 Census Key Statistics, Census output is Crown Copyright and is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO and the Queen's Printer for Scotland, 2001 Census Profiles Produced by Research Unit, Development Services Department, Staffordshire County Council

Issues facing the Borough 3

3.1 The following key issues have been identified from the evidence base, responses to previous consultations, and the Borough's unique characteristics relating to the social, economic and environmental challenges that are facing the area over the Plan period.

New Development & Infrastructure

3.2 A significant level of new development at Stafford Borough, focused on Stafford town, over the Plan period. The scale of development will require new infrastructure provision to enhance existing facilities, particularly road transport, sewage and drainage, education and health, water supply and green infrastructure including open space, sport and recreation requirements. However recent property market changes, amended land values and increased infrastructure costs will be key factors in terms of ensuring that all forms of new development contribute to this provision. Delivering the scale of new development at Stafford town is likely to be particularly challenging with several major urban extensions over the Plan period to support growth requirements and Ministry of Defence personnel returning from Germany.

Climate Change & Renewable Energy

3.3 Both the Staffordshire and Stafford Borough Sustainable Community Strategies highlight the issue of climate change which is likely to have a direct impact on Stafford Borough through a greater risk of flooding and increased pressure on drainage systems, particularly in winter, and more challenging circumstances for agricultural production in summer due to increased temperatures. In 2000 and 2007 both the Rivers Penk and Sow flooded causing extensive damage to Stafford town and extensive tracts of farmland.

3.4 Planning policies can contribute to the Borough's commitment to reducing CO₂ emissions by using appropriate mitigation measures incorporated into new development as well as applying sustainable development principles such as on-site renewable energy facilities, energy conservation, water conservation and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). Furthermore the impact of flooding can be reduced by avoiding new development in flood risk areas and increasing strategic green space in river corridors. A key challenge for Stafford Borough will be fulfilling its role in delivering the Government's targets for renewable energy by using biomass and wind energy infrastructure in the context of local community and landscape concerns.

Environmental Quality

3.5 The Borough has a rich and varied natural environment composed of a diverse range of wildlife sites and habitats, including seventeen Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), three Ramsar sites, four Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and three National Nature Reserves. In addition there are more than a hundred sites identified locally as Sites of Biological Interest (SBIs). The protection, enhancement, improvement and proper management of these sites is a key issue for the Stafford Borough area, highlighted through both Sustainable Community Strategies, in order to maintain a high quality of life leading to economic prosperity as well as delivering large scale new development over the Plan period. There is evidence that in recent years the natural environment has come under increased pressure leading to fragmentation and the loss of key habitats and species. Whilst the most important sites have national designations, there are many other sites that contribute to the Borough's environmental quality but do not enjoy the same level of protection, such as Local Nature Reserves, Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and Biodiversity Alert Sites (BAS) habitats. Nevertheless it is important that all sites with significant habitats and associated protected species are protected in the future.

Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Landscape Character & Green Belt

3.6 To the south east of Stafford Borough is a landscape designated as nationally important, the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) as well as being highlighted in both the Staffordshire and Stafford Borough Sustainable Community Strategies. Development pressures for adjacent areas, including Stafford, can lead to significant impacts on the character of this landscape which should be protected. The Cannock Chase AONB is surrounded by agricultural land acting as a landscape buffer to the area as well as protecting views to and from the AONB. Despite the development pressures nearby it is crucial that this landscape buffer is maintained to preserve the integrity of the AONB. Furthermore the landscape character of other areas across Stafford Borough may also come under development pressure thus raising an issue of protection. There

3 Issues facing the Borough

are two Green Belt areas in Stafford Borough linked to the Cannock Chase AONB and the North Staffordshire conurbation north of Stone which includes a number of Major Developed Sites where the type and scale of re-development will be crucial to maintaining the principles and objectives of the Green Belt.

Protection of Internationally Protected Habitats

3.7 In Stafford Borough there are areas where change will be carefully managed. Of particular significance to the spatial strategy are internationally protected habitats. These are Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation, Chartley Moss Special Area of Conservation, Pasturefields Salt Marsh Special Area of Conservation, Cop Mere Ramsar site, Aqualate Mere Ramsar site and Motte Meadows Special Area of Conservation, all of which are covered by the European Union Habitats Directive as having internationally rare and vulnerable habitats in a European context. A key issue will be delivering appropriate mitigation and avoidance measures to protect the integrity of these sites.

Housing

3.8 The provision of adequate housing for the Borough in terms of size, quality and type is essential for future prosperity and quality of life. The current demand for housing in Stafford Borough is high, caused by a combination of natural demographic change, an increased growth in single person households and inward migration from adjoining areas. Pressure on the local housing market has increased in recent years due to a rise in prices with the average house price in Stafford, at 2007, being £187,000 having steadily increased year on year since 2003. In addition there are a lack of 2 and 3 bedroomed houses within the existing housing stock within Stafford Borough, particularly in Stone.

Affordable Housing & Gypsy provision

3.9 As elsewhere in the UK, high levels of housing demand and increased prices in Stafford Borough have led to the mean income affordability ratio being one of the highest in Staffordshire at 5.6 times the average salary. This has led to the exclusion from the housing market of particular groups including young people, single parent families and those on below average local wages.

3.10 The rural areas of Stafford Borough have experienced the most significant increase in house prices over recent years and an influx of more affluent residents seeking a rural setting and relatively good accessibility. This has led to a significant proportion of new housing development taking place in these areas when compared to Stafford and Stone. Furthermore this has created pressures on existing rural communities, with younger people being unable to afford the increased house prices and fewer skilled employees to work in these rural areas. However the number of affordable homes provided in recent years has been extremely low across the Borough. Therefore there is a significant need for more affordable and social housing in the rural hinterland particularly around Stone and west of Stafford to meet the needs of local communities. A further issue in the rural area is the identified needs of Gypsies and Travellers, which should be met in line with the results of the Northern Housing Market Area Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA)

Lifetime Homes & Specialist Housing

3.11 In line with national trends the population demographic of Stafford Borough is ageing and by 2025 the projected numbers of people over 64 years of age is expected to increase by 49.4% to 34,800 people whilst the number of people aged over 85 years will almost double. Currently there is inadequate provision of specialist housing across Stafford Borough, including extra care units. Future housing developments in Stafford Borough will need to provide enhanced design features for the Borough's ageing population through lifetime homes standards to enable people to live independently for as long as possible.

Local Economy

3.12 Stafford Borough is strategically placed in the centre of Staffordshire with excellent access to the M6 motorway and the West Coast mainline railway, providing a strong base to support the local economy and future inward investment. Historically the Borough's economy has centred on traditional manufacturing industry but in recent years such industries have undergone dramatic restructuring leading to job losses, de-industrialisation and considerable scaling back in levels of production, particularly in Stafford. This has had a significant impact on the local economy changing from predominantly manufacturing to more service based

Issues facing the Borough 3

industries, with forecasts anticipating that this trend will continue in subsequent years. A result of these changes has also led to a loss of employment areas to housing development. Despite this, Stafford continues to retain a manufacturing presence and the local community has not suffered from significant levels of unemployment.

3.13 Stafford Borough has a low unemployment rate and the mean household income is above both the national and the West Midlands average. Approximately 40% of the Borough's workforce is employed in public administration, health and education which reflects Stafford's position as a sub-regional centre of governance. Furthermore over 12,000 people are employed in the distribution, hotel and restaurant sectors which accounts for 20.6% of the Borough's workforce. There are concerns that a lack of diversity within the local economy could lead to challenges in the future. Therefore it would be advantageous to diversify and adapt the employment base to encourage emerging high technology and creative industries using strengths such as the higher education sector in Stafford, not least Staffordshire University which is a national leader in multi-media and technology studies. A greater retention of highly skilled graduates will be crucial to enhancing future local economic prosperity, maximise job creation and economic growth.

3.14 Educational attainment levels are good in the Borough with a higher proportion of pupils reaching level 4 of key stage 2 compared to Staffordshire as a whole. However attainment levels at GCSE are not as good with a lower proportion of students passing 5 or more GCSE's at Grade A* to C. Furthermore the proportion of school leavers progressing to higher education (28.2%) is lower than the Government's target of 50% although only 8% of school leavers do not continue some form of structured learning. For Stafford to realise its ambition of increasing its proportion of knowledge intensive industry it is important for the proportion of school leavers that attain higher educational qualifications to increase.

Retail

3.15 Stafford Borough's town centres are the key focus for shopping, accessing key services and facilities as well as increasingly being seen as places to live. Stafford is the Borough's strategic town centre and a principal shopping destination serving a large and diverse economic hinterland with large scale retail developments within and adjacent to the town centre. However in recent years Stafford has begun to fall behind other competing centres across the region in terms of its retailing offer, which needs to be addressed in order to support the future communities. The Stafford Borough Sustainable Community Strategy identifies this as a key issue to be addressed through the new Plan. Therefore in the future Stafford town centre needs to be ready to accommodate major new developments, to ensure provision of a wider range of goods and services.

3.16 Across the Borough area other centres including Stone, Eccleshall, Gnosall, Great and Little Haywood provide more localised services and facilities for their communities. In recent years a number of these centres have experienced a reduction in the range of services and facilities, resulting in greater car travel to other larger centres. In the future these local rural centres need to be protected and enhanced so that they can continue to meet the needs of the community and reduce the need to travel.

Design

3.17 A key theme within both the Staffordshire and Stafford Borough Sustainable Community Strategies is the promotion of community safety to ensure the area is a prosperous, safe and pleasant place to live. Although Stafford Borough has a lower than average crime rate the general public continue to have a perceived fear of crime including anti-social behaviour, youth crime as well as drug and alcohol related problems. It will be vital for the new Plan to deliver high quality developments which contribute to issues of community safety, designed to a high quality, to minimise the opportunities for crime thereby ensuring that people feel safe.

3.18 A number of rural communities have raised concerns that new development and its design does not respect the local character and distinctiveness of the Borough's villages and hamlets, which needs to be addressed by the new Plan.

Historic Environment

3.19 A key asset to Stafford Borough is its extensive heritage, including internationally recognised Parks & Gardens such as the Shugborough Estate, historic landscapes, archaeological sites, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Conservation Areas and listed buildings across the urban and rural environments. The historic

3 Issues facing the Borough

environment can be significantly undermined by inappropriate development in terms of scale, height and location particularly in key settlements where new development occurs. Therefore it is important that the historic environment and its irreplaceable assets are provided with protection, enhancement and management, not least to support cultural and tourism related interests.

Open Space, Sport & Recreation

3.20 Evidence highlights that Stafford Borough has a number of areas with deficiencies in quality and quantity of open space, sport and recreation provision, particularly in Stafford town and certain rural areas. This type of provision can significantly improve the quality of life for local communities through associated health, well-being and productivity benefits as emphasised through both Sustainable Community Strategies. A key issue for the Borough will be to ensure new development overcomes existing deficiencies to enhance resources and accessibility to open space, sport and recreation for all users in the future.

Policy Influences (National and Local) 4

4.1 This section of the document explains the key influences for the Development Plan through local-led and national policy approaches.

4.2 The Plan for Stafford Borough must be prepared in line with national planning policies, which set out the higher level policy framework for local areas to achieve sustainable development by addressing strategic issues such as mitigating the effects of climate change, delivering new development, educational and health needs whilst developing a vibrant prosperous and sustainable economy. To ensure that the Plan for Stafford Borough achieves sustainable development a process called [Sustainability Appraisal](#) is being used to assess the proposals and policies.

National Policy

4.3 The central aim of National Government's planning policies is to deliver sustainable development by promoting a pattern of resource management and use that meets the present human needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The Government's strategy for securing sustainable development is outlined in the 'UK Sustainable Development Strategy - Securing the Future', published in 2005. The strategy identifies five principles and four priorities, which are outlined below:

The Principles are:

- Living within environmental limits
- Ensuring a strong and healthy just society
- Achieving a sustainable economy
- Promoting good governance
- Using sound science responsibly

The Priorities are:

- Sustainable production and consumption
- Climate change and energy
- National resource protection and environmental enhancement
- The creation of sustainable communities

4.4 At a national level, to ensure that local authorities fulfil the objectives of promoting and facilitating sustainable development, the Government has produced a suite of [Planning Policy Statements \(PPSs\)](#) and [Planning Policy Guidance \(PPGs\)](#) which set out how the Government requires local planning authorities to achieve sustainable development. Such guidance can be obtained on the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) [website](#). The Government has recently published a draft new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to replace PPSs and PPGs.

4.5 The Plan for Stafford Borough does not repeat or duplicate national planning policy but provides locally distinctive policies in order to deliver new development and address particular local issues. Nevertheless throughout the remainder of this document there are direct links to relevant national planning policies that will be applied through the Plan for Stafford Borough to guide decision-making for the planning applications process, particularly in Chapters 6 and 7.

4.6 In July 2008 Stafford was announced as a [Growth Point](#) by the Government. In supporting Stafford Borough as a new Growth Point, the Government committed to a long-term partnership with Stafford Borough Council and Staffordshire County Council by recognising their ambitions for growth, subject to the statutory local planning processes. Individual proposals to deliver the growth agenda must be sustainable, acceptable environmentally and realistic in terms of infrastructure.

4.7 Achieving these ambitions will depend on a range of public and private funding programmes, including developer contributions. Government is committed to work with local partners to achieve sustainable growth, to secure the best outcomes from this investment and overcome obstacles to delivery.

4 Policy Influences (National and Local)

4.8 The Localism agenda, through Government, is legislating for communities to be able to shape the future development of their neighbourhoods through a new process of 'neighbourhood planning'. Neighbourhood plans will set out a community's policies for the development and use of land in their area, to be incorporated into the Local Development Framework. Neighbourhood plans will be brought forward by Parish Councils or community groups which have been designated as 'neighbourhood forums'.

4.9 Until July 2010 local planning policy was also guided by regional policy contained in the West Midlands regional plan called the [West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy \(RSS\)](#), which included new development requirements for the Stafford Borough area through until 2026 and a focus on Stafford town for future growth. However the coalition Government revoked the regional policy in July 2010 through the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 and aim to abolish the Regional Spatial Strategy through the Localism Act in 2012.

Stafford Borough Strategic Board

4.10 Stafford Borough Strategic Board came into effect in April 2011 and is made up of a number of key organisations that have agreed to work together on projects in connection with the prosperity and well being of the Borough community. The Board mirrors and supports the Staffordshire Partnership model. The Strategic Board incorporates statutory functions in respect of the current Children's Trust Board and Community Safety Partnership within its terms of reference and in addition, covers health and well being issues which will arise out of the reform of the NHS and in particular public health responsibilities.

4.11 Stafford Borough Strategic Board considered the future of the Sustainable Community Strategy and took the decision that a Borough 'Community Action Plan' would replace the strategy which would set out the main areas of focus for partnership working in the Borough. Staffordshire Observatory were commissioned to complete a profile of the Borough to assist with the identification of priority areas and agreement was given for the following four areas to be included in the Community Action Plan:

- Alcohol misuse in particular cause and consequence
- Housing - Good quality safe housing, which is decent fit and affordable to run
- Employment opportunities with particular reference to the Borough being dependant on public sector jobs
- Health and well being

4.12 These areas of focus support the wider priorities of the Staffordshire Strategic Partnership in respect of the following outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Staffordshire will have a thriving economy
- Outcome 2: Staffordshire will be a safe, healthy and aspirational place to live

4.13 The Local Development Framework will directly support the wider partnership priorities with reference to the spatial planning in respect of housing, employment, environmental and leisure policies. This Partnership activity will also support the work of the Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

Cross Boundary Issues

4.14 Stafford Borough does not exist in isolation and regular discussions on cross boundary spatial planning issues are held with other Councils, particularly in Staffordshire. A number of cross boundary key issues where a complementary approach will be required includes flood risk, provision of infrastructure including transport links, sustainability, the distribution of housing associated with local housing markets, employment needs through the Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership as well as protection of the environment and landscape. In addition the Council is working with the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership and other relevant authorities concerning the impact of new development on the Cannock

Policy Influences (National and Local) 4

Chase Special Area of Conservation and the AONB. The Council is also working with neighbouring authorities in relation to the North Staffordshire Green Belt area to balance development requirements. Stafford Borough Council has also worked on a number of joint evidence based studies including for strategic housing markets, renewable energy and surface water management.

Local Evidence Base

The Plan for Stafford Borough has also been produced drawing on the following evidence base:

Housing

- [The Housing Monitor: Land for New Homes](#)
- [North Housing Market Area Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment](#)
- [Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment \(SHLAA\)](#)
- [Housing Market Areas Assessment](#)
- [5 Year Housing Land Supply Statement](#)

Employment and the Economy

- [Employment Land Review](#)
- [National Land Use Database](#) (Homes and Communities Agency website)

Retail / Town Centres

- [Town Centre Capacity Assessment \(Retail, Office and Leisure\)](#) and [appendices](#)
- [Stafford Town Centre Study 2000](#)

Community

- [Settlement Assessment of Services and Facilities](#)
- [Key Stakeholder Discussions: Parish Meetings](#)

Transport

- Traffic Study for Stafford Urban Area
- [Local Transport Plan 2006 - 2011](#)

Climate Change

- [The Strategic flood-risk assessment \(SFRA\) Prepared jointly alongside Lichfield District Council, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and Tamworth Borough Council](#)
- [Water Cycle Study and Surface Water Management Plan](#)
- [Renewable Energy Study](#)

Tourism, leisure & recreation

- [Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 \(PPG17\) 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation' Assessment](#)

Environment & landscape

- [Green Infrastructure Strategy](#)
- [Landscape and Countryside Character Assessment](#)
- [Habitats Regulations Assessment \(Appropriate Assessment\)](#)
- [Stafford Borough Local Development Framework Ecological Desk Study 2008](#)
- [Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan](#)
- [Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan](#)

4 Policy Influences (National and Local)

Historic Environment

- [Historic Environment Character Assessment for Stafford Town \(April 2009\)](#)
- [Historic Environment Character Assessment for Stone \(July 2009\)](#)
- [Historic Environment Character Assessment for Haywoods \(July 2009\)](#)
- [Historic Environment Character Assessment for Eccleshall \(August 2009\)](#)
- [Historic Environment Character Assessment for Gnosall \(August 2009\)](#)
- [Stafford Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal](#)
- [Stone Conservation Area Appraisal](#)

Infrastructure

- [Stafford Borough Infrastructure Strategy: Stage 1 Final Report \(July 2009\)](#)
- [Key Stakeholder Discussions: Statutory Agencies & Utilities](#)
- [Water Cycle Study and Surface Water Management Plan](#)

Other

- [Annual Monitoring Report](#)
- [Census Information](#) - Local information and data on Stafford Borough from the 2001 Census

Spatial Vision 5

5.1 The following locally specific Vision has been used to guide the Plan for Stafford Borough through until 2031 and beyond by differentiating how the character of particular towns, villages and places in the area might change over time. Please note that other elements of this document have also been structured in a locally distinctive manner specific to Stafford, Stone and the rural areas.

Spatial Vision

By 2031 Stafford Borough will have:

- a. *retained and enhanced its high quality unique character made up of the County Town of Stafford, the market town of Stone and extensive rural area containing smaller towns and historic villages;*
- b. *provided high quality designed developments, including affordable and quality housing, to meet the local needs of all communities and an ageing population;*
- c. *reduced the need to travel through the provision of increased services and facilities in key locations to sustain the surrounding rural areas;*
- d. *addressed issues of climate change including a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and flood risk;*

By 2031 the County Town of Stafford will have:

- e. *an enhanced national and regional profile through major new developments and infrastructure;*
- f. *achieved a strengthened and diverse economy based on specialist industries, including the Ministry of Defence;*
- g. *retained high quality graduate skills delivered by further education facilities and bolstered by significant inward investment;*
- h. *significant levels of high quality housing including specialist housing and extra care provision in recognition of an ageing population;*
- i. *major town centre investments and exceptional levels of accessible community services and facilities;*

By 2031 the market town of Stone will have:

- j. *preserved and enhanced the local character of the town with its canal side vistas;*
- k. *a vibrant local economy and community activities;*
- l. *an increased mix of high quality residential developments supporting first class business development;*

By 2031 the Borough's rural areas will have:

- m. *been protected, conserved and enhanced to provide an exceptionally high quality of environmental, historic and landscape character;*
- n. *provided new green infrastructure / biodiversity enhancement schemes;*
- o. *delivered new housing within villages to provide for local needs;*
- p. *supported a diverse and regenerated rural economy and renewable technologies;*

5 Spatial Vision

q. increased the availability of accessible and enhanced high quality services and facilities, including public transport provision;

r. High quality recreation, open space and sport provision identified through Neighbourhood Plans.

The Borough will have a rich natural environment which is resilient to the effects of climate change, is well maintained and enhanced with more people enjoying the area through a greater sense of health and well being. A high quality strategic network of accessible green space will have been developed in and around Stafford, Stone and other areas as well as enhanced and managed built heritage and natural resources providing a clean, safe and enjoyable place to live and tourists to visit facilitated by an improved road and public transport network.

The Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Special Areas of Conservation and the Green Belt areas within Stafford Borough will not have had any significant development affecting their local character, unique environmental qualities or openness.

Question 2

Do you agree with the Spatial Vision for Stafford Borough?

Key Objectives 6

6.1 To deliver the Vision for Stafford Borough, the new Plan for Stafford Borough will aim to achieve the following key objectives:

Key Objectives - Stafford

1. Provide new high quality homes between 2011 - 2031 including accommodation for an ageing population and military personnel. In the short term development will take place north of Stafford and in the medium term west and east of Stafford provided the Western and Eastern Access Improvement Schemes are constructed
2. Create new communities supported by district centres, new health centres including GP surgeries and new primary schools north and west of Stafford
3. Deliver mitigation measures against any adverse impacts on the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation and avoid development in flood risk areas
4. Provide premium employment land between 2011 - 2031 that mitigates against any adverse impacts, made available for new research and development facilities as well as growth opportunities to provide new businesses for graduate employment and inward investment to diversify the economy. In the short term new development will take place north and east of Stafford
5. Provision of significant new green infrastructure, sport and recreation including green links from the surrounding open countryside and the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty into the heart of Stafford to encourage healthy living for leisure time activities, whilst safeguarding and enhancing the landscape setting
6. New open space and recreational facilities to meet the needs of an increasing population in the area including the Sow and Penk river corridors and Stafford Common
7. Deliver major new mixed use town centre proposals of retail provision to make Stafford a significant regional centre for retailing, leisure and cultural attractions with an emphasis on non-car modes of transport provision. New development will take place at Riverside and Kingsmead
8. Provide new office development at Stafford to encourage greater retention of high quality Further & Higher Education professionals in the area and up-skill educational attainments
9. Support and enhance the role of public sector agencies who have their headquarters or a significant presence in Stafford including Staffordshire University, Stafford College, Staffordshire Police, the Ministry of Defence, the Prison Service and Health Service co-ordination
10. Provide for future development beyond the Plan period to the south of Stafford through appropriate infrastructure and mitigation measures
11. Deliver the Western Access Improvement Scheme to improve the transport network to the west of Stafford town centre and implement phase one of the Eastern Access Improvement Scheme

Key Objectives - Stone

12. Provide new high quality homes in mix and tenure that mitigate against any adverse impacts and support the sustainable community. In the medium term new development will take place west of Stone
13. Deliver a new health centre for Stone as part of future community facilities
14. Provide new high quality employment land which mitigates against any adverse impacts to provide further support and opportunities for expansion to new and existing employers at Stone Business Park
15. Provide infrastructure including an upgraded electricity distribution network, new sewage facilities, green infrastructure links, enhanced public transport and new education provision through housing developments
16. Deliver new mixed use town centre proposals to enhance Stone as a centre providing for local needs of retail, leisure and community activities

6 Key Objectives

17. Safeguard and enhance the landscape setting through new green infrastructure provision including supporting the role of the Trent Valley corridor through the town in terms of biodiversity, accessibility, recreation and community uses together with exploring the opportunities for marina and commercial developments

Key Objectives - Areas outside of Stafford & Stone

18. Provide for high quality new housing development within existing villages (Residential Development Boundaries) that considers the distinctive local character

19. Deliver sensitive additional facilities to provide an improved level of local services appropriate to settlements, reduce the need to travel and be in keeping with the local character, the historic environment and the rural setting

20. Provide increased rural employment through renewable energy schemes including biomass, low impact hi-tech industries in agricultural buildings and sensitive new national and regional tourist attractions which enhance the high quality environment of the area

21. Deliver new employment land for existing industrial areas at Ladfordfields & Raleigh Hall Recognised Industrial Estates

22. Provide new high quality homes with new affordable homes on rural exception sites adjacent to existing villages (Residential Development Boundaries), to support sustainable rural communities in the future

23. Support increased habitat creation and the encouragement of a diverse range of species through Biodiversity Enhancement Zones as part of the strategic green infrastructure network across the Stafford Borough area whilst also protecting the Special Areas of Conservation

Question 3

Do you agree with the Key Objectives?

6.2 Based on the Spatial Vision and Key Objectives set out above the following development strategy is proposed for the Stafford Borough area and its principal areas.

Development Strategy 7

Core Policy 1**Guiding Principles**

Sustainable development and the creation of high quality places where people want to live and work is at the core of the Council's philosophy for plan making. Accordingly the Council will apply the following priorities when determining planning applications:

- Development should be of a high quality design that respects the natural and built environment and reflects locally distinctive character with higher density development on sites within or close to the town centres;
- Deliver the scale of housing and employment development required;
- Encourage economic growth and inward investment to ensure an appropriate balance between new housing and new employment land provision;
- Improve accessibility for all to services, education, employment, health, leisure and housing;
- Protect, conserve and enhance the heritage, cultural and environmental assets including the high quality open countryside across the Borough area;
- Protect and conserve the two areas of Green Belt in the Borough and the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- Avoid areas at risk from flooding including locations vulnerable to surface water flooding;
- Support sustainable communities with an enhanced range of services and facilities particularly at Stafford and Stone;
- Prevent all out of centre retail developments which would undermine the vitality and viability of Stafford and Stone town centres;
- Maximise the use of brownfield redevelopment sites within the Borough's towns and villages to reduce the need for greenfield sites. Therefore only where insufficient sites on previously developed land, in sustainable locations, are available to meet new development requirements should greenfield sites be released.

Question 4

Do you agree with the Borough development priorities?

7 Development Strategy

Core Policy 2

Spatial Strategy

The following approach will be applied to the spatial development in Stafford Borough

Key Urban Centres

Stafford Borough will accommodate new growth and investment over the plan period to enable it to flourish and provide a place where people want to live and work. Throughout the Borough, provision will be made for the development of at least 500 dwellings per year over the plan period, including military housing requirements and provision for gypsies as well as 8 hectares per year of employment land to provide for the future needs and prosperity of residents (refer to Appendix 1 for more details). The Borough Council will ensure that the majority of future development will be delivered to the most sustainable locations and will work together with its partner organisations to ensure that the required level of infrastructure and facilities are delivered to the following areas:

- Stafford
- Stone

Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) at the main urban centres of Stafford and Stone will be delivered on a phased basis to ensure a consistent delivery of houses for the Plan period is achieved, having regard to the necessary infrastructure and environmental requirements. SDLs may be brought forward from a later phasing period where this would not undermine the delivery of sustainable development, including the availability of infrastructure. Development in Stone may be phased later in the Plan period where the cumulative completion rates for the Borough exceed 500 new homes per year.

Existing Towns and Villages

The smaller rural villages comprise the key rural settlements and should continue to serve their local populations through the diverse range of services and facilities they provide. These villages could be suitable for a small amount of new development facilitated by minor amendments to Residential Development Boundaries through the neighbourhood planning process or a subsequent Site-specific Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document where local need arises to support rural sustainability and maintain local services.

Proposals for housing development or redevelopment within a defined Residential Development Boundaries of existing towns and villages will be acceptable subject to the provision of other relevant policies and should:

- i. Be accessible to everyone, regardless of mobility requirements;
- ii. Where appropriate ensure adequate vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access, as well as cycle and short stay parking facilities on the site; and
- iii. Not adversely affect the residential amenity of the locality.

The Countryside

The countryside will be protected for its own sake. New development in the countryside will be restricted beyond Residential Development Boundaries to housing essential for farming, forestry or the operation of a rural based enterprise; or housing meeting the rural exception policy.

Development Strategy 7

Question 5

Do you agree with the Spatial Strategy and the approach for Strategic Development Locations?

7.1 The Spatial Strategy aims to balance the social, environmental and economic priorities set out in the key objectives and the spatial vision of this document whilst facilitating sustainable growth in a manner that reflects the character and role for each settlement within the Borough.

7.2 The strategy has evolved by considering the specific needs of the residents and of the capacity of different locations to accommodate the future needs of residents, whilst also taking account of the evidence base and the Sustainability Appraisal of options and policies, national policy guidelines, local objectives that were identified through the consultation process as well as the Sustainable Community Strategies.

7.3 The Spatial Strategy will be delivered through the Core Strategy policies for Stafford, Stone and other areas relating to Residential Development Boundaries (RDBs) together with the Borough-wide Core Policies and Development Management policies.

7.4 To achieve the vision and spatial planning objectives, in step with the development requirements and Stafford town being the principal settlement in the Borough, a number of Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) have been identified. The majority of new development will be concentrated on the most sustainable settlements of Stafford and Stone. Stafford being the most sustainable settlement, will have three SDLs whilst Stone being the second most sustainable location in the Borough will have a single SDL, to be delivered later in the Plan period.

7.5 The concentration of development in the larger settlements of Stafford and Stone will boost employment opportunities and reduce inward commuting. The size of the allocations proposed will also result in contributions towards the delivery of necessary infrastructure to support new developments and to provide improved services and facilities for the Borough's residents.

Stafford Town

7.6 The population of Stafford Town will grow substantially over the Plan period. To provide for this increased population the spatial strategy will provide for increased housing and employment growth in a manner that reflects the character and role of Stafford Town as the principal settlement within the Borough.

7.7 Stafford town will provide approximately 5,500 new homes and 63 hectares of new employment land on Strategic Development Locations over the Plan period. New developments in the north, west and east of Stafford are deliverable in planning terms whilst growth to the south is restricted due to being within South Staffordshire District Council's administrative area, and is in proximity to the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty / Special Area of Conservation.

7.8 As part of the Stafford Borough Local Development Framework's evidence base a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) was produced in January 2009 and subsequently updated in January 2010 and June 2011. This is a key element of the evidence base to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing to meet the Borough's future needs. The SHLAA is also required by national planning policy set out in [Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing \(PPS3\)](#).

7.9 Stafford is currently identified as a Growth Point. The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) stated that, depending upon the outcome of local studies, some of the housing requirement for Stafford Borough may need to be provided within South Staffordshire adjacent to the southern boundary of Stafford to meet the needs of Stafford Town. For this Plan period the Council has not identified land south of Stafford as a Strategic Development Location as this is in the administrative area of South Staffordshire District Council.

7.10 In terms of delivery, using existing and proposed major new infrastructure, new developments to the north and west of Stafford are more deliverable, with the Western Access Improvement Road Scheme facilitating growth including a link from Martin Drive to Doxey Road. Development to the east of Stafford, whilst deliverable

7 Development Strategy

in planning terms, is linked to the requirement to provide the Eastern Access Improvement Road from the Weston Road (A518) to Cannock Road (A34) via Baswich Road. Although a short section of the Eastern Access Improvement Road could be delivered by new development between the Weston Road (A518) and St Thomas' Lane, the remaining section to Baswich Road crossing floodplain areas, the River Sow and the canal could not be delivered without significant public sector funding support. The majority of new employment development to take place at the north and east of Stafford.

Stone Town

7.11 At Stone new housing development west of the town is more deliverable than locations to the east of Stone, which would require bridging of the West Coast mainline railway. Land north of Eccleshall Road, known as Walton Hill, could provide 500 new homes and present a more appropriate extension and rounding off to the existing urban fabric of Walton west of Manor Hill primary school, delivered later in the Plan period due to recent commitments and the rate of growth. New employment development of approximately 18 hectares west of the A34 Stafford Road could be provided south of the existing Stone Business Park. However employment commitments at Meaford could be considered sufficient for Stone's needs over the Plan period with over 34 hectares being available.

7.12 Although not currently identified it is anticipated that approximately 1,000 new homes could be delivered across the Borough, including through amendments to Residential Development Boundaries facilitated by new Neighbourhood Plans. There is also evidence of further housing commitments being delivered within existing Residential Development Boundaries.

Key Village Settlements

7.13 A number of towns and villages within the Borough are not considered appropriate to deliver major new development through the 'Plan for Stafford Borough' outside of existing Residential Development Boundaries. However a small element of housing growth could be identified and facilitated by minor amendments to Residential Development Boundaries through the neighbourhood planning process or a subsequent Site-specific Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document, to be progressed following adoption of the Plan for Stafford Borough, to meet identified local need.

7.14 At Raleigh Hall new employment development at land north of Sturbridge Lane of approximately 6 hectares could support local employment needs in the rural area, including for Eccleshall.

7.15 At Ladfordfields new employment development at land north of the Recognised Industrial Estate of approximately 6 hectares could support local employment needs in the rural area and for the existing employer.

8.1 Stafford

Core Policy 3

Stafford Town

In support of the overall Spatial Strategy, Stafford as the County Town and the principal settlement, will seek to enhance its role by increasing both the range and quality of services and facilities. This will be achieved through the following actions:

Housing

Continue to meet the housing requirements for Stafford Town, including Ministry of Defence personnel, by providing up to 5,500 new homes:

- Increasing the range and type of housing including a greater number of specialist houses and extra care provision for the elderly;
- Providing a range of development locations for new homes over the Plan period to 2031 including for affordable housing. This will include new housing development at the following Strategic Development Locations (final decision to be taken following this consultation):
 - North of Stafford
 - West of Stafford linked to delivery of the Western Access Improvement Scheme from Martin Drive to Doxey Road
 - East of Stafford linked to delivery of the Eastern Access Improvement Scheme
- Sites within the urban area of Stafford town will have good accessibility to public transport, services and facilities;
- Strategic Development Locations adjacent to Stafford's urban area will minimise the impact on surrounding landscapes, be fully accessible by public transport with facilities to encourage walking and cycling;
- Increasing and enhancing the provision of educational, health and community facilities to provide for increased growth including for the elderly population.

Open Space, Sport & Recreation

Increasing and improving the provision of open space, sport and recreational facilities by addressing specific deficiencies identified through the local evidence base in the PPG17 Assessment. New development will provide high quality facilities by ensuring:

- Increased number of allotments on the eastern and western sides of Stafford town and high quality allotments elsewhere across the town
- Improved safety and accessibility of children's play areas
- High quality and adequately sized green spaces in the south western part of Stafford
- Adequate access to natural green spaces in the south western and eastern part of the town
- Improved access to multi-sport courts in the northern half of Stafford
- High quality range of facilities for teenagers.

Employment

Create employment growth and promote economic diversification by:

- Supporting the Science and Technology park at Beaconside as a high quality location for knowledge based industries;

8 Policies

- Supporting further development of Ministry of Defence land at Stafford as a military base in the West Midlands;
- Supporting the continuing retention and growth of existing public and private sector employers as well as targeting new businesses through the provision of a range of premises, support and advice;
- Providing opportunities for new enterprises and businesses by allocating new employment sites with good transport links that contribute to sustainable development. New employment sites will be included in the following Strategic Development Locations (final decision to be taken following this consultation):
 - North of Stafford
 - East of Stafford
 - West of Stafford
- Providing facilities and sites for new start-up businesses, particular business incubation units for knowledge-based and creative industries.

Stafford Town Centre

Strengthen Stafford town centre's role as a principal centre for the Borough by:

- Encouraging the development and expansion of the town centre to provide an increase of 34,000 square metres of non-food (comparison) retailing and 2,000 square metres of food (convenience) retailing and include the level and quality of the offer as well as establish new development opportunities;
- Ensuring that there is 45,000 square metres of new office space and commercial premises within Stafford town centre;
- Promoting mixed use development on larger development sites, particularly those that are within the town centre, through a phased approach for the major regeneration plan on the following sites (final decision to be taken following this consultation):
 - Kingsmead
 - Riverside
- Consolidating the primary retail core / shopping area as well as protecting and enhancing its distinctiveness, vitality and viability;
- Supporting an enhanced range and diversity of educational, health, cultural and community services and facilities in the town centre;
- Improving accessibility to the town centre, particularly by public transport, from the rest of the Borough.

Transport and Access

Strengthen Stafford Town's role as the principal transport hub in Stafford Borough by:

- Supporting the introduction of better bus services, by increasing service levels, frequency and punctuality of services between Stafford town centre and other parts of the Borough;
- Deliver the Western Access Improvement Scheme and the next phase of the Eastern Access Improvement Scheme from Beaconside to St Thomas' Lane;
- Extend existing and create new, cycle and walking paths, as an integral part of new developments in the town;
- Improve access to the rail station for all users and secure appropriate levels of parking for both cars and bicycles;
- Ensure that new developments that have significant transport implications, are capable of providing safe and convenient access by foot, cycle, public and private transport that addresses the needs of all, particularly those with disabilities.

Environment

Promote Stafford as a tourist destination with its unique architectural character and heritage by:

- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment, the context and character of its buildings and streets, its rich heritage and areas of cultural importance, which will be complemented by new, distinctive, high quality and well designed buildings, protecting sight lines to historic buildings such as St Mary's Church;
- Provision of new Green Infrastructure (GI) for Stafford Town such as the Penk and Sow natural parklands as well as the Stafford Common Community Park together with local area schemes that respond to the characteristics, local needs and opportunities for improved GI provision and biodiversity assets of the town;
- Increasing tourist opportunities for visitors through additional high quality accommodation, promoting links with the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Staffordshire County Showground, the Shire Hall Gallery, Ancient High House, Stafford Castle and St Mary's Church by facilitating the development of innovative new tourist attractions;
- Ensure that development does not damage the integrity of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC);
- Improving access into the countryside by means other than by the private car, such as public transport, walking and cycling.

Question 6

Do you agree with the Development Strategy for Stafford Town? Do you agree with the infrastructure requirements for Stafford Town?

Housing

8.1 Stafford is the largest town in the Borough and faces the greatest level of development over the Plan period. Most of the Borough's housing and employment growth will be concentrated at Stafford Town, as it is the most sustainable location with the greatest level of services and facilities, jobs and transport links. The Government announced Stafford as a Growth Point in 2008. National planning policy relating to housing development is set out in [Planning Policy Statement 3 \(PPS3\)](#).

8.2 Analysis of the population information for the County Town of Stafford shows that although the over 65 year olds are a significant group, a range of housing will be important for existing and migrating households as well as encouraging Staffordshire University graduates to settle in the Borough after their studies. New housing developments in Stafford must provide for specialist needs and the elderly including retirement homes and specialist accommodation, lifetime homes and extra care schemes.

8.3 Recent analysis of the Borough's housing markets, including for Stafford town, through the West Midlands North Housing Market Area (HMA) Assessment indicates that there has been strong house price growth in the town as in the rest of England. Although the overall income to house price ratio is 1:4.98 this masks strong growth in the east of the town where affordability ratios can be as high as 1:6. Moreover, the high average salary (£32,663) in the town ensures that housing affordability is less of an issue than in other parts of the Borough. However homelessness is a significant issue in Stafford, particularly among young single households requiring support. In addition, homeless acceptances are increasing as a percentage of applications in the face of limited local resources. Provision has been made at The Eagle, Stafford for vulnerable people but there may be a need to provide further accommodation for vulnerable people in Stafford.

8.4 In terms of existing housing types Stafford has a well balanced supply of different housing stock although there is a slight over supply of smaller terraces and apartments. The most up-to-date information about how many houses have been built in Stafford town and the number of planning permissions given for new homes is set out in the Council's annual publication called [The Housing Monitor: Land for New Homes](#). In addition land

8 Policies

has been assessed within the Stafford residential development boundary to establish how much potential housing land is available, the findings of which will be set out in the [Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment \(SHLAA\)](#). Due to the scale of new development requirements significant levels of new housing will be required on greenfield land on the edge of Stafford Town.

Employment

8.5 The Regional Centres Study demonstrates quite graphically that by some measure Stafford Borough was the worst performing West Midlands District in relation to employment change in the period 1998-2003. A similar pattern emerges in relation to employment change in Town and City Centres ([Regional Centres Study](#) - Table 3.3 Page 27) where again Stafford was the worst performing Authority.

8.6 In recent years a large amount of warehousing / logistics development has taken place at Stafford due to the proximity of the M6 motorway and the M6 Toll, in particular land allocated close to Junction 14. However evidence from Instaffs, the Staffordshire inward investment company, as well as the Council's regeneration section attracting new businesses to the area shows that the number of high quality new jobs provided is relatively limited due to warehousing / logistics development whilst the amount of land used is substantial.

8.7 Against this background there has been a considerable turn around. More recent indications appear to demonstrate that Stafford has been very successful in adapting and attracting new employment growth. This has occurred in part because the right sites were offered to incoming investment, Primepoint at the M6 Junction 14 and the Staffordshire County Council promoted Technology Park adjacent to the University in particular. There needs to be a continuing supply of good quality employment land as part of an integrated growth strategy if recent success is not to be reversed.

8.8 To support the delivery of future sustainable communities at Stafford Town and reflecting National objectives in [Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth](#) a significant element of the Borough's employment provision is identified at Stafford. Taking account of completions and commitments it is necessary to allocate new greenfield sites on the edge of Stafford town to provide for new jobs. To provide this level of employment land will require expansion of existing employment sites to the north and east of Stafford Town, which are easily accessible to the strategic road network.

8.9 Staffordshire University has a principal campus based at Beaconside in Stafford. The University, together with Stafford College in the town centre, provides a nationally important further and higher education resource for Staffordshire. Furthermore an important issue for Stafford Borough is to provide a quality environment for graduates to remain in the area following completions of studies. To achieve this will require a combination of housing, job opportunities and quality environments for leisure time activities nearby.

8.10 A key priority for Stafford Town is to diversify its employment base to deliver significant employment growth over the plan period. It is anticipated that the primary drivers for new employment growth will be the development of small and medium scale high technology industries that builds on the information and multimedia technologies from emerging university graduates. The Borough has failed in recent times to retain graduates in these growth industries. Therefore a step change is necessary to retain graduates in the town to help nurture a more prosperous economy within the local area.

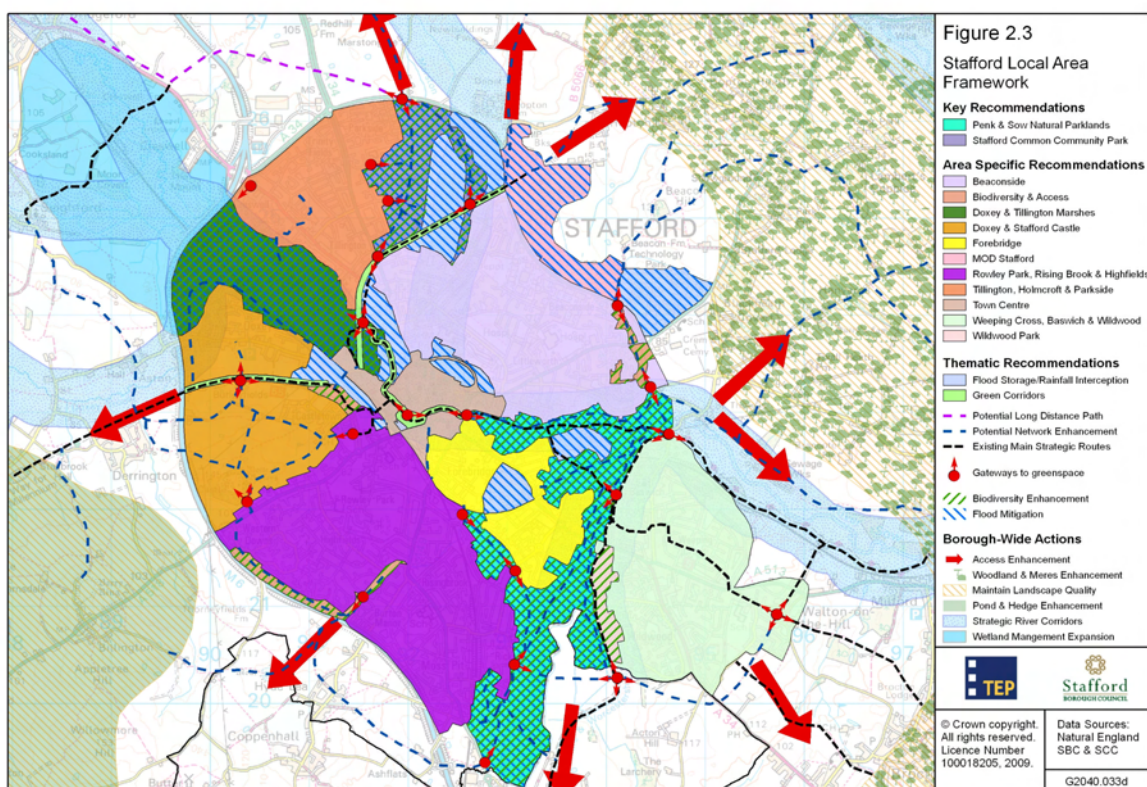
8.11 Ministry of Defence (MoD) land at Stafford is part of the area covered by the West Midlands Estate Group which is looking at the future of MoD sites across the Midlands. MoD Stafford is a core site to be retained for military purposes and in the future more units will move to the site. Stafford Borough Council and the MoD will continue to work in close partnership concerning land at Stafford to ensure that future development is incorporated with the existing communities of the town. Therefore it is unlikely that any of the MoD land will be released for other uses.

Green Infrastructure and Environment

8.12 National planning policy set out in [Planning Policy Statement 1 \(PPS1\)](#), [Planning Policy Statement 9 \(PPS9\)](#) and [Planning Policy Statement 25 \(PPS25\)](#) as well as the Regional Spatial Strategy highlight the importance of Green Infrastructure (GI). The scale of growth at Stafford town will increase pressure on local GI assets, which could impact on the town's biodiversity and landscape character. As part of the Green

Infrastructure Strategy two key proposals are recommended for Stafford town to increase biodiversity, recreational opportunities and provide flood protection benefits. These include creation of the Penk & Sow Natural Parkland and enlarging Stafford Common into a community park. To support GI no development is proposed in the flood plain areas of Stafford and the river corridors through the town will be important to provide increased recreational provision and walking / cycling links to other parts of Stafford as well as links to the open countryside. Furthermore other specific recommendations set out on the map below and detailed in the Stafford Borough Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Green Infrastructure map for Stafford Borough



8.13 The Borough Council's [PPG17 Assessment and Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy](#) covers indoor and outdoor sports facilities, parks and greenspace, playing pitches and children's play provision including the provision of local standards for accessibility, quantity and quality provision for a range of green space. In Stafford a number of deficiencies in both the quality and quantity of provision have been identified. Although Stafford's new leisure centre opened in April 2008 on the edge of the town centre it is important to ensure that deficiencies are addressed in other areas and new development provides further open space, sport and recreation provision for the local community.

8.14 The Staffordshire Wildlife Trust undertook an [ecological survey](#) for areas on the edge of Stafford town which identified six locations requiring further protected species surveys. Furthermore the survey identified four sites that have habitats possibly being used by protected species or Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species which should be retained and enhanced, with habitat creation to replace any losses arising from development. Habitat surveys will required for nine sites at Stafford Town, with the installation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) recommended at two sites to increase water storage.

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Cannock Chase

8.15 Cannock Chase is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) because of the extent of European Dry Heath habitat, protected under the Habitat Regulations, which is afforded the highest level of protection for plants, animals and habitats that are rare or vulnerable in a European context. To facilitate the Borough's commitment under the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994, an Appropriate Assessment and a visitor mitigation assessment has been completed for the Cannock Chase SAC.

8.16 The Appropriate Assessment identifies three broad areas where development could lead to adverse effects on the Cannock Chase SAC, relating to:

- Water Abstraction
- Air Quality
- Recreational Pressure

8.17 Evidence identifies that in all three cases there would be significant adverse impacts on the integrity of the SAC. New housing developments allocated through relevant Plans, including for Stafford Borough, will increase visitor levels. Therefore, mitigation measures will be required to avoid the adverse effects arising from recreational pressure, which can be complex, difficult to deliver, require a separate strategy and a more detailed implementation plan from related development.

8 Policies

Historic Environment

8.18 Within Stafford Town there are a number of historic assets which are particularly important and should be protected and conserved for the future. The Stafford Town Centre Conservation Area and outlying areas include a number of historically important buildings which should be conserved for the future. Staffordshire County Council have recently produced a [Historic Landscape Characterisation Study](#) which highlights the sensitivities of the landscape around Stafford Castle in particular. In addition, a [Historic Environment Character Assessment](#) has been carried out which specifies that developing in both the west and east of the town will have the greatest impact on the Historic Environment, whilst development to the north will have least impact. The Stafford Town Centre Conservation Area, includes the Ancient High House, St Mary's Church and other historically important buildings. With an increased emphasis for new retail and office development in the town centre the loss of character and sight lines between historic assets could increase, which should be minimised through controlling the height of new developments. Staffordshire County Council are preparing an Extensive Urban Survey for Stafford town to inform policy.

Stafford Town Centre

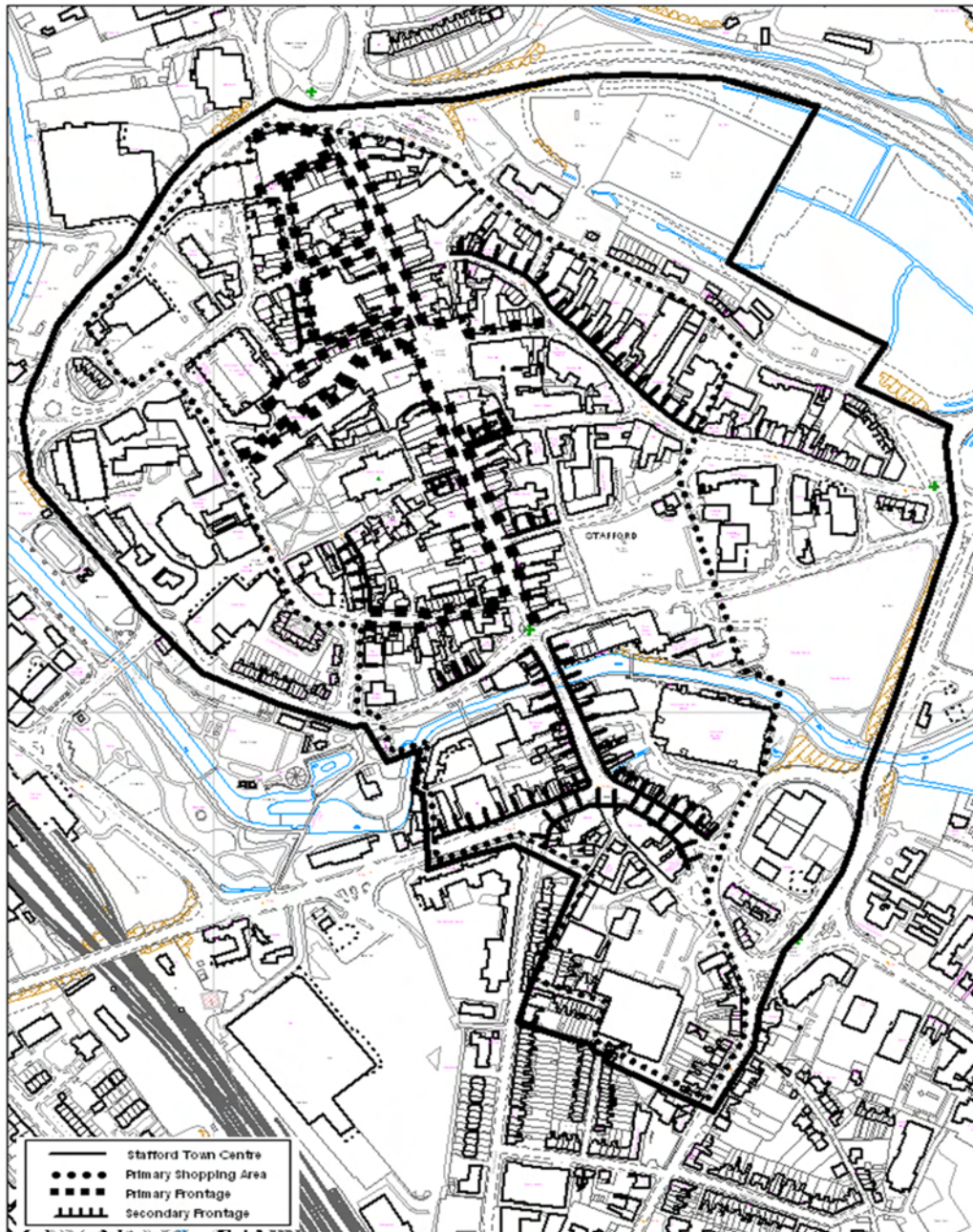
8.19 Successful town centres incorporate a diverse range of complementary mixed use developments including leisure, retail, residential, employment and recreational use. This complementary mix of uses will enable the town centre to appeal to a diverse range of age and social groups, which strengthens the local economy and encourages further investment.

8.20 Stafford town centre must create an attractive sense of place, through the implementation of high quality urban design, an attractive public realm and streetscape and will attract visitors and encourage inward investment. A key principle for town centre developments is the need to provide high quality, well designed buildings, parks and public spaces which are capable of being used by all age groups and are safe, accessible, durable and fit for purpose. Of particular importance in establishing a sense of place that is varied and diverse, is the protection and conservation of the town's historic environment including the protection of sightlines. The town centre includes a number of architecturally important buildings, such as the Elizabethan Ancient High House, the Churches of St Mary's and St Chads and other historically important buildings, which give the town centre its rich architectural character and vibrancy.

8.21 Stafford has significant retail development, large scale office developments and uses which attract large numbers of people including major cultural, indoor sport, tourist, social, leisure and community venues. The town represents the heart of retail, leisure and cultural provision for the Borough with the majority of shoppers travelling from a wide catchment area to access high-order purchases. However in recent years there has been significant development in comparison and convenience goods with three superstores on the edge of the centre and retail parks at The Hough, The Green and Madford Retail Park. Stafford will provide 34,000 square metres of comparison retail floorspace within the strategic town centre and 45,000 square metres of new office development within or on the edge of the town centre by 2026.

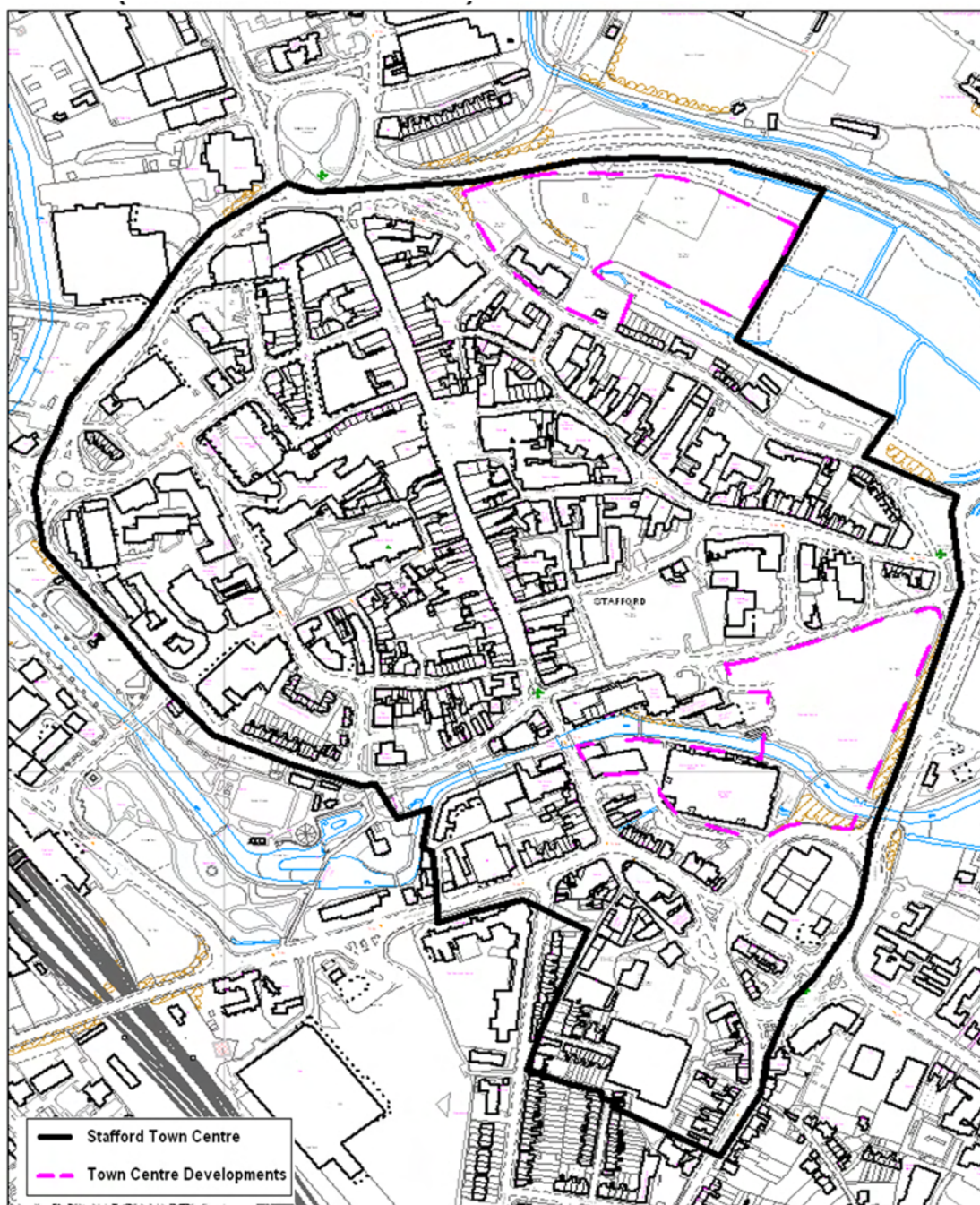
8.22 Recent planning commitments are seeing delivery of the Tipping Street scheme for office and retail provision as well as other major town centre developments proposed at Kingsmead and Riverside. In addition there are commitments for approximately 14,000 square metres of comparison retail floorspace and 24,000 square metres of office development on the edge of the town centre. National planning policy in [Planning Policy Statement 4](#) requires Development Plans to identify a town centre boundary and a primary shopping area as well as primary and secondary shopping frontages.

Stafford Town Centre Boundaries



8 Policies

Stafford Town Centre Proposals



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Question 7

Do you agree with the Stafford Town Centre boundaries and the development sites identified? (Final decision to be taken following this consultation)

8.23 Across Stafford there are a number of District Centres which provide services and facilities including daily retail convenience outlets. In relation to the scale and location of new housing additional District Centres will be required as part of new residential development. Furthermore existing District Centres should be expanded or replaced with new facilities in existing locations.

Transport

8.24 Stafford Town has a high degree of self containment with the majority of employed residents actually working within the town (Source: Census 2001). Travel to work patterns indicate that only a minority of journeys are made by public transport, walking and cycling with the majority being made by private car.

8.25 A key aspect of the current Staffordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP 2011) is to achieve a modal shift away from private car use and to encourage a reduction in the demand for travel. The principal mechanism for achieving this modal shift is to promote more effective integration of land use and transportation which enables facilities to be assessed by a wide range of sustainable travel choices. This will be principally achieved by improving bus and rail services to and from Stafford Town in line with the Staffordshire LTP and through the provision of better pedestrian and cycle links between the town centre and the outer urban areas.

8.26 Whilst the overall aim of the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan is to reduce the need to travel by car, it is recognised that many people will continue to use their cars to travel to work and leisure activities due to the insufficient public transport route density and the inaccessibility of many employment and leisure sites.

8.27 Equally it is important that necessary transport improvements take place to address the traffic and travel consequences of new development and to mitigate existing problems. This means that full transport assessments of new developments will be required. The Borough Council and County Council have worked closely to ensure that the Stafford Borough Local Development Framework (LDF) and the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan are in step. The location of development and the way that development is carried out is very important in helping to achieve these priorities and in reducing the need to travel.

Infrastructure

8.28 Major investment is required to support the planned growth at Stafford town including new roads, education, health, transport, water supply and other social and physical infrastructure services to be identified and delivered through detailed phasing to ensure that locations have the capacity to support further development. A key element will be new roads to improve connections around Stafford.

8.29 A key consideration in terms of new housing development in Stafford is alleviation of foul water flows through the current sewerage system, which reaches capacity during storm events due to the combination of foul water and surface water run off within the existing system. Severn Trent Water has concerns about new development impacting on the Lammascote pumping station which is currently operating close to capacity and has limited scope to increase its pumping capacity. Although improvement works could take place an alternative solution would be to drain new development and / or part of the existing sewerage catchment to a new pumping station, with a new rising main to Brancote Sewage Treatment Works (STW). The issue is particularly evident between the main sewerage pumping station at Lammascote and the Branscote sewage treatment works east of Stafford which are connected with a rising main pipe. New development to the north, east and central areas of Stafford would increase capacity pressures on the rising main pipe.

8.30 To solve this issue Severn Trent Water advise that prior to major residential development in Stafford it will be necessary to increase the storage capacity within the sewerage system. This significant infrastructure provision will be delivered using new over-sized pipes and new storage of foul water at specific locations within the network. Although the sewerage infrastructure is able to cope with increased housing development to the south of Stafford, due to the capacity of the Baswich pumping station and its rising main to Branscote sewage treatment works, nevertheless the storage capacity at Brancote will need to increase in order to meet the new housing provision in Stafford. All new development should provide Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) with foul water and surface water run off kept separate to minimise capacity pressures during storm events in the future and provide foul water storage

8 Policies

8.31 The clean water supply to Stafford is provided by a number of boreholes and three storage reservoirs located north, south east and south west of the town. The current network has spare capacity to the north of Stafford from the Peasley Bank Storage Reservoir but issues remain concerning the overall resource capacity of supplies from boreholes. Although new development will not require infrastructure to the north of Stafford, reinforcement work will be necessary to the west of the town via the Peasley Bank reservoir. Further development to the east and south of Stafford will also require reinforcement work taking the form of a 300mm pipe connected to the northern supplies.

8.32 With regards to community infrastructure provision new development will be required to deliver education contributions through the development of new primary schools and facilities for existing secondary schools at Stafford due to the scale of growth. As previously mentioned an increasingly ageing population will need to be provided for through extra care and specialist housing schemes, supported by new health centres in Stafford town.

8.33 Electricity providers have identified that new development at Stafford will require 11kV network improvements including local substations together with a new major substation for growth north of Stafford. However no major gas infrastructure would be required except for the employment location north of Primepoint Junction 14 needing reinforcement due to its distance from the existing gas infrastructure.

Stafford - Strategic Development Locations

Core Policy 4

North of Stafford

Within the area identified North of Stafford a sustainable, well designed mixed use development will be delivered by 2031. Any application for development on a part or the whole of this area must be preceded by, and consistent with, a comprehensive Master Plan for North of Stafford including building Design Statements which have been agreed by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document. Subject to a viability assessment the development must deliver the following key requirements:

- Phased delivery of up to 2,700 new homes with 30% being affordable housing in a mix of housing types, tenures, sizes and styles and a greater proportion will be 2 and 3 bedroomed properties;
- The development takes place on a 'neighbourhood' approach with the provision of a mix of uses including local retail facilities, social and physical infrastructure, a primary school, a library service, health facilities and public open space;
- At least 36 hectares of new employment land with comprehensive links for a range of transport modes across the A34 to housing development areas;
- Provision of an area for Heavy Good Vehicles to park overnight with associated facilities;
- Proposals must relate to the whole Strategic Development Location or, if less, do not in any way prejudice implementation of the whole development;
- A comprehensive flood management scheme is essential to implement development of the Strategic Development Location including off-site measures to alleviate flooding and surface water management on Marston Brook and Sandyford Brook;
- The development should be based on maximising opportunities to use sustainable construction methods;
- The development should maximise on-site renewable or low carbon energy production including associated infrastructure to facilitate site-wide renewable energy solutions
- Existing hedgerows and tree lines to be retained and enhanced to support the provision of a network of green infrastructure including wetlands and water corridors, play areas, green corridors allowing wildlife movement and access to open space together with necessary measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of development on the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation including Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace;
- An access and transport strategy is developed for the Strategic Development Location that maximises accessibility by non-car transport modes to Stafford town centre, nearby existing and new employment

Policies 8

areas, identifies access points to the site and between the site and the existing settlement, identifies construction access arrangements that do not disrupt existing residents and improvements to transport capacity along the A34, A513 Beaconside road and the Redhill roundabout;

- A clear hierarchy of roads (from distributor to home zones) producing discernable and distinctive neighbourhoods integrated and linked to existing areas.

A development tariff approach will be applied to all planning applications within the North of Stafford Strategic Development Location. The tariff will contribute towards the strategic infrastructure required to achieve a comprehensive sustainable development. Details of the development tariff will be set out in a future Developer Contributions SPD.

Question 8

Do you think that Land north of Stafford is a suitable and sustainable location? Please could you give use your reasons?

Do you agree with the infrastructure requirements we have outlined for Land north of Stafford? Have we missed anything?

Location

8.34 Development to the north of Stafford is located to the north of the A513 and both sides of the A34 on the extreme periphery of Stafford comprising of two housing sites delivering 2,700 new homes and one employment site delivering 36 hectares as an extension to the existing Primepoint 14 area. A final decision on the identification of this Strategic Development Location will take place after this consultation exercise, taking into account responses received.

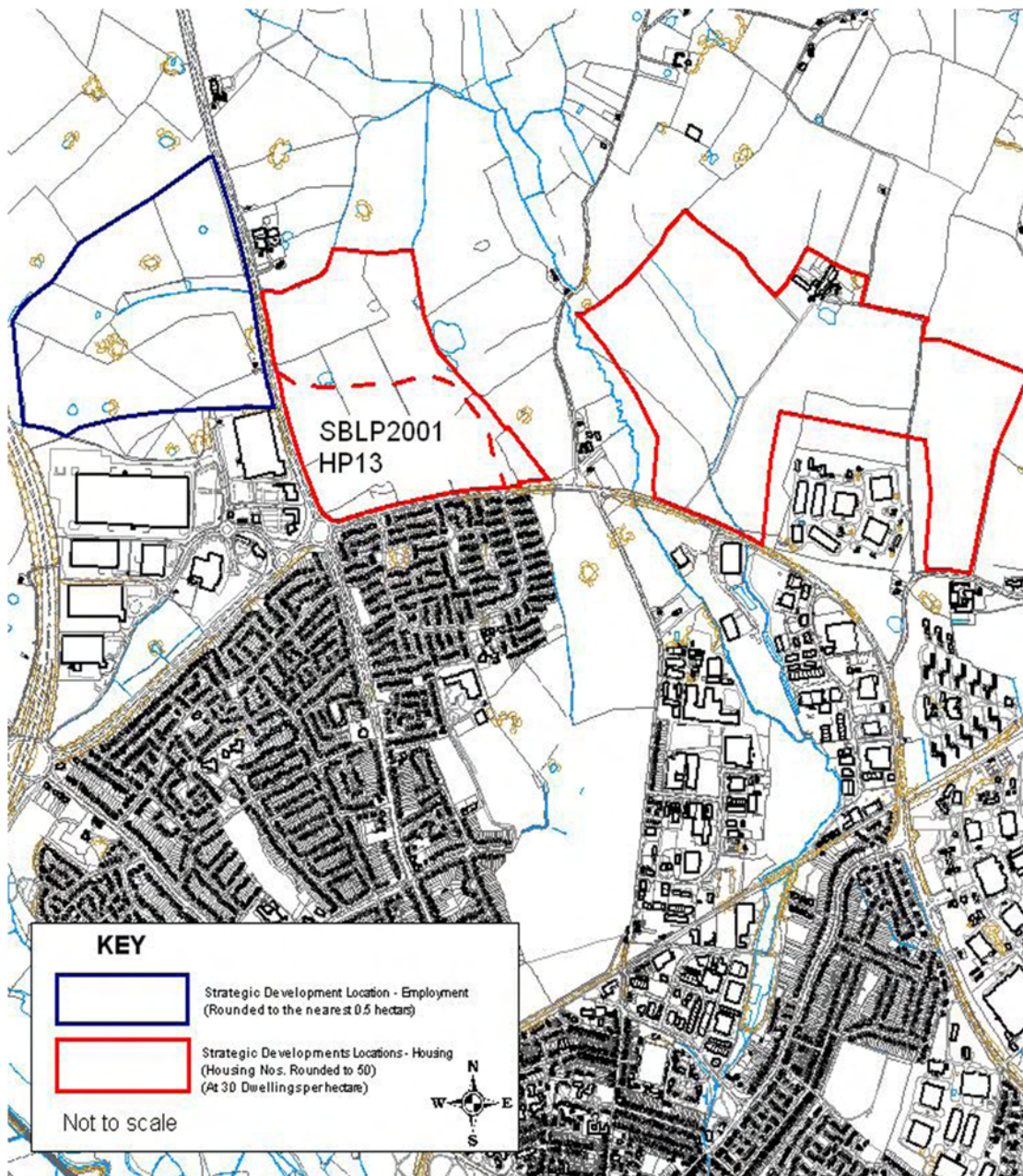
Issues

8.35 There are opportunities for trips to be made by walking and cycling into Stafford but the A513 presents a severance issue. There are primary and secondary schools within 20-30 minutes walking distance of the area although the GP surgery on Holmcroft Road is further away and as such would rely on public transport or the private car. Currently the development areas are more isolated from public transport routes. The development areas north of Stafford are adjacent to the A34 and north of the A513 with these roads intersecting at the Redhill priority controlled roundabout. Although new development could be delivered without major new infrastructure it would require enhancements to the existing infrastructure at junctions, signalling improvements and carriageway alterations.

8.36 No infrastructure improvements would be required in relation to clean water supply. However surface water run-off would require the provision of new storage ponds with regards to catchment areas. Major flood attenuation measures will be required, subject to detailed modelling, to manage surface water run-off and flows into the Marston Brook and Sandyford Brook. Gas infrastructure will not generally require upgrading other than standard connections into the system. However the employment land north of Primepoint 14 and west of the A34 will require re-reinforcement. Improvements will also be needed to the electricity supply network together with a new major electricity sub-station for new housing development. Further details are set out in the Stafford Borough Infrastructure Strategy.

8 Policies

Development North of Stafford Town



Core Policy 5

West of Stafford

Within the area identified West of Stafford a sustainable, well designed mixed use development will be delivered by 2031. Any application for development on a part or the whole of this area must be preceded by, and consistent with, a comprehensive Master Plan for West of Stafford including building Design Statements which have been agreed by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document. Subject to a viability assessment the development must deliver the following key requirements:

- Phased delivery of up to 2,200 new homes with 30% being affordable housing in a mix of housing types, tenures, sizes and styles and a greater proportion will be 2 and 3 bedroomed properties;
- Significant provision to meet the needs of an ageing population through new extra care and specialist housing provision close to Stafford town centre;
- The development takes place on a 'neighbourhood' approach with the provision of a mix of uses including local retail facilities, social and physical infrastructure, a primary school, a library service, health facilities and public open space;
- At least 7 hectares of new employment land with comprehensive links to existing and new housing development areas;
- Proposals relate to the whole Strategic Development Location or if less do not in any way prejudice implementation of the whole development;
- A comprehensive flood management scheme is essential to implement development at the West of Stafford Strategic Development Location including off-site measures to alleviate flooding and surface water management on Doxey Brook;
- The development should be based on maximising opportunities to use sustainable construction methods;
- The development should maximise on-site renewable or low carbon energy production including associated infrastructure to facilitate site-wide renewable energy solutions
- Existing hedgerows and tree lines to be retained and enhanced to support the provision of a network of green infrastructure including natural grasslands and wetlands, play areas, green corridors allowing wildlife movement and access to open space together with necessary measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of development on the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation including Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace;
- An access and transport strategy is developed for the Strategic Development Location that maximises accessibility by non-car transport modes to Stafford town centre through walking and cycling connections including retention of the disused railway line, nearby existing and new employment areas, identifies access points to the site and between the site and the existing settlement, identifies construction access arrangements that do not disrupt existing residents and improvements to transport capacity along the A518 Newport Road and its roundabout;
- Support delivery of the Western Access Improvement Scheme and associated transport improvements from Martin Drive to Doxey Road;
- Measure to conserve and enhance historic environment assets including the setting of Stafford Castle and sight lines to St Mary's Church in Stafford town centre;
- Protect nature conservation interests including Doxey Brook (Biodiversity Alert Site) and Doxey Marshes SSSI
- A clear hierarchy of roads (from distributor to home zones) producing discernable and distinctive neighbourhoods integrated and linked to existing areas.

A development tariff approach will be applied to all planning applications within the West of Stafford Strategic Development Location. The tariff will contribute towards the strategic infrastructure required to achieve a comprehensive sustainable development. Details of the development tariff will be set out in a future Developer Contributions SPD.

8 Policies

Question 9

Do you think that Land west of Stafford is a suitable and sustainable location? Please could you give us your reasons?

Do you agree with the infrastructure requirements we have outlined for Land west of Stafford? Have we missed anything?

Location

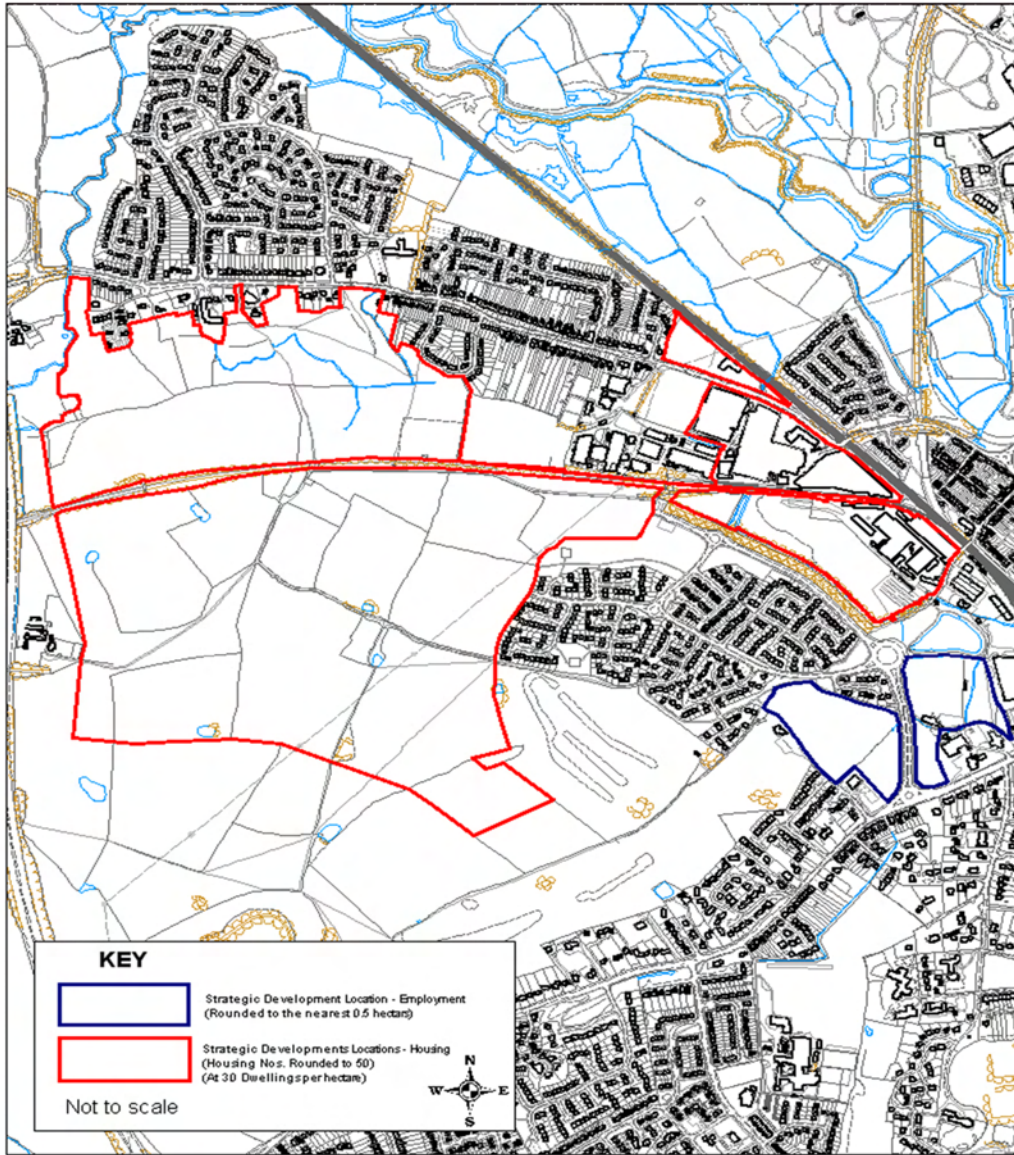
8.37 Development to the west of Stafford is close to Stafford town centre comprising of housing sites delivering 2,200 new homes and employment sites delivering 7 hectares. The West of Stafford area is considered to be the most sustainable due to the proximity of current infrastructure including Stafford town centre and has reasonable public transport services. A final decision on the identification of this Strategic Development Location will take place after this consultation exercise, taking into account responses received.

Issues

8.38 There are opportunities for trips to be made by walking and cycling into Stafford town centre as well as between the Doxey and Castletown areas. A primary school and GP surgery are within 20-30 minutes walking distance of the area although the King Edwards secondary school is further away and as such would rely on public transport or the private car. There is the potential for linked trips by public transport into other areas of Stafford and further afield. Reinforcement to the water supply network will be required together with significant waste water infrastructure investment and provision of a local electricity sub-station.

8.39 Development west of Stafford will need the Western Access Improvement Scheme to be delivered between Martin Drive and Doxey Road with associated junction improvements due to the lack of local road network connections. Funding measures to prioritise public transport or support other smarter travel choices will need to be provided through development contributions as well as junction improvements along Tenterbanks and Newport Road. Further details are set out in the Stafford Borough Infrastructure Strategy.

Development to the West of Stafford



8 Policies

Core Policy 6

East of Stafford

Within the area identified East of Stafford a sustainable, well designed mixed use development will be delivered by 2031. Any application for development on a part or the whole of this area must be preceded by, and consistent with, a comprehensive Master Plan for East of Stafford including building Design Statements which have been agreed by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document. Subject to a viability assessment the development must deliver the following key requirements:

- Phased delivery of up to 600 new homes, subject to provision of the Eastern Access Improvement Scheme, in a mix of housing types, tenures, sizes and styles with 30% being affordable housing in a mix of housing types, tenures, sizes and styles and a greater proportion will be 2 and 3 bedroomed properties;
- Provision to meet the needs of an ageing population through new extra care and specialist housing;
- The development takes place on a 'neighbourhood' approach with the provision of a mix of uses including local retail facilities, social and physical infrastructure (including provision to support new facilities at existing primary and secondary schools), health facilities and public open space;
- At least 20 hectares of new employment land at Beacon Hill with comprehensive links to existing and new housing development areas;
- Proposals relate to the whole Strategic Development Location or if less do not in any way prejudice implementation of the whole development;
- A comprehensive flood management scheme is essential to implement development at the East of Stafford Strategic Development Location including off-site measures to alleviate flooding and surface water management on the River Sow;
- The development should be based on maximising opportunities to use sustainable construction methods;
- The development should maximise on-site renewable or low carbon energy production including associated infrastructure to facilitate site-wide renewable energy solutions
- Existing hedgerows and tree lines to be retained and enhanced to support the provision of a network of green infrastructure including natural grasslands and woodlands, play areas, green corridors allowing wildlife movement and access to open space together with necessary measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of development on the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation including Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace;
- An access and transport strategy is developed for the Strategic Development Location that maximises accessibility by non-car transport modes to Stafford town centre through walking and cycling connections, nearby existing and new employment areas, identifies access points to the site and between the site and the existing settlement, identifies construction access arrangements that do not disrupt existing residents and improvements to transport capacity along the A518 Weston Road in the vicinity of the University roundabout and along the Tixall Road;
- Delivery of the Eastern Access Improvement Scheme and associated transport improvements from Weston Road to St Thomas' Lane;
- Measure to conserve and enhance historic environment assets including St Thomas' Priory and landscapes such as Blackheath Covert;
- Protect nature conservation interests including Kingston Covert SBI;
- A clear hierarchy of roads (from distributor to home zones) producing discernable and distinctive neighbourhoods integrated and linked to existing areas.

A development tariff approach will be applied to all planning applications within the East of Stafford Strategic Development Location. The tariff will contribute towards the strategic infrastructure required to achieve a comprehensive sustainable development. Details of the development tariff will be set out in a future Developer Contributions SPD.

Question 10

Do you think that Land east of Stafford is a suitable and sustainable location? Please could you give use your reasons?

Do you agree with the infrastructure requirements we have outlined for Land east of Stafford? Have we missed anything?

Location

8.40 Development to the east of Stafford are located between the A513 and the A518 comprising of housing sites delivering 600 new homes and one employment site delivering 20 hectares. A final decision on the identification of this Strategic Development Location will take place after this consultation exercise, taking into account responses received.

Issues

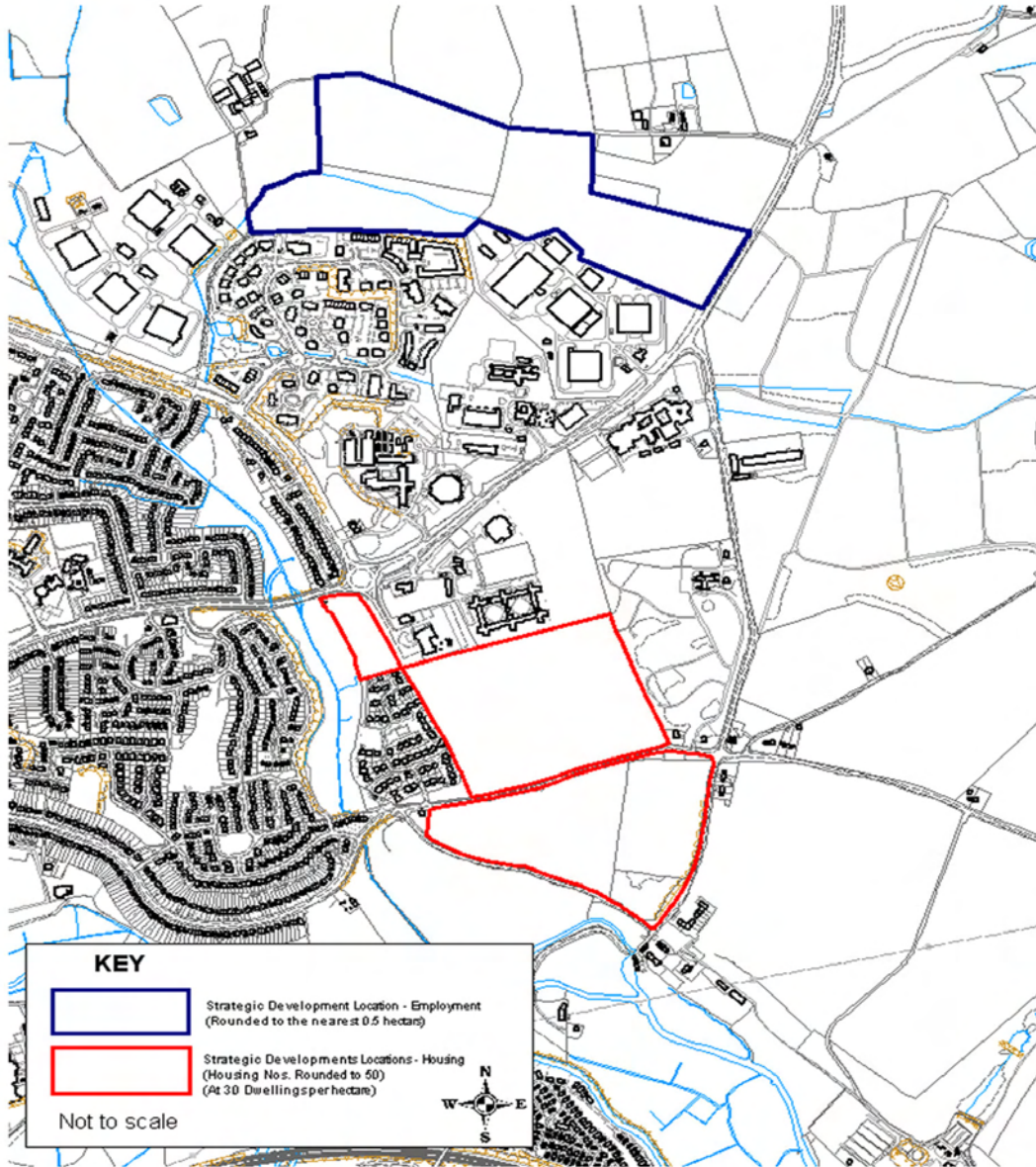
8.41 The East of Stafford area is covered by a limited public transport service although there are opportunities for walking and cycling connections as the area is close to Stafford. A primary school is within 20-30 minutes walking distance of the area although the GP surgery and a secondary school are further away and as such would rely on public transport or the private car. There is the potential for linked trips by public transport into other areas of Stafford and further afield. The proposed new employment area is adjacent to the A518 and access will therefore have an impact on the junctions along the A518 towards Stafford town centre.

8.42 Development to the east of Stafford will require a new waste water pumping station to be funded by developers. Reinforcement to the water supply network will be required together with provision of a local electricity sub-station. The East of Stafford area is within 3 kilometres of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation which will require mitigation measures to be provided demonstrating the potential impacts have been fully addressed.

8.43 Development in the East of Stafford area will need the Eastern Access Improvement Scheme to be delivered between Weston Road (A518) at its junction with A513 at Kingston Hill to the north and St Thomas' Lane linking to Milford Road (A513) to the south. An indicative route for a proposed Eastern Access Improvement Scheme is safeguarded in the Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 but no detailed alignment is provided. Funding measures to prioritise public transport or support other smarter travel choices will need to be provided through development contributions as well as the Eastern Access Improvement Scheme. Further details are set out in the Stafford Borough Infrastructure Strategy.

8 Policies

Development to the East of Stafford



8.2 Stone

Core Policy 7

Stone Town

The Council will seek to enhance the role of Stone as a market town by increasing both its range and quality of services and facilities. This will be achieved through the following actions:

Housing

Continue to meet the housing requirements for Stone Town by:

- Increasing the range and type of housing available including a greater number of semi-detached and terraced properties;
- Providing a range of development locations for new homes over the Plan period to 2031 including for affordable housing. This will include new housing development at the following Strategic Development Location deferred to later in the Plan period (final decision to be taken following this consultation):
 - West of Stone in the longer term beyond 2021
- Sites within the urban area of Stone town will have good accessibility to public transport, services and facilities;
- The Strategic Development Location adjacent to Stone's urban area will minimise the impact on surrounding landscapes, be fully accessible by public transport with facilities to encourage walking and cycling;
- increasing and enhancing the provision of educational, health and community facilities to provide for increased growth including for the elderly population.

Open Space, Sport & Recreation

- Ensure that there is adequate provision of open space, sport and recreational facilities by addressing the following requirements identified in the local evidence base through the PPG17 Assessment. New development will provide high quality facilities by ensuring:
 - Increased and high quality of allotment provision in the town;
 - A floodlit Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) is provided;
 - Improved quality of play areas, especially in the southern part of Stone;
 - Increased size of green spaces, apart from Westbridge Park and Stone Meadows;
 - High quality multi-sport courts;
 - Adequate range of facilities for teenagers.

Employment

Create employment growth and promote economic diversification in Stone by:

- Supporting the continued retention and growth of existing public and private sector businesses as well as targeting new businesses through the provision of a range of business premises, support and advice;
- Providing opportunities for new enterprises and businesses by allocating new employment sites with good transport links as well as support and facilities for new start-up businesses. (A final decision to be taken following this consultation). The Strategic Development Location for a new employment site is:
 - South of Stone Business Park

8 Policies

Stone Town Centre

Strengthen Stone town centre's role as a Market Town by:

- Encouraging the development and expansion of the town centre to provide a vibrant place where people can meet, shop, eat and spend leisure time in a safe and pleasant environment including provision of mixed use development at Westbridge Park;
- Provide for 1,400 square metres of new convenience (food) retailing and 2,200 square metres of new comparison (non-food) retailing at Stone town centre;
- Increase the levels of office space and commercial premises within Stone town centre;
- Enhancing different uses in the primary shopping area as well as protecting and enhancing its distinctiveness, vitality and viability through a greater diversity of independent retailers;
- Improving and strengthening both the range and diversity of educational, health, cultural and community services and facilities in the town;
- Facilitating improvements to the streetscape and the public realm through the enhancement of public spaces that are locally distinctive and strengthen local identity;
- Ensuring that new development around the railway station is reserved for employment uses.

Transport and Access

Strengthen Stone's role as a key transport hub in Stafford Borough by:

- Improving accessibility to Stone town centre, particularly by public transport, from the surrounding villages through better bus services with increased service levels, frequency and punctuality of services;
- Reducing the levels of traffic congestion on A34 at Walton and the A520 road through the town centre including improvements in traffic management and public transport;
- Extending the existing and creating new cycle and walking paths, as an integral part of new developments;
- Improving access to the rail station and secure appropriate levels of parking for both cars and bicycles;
- Ensuring that new developments with significant transport implications are capable of providing safe and convenient access by foot, cycle, public and private transport addressing the access needs of all, including those with disabilities.

Environment

Promote Stone as a tourist destination with its unique architectural character and heritage by:

- Conserving and enhancing the character of Stone town centre, its buildings, streets and rich heritage;
- Supporting canal based regeneration initiatives in Stone town centre that enhance the context and character of the canal as a focal point and tourist attraction;
- Provision of new Green Infrastructure (GI) for Stone Town such as the creation of a Stone canal and riverside park as well as local area schemes identified in the GI Strategy;
- Increasing tourist opportunities for visitors through additional high quality accommodation, promoting links with the surrounding countryside via the Trent and Mersey canal, the River Trent and by facilitating the development of innovative tourist attractions such as the Stone Food and Drink Festival;
- Improving access to the surrounding countryside by means other than the private car such as public transport, walking and cycling.

Question 11

Do you agree with the Development Strategy for Stone? Do you agree with the infrastructure requirements for Stone?

Policies 8

8.44 Stone is the second largest settlement in the Borough and over the plan period a significant level of development will be concentrated in the town as it is a sustainable location with services and facilities, job opportunities and transport links. The town acts as a key service centre for the surrounding rural hinterland.

Housing

8.45 The most up-to-date information about how many houses have been built in Stone and the number of planning permissions given for new homes is set out in the Council's annual publication called [Land for New Homes: Housing Monitor](#). In addition land has been assessed within the Stone residential development boundary to establish how much potential housing land is available, the findings of which are set out in the [Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment \(SHLAA\)](#). However it is evident from these documents that there is insufficient land available to provide significant new housing at Stone and therefore Greenfield locations on the edge of the town as required for new housing development.

8.46 Analysis of the population information for Stone shows that the over 65 year olds will increasingly be a significant group. However an element of family housing will still be required to provide for local needs.

8.47 Recent analysis of the Borough's housing markets including for Stone town through the West Midlands North Housing Market Area (HMA) Assessment indicates that there has been strong house price growth in the town which has led to affordability problems. Stone town and environs cover the northern parts of Stafford Borough including southern fringes of Stoke-on-Trent. The overall income to house price ratio is 1:4.89, which is lower than Stafford town. The mean house price in Stone and environs of £151,333 is less than that of Stafford Town at £162,685. In terms of housing type, Stone and environs has a significant oversupply of detached properties to the detriment of mid sized units such as semi-detached properties and terraced housing. There is also a pressing need for more affordable housing to meet current and future demand. The tenure is similar to Stafford Town with the majority being owner occupiers.

8.48 New housing development at Stone will take place later in the Plan period due to existing commitments and the recent rate of growth. To the north of the town is the North Staffordshire Green Belt. Significant development will not affect the Green Belt or its boundaries.

Employment

8.49 Stone has a number of significant employers providing jobs for hundreds of people. In recent years new employment development has taken place at Stone, in particular at Stone Business Park. However there is also evidence of existing employment sites being redeveloped for housing.

8.50 The Council has completed an Employment Land Review which has assessed existing employment areas and established that the majority of these locations should be retained in order to sustain a balanced future community. The potential supply of employment land, together with a highly skilled workforce, creates the opportunity for attracting new employers to the town. Within Stone there is over 12 hectares of employment land available comprising of 'good quality employment sites', situated within or adjacent to an established business park close to two major 'A' roads and the M6 motorway. Further employment land is also available relatively close to Stone at the former Meaford Power Station site.

Historic Environment

8.51 A number of historic assets, such as St Michael's & St Wulfrad's Church, are important to Stone particularly within the Stone Town Centre Conservation Area, which has recently been amended. With an increased emphasis for new development in the town centre, the loss of character and sight lines between historic assets could increase, but this should be avoided.

Stone Town Centre

8.52 Stone is the second largest settlement, as a non strategic centre, within the Borough and meets local needs for convenience shopping, local service and facility provision and day-to-day comparison shopping.

8 Policies

8.53 Stone town centre plays an important role in supporting local economic growth and encouraging further investment for both Stone and its surrounding hinterland. The town has a rich and varied history which is reflected in its building and street layout. Therefore conservation issues such as architectural and historic character of the town centre are major considerations in any development.

8.54 The success of Stone town centre is due to the diverse range of complementary mixed use developments including leisure, retail, residential, employment and recreational use enabling the town centre to appeal to a wide range of age and social groups.

8.55 Of particular importance has been the establishment of a reputation as a niche market for fine food and drink, reflected in the large numbers of jobs in the restaurant and hospitality sectors within the town centre offering diverse choice of both local and international cuisine. Local food production and direct sales at farmers markets and weekly town markets for local and speciality produce adds to local distinctiveness. Throughout the year Stone also hosts various themed Markets such as the French, European and World Markets reaching its highlight in October with the highly successful Stone Food & Drink Festival. These initiatives build upon the recent £1 million Stone Market Town Initiative and the leisure and food and drink offer which Stone provides.

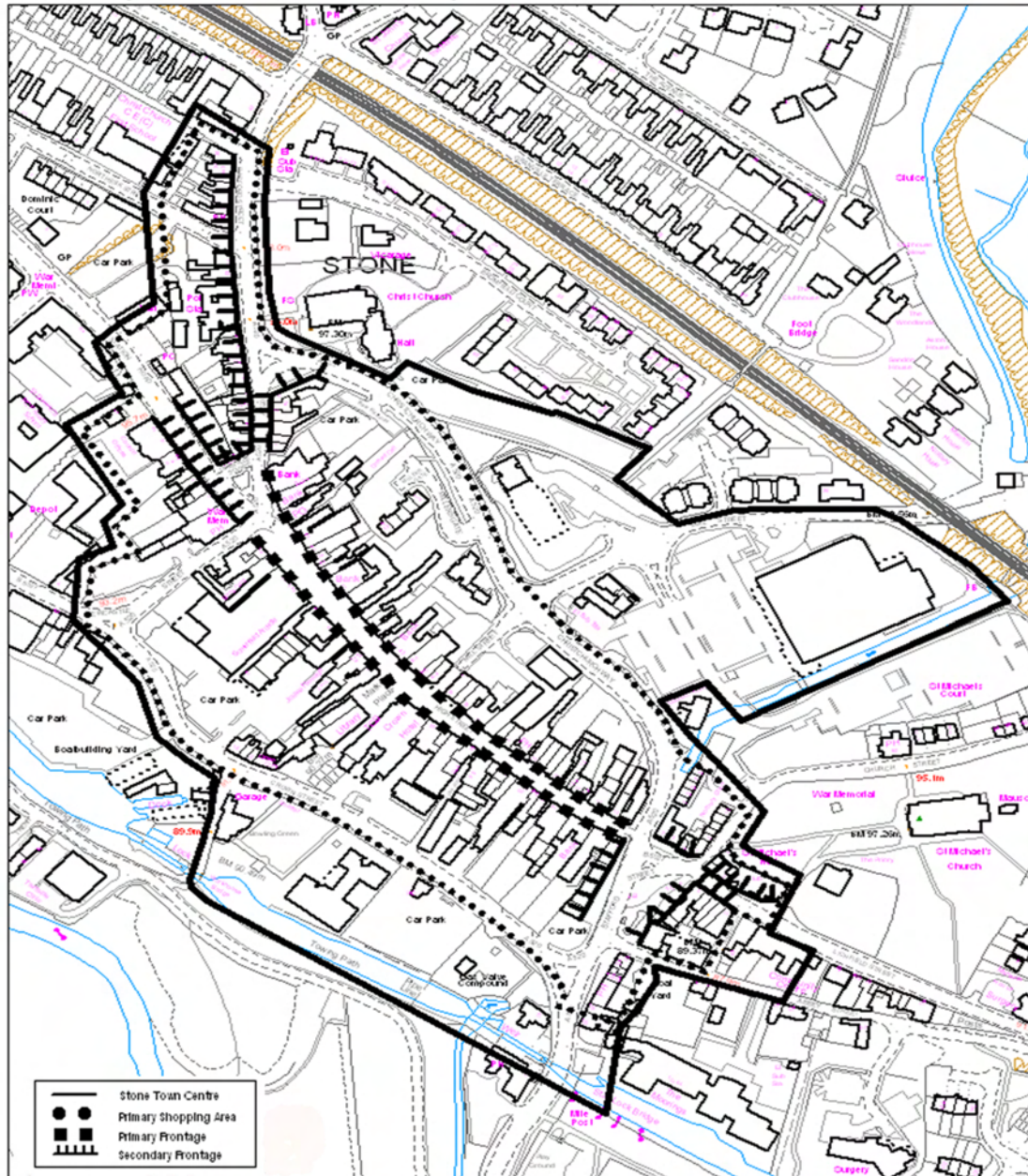
8.56 There have been a number of ongoing regeneration projects in Stone including proposals for a new multi-use community facility, which is currently at a feasibility stage, and physical improvements along the Trent and Mersey canal between Stone and Barlaston. The canal works programme is part of the Stone Market Town Initiative that will facilitate development opportunities within Stone. Of particular importance is the restoration of the listed Malthouse and the Crown Street Wharf site. National planning policy in [Planning Policy Statement 4](#) requires Development Plans to identify a town centre boundary and a primary shopping area as well as primary and secondary shopping frontages.

8.57 In order to keep Stone attractive to shoppers, businesses and tourists alike, the town centre must create an attractive sense of place, through the implementation of high quality urban design schemes, an attractive public realm and a streetscape that will attract visitors and encourage inward investment. A key principle is for town centre developments to provide high quality, well designed buildings, parks and public spaces which are capable of being used by all age groups and are safe, accessible, durable and fit for purpose. A key feature in creating a sense of place in Stone town centre is the varied and diverse historic environment, which reflects the town's development over a period of time and must be protected and conserved for the future. A number of historic assets are important to Stone particularly within the Stone Town Centre Conservation Area.

8.58 The most important recreational amenity areas for the town centre is the River Trent corridor including the much used Trent and Mersey Canal, which traverses the town centre boundary. It provides an excellent leisure facility for both canal boaters and for walkers and cyclists along the towpath. Furthermore, Westbridge Park also provides a valuable recreational space for indoor and outdoor events throughout the year.

8.59 A range of shops and other services are available in the town centre which acts as both a local service centre and a visitor destination. However the success of the town centre results in some parking problems with both the lack of sufficient spaces and the location of existing car parks creating town centre congestion.

Stone Town Centre Boundaries



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Question 12

Do you agree with the Stone Town Centre boundaries identified?

8 Policies

Transport

8.60 Over recent years traffic movements on principal routes bisecting Stone have increased pressure on the road network during peak periods. Furthermore incidents on the A34 road close to Stone exacerbate pressures on the local transport network. The Staffordshire County Council [Local Transport Plan](#) provides a range of solutions for consideration in terms of significant new development in Stone, including public transport and traffic management initiatives. Discussions with key stakeholders have suggested that the greatest pressures are on the A34 at the Walton and Stone Business Park roundabouts as well as through the centre of Stone on the A520 road. As a result of new development at Stone over the Plan period it will be necessary to implement transport management schemes and consider new roads to reduce traffic pressures.

8.61 The completion of the Trent Valley Twin Tracking Programme between Tamworth and Armitage has facilitated changes to timetables on the Trent Valley railway line with the Crewe to London Euston service stopping at a re-opened Stone station. Minor station improvements by the operator are anticipated, which could have the effect of increasing pressure for limited new housing development on brownfield land currently used for employment close to the rail station.

8.62 Although significant numbers of people work in Stone there is a high degree of in and out commuting which adds pressure to the transport infrastructure. Travel to work patterns indicate that only a minority of journeys are made by public transport, walking and cycling with the majority made by private car. The location of development and the way that development is carried out is very important in helping to achieve these priorities and in reducing the need to travel.

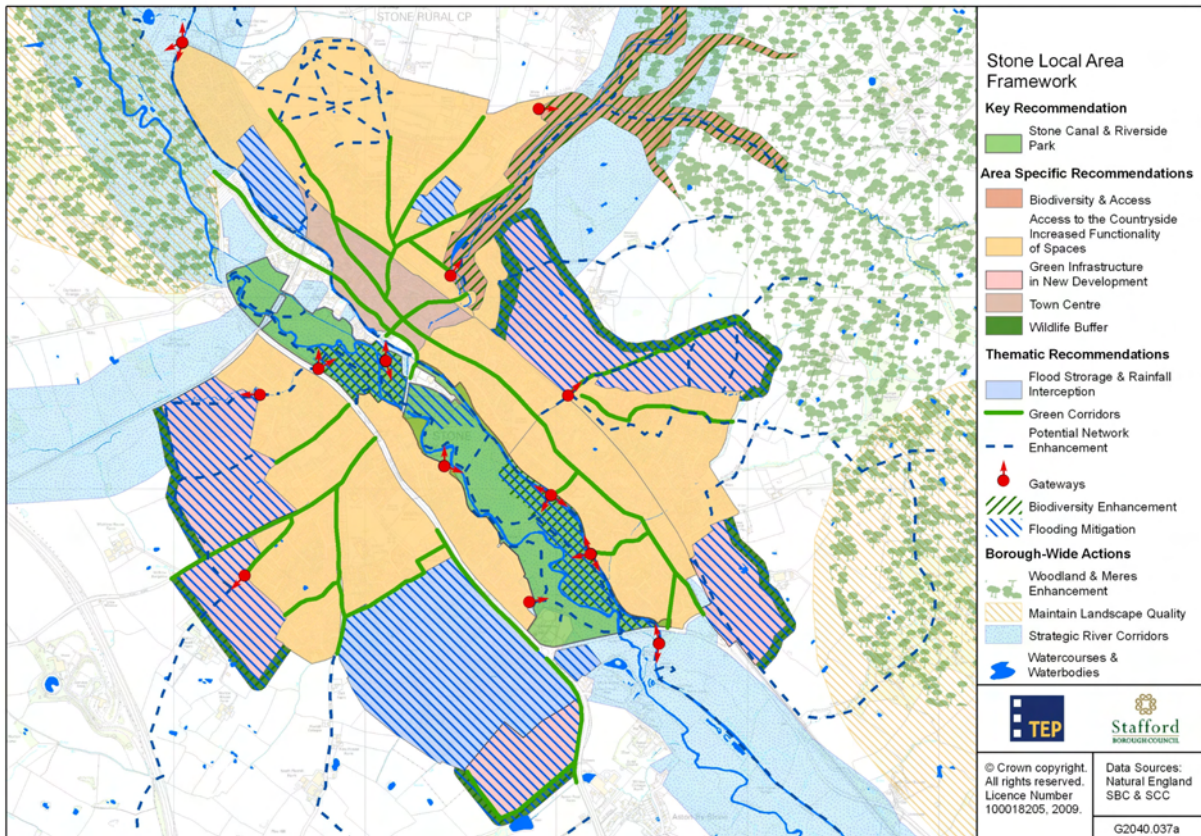
Green Infrastructure

8.63 As part of the Green Infrastructure (GI) strategy the key recommendation for Stone is the creation of a canal and riverside park alongside the River Trent, the Trent and Mersey Canal and the associated floodplain. The river corridors through the town will be important to provide increased recreational provision and walking / cycling links to other parts of Stone Town as well as links to the open countryside, facilitating improvement of biodiversity, accessibility, flood protection, provide for better quality leisure facilities, and create tourism opportunities. Other specific recommendations are illustrated in the map below with further details in the Stafford Borough Green Infrastructure Strategy. Furthermore the framework stresses the importance of investment in GI to support biodiversity and landscape in the context of future development.

8.64 As part of proposed new housing development on the edge of Stone, green infrastructure will be a key element for future local communities including the provision of links such as walking and cycling routes. The provision of open space, sport and recreation for Stone will be achieved through existing facilities being improved and expanded to provide for future requirements as well as new facilities developed alongside new development.

8.65 The Staffordshire Wildlife Trust undertook an ecological survey for areas on the edge of Stone town which identified eight locations requiring further protected species surveys. Furthermore the survey identified six sites that have habitats possibly being used by protected species or Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species which should be retained and enhanced, with habitat creation to replace any losses arising from development. Habitat surveys will be required for one site at Stone.

Green Infrastructure Map for Stone Town



Open Space, Sport & Recreation

8.66 The Borough Council's [PPG17 Assessment and Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy](#) covers indoor and outdoor sports facilities, parks and greenspace, playing pitches and children's play provision including the provision of local standards for accessibility, quantity and quality provision for a range of green space.

8.67 New housing development in Stone will enable the Borough Council to provide increased quantity and better quality provision for open space, sports and recreation facilities for both future and current residents in Stone Town. Such facilities will enable the Borough's residents to have increased participation in sporting activities, which will improve their health and well-being as well as reducing obesity.

8.68 Studies produced as part of the Stone Market Town Initiative have stressed the importance of continued investment in services and infrastructure to support existing and future population needs. The Trent Corridor provides an opportunity to deliver valuable open space, sport and leisure facilities that will help link the communities either side of the A34, as well as the newly developed areas to the north of the town centre. There is scope for the Borough Council and other landowners in the Trent Corridor to use their assets to improve biodiversity, increase accessibility, improve flood protection, provide better quality leisure facilities, and create tourism opportunities. In order to achieve this, it will be necessary to accept limited development of areas with lower flood risk within the Trent Corridor to generate the capital to fund such improved community infrastructure.

Flood Risk

8.69 The [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Stafford Borough](#) was completed and published in February 2008 which identified the extent of the floodplain affecting the urban area of Stone. No broad locations for potential new development have been identified in floodplain areas as alternative locations are available.

8 Policies

However a number of locations identified in Stone are adjacent to the floodplain and within the River Trent corridor. National planning policy in [Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk](#) does not support the identification of significant new development in floodplain areas if possible. However these floodplain areas do have a significant role to contribute in terms of green infrastructure. No new development should take place on low-lying land adjacent to the River Trent due to water resource implications.

Historic Environment

8.70 A number of historic assets are important to Stone particularly within the Stone Town Centre Conservation Area. The Historic Environment Character Assessment indicates that development to the east is likely to have a greatest impact on the historic environment of Stone. The landscape parks of Darlaston Hall and Meaford Hall represent surviving 18th / 19th century landscapes of planned enclosure and water meadow features. The Moddershall Valley is particularly sensitive to change where an early historic landscape is associated with the Listed watermills and associated structures which line the river. Another area where there is likely to be a significant impact is the River Trent Valley, where further water meadows features survive and where there is a high potential for archaeological remains to survive beneath the alluvium. The zones identified as having the least impact upon the historic environment mostly lie to the west of the town.

Infrastructure

8.71 Major investment is required to support the planned growth at Stone town including education, health, transport, water supply and other social and physical infrastructure services to be identified and delivered through detailed phasing to ensure that locations have the capacity to support further development.

8.72 Stone town centre has benefited from schemes to improve surface water run off and separation of foul water. An important consideration in terms of new residential development at Stone will be impacts on the current sewerage system, which reaches capacity during storm events due to the combination of foul water and surface water run off within the existing system. New development to the west of Stone will be required to increase storage capacity at Westbridge Park.

8.73 To solve this issue Severn Trent Water advise that prior to further residential development around Stone it will be necessary to increase the storage capacity within the sewerage system at Westbridge Park. All new development should provide Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), with foul water storage as well as foul water and surface water run off kept separate to minimise capacity pressures during storm events in the future. However the pumping station and treatment works capacity at Stone are not considered to be a constraint on new development.

8.74 Information from Severn Trent Water with regards to the clean water distribution is still being clarified. Nevertheless any "on site" mains required for particular developments will need to be met by landowners and developers.

8.75 With regards to community infrastructure provision new development will be required to deliver education contributions to primary, middle and secondary school facilities at Stone. Significant development in the Walton area of the town may require improvement of existing school sites in the locality.

8.76 In terms of hospital facilities the nearest services are at Stafford General Hospital in Stafford and North Staffordshire University Hospital at sites in the City of Stoke on Trent. It has been established that both of these hospital facilities will be sufficient to meet future demands over the Plan period from increased housing development in Stone as well as changes in the demographic character of the Borough. In order to provide a wider range of services to the local community in Stone the two GPs' surgeries are currently working to combine services into a single centrally located health centre including a minor injuries unit.

8.77 Electricity providers have identified that the 11kV infrastructure at Stone is at capacity and therefore new development will require local improvements with further details to be provided by Central Networks. However no major gas infrastructure would be required at Stone, with 'standard' connections to the medium pressure system to be provided by developers.

Stone - Strategic Development Location

Core Policy 8

West and South of Stone

Within the area identified West & South of Stone a sustainable, well designed mixed use development will be delivered by 2031. Any application for development on a part or the whole of this area must be preceded by, and consistent with, a comprehensive Master Plan including building Design Statements for West & South of Stone which has been agreed by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document. Subject to a viability assessment the development must deliver the following key requirements:

- Delivery of up to 500 new homes with 30% being affordable housing in a mix of housing types, tenures, sizes and styles and a greater proportion will be 2 and 3 bedrooed properties;
- Provision to meet the needs of an ageing population through new extra care and specialist housing;
- Integration with the social and physical infrastructure of the existing area and its landscape (including provision for new facilities at Manor Hill primary school);
- At least 18 hectares of new employment land south of Stone Business Park with comprehensive links for a range of transport modes to housing development areas;
- The development should maximise on-site renewable or low carbon energy production including associated infrastructure to facilitate site-wide renewable energy solutions;
- Measure to alleviate flooding and surface water management on the site and reduce associated implications for the River Trent valley corridor;
- Provision of a network of green infrastructure including play areas, green corridors allowing wildlife movement and access to open space together with necessary measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of development on the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation including Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace;
- Protect nature conservation interests including the Site of Biological Importance;
- Improvements to transport capacity along the A34 in the vicinity of the Walton roundabout as well as deliver local transport network measures;
- Measures to improve accessibility by non-car transport modes to Stone town centre through walking and cycling connections.

A development tariff approach will be applied to all planning applications within the West & South of Stone's Strategic Development Location. The tariff will contribute towards the strategic infrastructure required to achieve a comprehensive sustainable development. Details of the development tariff will be set out in a future Developer Contributions SPD.

Question 13

Do you think that Land west and south of Stone is a suitable and sustainable location? Please could you give use your reasons?

Do you agree with the infrastructure requirements we have outlined for Land west and south of Stone? Have we missed anything?

Location

8.78 Development to the west & south of Stone comprising of a housing site delivering 500 new homes and an employment site delivering 18 hectares. A final decision on the identification of this Strategic Development Location will take place after this consultation exercise, taking into account responses received. The west & south of Stone area is accessible to a number of services and facilities in Stone with opportunities to make trips

8 Policies

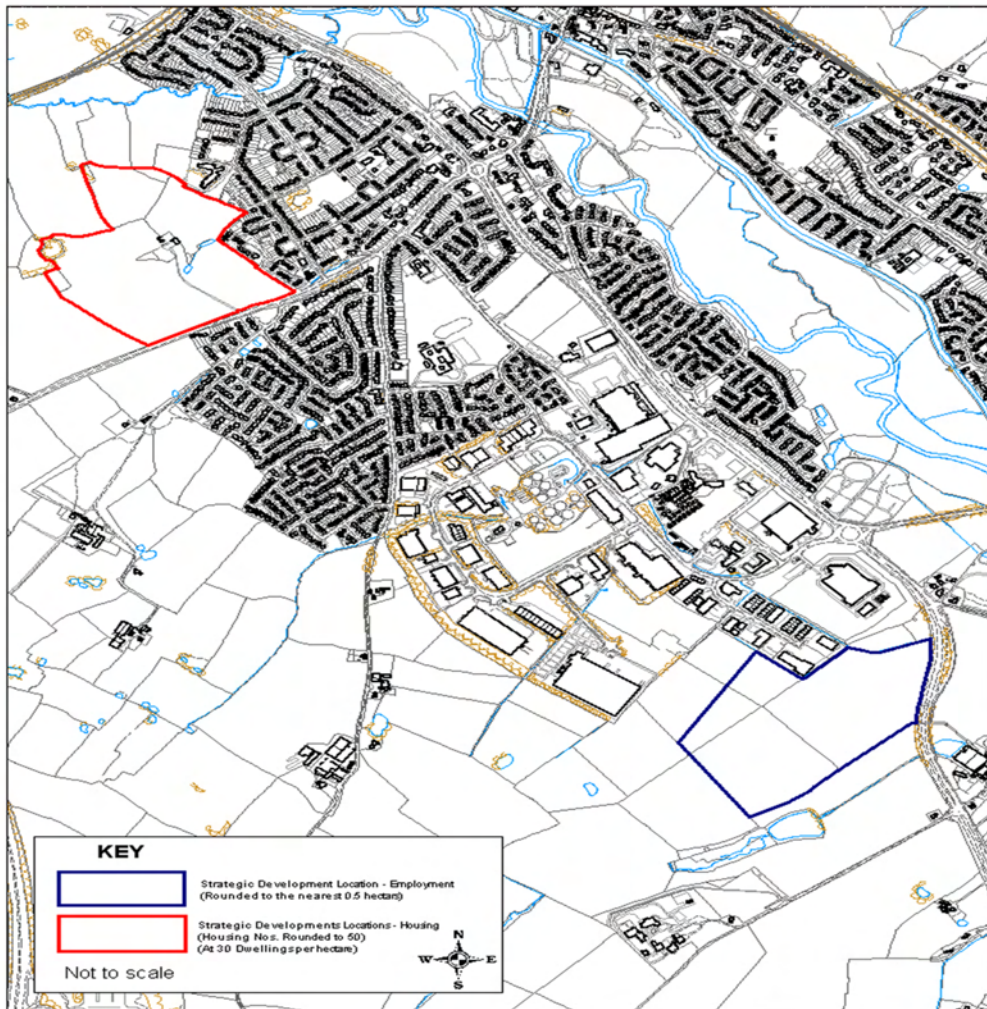
by walking and cycling. A primary school and GP surgery are within 20-30 minutes walking distance of the area although Alleynes secondary school is further away and as such may rely on public transport or the private car. There are good links to Stafford and the City of Stoke on Trent by public transport.

Issues

8.79 Local network improvements will be required for new development as the electricity supply for Stone is a constraint. Furthermore there may be requirements for clean water supply infrastructure improvements to take place. However gas supply and waste water treatment are not significant constraints. Reinforcement to the water supply network will be required together with significant waste water infrastructure investment and provision of a local electricity sub-station. New housing development west of Stone, next to the B5026 Eccleshall Road, would require enhancement together with the A34 roundabout junction.

8.80 Future employment development at Stone will take place south of the Stone Business Park adjacent to the A34 corridor which can occur through local highway improvements and enhancement of the A34 / A51 roundabout but without the need for significant infrastructure. Further details are set out in the Stafford Borough Infrastructure Strategy.

Development to the West and South of Stone



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8 Policies

8.3 Areas outside Stafford and Stone

Core Policy 9

Areas Outside Stafford and Stone

Areas outside of Stafford & Stone will be sustained through the provision of new housing and employment developments at an appropriate scale and type enabling an enhanced role for service centres and meeting the diverse needs of the rural hinterland.

New housing development may take place within existing Residential Development Boundaries in the settlements listed below, including provision for affordable housing. Where there is demonstrated local need rural exception sites outside of existing Residential Development Boundaries will also be encouraged to deliver affordable homes.

| Settlements | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Adbaston | Aston by Stone | Barlaston** | Barlaston Park** |
| Blythe Bridge*** | Bradley | Brocton & Brocton A34* | Church Eaton |
| Clayton*** | Cotes Heath* | Creswell | Croxton |
| Derrington | Eccleshall | Fulford** | Gnosall |
| Great Bridgeford | Great Haywood | Haughton | Hilderstone* |
| Hixon | Hopton | Hyde Lea | Little Haywood & Colwich |
| Meir Heath & Rough Close*** | Milford* | Milwich | Norbury |
| Oulton** | Ranton | Salt | Seighford |
| Swynnerton** | Tittensor** | Trentham / Dairyfields** | Weston |
| Woodseaves | Yarnfield* | | |

* Partially surrounded by Green Belt

** Surrounded by Green Belt

*** Surrounded by Green Belt and Major Urban Area outside Stafford Borough's area

The Stafford Borough area will achieve the following:

- Strengthen and enhance its economic role in achieving sustainable communities by:
 - Improving and strengthening local community facilities by increasing the range and quality of services and facilities available as well as maintaining existing local services;
 - Provision of adequate infrastructure including education, health and community facilities to sustain the local communities alongside new developments;

Policies 8

- Maintaining and improving employment opportunities by supporting and strengthening the rural economy through the creation of increased tourism facilities and supporting provisions for existing traditional rural industries;
- Providing for increased employment through the introduction of renewable energy schemes, low impact hi-technology industries in agricultural buildings, small scale development of local enterprises and farm diversification schemes;
- Encouraging the use of home working through the development of advanced, high speed broadband networks;

Delivering a total of up to 12 hectares of new employment land between the following locations (final decision to be taken following this consultation);

- Raleigh Hall Recognised Industrial Estate
- Ladfordfields Recognised Industrial Estate

2. Enhancing the high quality natural environment, rural landscapes and distinctive character by:

- Supporting increased habitat creation and encouraging the creation of Biodiversity Enhancement Zones;
- Strictly controlling development in the countryside to protect, conserve and enhance the environment, whilst ensuring that any new development respects the character and sense of place of settlements and rural areas;
- Improving the quantity and quality of open space, sport and recreation facilities to serve new development;

3. Meeting local housing needs, including for an ageing population, by increasing the level and range of affordable housing provision and types across the Stafford Borough area due to the current lack of provision including rural exception sites.

4. Meeting local transportation needs by delivering the Staffordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan through:

- Supporting the rural transport network that improves accessibility and connectivity contributing to sustainable communities and rural hinterlands;
- Developing walking and cycling networks that conserve and enhance the rural landscape;
- Supporting the implementation of rural traffic management initiatives, including Quiet Lanes, that protect the local character of the area and reduce traffic impacts.

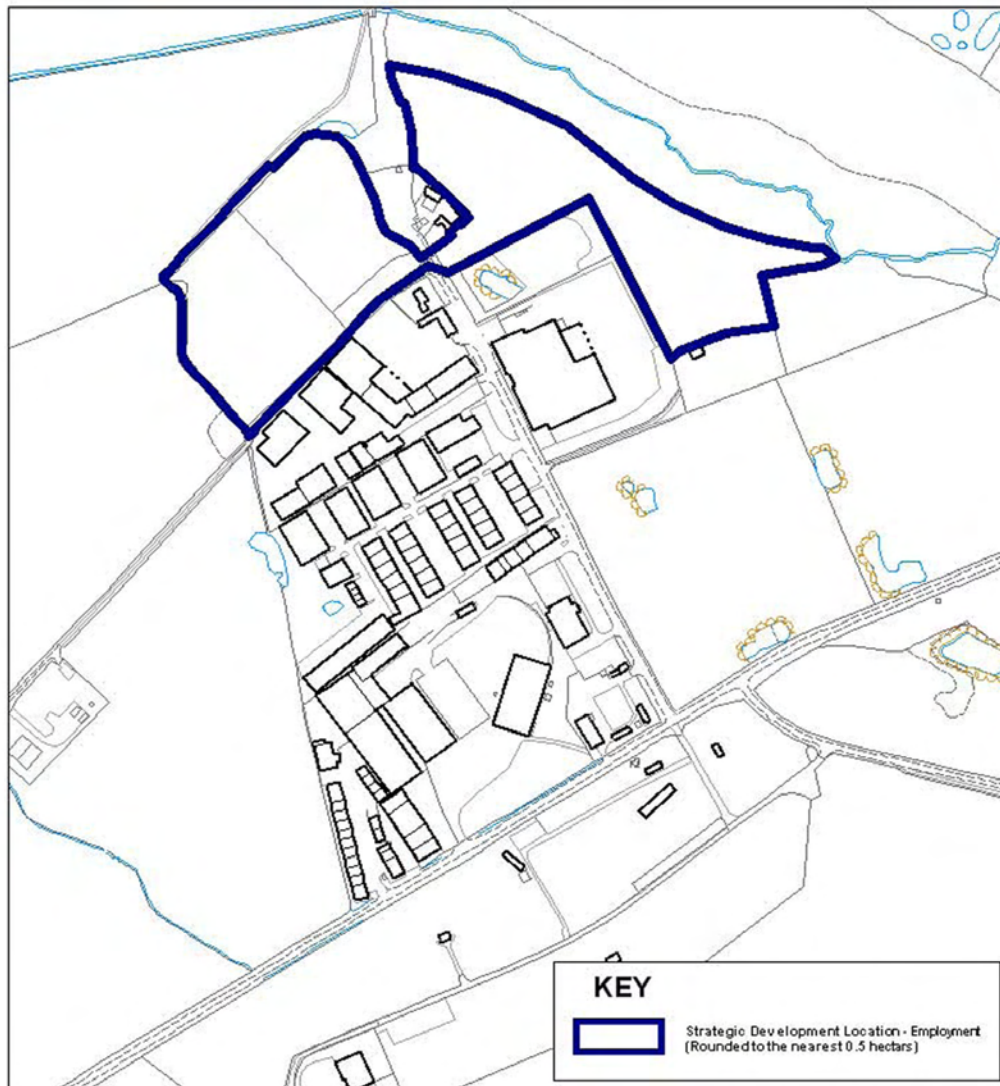
5. Development in the open countryside to meet a proven need for farming, forestry and other local enterprises that have an essential requirement to be located in such locations or for the provision of essential utility or service infrastructure will be supported. The Council will consider removing the restricted occupancy clause on a dwelling where it can be robustly demonstrated; by openly marketing the dwelling to the surrounding area at a price that reflects the limitation of the occupancy condition imposed or that dwelling has been made available to one or more local Registered Social Landlords (RSL) on terms which would allow it to be occupied as an affordable dwelling and that this option has been rejected.

Question 14

Do you agree with the policy approach for Areas outside of Stafford and Stone?

8 Policies

Development to the North of Ladfordfields Recognised Industrial Estate



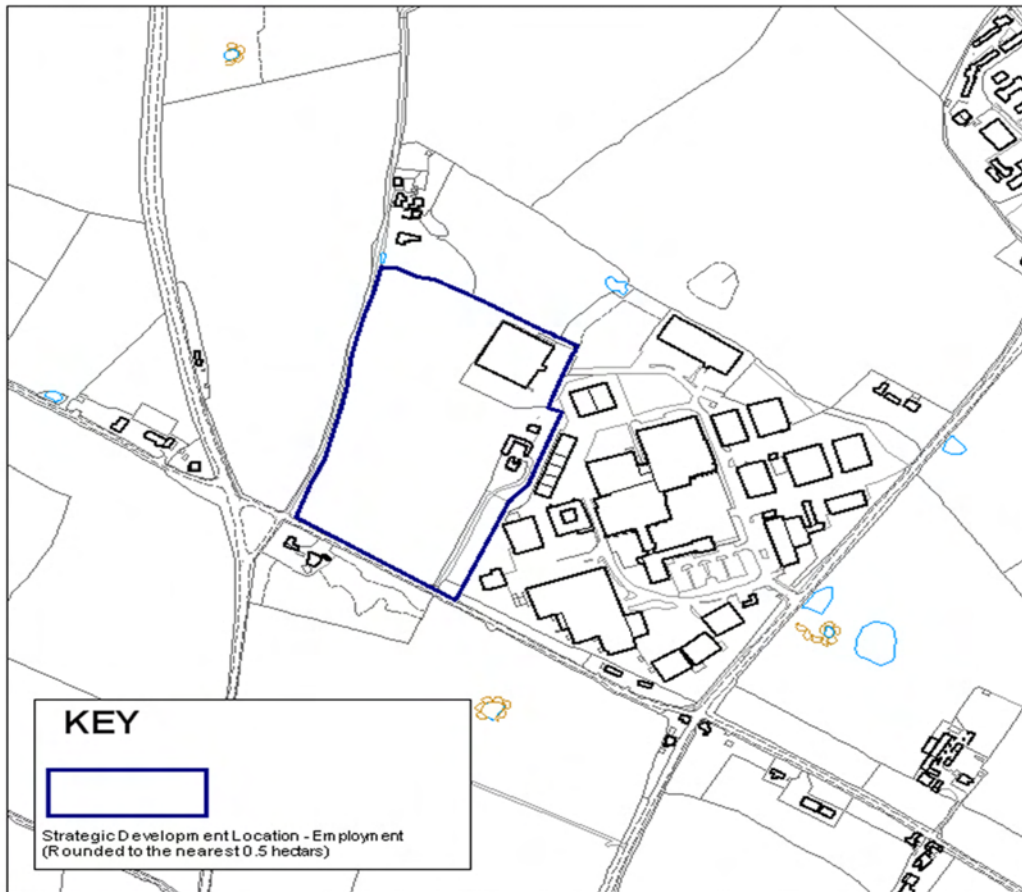
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Question 15

Do you think that Land north of Ladfordfields Recognised Industrial Estate is a suitable and sustainable location? Please could you give use your reasons?

A final decision on the identification of this Strategic Development Location will take place after this consultation exercise, taking into account responses received.

Development to the West of Raleigh Hall Recognised Industrial Estate



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Question 16

Do you think that Land west of Raleigh Hall Recognised Industrial Estate is a suitable and sustainable location? Please could you give use your reasons?

A final decision on the identification of this Strategic Development Location will take place after this consultation exercise, taking into account responses received.

8.81 The countryside is a key asset that makes a significant contribution to the attractiveness of the Borough as a place to live and work. The preservation and enhancement of this rural character and open countryside is a key priority to ensure it is maintained for both present and future Borough communities. However it is also important to appreciate that areas outside of Stafford and Stone have local needs to provide for communities including employment, recreational, community facilities and retail services to offer an alternative of travelling to larger towns as well as affordable housing requirements and small-scale infill development in settlements with defined boundaries. National planning policy in [Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas](#) sets out the approach for rural areas together with [Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development](#) and [Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation](#).

8 Policies

Core Policy 10

New Development in the Countryside

Within the countryside outside of Green Belt areas, development will be permitted where it requires a countryside location and:

- a. Supports the essential needs of agriculture or forestry interests; or
- b. Meets the essential, small scale, and exceptional local development needs of a community which cannot be met within residential development boundaries.

All development in the countryside outside of Green Belt areas should:

- a. Make use of suitable existing buildings or previously developed land before proposing new buildings or development of Greenfield land;
- b. Be well related to an existing farmstead or group of buildings, or be located close to an established settlement;
- c. Be complementary to and not prejudice any viable agricultural operations on a farm and other existing viable uses;
- d. Be sympathetic to the local character of the area and ensures that the impact of the development is reduced to a minimum on its surroundings, including for people living nearby and protects biodiversity through the scale, siting, design, materials, colour, landscape treatment and visual impact;
- e. Be appropriately designed for its purposes;
- f. Not be significantly detrimental to the amenity of the area;
- g. Provide appropriate crime prevention measures including for safety and security; and
- h. Contribute to the vibrancy of the rural area.

In the countryside outside of Green Belt areas, agricultural, forestry and other occupational dwellings will be permitted where there is a proven essential operational need.

Proposals for the conversion or reuse of a building in the countryside will be permitted where:

- a. It give priority to economic uses before residential uses and demonstrated that every attempt has been made to secure a suitable commercial re-use;
- b. It is complementary to and does not prejudice any viable agricultural operations on a farm and other existing viable uses;
- c. The building is structurally sound and is capable of conversion without the need for significant extension, alteration or rebuilding;
- d. The form, bulk and general design of the building is in keeping with its surroundings and the proposal and any associated development will not harm the character of the countryside and the landscape setting;
- e. The building is well related to an existing settlement and has access to local services and / or is close to a regular public transport service to a town or larger village;
- f. It will not damage the fabric or character of any traditional building and, in the case of a Listed Building, the proposal will not damage the architectural or historic merit of the building or its setting;

Policies 8

g. The building is large enough to be converted without the need for additional buildings, substantial new extensions or significant alteration.

Permitted development rights may be removed from dwellings.

Question 17

Do you agree with the contents of the New Development in the Countryside policy?

8.82 National planning policy in [Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas](#) states that the construction of new rural houses to meet identified needs such as agricultural, forestry or other workers who have to live at or in the immediate vicinity of their place of work will be subject to the criteria in Annex A. Restrictive occupancy conditions will be applied to such housing to ensure that it remains available to meet specific needs. Furthermore Government policy supports the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside where this would meet sustainable development objectives. Re-use for economic development purposes will usually be preferable, but residential conversions may be more appropriate in some locations, and for some types of building. Planning authorities should therefore set out in Local Development Documents their policy criteria for permitting the conversion and re-use of buildings in the countryside for economic, residential and any other purposes, including mixed uses.

8.83 These criteria should take account of:

- The potential impact on the countryside and landscapes and wildlife;
- Specific local economic and social needs and opportunities;
- Settlement patterns and accessibility to service centres, markets and housing;
- The suitability of different types of buildings, and of different scales, for re-use;

8.84 The need to preserve, or the desirability of preserving, buildings of historic or architectural importance or interest, or which otherwise contribute to local character.

8.85 To protect the rural character of the Borough it is necessary the Council will ensure that replacement dwellings and extensions to existing properties are strictly controlled to ensure that such development, either individually, and cumulatively does not have an adverse impact on the character of the individual properties or their surroundings.

8.86 The Council understands that in certain circumstances restricted occupancy dwellings are no longer required for the purpose for which they were originally intended. Where such circumstances arise the Council will require robust justification for the restricted occupancy removal to ensure that the concession that the granting of planning permission affords such developments has not been abused. Where it is concluded that a dwelling is no longer required for the approved purpose and applications are made to remove the condition the Council will require that the dwelling is occupied in a way which would otherwise be appropriate in a countryside location. Consequently applicants should demonstrate that the property has been openly marketed at a price that reflects the limitation of the occupancy condition imposed or has been made available to one or more Registered Social Landlords (RSL) on terms which would allow it to be occupied as an affordable dwelling and that this option has been rejected

Green Belt

8.87 National planning policy set out in [Planning Policy Guidance 2 \(PPG2\): Green Belts](#) states that development should only take place in the Green Belt under exceptional circumstances, which will apply to the washed over Green Belt settlements of Oulton and Trentham / Dairyfields. Settlements with a defined boundary which are partially or wholly surrounded by Green Belt such as Barlaston, Brocton and Fulford will have the

8 Policies

capacity to provide small scale infill developments. It is important to appreciate that a number of larger villages within the Green Belt provide a range of services and facilities to the local community and their rural hinterlands. Development may be acceptable in the Green Belt for rural exception housing sites and land designated as a 'Major Developed Site' in the Green Belt where development could be provided whilst preserving and enhancing the character and openness of the Green Belt in accordance with PPG2. Further details have been set out later in the document.

Housing

8.88 The most up-to-date information about how many houses have been built in areas outside of Stafford and Stone as well as the number of planning permissions given for new homes is set out in the Council's annual publication called [Land for New Homes: Housing Monitor](#). In addition land has been assessed in and around settlements with Residential Development Boundaries to establish how much potential housing land is available, the findings of which are set out in the [Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment \(SHLAA\)](#). Depending on the number of new houses suggested to areas outside of Stafford and Stone it is considered that there is sufficient land available to provide for new requirements.

8.89 Analysis of the population information for areas outside of Stafford and Stone shows that the over 65 year olds will increasingly be a significant group. However an element of affordable family housing will still be required to provide for local needs in these areas.

8.90 Recent analysis of the Borough's housing markets through the West Midlands North Housing Market Area (HMA) Assessment indicates that there has been strong house price growth across the area which has led to affordability problems and an acute shortage of rural affordable housing. Stafford West is a rural housing market covering the rural north west of the Borough including Eccleshall. The overall income to house price ratio across Stafford West is 1:6.44, which is higher than both Stafford and Stone with the mean house price being £233,139 thus considerably higher than Stafford Town at £162,685 and Stone environs at £151,333. In terms of housing type, Stafford West has a significant oversupply of detached properties to the detriment of mid sized units such as semi-detached properties and terraced housing. There is also a pressing need for more affordable housing to meet current and future demand. The tenure is similar to that of Stafford and Stone with the majority being owner occupiers.

8.91 To meet the needs of local communities a degree of small-scale infill housing development which is sensitive to the existing local character as well as rural exception housing determined through evidence of local needs surveys or Parish Plans can be used to address some of the affordability issues.

Employment

8.92 A sustainable rural economy is vital to diversifying the local economy and expanding the employment base for communities. Within Stafford Borough farming continues to provide a key role for maintaining the rural economy. However in recent years there has been a shift away from traditional farming activities to the use of farm buildings for commercial purposes which has enabled small industries to develop including high value food production, biomass and tourism opportunities. Furthermore the roll-out of high speed rural broadband access through the Rural Broadband Action Programme (RBAP) has increased the diversity of businesses active in rural areas including e-business opportunities.

8.93 As well as the level of employment land commitments in Stafford Borough, indicated in the evidence base, the Council has recently completed an [Employment Land Review](#) which has assessed existing employment areas and established that the majority of these locations should be retained in order to sustain a balanced future community in the Borough. Currently the employment land commitments for areas outside of Stafford and Stone is approximately 17 hectares, of which over 8 hectares are at Recognised Industrial Estates in Hixon. Less than 1 hectare of employment land is committed adjacent to Moorfields Recognised Industrial Estates. Moorfields is located within the North Staffordshire Green Belt.

8.94 A proportion of new employment provision has been identified at Raleigh Hall and Ladfordfields Recognised Industrial Estates. There are currently five employment areas outside of Stafford and Stone, called Recognised Industrial Estates, at Pasturefields next to Hixon, Hixon Airfield, Ladfordfields, Moorfields and Raleigh Hall.

Rural Services & Facilities

8.95 Rural settlements provide essential services and facilities to their local communities, particularly those who prefer to shop locally or who are dependent on community activities in the locality, especially those without a car or with mobility issues. A key element of promoting a sustainable rural economy is through retaining and enhancing the role of such service centres. Larger settlements across the Stafford Borough area, such as Barlaston, Eccleshall, Gnosall and The Haywoods also act as community hubs for public transport access, leisure and entertainment facilities as well as having limited non-food and specialist shops. The majority of settlements have at least some retail provision such as a public house, general store or post office.

8.96 As a result of changes in spending patterns, the rural demographics and greater car use over recent years a number of public houses, post offices and other retail establishments have ceased trading leading to a greater reliance on travelling to other areas for services and facilities. Whilst the Borough Council can not prevent such closures it is possible to resist the loss of key services and facilities by restricting change of use.

Transport

8.97 The Staffordshire County Council [Local Transport Plan](#) provides a range of solutions for consideration in terms of reducing these impacts as well as the implications of new development in identified settlements including public transport and traffic management initiatives. A key issue for areas outside of Stafford and Stone is the limited extent of public transport provision. The Borough Council will continue to work with Staffordshire County Council, Staffordshire Rural Economic Forum, local transport operators and communities to ensure that the bus strategy set out in the Local Transport Plan is achieved thus enabling greater access to services and facilities.

8.98 A key concern raised through Parish Plans across the Stafford Borough area is the volume of heavy goods vehicles and traffic speeds on narrow country lanes. Over recent years traffic movements, in particular Heavy Goods Vehicles, on principal routes through the Borough have increased pressure on the local road network. Lorries can also cause concern for other road users, particularly pedestrians and cyclists. At the same time, the efficient movement of freight is vital for the economy of the Borough. This would principally be a matter for the Local Transport Plan.

8.99 A key feature of the Transport Act 2000 is the ability of Highway Authorities, such as Staffordshire County Council, to designate Quiet Lanes. There are typically rural or unclassified roads that have been designated by local authorities which provide measures to lower speed levels and accident rates leading to reduced traffic impacts and a more tranquil rural environment. The suggestion has been made that a Quiet Lanes Initiative should be investigated in Stafford Borough.

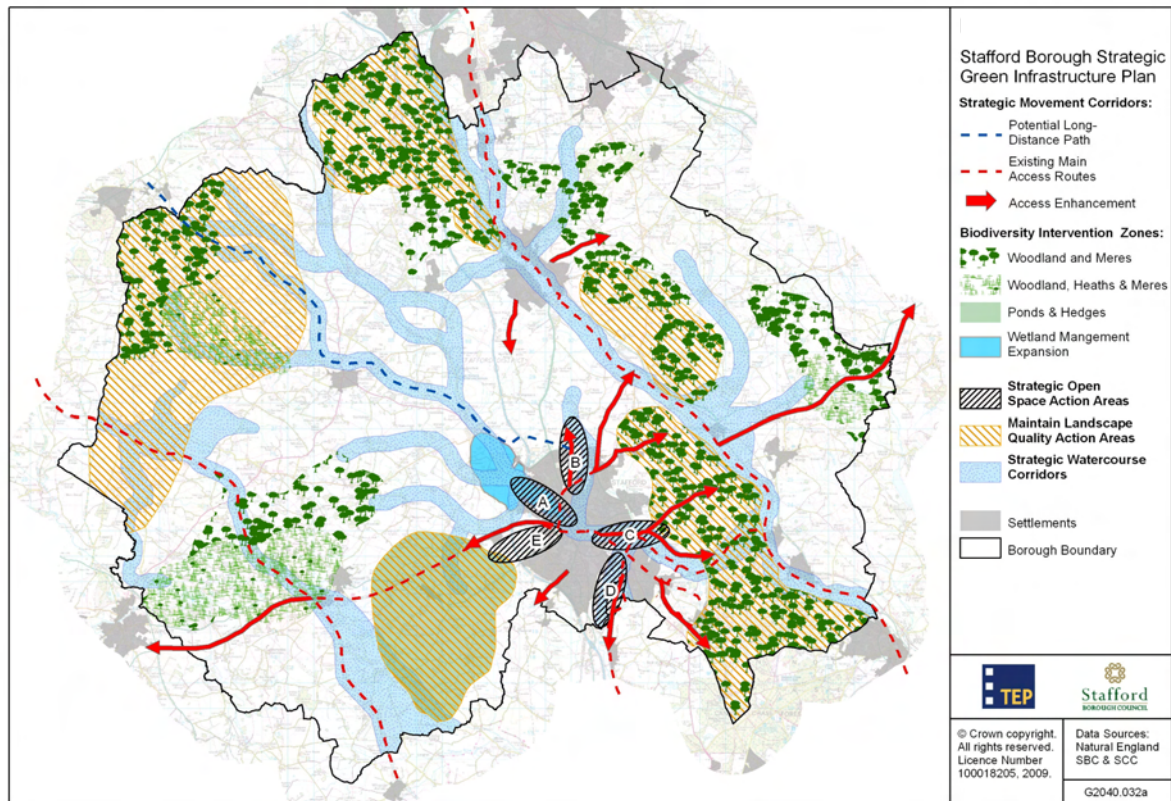
Green Infrastructure

8.100 As part of the Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy the key recommendation for areas outside of Stafford and Stone is for biodiversity intervention zones, watercourse and movement corridors, strategic open spaces and landscape quality. Habitat areas and river corridors across the Borough will be important to provide increased recreational provision and walking / cycling links to other settlements as well as links to the open countryside, facilitating improvement of biodiversity, accessibility, flood protection, provide for better quality leisure facilities, and create tourism opportunities. Other specific recommendations are illustrated in the map below. Furthermore the framework stresses the importance of investment in GI to support biodiversity and landscape in the context of future development.

8.101 The Staffordshire Wildlife Trust undertook an ecological survey for areas on the edge of settlements which identified locations requiring further protected species surveys. Furthermore the survey identified sites that have habitats possibly being used by protected species or Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species which should be retained and enhanced, with habitat creation to replace any losses arising from development at Gnosall. Habitat surveys would be required for a site at Haughton.

8 Policies

Green Infrastructure Map for Stafford Borough



Open Space, Sport & Recreation

8.102 The Borough Council's [PPG17 Assessment and Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy](#) covers indoor and outdoor sports facilities, parks and greenspace, playing pitches and children's play provision including the provision of local standards for accessibility, quantity and quality provision for a range of green space.

8.103 New development outside of Stafford and Stone could bring limited pressure for recreational open space provision, impact on biodiversity and landscape implications. In areas outside Stafford and Stone evidence on open space, sport and recreation has identified a number of deficiencies in both the quality and quantity of provision on the eastern and western sides of the Borough, including:

- The lack of allotments on the eastern side of the Borough and the limited provision on the western side
- The difficulties that residents of the western side of the Borough have in accessing artificial turf pitches
- The lack of provision for bowls
- Very limited children's play provision
- The lack of fitness, sports hall, swimming pool and multi-sports court provision
- The lack of facilities for teenagers in the western half of the Borough
- The limited tennis court provision

8.104 Across the Borough there is a lack of country park provision as well as indoor bowls and indoor tennis provision, with facilities in adjoining local authority areas readily accessible to only a limited number of Borough residents. However it is unlikely that the scale of new development will address these deficiencies over the Plan period.

Flood Risk

8.105 The [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Stafford Borough](#) was completed and published in February 2008 which identified the extent of the floodplain affecting the areas outside of Stafford and Stone. No new development has been identified in floodplain areas as alternative locations are available. National planning policy in [Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk](#) does not support the identification of significant new development in floodplain areas if possible. Furthermore Severn Trent Water do not support new development on low-lying land adjacent to rivers. However these floodplain areas do have a significant role to contribute in terms of green infrastructure.

Historic Environment

8.106 A number of historic assets are important in areas outside of Stafford and Stone particularly within Conservation Areas and Registered Parks and Gardens.

Infrastructure

8.107 Infrastructure investment is required to support new developments outside of Stafford and Stone to ensure adequate capacity is provided including for education, health, transport, water supply and other social and physical infrastructure services.

8.108 A number of schemes are currently taking place in Barlaston to solve flooding problems which occur during storm events with regards to foul water and surface water run off. Furthermore there are local flooding issues to be addressed in Gnosall, Haughton, Little Haywood and Eccleshall. An important consideration in terms of new residential development in areas outside of Stafford and Stone will be impacts on the current sewerage system, which reaches capacity during storm events due to the combination of foul water and surface water run off within the existing system.

8.109 To solve this issue Severn Trent Water advise that prior to further residential development it will be necessary to increase the storage capacity within the sewerage system. All new development should provide Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), foul water storage as well as foul water and surface water run off to be kept separate to minimise capacity pressures during storm events in the future. Based on drainage network plans and information from Severn Trent Water in areas outside of Stafford and Stone it is not considered that there are any significant constraints on new development. However no modelling capacity for Sewage Treatment and Wastewater Reclamation Works have been carried out to date.

8.110 Information from Severn Trent Water with regards to the clean water distribution is still being clarified through a modelling exercise to indicate spare capacity. Nevertheless any "on site" mains required for particular developments will need to be met by landowners and developers.

8.111 With regards to community infrastructure provision new housing development will generally be required to deliver education contributions to primary school and secondary school facilities in areas outside of Stafford and Stone. Information from the Staffordshire County Council Children and Lifelong Learning Directorate identifies that a number of primary schools in areas outside of Stafford and Stone have spare pupil places, although certain primary schools have no surplus pupil capacity. However it is not anticipated that additional primary schools will be required to meet future education needs in any areas outside of Stafford and Stone.

8.112 In terms of hospital facilities the nearest services for areas outside of Stafford and Stone are at Stafford General Hospital in Stafford and North Staffordshire University Hospital. It has been established that both of these hospital facilities will be sufficient to meet future demands over the Plan period from increased housing development as well as changes in the demographic character of the Borough. At Gnosall a significant health facility has been opened providing sufficient services and facilities in the western part of Stafford Borough. However following discussions with the Southern Staffordshire Primary Care Trust a new health facility should be developed in the eastern part of the Borough to meet future demands.

8 Policies

8.113 Electricity providers have identified that small scale developments of up to 50 new houses could generally be supported by existing infrastructure provided that they are within 300 metres of existing substations. Therefore new development will only require local improvements with further details to be provided by Central Networks. Locations requiring additional gas supply infrastructure work to the medium pressure system are identified at Eccleshall, Great Haywood, Little Haywood and Yarnfield whilst Woodseaves is 6 kilometres from the nearest mains gas supply connection. Furthermore 'standard' connections to the medium pressure system is to be provided by developers.

8.4 Developer Contributions

Core Policy 11

Planning Obligations

On schemes of 15 or more dwellings, commercial development or where development creates a need for additional improved infrastructure, services, community or open space facilities, or exacerbates an existing deficiency, planning permission will not be granted unless appropriate arrangements for improvement or provision required for the development are agreed and completed prior to the overall completion of the scheme; taking account of the cumulative impact of schemes where relevant.

Arrangements for provision and improvement to the required standard will be secured through planning obligations if appropriate. A supplementary planning document (SPD) will provide further detailed guidance on the implementation and the nature of planning obligations.

Question 18

Do you agree with the policy approach for Planning Obligations?

8.114 The system of planning obligations relies on agreements negotiated between local planning authorities and persons with an interest in a piece of land (or 'developers') in the context of granting planning permission. This may make development acceptable which would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms.

8.115 To provide clarity on the scope and purpose of planning obligations, in light of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), the existing policy tests set out in Circular 05/05: Planning Obligations have been placed into law. This will ensure that planning obligations are only sought for essential contributions to allow the granting of planning permission, rather than more general contributions which are better suited to use of CIL.

8.116 From 6 April 2010 it will be unlawful for a planning obligation to be taken into account when determining a planning application for a development, or any part of a development, that is capable of being charged CIL, whether there is a local CIL in operation or not, if the obligation does not meet all of the following tests:

- (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
- (b) directly related to the development; and
- (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development

8.117 Planning obligations can be used for:

- Compensating for the loss or damage caused by a development - where loss or damage will occur due to development, compensation may be required by substitution, replacement or regenerating the loss of, or damage to a resource present or nearby.
- Prescribing the nature of the development - Planning Obligations may be used to secure the implementation of planning policy to make acceptable a development proposal that would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms.
- Mitigating the impact of a development – where a proposed development would, if implemented, create a need for a particular facility that is relevant to planning but cannot be required through the use of planning conditions.

8 Policies

8.118 Therefore, contributions currently sought by Stafford Borough Council through Planning Obligations will need to be scaled back to affordable housing and site specific elements; whereas CIL will be used to fund a broad range of infrastructural requirements.

Core Policy 12

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Council will prepare a charging schedule under the provisions of the Planning Act 2008

8.119 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a flexible, new, local levy which that came into force on the 6th April 2010. It enables local authorities in England and Wales to levy a charge on most new developments in their area in order to secure top-up funding for infrastructure to unlock housing and economic growth.

8.120 CIL can only be used to deliver the infrastructure that is needed to support development in the area. However, this does not restrict CIL to entirely new infrastructure. It may equally be used to refurbish or increase the capacity of existing infrastructure.

8.121 The Government proposes that the definition of infrastructure for CIL should encompass different types of infrastructure such as transport, schools and health centres, flood defences, play areas, parks and other green spaces. However, affordable housing, direct replacement of facilities or amenities caused by development and other matters necessary to make the development site acceptable in planning terms should continue to be provided by the current system of planning obligations.

8.122 Stafford Borough Council will prepare a charging schedule that sets out the rates and/or formula's for determining how the levy will be applied throughout the Borough. The charging schedule will be part of the folder of documents which make up the Local Development Framework. Although the charging schedule will not be formally part of the development plan, it will be subject to the same level of rigorous testing as development plan documents, including a public examination before an independent inspector. This enables developers, stakeholders and the local community to influence how CIL will deliver on local infrastructure priorities.

8.123 There will be a direct relationship between the charging schedule and the infrastructure planning process to strike an appropriate balance between funding infrastructure from CIL, and the potential effects of the imposition of CIL upon the economic viability of development.

8.124 The amount of CIL will be calculated with reference to the charging schedule when a planning permission is granted. The planning permission will determine the number of chargeable units and the charging schedule will determine the rate per unit, so the liability will simply be one multiplied by the other. However, payment (including any indexation) would not be due until commencement of development.

Development Management Policy 1

Social Infrastructure

The Council will work with service providers and community organisations to co-ordinate land use and investment decisions to achieve the following:

- a. Ensure that new social infrastructure is developed in or on the edge of existing centres and is accessible by all modes by potential users;
- b. Co-ordinate decisions on schools investment and the provision of new facilities with housing development;
- c. Facilitate the modernisation of local health services, informed by partnership working to address health inequalities;

Policies 8

- d. Promote the provision of other facilities necessary for local communities and maximise the potential of existing community buildings and other facilities wherever there is the potential for mixed use;
- e. Encourage the creation of safer neighbourhoods.

Question 19

Do you agree with the policy approach for social infrastructure?

8 Policies

8.5 Sustainable Development and Climate Change

Core Policy 13

Climate Change

All development in Stafford Borough must incorporate; sustainable design features to facilitate a reduction in the consumption of natural resources, improve the environmental quality and mitigate against the impact of climate change by addressing its causes and impacts. Development proposals on contaminated land must be accompanied by a mitigation study detailing measures to ensure it will not release, cause or increase any type of pollution as well as minimise detrimental impacts on future occupiers.

Flood Risk

Development will be supported where it can be demonstrated that it will not be located where it is at risk from flooding and will not increase the risk of flooding in other areas.

Development in areas that are susceptible to flood risk, such as the river valleys of the Trent, Penk and Sow and other watercourses, will be determined by the sequential approach outlined in the Stafford Borough Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), [Planning Policy Statement \(PPS\) 25: Development and Flood Risk](#) or any successor documents using the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Where land in Flood Zone 1 is surrounded by land in Flood Zone 2 or 3 it shall be considered to be at a higher risk of flooding. A site-specific and detailed Flood Risk Assessment should be produced for a site proposed for development which is identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment as being vulnerable to flood risk.

Where it is deemed that there is no reasonable alternative but to develop in the floodplain, development shall meet the following criteria:

1. The risk posed by flooding shall not be increased by a change to a more flood risk vulnerable land use (regardless of whether it is demonstrated to be safe);
2. The development shall fully mitigate against the effects of climate change for the lifetime of the development as defined by PPS25 or any successor document;
3. The developer shall provide effective floodplain compensation for any encroachment into Flood Zone 3;
4. All new developments or redevelopments shall have safe pedestrian and vehicular access at all times.

Sustainable Drainage

All new development will be expected to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). Each system should:

1. Discharge clean roof water to ground via infiltration techniques such as soakaways unless demonstrated by an infiltration test that due to ground conditions this is not possible;
2. Limited surface water discharge to the greenfield run-off rate, or where this is demonstrated to not be viable a minimum of 20% reduction from the existing situation;
3. Improve the water quality of run-off by ensuring that foul and surface water run-off are separated;
4. Protect and enhance wildlife habitats, existing open spaces / playing fields, heritage assets, amenity and landscape value of the site as well as being sympathetically designed to meet the needs of the local community.

All new development must provide adequate arrangements for the disposal of foul sewerage, trade effluent and surface water to prevent a risk of pollution. Groundwater resources and standing water bodies will be safeguarded and any development leading to pollution or degradation will not be permitted unless, exceptionally, adequate mitigation measures can be implemented that avoids adverse impacts. Development will not be permitted in locations where adequate water resources do not exist, or where the provision of water would be detrimental to the natural environment.

Sustainable Construction

New residential development will be expected to incorporate sustainable design and construction technology to achieve the goal of at least four star rating under the Code for Sustainable Homes by 2013 in line with Government policy. By 2016 all new dwellings will be carbon neutral (six star rating). For all new development these standards require initiatives such as:

1. Reduce water consumption, use of low water volume fittings and grey water systems;
2. Orientation to maximise solar gain;
3. High levels of insulation, adequate provision for separation and storage of waste for recycling; and
4. Use of materials from sustainable sources in new development.

All non-residential development up to 1,000 sq m (net) will be expected to have a BREEAM Very Good rating; whilst non-residential development greater than 1,000 sq m (net) will be expected to have a BREEAM Excellent rating, unless it can be demonstrated it is technically impractical or makes the development unviable. A statement will be required to detail how the BREEAM and Code for Sustainable Homes standards will be addressed or conversely why it is not possible to do so.

All new developments will be required to generate a proportion of their energy requirement from on site renewable resources or low carbon energy equipment. If it can be demonstrated through an independent viability assessment that it is technically or environmentally impractical on-site then off site energy generation will be considered.

Recycling

New development will be expected to provide recycling facilities, ensure waste minimisation and facilitate greater use of recycling, including during the development process, through Site Waste Management Plans. This will be achieved through the provision of recycling facilities and employing best practice technology to optimise the opportunities for recycling and minimise waste during both construction and occupation of developments, including for commercial and industrial premises.

Question 20

Do you agree with the contents of the Climate Change policy?

Climate Change

8.125 There is significant scientific evidence that human activity is changing the Earth's climate and that man-made emissions are the primary cause for this change. There is therefore an urgent need to address these issues through policies and priorities both in the UK and internationally. [Planning Policy Statement 1: Planning & Climate Change Supplement](#) has been published by the Government to provide more information about national policy on this subject.

8 Policies

8.126 Climate change is likely to have a significant effect on the local climate of Stafford Borough with an increasing incidence of extreme weather events, particularly warmer and dryer summers, greater risks of flooding events seen in both 2007 and 2000. These have severe implications for Stafford Borough as much of the Borough is at risk of flooding, from the Trent, Penk and Sow rivers and myriad of other smaller watercourses throughout the Borough.

8.127 To address the risks posed by climate change, in December 2006 Stafford Borough Council signed the Staffordshire Declaration on climate change which commits the authority to comply with the UK Climate Change Programme, the Kyoto Protocol and the carbon dioxide reduction target by 2010. In 2007 Stafford Borough's total emissions of carbon dioxide was 109 kilo tonnes, the main contributors being road transport sources at 45%, industrial & commercial sources at 28% and domestic transport at 26%. The M6 motorway bisects Stafford Borough and therefore is a major source of emissions. The annual domestic per capita CO₂ emission in Stafford Borough is estimated at 3 tonnes, which is above the West Midlands average of 2.5 tonnes.

Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage

8.128 Within Stafford Borough there are significant areas that are subject to flood risk from the network of rivers such as the Trent, Penk and Sow, their tributaries, smaller streams and brooks or localised surface water flooding and the risk of flooding will increase over the plan period due to climate change.

8.129 The Council will act to prevent development, including redevelopment of existing sites that results in an increased level of flood risk, either on site or elsewhere. In proposing new areas for development, the Core Strategy will avoid areas that have a high probability of flooding and the functional flood plain. Where it is considered that development will impact on or off site flood risk, a detailed flood risk assessment that takes account of the potential impacts of climate change will be required prior to any application being determined.

8.130 Government policy on development and flood risk is outlined in [Planning Policy Statement \(PPS\) 25: Development and Flood Risk](#) which sets out the Government's overall aim to steer development to areas that have a low risk of flooding (Zone1). Additionally, it sets out a flood risk vulnerability classification and associated 'Compatibility' matrix for the most appropriate land uses (including Zones 3a and 3b) that are allowed in each flood risk zone. Within Stafford Borough there is a substantial volume of land located in flood risk zone 1 and new development will be steered to these locations. Developments that are in areas of higher flood risk will be determined using the sequential approach outlined in PPS:25. In exceptional circumstances the exceptions test allows development to take place in areas of high flood risk, provided no reasonable alternatives exists.

8.131 [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment \(SFRA\)](#) for Stafford Borough, published in 2006, has been prepared to support the Local Development Framework (LDF). It refines the flood risk areas, and assesses and maps all forms of flood risk from ground water, surface water, sewer and river sources, taking into account future climate change predictions. The associated maps detailing all of the flood risk areas are available on the Council's website. Evidence from the SFRA will be used to assist in the preparation of the Stafford Borough's Development Plan Documents (DPD). Stafford Borough is within the Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP) for the River Trent catchment which guides the Environment Agency regarding strategic flood risk management, and requires to "take further action to sustain the current level of flood risk into the future (responding to the potential increases in risk from urban development, land use change and climate change)."

8.132 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), are designed to reduce the potential impact of new and existing developments with respect to surface water drainage discharges. They mimic natural movement of water from a development, reducing flood risk, improving water quality and in many cases can be used as an attractive feature of developments that enhances the quality of the area and makes the living environment a more pleasant place for the local community.

8.133 SuDs use cost effective solutions with low environmental impact to drain away dirty and surface water run-off through collection, storage, and cleaning before allowing it to be released slowly back into the environment, such as into water courses. Each system will be easy to manage, requiring little or no energy input, resilient to use, and being environmentally as well as aesthetically attractive. The SuDs approach uses measures to prevent pollution, reduce surface run-off at source through implementing such measures as rainwater butts, green roofs and permeable pavements or using physical structures such as swales, ponds and wetlands.

8.134 The inclusion of SuDS should be done at the earliest stages of the process to ensure that they are successfully designed, built and maintained. Additionally, it is also important that developers consult planning authorities, highway authorities, sewage undertakers and regulators as appropriate, early in the development process, when SUDS options are being considered.

Sustainable Construction & Recycling

8.135 The Council is committed that all new development contributes substantially to achieving to the Council's sustainability objectives of reducing carbon emissions and the impacts of new development on climate change. New developments in Stafford Borough are legally required to provide a [Code for Sustainable Homes](#) Certificate which assesses the sustainability of newly completed developments across nine design code categories. Furthermore recycling targets for the construction industry aim to halve the amount of construction waste to landfill.

8.136 Newly built homes in Stafford Borough will be required to achieve a minimum of 4 stars which would be 44% more energy efficient and have many more sustainable features than a 1 star home. Additionally, it is anticipated that from 2016, all developments will be 6 star homes to be consistent with the Government's 10 year timetable for new homes to be carbon neutral by 2016.

8.137 In the UK, business accounts for approximately 40% of the CO₂ emissions nationally and 28% locally in Stafford Borough. The Council is seeking to fulfil its commitment under the Staffordshire Declaration on climate change to address the emissions emanating from commercial developments. In the longer term, commercial developments that decrease their carbon emissions will increase their marketability as well as future proofing developments against compliance with more stringent environmental legislation and standards. It will also decrease running costs and may assist in improving staff satisfaction with their working environment.

8.138 The Building Research Establishment (BRE) has developed an environmental assessment method ([BREEAM](#)) for commercial buildings that addresses a wide range of environmental and sustainability issues, awarding credits linked to a star rating.

Low Carbon Sources of Energy & Renewable Energy Generation

Development Management Policy 2

Low Carbon Sources & Renewable Energy

Development of schemes for the generation of renewable energy resources and initiatives for a low carbon economy will be supported in the context of the Borough's renewable energy study, sustainable development and climate change provided that:

- The technology is suitable for the proposed location, does not cause harm to residential amenity, the significance of historic assets and is sympathetic to the surrounding landscape and townscape character, taking account of the Staffordshire County Council Landscape Character Assessment;
- Levels of noise, overshadow, flicker (associated with wind turbines), or other harmful emissions are minimised and there is no adverse effect on public safety;
- The technology does not affect the integrity of locally, nationally and internationally designated sites;
- Every proposal is accompanied by decommissioning conditions and the ability to ensure restoration of the site following cessation of energy production.

In areas where other renewable energy schemes are in operation, the cumulative effect of additional developments will be an important factor that will be taken into consideration. Large scale renewable energy proposals should deliver economic, social and environmental benefits that are directly related to the proposed development.

8 Policies

Question 21

Do you agree with the contents of the Low Carbon Sources & Renewable Energy policy?

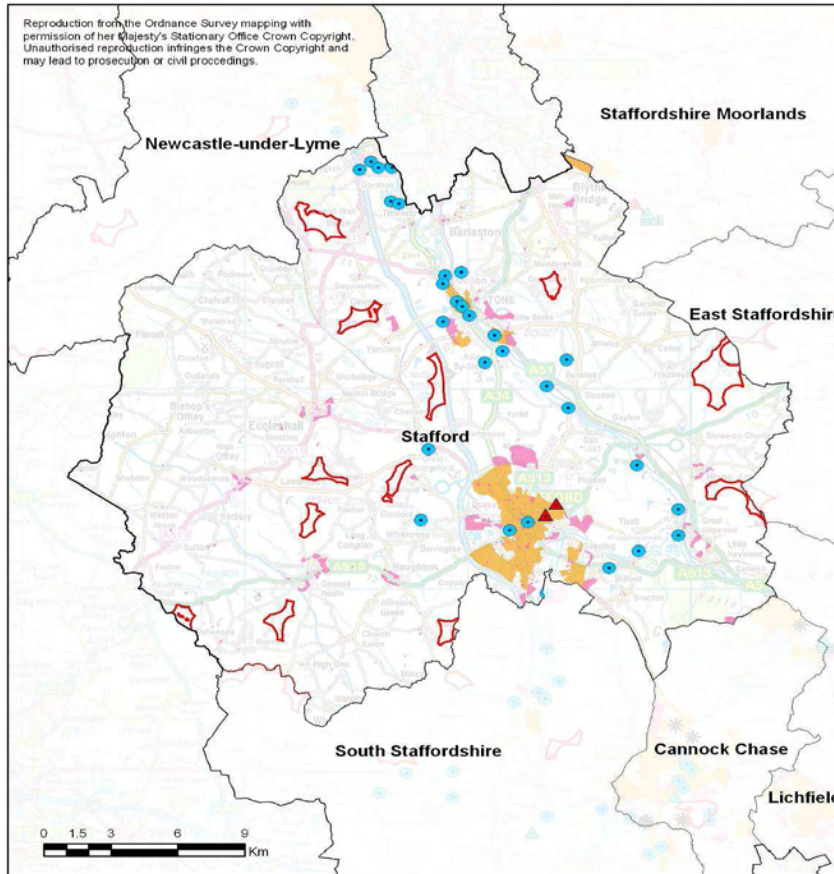
8.139 Government policy on renewable energy is outlined in [Planning Policy Statement \(PPS\) 22: Renewable Energy](#) and the [Planning and the Climate Change Supplement](#) to [Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development](#). It states that local planning policies should promote and encourage, rather than restrict, the development of renewable energy resources. The Council will aim to encourage the use of renewable energy through its Core Strategy as well as through its commitment to adapting to, and reducing the effects of global climate change.

8.140 The principal sources of renewable energy within Staffordshire County are biomass, anaerobic digestion, wind and solar. Currently within Stafford Borough the principal source of renewable energy is the Eccleshall Biomass project. Its power output of 2 mega watts supplies electricity to 2,000 households by utilising locally grown biomass crops.

8.141 The Council will actively encourage and support proposals for renewable energy technologies, where it can be demonstrated that renewable technology and its associated infrastructure, either individually or cumulatively has limited adverse effects on radar and aviation in line with [Planning Policy Statement \(PPS\) 22: Renewable Energy](#); the residential amenity of the locality; designated sites of biodiversity and nature conservation; National and Internationally designated areas and the surrounding landscape, townscape and heritage assets.

8.142 Furthermore, it is anticipated that substantial investment in equipment and energy infrastructure in certain locations may be required to provide for renewable energy in the future. The Staffordshire County-wide Renewable / Low Carbon Energy Study has estimated that the authority is capable of meeting a proportion its energy demand through renewable energy sources by 2020. (Although the Plan runs to 2031 the evidence base has utilised a timescale of 2020 to tie in with Government targets. Any policies containing targets to 2020 will therefore be reviewed at this date.) The study has identified that Stafford Boroughs greatest opportunity lies in the diversion of wind energy and biomass sources with the most. It is therefore recognised that demand may arise for large scale renewable energy facilities to utilise local resources and that a criteria-based planning policy is required to manage such development.

Renewable Energy Opportunities in Stafford Borough



- | | |
|---|---|
|  Large heat generators |  Power stations |
|  Large heat users |  Future major developments |
|  Wind potential - 3 or more turbines |  SHLAA |
|  Hydropower opportunities |  LSOAs with District Heating potential |

Biomass energy sources have not been mapped due to their highly distributed nature.

8 Policies

8.6 Environmental Protection and Management

Core Policy 14

The Natural Environment & Green Infrastructure

The Borough's natural environment will be protected, enhanced and improved by:

- Implementation of the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan and guidance including 'Biodiversity by Design' or any other successor documents to increase and enhance biodiversity, in terms of habitats and species as well as geological conservation or geodiversity through appropriate management for a network of:
 - i. Designated Sites (international, national, regional and local);
 - ii. Biodiversity Action Plan habitats and species populations;
 - iii. Wildlife Corridors and Ecological Networks;
- Conservation and enhancement of water courses and their settings for their landscape character, biodiversity and recreational value, particularly for the Borough's extensive canal system;
- Protecting, conserving and enhancing the historic environment and irreplaceable semi-natural habitats such as ancient woodlands;
- Increasing the ability of landscapes and ecosystems to adapt to different weather patterns by increasing the range and extent of habitats, informed by Biodiversity Opportunity mapping produced by Natural England;
- Ensuring that no new development takes place in areas where environmental risks, particularly flooding, cannot be managed properly;
- Any new development where damage to the natural environment is unavoidable must include measures to mitigate or compensate such impacts through the establishment of replacement habitats or features including appropriate site management regimes.

The Borough's green infrastructure network will be protected, enhanced and expanded to enhance quality of life, increase sustainability, reduce the impacts of climate change and improve health and well being across these overarching objectives:

- Networks of open spaces, natural corridors, access routes and watercourses will be enhanced and created to:
 - i. protect the setting of landscape, heritage and natural (biodiversity and geodiversity) assets
 - ii. reverse habitat fragmentation
 - iii. provide recreational opportunities for new and existing communities
 - iv. provide open breaks between neighbouring residential areas and business developments.
- The network of existing access routes will be improved and expanded to allow sustainable commuting, including:
 - i. shared surfaces to reduce vehicle speeds
 - ii. providing safe, attractive and well-signed walking and cycling routes between residential areas, employment centres, green spaces and the wider countryside.
- Local landscape and heritage features should:
 - i. Be retained as focal points for new neighbourhoods,
 - ii. Have their historic nature protected
 - iii. Act as attractive green and open spaces where communities can come together.
- To alleviate the effects of climate change:

- i. Measures such as Sustainable Drainage Systems and street trees must be included in new developments and should be 'retro-fitted' into existing developments
 - ii. Green spaces will provide a flood storage / management function (where appropriate)
 - iii. Provide adequate development easement from watercourses (culverted or otherwise)
 - iv. Incorporate proposals for deculverting and renaturalisation of watercourses.
- All new developments will:
 - i. Be set within a well designed and maintained attractive, green setting demonstrated through a detailed management plan
 - ii. Provide a variety of spaces to meet the needs of people and nature
 - iii. Provide safe opportunities for sustainable transport
 - iv. Achieve at least the green infrastructure standards laid out in a Supplementary Planning Document.

Question 22

Do you agree with the contents of the Natural Environment & Green Infrastructure policy?

The Natural Environment & Green Infrastructure

Biodiversity

8.143 Biodiversity is defined as the variety of life-forms and the role that they play. This includes the whole range of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, plants, invertebrates, plants, fungi and micro-organisms. It also includes both common and rare species as well as genetic diversity within species. Government policy is set out in [Planning Policy Statement 7 \(PPS7\): Sustainable Development in Rural Areas](#) and [Planning Policy Statement 9 \(PPS9\): Biodiversity and Geological Conservation](#).

8.144 Stafford Borough contains an abundance of biodiversity and natural habitats that support a variety of wildlife habitats, associated species and geological conservation or geodiversity. The Borough is committed to maintaining, protecting and enhancing areas such as SACs (Special Areas of Conservation), SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest), Ramsar sites and LNRs (Local Nature Reserves) in addition to sites that are not afforded statutory protection, SBIs (Sites of Biological Importance) and RIGS (Regionally Important Geological Sites). Biodiversity and geological conservation or geodiversity are not only intrinsically valuable to the Borough's residents but also because it contributes to human well being.

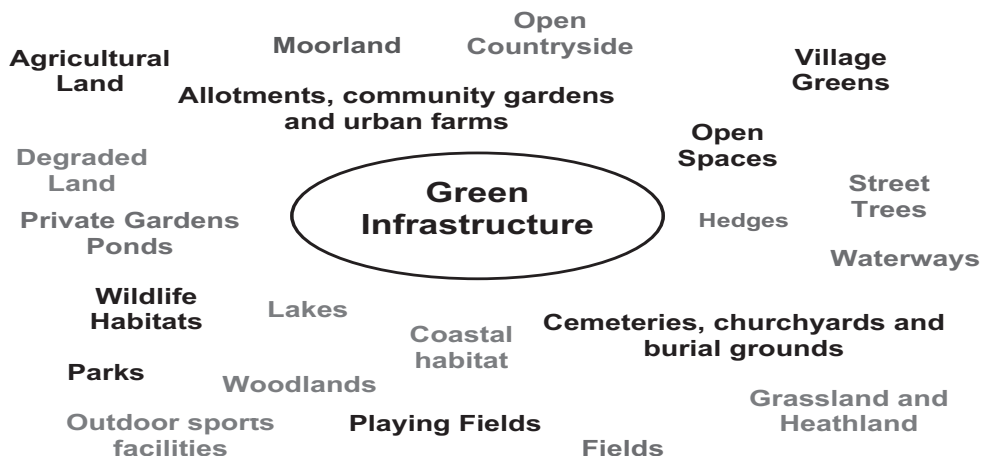
Green Infrastructure

8.145 Green infrastructure is defined as:

'the network of green spaces and natural elements that intersperse and connect our cities, towns and villages. It is the open spaces, waterways, gardens, woodlands, green corridors, wildlife habitats, street trees, natural heritage and open countryside.'⁽⁹⁾

Green infrastructure has the following components:

8 Policies



8.146 Green Infrastructure should be multi-functional resources capable of providing the landscape, ecological services and quality of life benefits that are required by the communities they serve.

8.147 Natural England have outlined the following 'Green Test' against which all new developments should be measured in order to achieve networks of parks, open spaces and wild areas in all areas of significant growth and regeneration.

All new developments should feature green infrastructure which:

1. Provides greenspace within 300m of every home;
2. Supports an increase in priority species and habitats in and around new developments;
3. Provides a wide variety of parks, wild areas and open spaces to meet the needs of both nature and people;
4. Equips new development to cope with the effects of climate change and extreme weather events;
5. Is designed to ensure it fits into any surrounding countryside and into its landscape setting.

8.148 The Plan for Stafford Borough will be a crucial mechanism in delivering green infrastructure. The Green Infrastructure Strategy for Stafford Borough together with the PPG17 Assessment will be referenced within the Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document which will be produced in due course.

Development Management Policy 3

Sites of National & Local Nature Conservation Importance

Developments (either individually or in combination with other developments) in or likely to affect Sites of Special Scientific Interest will not be permitted unless the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the nature conservation value of the site itself and the national policy to safeguard the national network of such sites.

Development likely to have an adverse effect (either directly or indirectly) on

- A Local Nature Reserve
- A Site of Biological Importance or Regionally Important Geological site
- An Ancient Woodland or Ancient Trees
- A natural watercourse

will not be permitted unless:-

- (a) It can be clearly demonstrated that there are reasons for the proposal which outweigh the need to safeguard the special ecological / geological interest of the site.
- (b) It has been demonstrated, where development would result in significant harm, that it can not be reasonably located on an alternative site that would result in less or no harm.
- (c) Significant harm can be prevented, minimised, adequately mitigated or compensated for.

Where development is permitted the authority will impose conditions or planning obligations to ensure the protection and enhancement of the site's nature conservation and/or geological interest.

Where the Council considers that any designated site or any species of principal importance for conservation may be affected by a development proposal, an ecological assessment will be required to be submitted with the planning application.

Where development is permitted the Council will require developers to:

- a. minimise disturbance;
- b. protect and enhance the site's ecological value;
- c. ensure appropriate management;
- d. ensure appropriate mitigation measures are designed into the proposal and work on the site does not commence until these measures are in place;
- e. work to approved methods; and
- f. create new or replacement habitats equal to or above the current ecological value of the site if damage or loss is unavoidable.

Question 23

Do you agree with the contents of the Sites of National and Local Nature Conservation Importance policy?

8.149 The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, Section 4 (October 2006) introduced a new Biodiversity Duty, which applies to all public authorities including local authorities. Its implications are summarised in 'Guidance for Local Authorities on implementing the Biodiversity Duty', published by the Government's Department of Farming & Rural Affairs in May 2007. The strategy to protect and enhance biodiversity across

8 Policies

the Stafford Borough area is being identified through liaising with partner organisations such as Natural England and the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust to direct habitat protection, enhancement and mitigation as well as controls on new development.

8.150 The Borough supports a variety of wildlife habitats and associated species, remnants of a much richer and more abundant resource which has been fragmented and diminished. Whilst some habitats are being improved through conservation measures there remain significant threats to particular species and habitats. Although it is a contributing element, the planning system alone cannot fully protect and enhance the biodiversity resource of the Borough. Pollution control, environmentally sensitive land management and nature conservation initiatives, which are beyond control of the planning system, also need to change to achieve an ecologically healthy environment.

8.151 Over the last few years there has been a significant decline in the amount and quality of the wildlife asset in the Borough. For example between 1979 and 1999 over 50% of the Borough's marshy grassland has been lost, which is important for wading birds and other wetland species. The table below shows the percentage loss of habitat areas in Stafford Borough between 1979 and 1997.

Table 3 Loss of Habitat Area

| Habitat | Percentage loss of area in Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) between 1979-1997 |
|--------------------------|--|
| Lowland Wet Grassland | 51% |
| Neutral Grassland | 15% |
| Standing Water and Swamp | 8% |
| Broadleaved Woodland | 2% |
| Heathland | None lost, but loss of habitat quality continues |

8.152 In the last 60 years almost all of the flower rich meadows have been destroyed and since 1950 many areas of woodland have become degenerated, suffering from a lack of management and cessation of traditional practices such as coppicing.

8.153 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan was published in 1994. Its overall goal is to 'conserve and enhance biological diversity within the UK and to contribute to the conservation of global biodiversity through all appropriate mechanisms'

8.154 To ensure that the damage done to natural habitats and landscapes is repaired, the Staffordshire Biodiversity Partnership has prepared the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan (SBAP) since 1998. The SBAP covers species and habitats that are of regional, national and local importance. The plan utilises an ecosystems approach, to focus conservation efforts on the areas that will result in the greatest benefit for ecological networks, habitats and species. By integrating biodiversity objectives with other environmental, social and economic needs, the SBAP aims to provide a sustainable living and working environment that benefits both people and nature.

8.155 The current SBAP replaces Habitat and Species Action Plans with 14 "Ecosystem Action Plans" (EAPs) and one Rivers Action Plan, to prioritise conservation management at a landscape level and contribute to local, regional and national conservation targets.

Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Core Policy 15

Cannock Chase AONB

The conservation and enhancement of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is of primary importance. The principles to be followed in the area are to:

- Conserve and enhance the special landscape character, heritage and distinctiveness of the locality;
- Conserve and enhance important viewpoints, protect the context and safeguard views out of and into the AONB;
- Require appropriate new developments to be suitably located and have regard for existing landscape features and tree screening;
- Support suitably located small, well designed sustainable developments where it is required to meet the needs of the local community;
- Have regard to the principles set out in the Cannock Chase AONB management plan for managing recreational activities;
- Promote access to the AONB through sustainable forms of transportation, particularly by means other than the car.

Question 24

Do you agree with the contents of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty policy?

8.156 The Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is one of 47 designated AONBs in the UK. It was designated as an AONB in 1958 and is considered to be one of the most vulnerable due to its proximity to large adjoining conurbations as well as rich array of mineral resources located under it. It is composed of 68 square kilometres of high sandstone heathlands and pine plantations that are fringed by historic parklands and enclosed by farmlands. A substantial part of the heathlands in the AONB have been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) as a measure of their importance in providing important nesting and feeding grounds for a rich array of interesting and rare species of plants and animals.

8.157 The Cannock Chase AONB is predominantly used for recreational activities by approximately 1.27 million visitors annually through partaking in activities such as walking, cycling and horse riding due to the excellent accessibility via its network of public footpaths, bridleways and permissive trails which stretch for over 500km. Both the Trent and Mersey canal and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal run through the Cannock Chase AONB with a junction between the two at Great Haywood.

8.158 Government policy stated in [Planning Policy Statement 7 \(PPS7\): Sustainable Development in Rural Areas](#) affords nationally designated areas such as the Cannock Chase AONB the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The Cannock Chase AONB provides a valuable asset to the residents of Stafford Borough and the adjoining districts of Lichfield, South Staffordshire and Cannock Chase. The Cannock Chase AONB also acts as a resource for the development of sustainable tourism as well as contributing to the quality of life locally.

8.159 The conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape and countryside is managed through the AONB management plan, produced by the Cannock Chase AONB Unit, which provides guidance for the management, preservation and enhancement of the unique qualities of the areas landscape and environment. The management plan is updated at regular intervals and should be taken into consideration in all development proposals that could affect the area.

8 Policies

8.160 National policy states that major development should not take place within nationally designated areas, such as AONBs, except in exceptional circumstances. Smaller scale development whether individually or cumulatively that would be harmful or have an adverse effect on the AONB by virtue of their scale, design or location will not be permitted. Certain small scale development will be supported where it can be demonstrated that it is necessary to meet local need, such as affordable housing or other uses that are essential to sustain local employment or community services maybe acceptable where they are integrated with existing developments.

Landscape Character

Development Management Policy 4

Landscape Character

Development proposals must be informed by and be sympathetic to landscape character and quality, demonstrated through local site specific assessments in the context of the Staffordshire Landscape Character Assessment together with Historic Landscape Characterisation Assessment.

Development should demonstrate that proposals with landscape and visual implications, should protect, conserve and where appropriate enhance:

- The elements of the landscape that contribute to the local distinctiveness of the area (including cultural character and biodiversity);
- Historic elements of the present day landscape which contribute significantly to landscape character;
- The setting and views of or from heritage assets, including conservation areas, Registered Parks and Gardens, and Scheduled Monuments;
- The locally distinctive pattern of landscape elements such as woodland, streams, hedgerows, trees and field boundaries.

New development should reinforce and respect the character of the settlement and the landscape setting through the design and layout that includes use of sustainable building materials and techniques that are sympathetic to the landscape.

Question 25

Do you agree with the contents of the Landscape Character policy?

8.161 The Stafford Borough area has a rich and diverse landscape including the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Natural England has identified National Character Areas which place Stafford Borough within the following categories:

- 61 / 62 Shropshire, Staffordshire & Cheshire Plan / Cheshire Sandstone Ridge
- 67 Cannock Chase & Cank Wood
- 68 Needwood & South Derbyshire Claylands

8.162 Additional details assessing and mapping the general sensitivity of landscape units across Stafford Borough are set out in Staffordshire County Council's Landscape Character Assessment document '[Planning for Landscape Change: Supplementary Planning Guidance](#) to the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011'.

8.163 Staffordshire County Council has also carried out a detailed [Historic Landscape Characterisation Assessment](#) for the County area, including Stafford Borough, which is available as part of the evidence base for the new Plan.

Development Management Policy 5

Safeguarding the Integrity of European Sites

The highest level of protection will be given to European Sites, with new development only permitted where:

- There will be no adverse effect on the integrity of any European site, or
- If adverse effects are identified it can be demonstrated that the proposed mitigation measures shows that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of any European site.

In relation to air quality issues identified, planning permission will only be granted where:

- It can be demonstrated that development will not significantly contribute to adverse effects caused by local and / or diffuse air pollution at European sites, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, or
- Where development would result in an increase in local and/or diffuse air pollution at European Sites, it would be expected to include measures to secure an equivalent improvement in air quality or reduction in emissions from other sources; and
- Require a pollution-neutral strategy for major development near to European sites.

In relation to water quality, supply and run-off issues, planning permission will only be granted where:

- There will be no demonstrable unauthorised impact on the integrity of the European site;
- The development takes account of the Water Cycle Study and Surface Water Management Plan and any other successor documents.

Question 26

Do you agree with the contents of the Safeguarding the Integrity of European Sites policy?

8.164 'European sites' are those that have the highest level of protection in the UK through legislation. These include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), candidate (cSAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), proposed (pSPA), European Offshore Marine Sites, and Ramsar sites which are a World designation. It should be noted that impacts on European Sites can occur at some distance away.

8.165 Within Stafford Borough there are the following European sites:

- Cannock Chase SAC
- Chartley Moss SAC (under the West Midlands Meres and Mosses SAC)
- Pasturefields Salt Marsh SAC

8.166 Within Stafford Borough there are the following Ramsar sites which are a World designation:

- Cop Mere (under Midland Meres and Mosses Phase II Ramsar designation)
- Aqualate Mere (under Midland Meres and Mosses Phase II Ramsar designation)

8.167 The following site is on the edge of the Borough:

- Motte Meadows SAC

8.168 The Habitats Regulations Assessment (also known as Appropriate Assessment) is a European Directive requirement - Local Authorities should consider and assess whether development proposals and policies set out in Local Development Documents (LDDs) would affect European Sites.

8 Policies

8.169 Appropriate Assessment aims to ensure that the plan will not have adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites, or affect the features that make it a European site.

8.170 The Council are currently preparing a Screening Opinion looking at possible impacts on European Sites. Where possible affects are identified, mitigation measures will be explored to overcome any negative impacts.

Core Policy 16

Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Development will not be permitted where it would be likely to lead to an adverse effect upon the integrity, directly or indirectly, of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

To ensure this site is not harmed all development within the Stafford Borough area must take account of the following criteria:

- i. No development involving a net increase in dwellings will be permitted within a suitable buffer area around the SAC (400 metres) unless, as an exception, the form of residential development would not have an adverse effect upon the sites' integrity;
- ii. Between 400 metres and 12 miles development will be expected to take all necessary steps on-site, to avoid or mitigate any adverse effects upon the site's integrity or, where this cannot be achieved within the development, make provision for mitigation measures designed to avoid such adverse effects taking place as set out in the Cannock Chase Visitor Impact Management Strategy. Measures will include:

- Habitat management
- Access Management and Visitor Infrastructure
- Publicity, Education and Awareness Raising; and
- Provision of alternative sites

Large developments within 400 metres and 12 miles of the SAC will also be required to provide targeted alternative green space within or close to the development site.

The effective avoidance and / or mitigation of any identified adverse effects must be demonstrated and secured prior to approval of the development. Developer contributions to measures set out above will be set out in Supplementary Planning Documents and informed by the Cannock Chase Visitor Impact Mitigation Implementation Plan.

Question 27

Do you agree with the contents of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation policy?

8.171 Stafford Borough Council has worked jointly with Staffordshire County Council, Cannock Chase District Council, Lichfield District Council and South Staffordshire District Council on the Appropriate Assessment in relation to Cannock Chase SAC commissioning an evidence base report and a Visitor Impact Management Strategy. The [reports](#) outline possible negative impacts on Cannock Chase SAC from the following sources:

- Water abstraction
- Air Quality
- Recreation

Policies 8

8.172 A Partnership is currently being set up to carry out further work and establish suitable mitigation measures and implementation to address possible negative impacts.

8 Policies

Green Belt

Core Policy 17

Green Belt

The existing Green Belt boundaries in Stafford Borough will be maintained. The Green Belt will be protected from inappropriate development as defined by Government policy. Proposals supporting the rural economy, such as commercial or recreation uses, will be encouraged whilst proposals for residential uses will need to demonstrate why other uses are inappropriate.

Reuse of buildings within the Green Belt may be appropriate provided that the new use does not have a materially greater impact on the openness or quality of the Green Belt. Any conversion work must be for buildings of permanent or substantial construction without major or complete reconstruction, not disproportionately increase the size of buildings and be in keeping with the surroundings.

The following sites will continue to be identified as Major Developed Sites within the Green Belt;

- Former Creda Works Limited, Blythe Bridge;
- Former BT Training School, Yarnfield;
- Moorfields Industrial Estate, Swynnerton;
- Meaford Power Station, Meaford, Stone.

Question 28

Do you agree with the contents of the Green Belt policy?

8.173 The majority of the Borough's area, including the urban areas of Stone and Stafford, is not within the Green Belt. Less than a quarter of the Borough area is identified as Green Belt designation, located to the south east of Stafford as part of the West Midlands Green Belt Area (1,810 ha) and to the north of Stone forming part of the North Staffordshire Green Belt Area (9,266 ha). The existing [Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001](#) identifies the precise boundaries of these Green Belt areas.

8.174 The Green Belt area to the north of Stafford Borough acts as a buffer to prevent unrestricted growth of the North Staffordshire conurbation and to assist in focusing urban regeneration within the conurbation through encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land. The Green Belt area to the south east of Stafford Borough supports national objectives by assisting in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. In terms of the national objectives the Green Belt area to the south and east of Stafford Borough also provides opportunities for access to the open countryside for the urban population, retains and enhances attractive landscapes near to where people live and secures nature conservation interests.

8.175 The villages of Oulton, Hanchurch and Trentham are 'washed over' by Green Belt. The settlements of Fulford, Swynnerton, Tittensor, Barlaston, Barlaston Park, Meir Heath & Rough Close, Cotes Heath, Yarnfield, Brocton and Hilderstone are within or abut areas of Green Belt in Stafford Borough.

8.176 [Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts](#) sets out the general presumption against all new development within the Green Belt apart from agriculture, forestry, some recreational and outdoor uses or minerals operations.

8.177 Stafford Borough Council will not be identifying safeguarded land through the Local Development Framework as there is sufficient land to serve the development needs of Stafford Borough for the duration of the planned period 2006-2026.

8.178 Stafford Borough Council has identified 4 major locations that are listed as Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt defined with a boundary. [Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts](#) allows for limited infill development or redevelopment of existing major developed sites within the Green Belt. The criteria set out in PPG2 Annex C will be applied to these Major Developed Sites.

Development Management Policy 6

Re-use of Buildings in the Green Belt

Proposals for the re-use of buildings, which may be in use or vacant, situated in the Green Belt will only be acceptable provided that:

- a. The reuse does not have a materially greater impact than the present use on the openness and purposes of including land in the Green Belt;
- b. The buildings are of permanent and substantial construction which are capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction;
- c. The form, bulk and general design of the buildings are in keeping with its immediate setting and their surroundings;
- d. The proposed use does not involve any extension of the buildings or any associated uses of land surrounding the buildings which conflict with the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it (for example extensive external storage, or extensive hard standing, car parking, boundary walling or fencing);
- e. The proposed use is appropriate to the building and the rural area; and
- f. The proposed use would not cause environmental problems such as noise and light impacts and consideration has been given to the implications for biodiversity, water quality, road safety and traffic generation.

Within the Green Belt proposals which encourage the rural economy such as commercial, recreation or tourism uses and which are accessible to a choice of means of transport will be preferred. Proposals for residential uses must prove demonstrable local need and will need to be supported with evidence that the applicant has made all reasonable attempts to market the property at a reasonable and realistic price / rent over a continuous period of not less than six months in the preceding twelve months for suitable business re-use including commercial, recreation and tourism purposes and that this is unviable and inappropriate. This evidence will need to be produced to support any subsequent planning application.

The extension or alteration of a dwelling in the Green Belt will not be permitted if it would result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the dwelling as originally built, or if it would cause undue visual intrusion, noise or light impacts in the Green Belt. Development proposals must take into account biodiversity and water quality.

The Council may grant planning permission for replacement of existing dwellings in the Green Belt, provided that the proposals comply with the following criteria:

- (a) Replacement proposals have demonstrated (by means of an independent structural survey) that demolition of the existing dwelling is necessary, as it cannot be viably altered or renovated to provide an acceptable standard of accommodation;
- (b) The replacement must respect local character and distinctiveness of the area by not being materially larger than the dwelling it replaces in terms of footprint, volume, height and massing;
- (c) Is sited on or immediately adjoining the site of the dwelling which it replaces and does not detract from the open character of the Green Belt; and
- (d) Provision is made for a safe means of access.

8 Policies

Where appropriate, the Council will apply a condition to any planning permission so granted, to ensure that the replacement dwelling does not result in an increase in the number of separate units of accommodation

In any planning permission conditions may be imposed limiting permitted development rights for subsequent development.

Question 29

Do you agree with the contents of the Re-use of Buildings in the Green Belt policy?

8.7 Housing needs

Dwelling Types & Sizes

Core Policy 18

Dwelling Types and Sizes

New housing development must provide a mix of dwelling types, tenures and sizes including a proportion of affordable housing and specialist provision to respond to the identified needs of the community. To secure the appropriate range of dwelling types, the Council will seek that:

- All new housing development must be compatible with the site density, character and distinctiveness of the area;
- Housing developments will be required to provide a mix of dwelling types on site. However, the final mix will be determined in line with Government policy set out in [Planning Policy Statement 3 \(PPS3\): Housing](#).

All new housing development must adopt lifetimes homes standards, unless it can be demonstrated that it is not technically feasible or will render the development unviable.

Question 30

Do you agree with the contents of the Dwelling Types and Sizes policy?

8.179 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) prepared for the West Midlands North Housing Market Area identifies a preponderance of larger detached dwellings in the current stock and a high rate of owner occupation in the Borough. This trend has been extenuated by the completion of a significant number of four or more bedroom houses. However, projected changes in the population structure shows that this type of housing may be less appropriate for the area in the future.

8.180 The Council recognises that it is important to provide the appropriate mix of housing to meet the needs of the local community. The SHMA indicates that, along with the rest of England, the demographic profile of Stafford Borough is shifting towards increased levels of one person households, with commensurate decreases in the levels of married couple households, a trend which is expected to continue over the Plan period.

8.181 This reduction in household sizes will increase the need for more dwellings that are smaller in size. However, in order to facilitate the development of sustainable mixed communities the Council will seek that new developments provide a range of dwelling types and sizes for a mixture of different households. Where a development includes a proportion of affordable housing the Council will normally specify the required mix of dwelling sizes and types. New developments should provide a range of dwellings types and sizes for a mixture of different households, but with the proportion based on:

- Existing household and dwelling size in the development locality
- Indicative waiting list data for the locality
- Sustainability of occupancy in terms of turnover, future management and market forces.

8.182 National policy in [Planning Policy Statement 3 \(PPS3\): Housing](#) requires that, in planning at site level, Local Planning Authorities should ensure that the proposed mix of housing on large strategic sites reflects the proportions of households that require market or affordable housing and achieves a mix of households as well as a mix of tenure and price. For smaller sites, the mix of housing should contribute to the creation of mixed communities having regard to the proportions of households that require market or affordable housing and the existing mix of housing in the locality.

8 Policies

8.183 In addressing the changing household profile towards smaller and more sustainable communities the Council will ensure that, in line with national policy, new development makes the most efficient use of the land and buildings available. Developments in Stafford and Stone town centres will cater for higher density development, as such locations are more sustainable, and have greater access to public transport and town centre amenities. Additionally, such locations could allow for the development of car free developments in the Stafford and Stone town centres.

8.184 Outside Stafford and Stone town centres a more flexible approach will be adopted that allows new development to be more responsive to the existing character of the area or settlement and to community views set out in such documents as Village Design Statements.

8.185 [The Lifetime Homes Standard](#) was developed in the 1990s by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The principle is that new homes should be designed to meet the varied and often changing needs of occupiers over time. The standard comprises 16 design features applying to both the interior and exterior of the home. Each development must contain each of the 16 standards to qualify as a lifetime home. These standards will enable housing to become more functional for everybody including families, disabled people and older people as well as future proofing developments by enabling simpler and cheaper adaptations to be made when necessary.

8.186 Research undertaken by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation indicates that the additional costs of building to Lifetime Homes standards are small. In addition, because of the benefits of internal space, thoughtful design and flexibility, dwellings built to these standards are likely to attract a higher market value and so any additional cost ought to be recouped. Due to Stafford Borough's demographic profile and forecasts of a growing elderly population, the addition of lifetime homes will play an important part in meeting the Borough's needs, without being too onerous on developers. For these reasons, the Local Planning Authority will require all new development to be completed to Lifetime Homes Standards.

Development Management Policy 7

Replacement Dwellings

Outside of Residential Development Boundaries planning permission will be granted for a replacement dwelling if all of the following criteria are met:

- The present dwelling has a lawful residential use and is not in a state of abandonment, partial or complete demolition or collapse;
- The present dwelling is not the result of a temporary planning permission, a temporary form of construction or a caravan / mobile home;
- The building is not worthy and capable of retention through renovation;
- The replacement building is of a similar floor area, volume and massing as the original whilst respecting the character of the existing site and its surroundings;
- The number of new dwellings is no more than the number of dwellings to be demolished and replaced; and
- Any new replacement dwellings should be positioned on the footprint of the existing dwelling, unless on design, landscape, highway safety, residential amenity, or other environmental grounds a more appropriate location can be agreed.

Permitted development rights may be removed from replacement dwellings. Where the proposal relates to the replacement of a dwelling of traditional style and construction, replacement will only be acceptable where the application is accompanied by a structural survey that demonstrates that the demolition of the existing dwelling is necessary, as it cannot be viably altered or renovated to provide an acceptable standard of accommodation.

Question 31

Do you agree with the contents of the Replacement Dwellings policy?

Development Management Policy 8**Extension to Dwellings**

Proposals for the alteration or extension of an existing building which requires planning permission will need to meet all of the following criteria:

- a. It relates to and respects the period style, profile, silhouette, roofscape and detailing of the original building, including external features such as chimneys, porches etc. The proposal should use matching or complementary materials in terms of colour, texture and appearance. Well executed contemporary designs which offer a visual contrast to the original building may be appropriate providing they meet the other criteria of the policy;
- b. It should be complementary to the size and style of the original building or, where appropriate, a continuation of the original building of appropriate scale, style and massing. They should be confined to the rear or least important elevation. The height, roof and form of extensions should be in keeping with the building and its setting and not be higher than the original building; and
- c. The proposal should not unacceptably harm the privacy, outlook, sunlight and daylight (having regard to Building Research Establishment - BRE standards) of adjoining residents, nor result in an undue loss of residential amenity space.

Outside of Residential Development Boundaries the extension or alteration of an existing building must not result in disproportionate additions to the dwelling as originally built and subordinate in scale and proportion.

Question 32

Do you agree with the contents of the Extension to Dwellings policy?

Development Management Policy 9**Extensions to the Curtilage of Dwellings**

The extension of residential or other curtilages beyond and outside Residential Development Boundaries will only be permitted where there would be no harm to the character, appearance and landscape quality of the area such as the new curtilage extension brings it into line with the existing adjacent properties. Permitted development rights, including those for the erection of curtilage structures and means of enclosure, will normally be withdrawn. Special regard will also be had to landscaping and boundary treatment.

Question 33

Do you agree with the contents of the Extensions to the Curtilage of Dwellings policy?

8 Policies

Development Management Policy 10

Housing Conversions and Subdivisions

Proposals to subdivide or convert existing dwellings and other buildings will only be permitted where all of the following criteria are met:

- a. The proposal does not introduce a potential source of noise and disturbance greater than that normally associated with such use of a dwelling to the detriment of neighbouring residential properties;
- b. Does not lead to a concentration of such uses damaging to the character and amenity of a street or residential area;
- c. Does not necessitate associated extensions or external alterations inconsistent with the character and appearance of the property or its setting within the locality;
- d. Provides satisfactory living accommodation in terms of fire safety and means of escape, size, amenity, facilities, private open space provision, appearance and general outlook;
- e. Provides appropriate levels of on-site parking;
- f. Satisfactory sound proofing arrangements are incorporated within and between properties;
- g. It would not involve the self-containment of basement areas or other parts of any property having inadequate light or low ceilings or which would result in a poor outlook from main windows;
- h. It would make adequate provision for refuse storage; and
- i. Takes into account other relevant policies within the Development Plan.

For the subdivision or conversion of existing dwellings where the property is large enough a mix of unit sizes should be provided.

Question 34

Do you agree with the contents of the Housing Conversions and Subdivisions policy?

Development Management Policy 11

Non Residential Uses in Primarily Residential Areas

Proposals for non residential development, whether for new development or change of use of an existing building, will normally be accepted, provided the following criteria are met:

- (a) The development would provide safe access and would not result in indiscriminate customer parking and / or traffic movement that would be likely to create hazards for traffic or pedestrians;
- (b) It would not lead to an over-concentration of such uses in any one location either individually or cumulatively to the detriment of the area's character, environment and amenity;
- (c) The development would not cause unacceptable disturbance to the occupiers of nearby residential property, particularly at times when activity in the immediate vicinity would otherwise be at a relatively quiet level;
- (d) It does not materially detract from the appearance of the building itself and the locality generally.

Question 35

Do you agree with the contents of the Non Residential Uses in Primarily Residential Areas policy?

Affordable Housing

Core Policy 19

Affordable Housing

A proportion of new dwellings built in the Borough will be affordable, to be available to people on lower incomes, unable to afford housing at the prevailing market price or who need to live within the area. The Council has set a minimum target of 30%. Developers will be expected to provide an independent economic viability assessment if a lower figure is being advocated. The provision of affordable homes is based on the following thresholds:

- a) In larger settlements with populations of over 3,000 all sites of over 0.4 hectares or capable of accommodating 12 dwellings or more;
- b) In settlements of under 3,000 in population and in the rural area outside settlements, all sites of greater than 0.1 hectares, capable of accommodating 3 dwellings or more.

There will be a presumption that affordable housing will be provided on the development site. However in certain circumstances the Council may accept an off site contribution on another site provided by the developer. Where the developer provides evidence, which demonstrates that neither on-site nor off-site provision of affordable housing is appropriate, a commuted sum, based on a calculation of the supportable deficit, may be considered. The Council will expect on-site affordable housing to be clustered in small groups of up to 15 homes, distributed across a development, rather than in a single area, and their appearance must be indistinguishable from that of open market homes.

In deciding whether a particular site qualifies as being above the requisite site size thresholds set out above, the Council will assess not merely the proposal submitted but the potential capacity of the site.

Where the splitting up of a site would result in two or more sites which physically abut each other, any of which fall below the site size thresholds, the site will be treated as one site for the purposes of this policy.

Question 36

Do you agree with the contents of the Affordable Housing policy?

8.187 The Government in [Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing - Annex B](#) states that 'affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market'. Furthermore a definition of social rented housing and intermediate affordable housing can be found in Annex B.

8.188 Shared Ownership housing is housing which is partly sold to the occupiers and partly rented to them by a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) also known as Registered Providers. It is tailored towards a specific income group that is correctly targeted to address specific local housing needs.

8.189 The Council has a longstanding commitment to providing everyone with the opportunity of a decent home and to the provision of affordable housing to meet demonstrated local needs. Many people who move into the Borough can afford to pay higher prices for their housing than many existing residents. Wage increases are not keeping pace with increases in house prices. These factors have had the effect of pricing some local people out of their own communities and being replaced by better off commuters and people retiring to the countryside. Intermediate housing provides the opportunity for local people and key workers, who are unable to afford open market prices, to access the housing market affordably.

8 Policies

8.190 Evidence of local need in the [Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#) jointly commissioned for the West Midlands North Housing Market Area by East Staffordshire Borough, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough, Stafford Borough, Staffordshire Moorlands District and Stoke-on-Trent City, shows a continuing shortfall of affordable housing, including in Stafford Borough. A variety of demographic and social factors, coupled with pressures generated by economic growth and in-migration, means that a substantial number of low income households are unable to find suitable housing to rent or buy in the private market.

8.191 The provision by Government to provide 'right to buy' and 'right to acquire' schemes has reduced the stock of social rented housing. Consequently, Local Authorities are almost entirely reliant on affordable homes provided in association with market housing where Housing Associations purchase new homes from the developers of individual sites. However, this source will continue to be insufficient to meet the affordable homes target.

8.192 Recent evidence from the [Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#) highlights that there is a significant need for affordable housing in Stafford Borough will continue for some time. The 2007 [Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#) identified the need for 293 new affordable homes per year of over the period from 2006-2026. More than 200 households in the Borough are accepted as statutory homeless and in need of permanent housing each year. During 2007/08, nationally there were 0.8 homeless acceptances per 1,000 head of population, whereas Stafford Borough has 1.8 acceptances per 1,000 well above the national average.

8.193 Given the quantum of the affordable housing needed in Stafford Borough as outlined in the [Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#), the Council has set a minimum affordable housing target of 30% to meet its affordable housing commitment over the duration of the current plan period. However, as a result of a recent case heard by the [Court of Appeal](#), involving the affordable housing policies of Blyth Valley Borough Council in Northumberland, the Council has commissioned an economic viability assessment.

8.194 These measures could increase the overall supply of affordable housing, compared to the yield resulting from the 30% target that is current Council policy and might generate an average of 120 - 160 new affordable homes a year but will inevitably fail to meet the target of 293 new affordable homes per year unless there is major new public sector investment. Detailed policy guidance will be provided by Stafford Borough's Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.

Rural Exception Housing

Development Management Policy 12

Rural Exception Housing

The Council will grant permission for development of affordable housing on 'rural exception sites' provided that it meets the following set of criteria:

- The site delivers 100% affordable housing and an element of specialist housing;
- The housing is justified by a Parish based Local Housing Needs Assessment;
- The development is small in scale appropriate to local needs identified, whilst respecting the setting, form and character of the settlement and the surrounding landscape;
- An appraisal of the scheme, proving that it will meet the defined needs, shall accompany any planning application.

The Local Planning Authority will not grant planning permission for housing justified on the grounds of local needs, unless the initial and subsequent occupancy of such developments is controlled through planning agreements or conditions or Registered Social Landlords, to ensure that the accommodation remains available in perpetuity, to meet the need for which it was permitted.

The occupants of Rural Exceptions housing must meet the following need criteria:

1. Existing residents needing separate accommodation in the parish;

Policies 8

2. People whose work provides important services (key workers and carers) and who need to live closer to their work or local community;
3. People who have long standing links with the parish and who need to move nearer to close relatives in order to provide, or receive, necessary social support.

Each occupant of rural exception housing must demonstrate that they are unable to secure or maintain a dwelling in the open market, due to lack of available capital or income.

Question 37

Do you agree with the contents of the Rural Exception Housing policy?

8.195 The Government has made it clear that Local Authorities should consider allocating and releasing sites solely for affordable housing, including using a Rural Exception Site Policy. The Borough is dominated by agricultural land which is subject to strict development restraint policies, and as such, is not considered to be an appropriate location for new housing development.

8.196 This restrictive stance has limited the supply of dwellings in these communities and accordingly the prices of properties have increased to a level which is often significantly greater than a comparable property in a more urban setting. Entry-level house prices are particularly high in rural areas where few sites meet the threshold beyond which it is expected that an element of affordable housing is to be provided. The result of this has been that certain groups of local people, namely the young and those working in rural areas for relatively lower wages, can no longer afford to rent or buy properties. The effects of this can include:

- A greater degree of reverse commuting by workers employed in rural enterprises who are forced to live elsewhere as a result of their inability to buy or rent at local market rates
- An erosion of family and community ties as younger family members are forced to move away
- A shift in the demographic balance which has impacted upon the ability of local services, particularly schools, to maintain their patronage, and subsequently, their overall viability.

8.197 However, to ensure that rural areas continue to develop as sustainable, mixed and inclusive communities, housing will be permitted in rural settlements, subject to local support (particularly from Parish Councils), a landowner willing to provide a site at an appropriate value and a Housing Association willing to develop rural exception sites. Detailed policy guidance on Rural Exception Housing will be provided by Stafford Borough's Rural Exception Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Specialist Housing

Development Management Policy 13

Specialist Housing

A range of housing and care facilities to support the diversity of needs across the Borough will be delivered including Continuing Care Retirement Communities, Sheltered Housing, Retirement Villages, Residential Care Homes and support for independent living in homes. To meet the anticipated need to provide 703 net additional extra care bed units in Stafford Borough by 2025 over and above the current provision as at 2008 this will be delivered by:

- Resisting development that would lead to a reduction in the number of extra care premises unless it can be demonstrated that a replacement facility was being built or that such a use was unviable;

8 Policies

- Ensuring that any new developments are situated in a sustainable location, are self contained, and are accessible by both public and private transport. New development should make adequate provision for off-street car parking within any development scheme;
- Allowing for the extension of existing residential / nursing homes and conversion of existing sheltered accommodation providing that:
 - i. The development is compatible with the character of the local area
 - ii. There is adequate and well located car parking and the site is accessible by both public and private transport
 - iii. The development does not have an adverse impact on the amenity of adjoining properties through excessive noise, light pollution, loss of privacy and excessive traffic increases.
- Seeking to secure the provision of new Extra Care facilities through liaising with its partners, Staffordshire County Council and the South Staffordshire Primary Care Trust (PCT) on new major development schemes.

Question 38

Do you agree with the contents of the Specialist Housing policy?

8.198 Extra Care Housing is a type of specialised housing that provides independence and choice to adults with varying care needs and enables them to remain in their own home. The Department of Health's strategy is outlined in the 2008 document "Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society".

8.199 The current level of Extra Care Units in Stafford Borough is 1.3 units per 1,000 population aged 65+. Within Stafford Borough there are no Local Authority run Extra Care Units. This compares poorly to other Staffordshire districts. The Staffordshire average rate of provision is 2.9, with the highest rates of provision being in Lichfield District at 9.4 units per 1,000 population aged 65+.

8.200 In Stafford Borough, in line with regional demographic trends, it is anticipated that during the next few years there will be a substantial increase in the number of people post retirement age as set out in the Tables below.

Table 4 Predicted Population Increase

| | Total Population | Population 65+ | % | % Increase |
|--------------------|------------------|----------------|------|------------|
| Population at 2006 | 123,400 | 22,100 | 17.9 | - |
| Population at 2026 | 138,600 | 35,300 | 25.5 | 59.7 |
| Population at 2025 | 137,900 | 34,800 | 25.2 | 57.5 |

Table 5 Predicted Increase in the Number of People Post retirement Age

| | 2006 | 2025 | 2026 | 2006-2025 % increase | 2006-2026 % increase |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Age Group | | | | | |
| 80-84 | 3,200 | 5,600 | 5,800 | 75 | 81.3 |

Policies 8

| | 2006 | 2025 | 2026 | 2006-2025 % increase | 2006-2026 % increase |
|-----|-------|-------|-------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 85+ | 2,800 | 5,900 | 6,100 | 110.7 | 117.9 |

8.201 There is currently an identified need for 703 Extra Care Units in Stafford Borough up until 2025. To meet this level of service provision there would need to be an increase in the levels of provision of 20.2 units per 1,000 aged 65+ from the current level of 1.3. The majority of the need will have to be addressed by owner occupied units although significant provision should also be delivered as social rented and shared equity units. However, there is concern that this type of housing will not be delivered within the first few years of the Plan period as the majority of new development taking place over that period will be residential development made up of existing consents, windfall sites (based upon historic completions) and identified Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) sites. None of the existing consents are for Extra Care Housing and few sites suitable for such development are likely to come forward.

8.202 In addressing this large requirement for Extra Care Units there is a concern that such large concentrations of such developments may have an adverse effect on the local community and service provision, particularly health services. Therefore the Council will consider the location of such schemes and will consult with its partners (such as Staffordshire County Council and South Staffordshire PCT) and other relevant service providers to ascertain the best locality for such developments in accordance with the acknowledged need. Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs) are typically self-contained schemes able to support residents health and social needs without recourse to existing local facilities.

8.203 The provision of lifetime homes standards and Extra Care Units will enable the Borough to fulfil one of the central tenets of the Government's strategy by enabling elderly people to live independently in their own homes for longer. However, even with the provision of lifetime homes and more Extra Care Units, increasing numbers of older people will need to seek more specialist care in nursing homes, which have good access to local services and facilities.

Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show-people

Development Management Policy 14

Provision for Gypsies, Travellers & Travelling Show-people

Provision will be made for the delivery of sufficient good quality, appropriately located residential pitches to satisfy local need based on the Stafford Borough Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). The number of pitches to be delivered and the timespan for delivery may be subject to updating following subsequent reviews of the GTAA or relevant Government policy.

Proposals for development to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers will be permitted only where they comply with the following criteria:

- The intended occupants of the site comply with the definition of Gypsies and Travellers or Travelling Showpeople outlined by national policy;
- The development of the site has an acceptable impact on the surrounding landscape, environment and biodiversity;
- The site and its pitch sizes facilitate good quality living accommodation without over-crowding or unnecessary sprawl;
- Good design and layout based on Government guidance in 'Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites' or successor documents. Matters to address include the adequacy of facilities, services and amenities, the utility of outside space for leisure, recreation and for any essential employment related activities;
- The site does not compromise Green Belt or the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designations;

8 Policies

- The site has good access to the public highway system; adequate space for parking, turning and servicing on site;
- The development has reasonable access to local services and facilities;
- The site has been demonstrated to be located within Flood Zone 1;
- Adequate disposal of foul effluent ensures that there is no reduction in water quality within the catchment;
- Suitable recycling facilities are provided.

Any requirements for Travelling Showpeople will be delivered in conjunction with other local planning authorities in the sub-region based on a revised Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment, Government policy or any other successor documents.

Question 39

Do you agree with the contents of the Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show-people policy?

8.204 Gypsies and Travellers are protected under Section 19A of the 1976 Race Relations Act and Local Planning Authorities are required to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good race relations in all that they do. Currently within Stafford Borough, accommodation provision for travelling families' is provided by both a Council owned site at Stafford and by private sites; predominantly in the Hopton area. At present, the number of currently authorised pitches is 70.

8.205 Government policy for the provision of Gypsies and Traveller accommodation is currently being reviewed. In 2007 the Borough Council undertook a [Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment](#) (GTAA) to ascertain the required level of accommodation to be provided and to allocate land accordingly.

8.206 The identification and allocation of specific plots of land is a more difficult process than using a solely criteria based approach. However it ensures some certainty for local people and gypsies and travellers when planning applications are determined by local planning authorities, or appeals are considered by the Secretary of State. This matter will be considered, taking account of the 'area of search' identified through the 'Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough - issues & options' document.

8.207 The GTAA assessment was commissioned by the five local authorities which make up the North Housing Market area of the West Midlands these being East Staffordshire Borough, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough, Stafford Borough, Staffordshire Moorlands District and Stoke-on-Trent City. The study was undertaken by the Housing and Urban Studies Unit at the University of Salford assisted by staff at the University of Birmingham.

8.208 The needs assessment identified a requirement for 70 residential pitches between 2007 and 2026 in Stafford Borough as well as 2 transit pitches. This represents around 0.7% of the total housing requirement to be met in the Borough. The study breaks down the need to 22 pitches between 2007 and 2012, 12 pitches between 2012 and 2016, 17 pitches between 2016 and 2021 and 19 pitches between 2021 and 2026. Clearly the process of developing accommodation to meet the identified need will require significant funding, much of which will be expected to be provided through the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) by the Gypsy and Traveller Site Grant.

8.209 The Council will ensure that the preferences and aspirations of Gypsies and Travellers are commensurate with the recommendations stated in the GTAA and are taken into consideration when deciding the planning, design and development of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. The primary considerations for such accommodation are: Location to local services and transport networks, Pitch size, Amenities, Sheds, Management, Mixture of accommodation (chalet, trailer, etc.), Utility of outside space (driveways, gardens), Homes for life principles, Health and related support issues such as tenure Mix and space for short-term visitors.

Policies 8

8.210 Travelling Showpeople are not included in the definition of Gypsies and Travellers. Although their needs are similar, their culture, traditions and accommodation requirements differ so a separate planning policy document, Circular 04/07, details the particular planning needs of Travelling Showpeople. Both the GTAA and the local branch of the Showmens Guild of Britain have confirmed that there is currently no requirement for Travelling Showpitches / Plots in Stafford Borough.

8 Policies

8.8 Economy

Core Policy 20

Local Economy

The location, diversity and intensity of new employment development will be delivered by:

- Providing and safeguarding an adequate supply and variety of land, buildings and utility services, including site expansions, conversion and re-use, for current and future employment uses for both small and large businesses including provision for lorry parking facilities as appropriate to the Strategic Highway Network, together with adequate space for off-street manoeuvring, loading and unloading;
- Promoting Stafford Borough as a location for new business start-ups, new enterprise and incubator units, and Information Technology capacity sectors in urban and rural areas that are in accordance with other elements of the development strategy;
- Improving access to urban and rural employment areas through the provision of improved public transport services and highway infrastructure, where appropriate;
- Support farm / rural diversification for employment or service generating uses, including live / work units, to promote sustainable rural communities, preferably by re-using existing buildings, which are appropriate in size and scale, in or adjacent to villages, do not lead to significant traffic generation and are not detrimental to the local environment, landscape or residents;
- Increasing the levels of skills and educational attainment of the Borough's workforce, to promote the area as a place to invest through delivery of enhanced higher and further education facilities;
- Encourage the use of existing employment areas for new enterprises in more modern, accessible or other suitably designed and landscaped developments in the same area.

Development or conversions must not result in the loss of employment land to non employment generating uses unless either:

1. There is overriding evidence to demonstrate that the current use is presently causing and has consistently caused significant nuisance or environmental problems that could not have been mitigated; or
2. The loss of jobs would not result in a reduction in the range and diversity of jobs available within Stafford Borough; and
3. No new occupiers can be found despite substantial evidence to show the premises or site has been marketed both for its present use and for potential modernisation or regeneration for alternative employment-generating uses.

Where it is established that existing employment sites have no realistic prospect of development under current market conditions within the plan period, careful consideration should be given in priority order to:

1. What remedial action / infrastructure works will be required to justify the retention of the site;
2. Identification / re-allocation of the site for mixed uses; and
3. Identification / re-allocation of the site for an alternative use.

Question 40

Do you agree with the contents of the Local Economy policy?

8.211 Within Stafford Borough the majority of new employment development has taken place on greenfield sites with only 20% on previously developed land in recent years. A reasonable stock of employment land remains in the Borough area with planning consent for a range of uses. However this has declined in recent years. For further information refer to the Staffordshire County Council - Employment Land Availability Surveys.

8.212 Despite the level of employment land commitments in Stafford Borough, as indicated in the evidence base, the rate of development of employment land remains below the target set in the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011 (Refer to the Employment Land Availability Study 2007 – Staffordshire County Council). The Council has recently completed an [Employment Land Review](#) which assessed existing employment areas and established that the majority of these locations should be retained in order to sustain a balanced future community in Stafford town and the Borough.

8.213 The Government's [Planning Policy Statement 4 \(PPS4\): Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth](#) sets out further details in terms of economic and employment development. Across the Stafford Borough area in recent years, in line Government policy defined in [Planning Policy Statement 3 \(PPS3\): Housing](#), there has been a shift in the balance of housing development away from greenfield sites to the development of Previously Developed Land (PDL). Much of this housing development has been on land previously occupied by formerly major employers such as British Reinforced Concrete, Lotus Shoes and Venables Timber in Stafford. Further consents have been given for the development of land released by closures of employers, ABB and Doulton Industrial Products, both at Stone, together with downsizing involving land release such as at Universal Grinding Wheels and Alstom at Stafford as well as Barloworld and Bibby Sterilin at Stone.

8.214 Sub-regional employment sites are high quality attractive sites, generally 10 to 20 hectares in size in sustainable urban locations with potential to meet local needs. Sites in this category should be suitable to attract clients with an international / national / regional choice of location. Land in this category would usually need to be located on or have a direct link to the strategic highway network and be, or proposed to be, well served by public transport.

8.215 Good quality employment sites are suitable for locally based investment. Sites in this category are likely to exceed 0.4 hectares in size. This category may include larger sites which are some distance from the strategic highway network as well as sites within rural areas.

8.216 Other employment sites are likely to be of interest only to local investors. Sites in this category are likely to be either very small (less than 0.4 hectares in size). This category may also include small sites within rural areas.

Development Management Policy 15**Development within and outside Recognised Industrial Estates**

Within the Recognised Industrial Estates the following appropriate employment uses will be permitted provided there are no significant adverse impacts on the surrounding environment, nearby residents or transport networks:

- a. Light industrial (B1), general industrial (B2), and storage and distribution (B8);
- b. A limited element of retailing where this is ancillary to another main use under (a);
- c. Services specifically provided for the benefit of businesses based on, or workers employed within the Recognised Industrial Estate;

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- d. Other employment-generating uses, such as those related to recreation and tourism, which meet local needs and / or promote the rural economy.

To maintain an adequate supply of smaller incubator units, proposals for the development of two or more small units (700 sq metres or less) will be supported, provided that the Council is satisfied there is a need for such units in the locality. Permission will be subject to a condition requiring subsequent proposals for the amalgamation of the units to be submitted to the Council.

The use of employment sites for employment purposes other than B1, B2 and B8 will not be permitted unless it can be proven to the Council that the proposed use cannot be located within Stafford or Stone town centre.

Outside allocated and existing industrial areas, where the site is within the Residential Development Boundary, the expansion of existing sites and the change of use of existing employment sites to an alternative employment use will generally be supported subject to detailed design considerations. Proposals for B1 uses will be permitted provided the use, either individually or cumulatively will not have an adverse effect on residents or the environment.

Question 41

Do you agree with the contents of the Development within and outside of Recognised Industrial Estates policy?

Development Management Policy 16

Development of Higher / Further Education and Research Establishments and incubator units

New development to facilitate the needs of higher / further education institutions and research facilities to grow and expand will be supported through the provision of sites, premises and supporting infrastructure addressing:

- a. The locational and operational requirements of the businesses;
- b. The anticipated scale and rate of growth;
- c. Local employment opportunities;
- d. Existing or proposed sustainable forms of transport including good quality public transport; and
- e. The opportunities to develop previously developed land and the need to protect and enhance the environment.

Question 42

Do you agree with the contents of the Development of Higher / Further Education and Research establishments and incubator units policy?

Development Management Policy 17

Potential 'Nuisance' Activities

New development or change of use that could have an adverse effect on the local environment, particularly industrial activity in or close to residential which would give rise to increased levels of noise, vibration, visual intrusion or pollution, by itself or in accumulation with existing or other proposed uses, will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that it is acceptable in terms of:

- a. human health and safety; and
- b. the environment; and
- c. general amenity.

Where pollution is unavoidable, mitigation measures to reduce pollution levels will be required in order to meet acceptable limits, demonstrated through a management agreement.

Question 43

Do you agree with the contents of the Potential Nuisance Activities policy?

Town, District & Village Centres

Core Policy 21

Town, Village and District Centres

The role of the Borough's market towns and service villages will be protected and enhanced by working with its partners (including Staffordshire County Council and InStaffs) to support appropriate new retail, commercial and service development in order to maintain the vitality and viability of its town and village centres, provide services as locally as possible and minimise the need to shop by car.

The use of town centres should be increased through measures which:

- (a) maintain and improve the quality and diversity of retail provision;
- (b) maintain and promote a diversity of uses, including the provision of entertainment and cultural areas;
- (c) retain and increase the amount of attractive residential provision in town centres, through new build and conversion.

The following hierarchy will apply for Stafford Borough:

- **Stafford Town Centre** is the primary comparison and convenience shopping destination for Stafford Borough with a vibrant night time economy including arts and cultural activities, attracting significant numbers of trips from adjoining parts of the Borough as well as developing a key role as a tourist destination within Staffordshire.

8 Policies

- **Stone Town Centre** will continue to act as a key local service centre, market town and visitor destination with a vibrant culinary evening economy.
- **Eccleshall, Gnosall, Great and Little Haywood, Stafford District Centres and Stone District Centre at Walton** will further develop as local service centres providing key services and facilities to local communities and their hinterlands.

Development should be provided at an appropriate scale to serve local needs without having a detrimental impact on the hierarchy. Support will be given to proposals and activities that protect, provide for, retain or enhance existing town, district and village centre assets. Loss of an existing facility will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the facility is no longer needed, or it can be established that the services provided by the facility can be served in an alternative location or manner that is equally accessible by the local community.

Question 44

Do you agree with the contents of the Town, District and Village Centres policy?

8.217 Town, district and local centres are at the heart of our communities and provide a focus where people shop, work, live and visit. We want them to be vibrant places which are easily accessible, particularly by public transport, making them sustainable locations for development, particularly those forms of development that attract a lot of people. Community facilities provide for the health, welfare, social, educational, spiritual, recreational, leisure and cultural needs of the community.

8.218 This core policy will be implemented, in conjunction with the other policies in the plan, through the determination of planning applications for retail developments that are consistent with the existing retail hierarchy in the Borough. This will enable the creation of new retail floorspace to enhance both job creation and the economic vitality of the Borough. Master Plans will be expected to be prepared by developers for comprehensive redevelopments in town centres.

8.219 The main effect of the implementation of this core policy will be to reinforce the dominant role of Stafford and Stone town centre as the key retail centres in the Borough, although the other centres will continue to serve their more local catchments.

Development Management Policy 18

Class A3, A4 & A5 Uses

Planning permission will be granted for the construction of new Use Class A3, A4 or A5 premises or change of use of existing premises to a Use Class A3, A4 or A5 use applying the following criteria:

- The development is within a town, district or local centre with adequate provision and access to public transport, walking and cycling;
- The development would provide safe access and would not result in indiscriminate customer parking and / or traffic movement that would be likely to create hazards for traffic or pedestrians;
- The development would not lead to an over-concentration of such uses in any one location;
- The development includes adequate provision for the disposal, storage and collection of refuse, including litter bins for use by customers;

e. The development would not cause unacceptable disturbance to the occupiers of nearby residential property, particularly at times when activity in the immediate vicinity would otherwise be at a relatively quiet level; and

f. The application is accompanied by a statement giving full details of means of control of emissions of fumes, storage and disposal of refuse and means of insulation.

Question 45

Do you agree with the contents of the Class A3, A4 & A5 Uses policy?

Development Management Policy 19

Primary & Secondary Retail Frontages

Planning permission will be refused for non-retail uses in the town centre primary and secondary retail frontages, if it would:

- a. Have a harmful effect on the character or appearance of the shopping frontage;
- b. Undermine the vitality and viability of the town centre as a whole; and
- c. Result in more than 2 permitted non-retail uses operating adjacent to each other in the defined Primary Retail Frontages or result in more than 3 permitted non-retail uses operating adjacent to each other within the defined Secondary Retail Frontage; or
- d. Result in over 20% of the primary retail street frontage (measured 50 metres either side of the application site) being in non-retail use or result in over 40% of the secondary retail street frontage (measured 50 metres either side of the application site) being in non-retail use.

Question 46

Do you agree with the contents of the Primary and Secondary Retail Frontages policy?

Development Management Policy 20

Vacant and Upper Floors

Within the town centre support will be given to bringing upper floors back into use, particularly for C3 residential purposes and B1 business uses. Proposals should not lead to any significant loss of ground floor space or street frontage and must not prejudice the amenity and conversion of adjoining properties or other floors in the same property.

Question 47

Do you agree with the contents of the Vacant and Upper Floors policy?

8 Policies

Development Management Policy 21

New retail and leisure development outside the defined town centres

Proposals for new retail development, including new district centres, extensions to existing retail units, recreation, leisure and entertainment uses outside the defined town centres will be permitted only when:

- a. A clear qualitative and primarily quantitative need exists and can be demonstrated;
- b. The sequential approach to site selection has been applied, including application of flexible formats to enable the possibility of locating closer to the established centre;
- c. The proposed development will be accessible by a variety of modes of transport, walking and cycling. Proposals must be accompanied by an agreed Green Travel Plan;
- d. The proposal will not significantly undermine the vitality and viability of the nearest centre, its function and role at the local level and its position in the wider network of centres;
- e. Adequate parking arrangements can be provided in connection with the proposal; and,
- f. The range of goods and products sold at the proposed retail development is appropriate for its location.

In order to meet these objectives if planning permission is granted for retail development in an edge-of-centre or out-of-centre location, the range sold at the development may be restricted either through planning conditions or legal agreement. No new development for retail warehouses and superstores is required in these locations.

New developments and extensions to existing village and neighbourhood shops will be assessed against the following:

- a. The proposed retail development does not exceed 200 sq metres gross (if the proposal does exceed 200 sq metres gross the proposal will be considered against criteria a to f above);
- b. The proposal will not result in the loss of local amenity particularly in terms of noise, litter, smell, parking and traffic creation and trading hours.

Question 48

Do you agree with the contents of the New Retail and Leisure Development outside the defined town centres policy?

Development Management Policy 22

Re-use of Vacant Land and Buildings

All development proposals should make best and most efficient use of land. In considering applications the Council will seek the use of previously developed sites or buildings, excluding land used for sport and recreation, in preference to undeveloped sites within the urban areas of Stafford, Stone and other settlements.

Policies 8

Consideration should be given to promoting sustainable forms of development, noise and light implications, and the natural, geological and historic environment including any protected species which use the buildings or land as a breeding or roosting site, or to any flora or fauna of nature conservation value.

- a. Proposals which re-use existing buildings for employment uses will be supported provided that:-
- b. The proposed development is of a scale and type in keeping with the character of the building and its location;
- c. The proposed development safeguards the historic or architectural interests of the building, where appropriate, and does not have a significant impact on the character of the surrounding environment and neighbouring properties, including the effects of noise and light pollution;
- d. The site can be satisfactorily accessed and the amount and type of traffic generated would not have an unacceptable impact on the road network;
- e. The building is of permanent and sound structure; and
- f. The proposals do not conflict with other policies in the Development Plan such as in the Green Belt and rural areas.

Question 49

Do you agree with the contents of the Re-use of Vacant Land and Buildings policy?

8 Policies

Tourism

Core Policy 22

Tourism

Opportunities for tourism and new visitor accommodation will be promoted and enhanced in appropriate locations throughout Stafford Borough by;

- Promoting and enhancing the Borough's landscape and historic character by preserving this unique environment, including Stafford and Stone town centres as well as the Borough's villages;
- Encourage water-based recreation and continuing the regeneration and restoration of the extensive canal system across Stafford Borough to maximise water based transport, walking and cycling without undermining water quality, flood risk areas, nature conservation and biodiversity;
- Canal-based developments should be within or adjacent to settlements to protect the open countryside;
- Promoting and enhancing visitor and recreational attractions such as Shugborough Park estate, Trentham Gardens, the Monkey Forest, the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty through sensitive management, Stafford Castle, the Staffordshire County Showground and the Ancient High House as well as local market events;
- Promoting new walking, cycling routes and linkages to national networks through the Borough's countryside;
- Supporting tourism opportunities in rural areas to sustain the local economy providing they are sensitively designed and are not detrimental to the natural environment.

Question 50

Do you agree with the contents of the Tourism policy?

8.220 Tourism in Stafford Borough has helped create and maintain employment locally and generate substantial revenue for the local economy. The towns and villages of the Borough act as the principal focus for visitors and accommodation, particularly the larger towns of Stafford and Stone. These thriving market towns, villages and hamlets are some of England's prettiest countryside that are peppered with picturesque streets, traditional pubs and a diverse range of facilities to cater for every taste.

8.221 The tourism sector in Stafford Borough is intimately linked with the quality of the natural and built environment, and many visitors come to enjoy the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Shugborough Park estate, Trentham Gardens, the Monkey Forest, Stafford Castle, the Staffordshire County Showground and the Ancient High House. To support the development of tourism and provide facilities that will benefit the local economy and community, provision will be made for new tourist facilities in areas that can accommodate additions, without adversely affecting the environment. Stafford Borough Council will continue to work with other tourism organisations to best provide tourism in the Borough including the Staffordshire Destination Management Partnership.

8.222 In the smaller villages and hamlets tourism development will be used to strengthen the local economy and reduce the impact of the declining agricultural sector. However, this must be compatible with its rural location as poorly controlled tourist development in rural areas can damage the character of the environment that attracts tourists initially.

8.223 A network of waterways links towns and villages taking cyclists, walkers and boaters through stunning countryside. The market town of Stone has the Trent and Mersey canal at its heart bringing visitors from far and wide to this busy market town. In Great Haywood the newly completed 200 boat Marina, on the edge of Cannock Chase, as well as a new marina near Aston-by-Stone offers cruising to some of the most beautiful stretches of the canal network. The Shropshire Union canal passes through the west of the Borough attracting significant interest at Gnosall and Norbury Junction whilst the Staffordshire and Worcestershire canal brings tourists into the Borough from the south. The extensive canal network has significant potential for restoration and expansion.

Development Management Policy 23

Canal Facilities and New Marinas

Proposals for new development alongside canals within existing settlements:

- a. Must create an active canal frontage and have regard to the canal's use and accessibility, including safety measures; and
- b. Should encourage mixed use canal related proposals.

Outside existing settlements small scale marinas and moorings with limited service facilities will be acceptable provided:

- a. The countryside is protected, in terms of its openness, rural character and attractiveness;
- b. The proposal is appropriate in scale to its locality;
- c. The development proposal has minimum or sensitively located lighting, to reduce light pollution and interference with nocturnal wildlife species; and
- d. Facilities, including car parking have adequate landscaping and screening, to minimise visual impact.

Planning permission for new canal facilities and associated infrastructure will only be granted where:

- a. Public access is improved and integrated with the canal frontage;
- b. The development does not have an adverse effect on water quality;
- c. Canalside development, particularly new build, is of high quality, which contributes and enhances the function and appearance of canals and their frontages, wherever possible, providing regeneration and re-use of redundant canals and related buildings, taking into account Conservation Area and Listed Building designations;
- d. It does not create conflicts between different users of the canal, such as pedestrians and recreation users on/by the water;
- e. The traffic generated by the proposal does not adversely affect the safety of the existing road network and adequate car parking facilities can be provided within the site for the likely needs arising from the proposal;
- f. Adequate provision for short-stay moorings and related facilities are incorporated, where appropriate;
- g. The wildlife value of the locality is conserved and, where possible, enhanced including wildlife corridors;
- h. The proposal does not have any detrimental affects on area designations identified in the development plan; and
- i. The proposal does not conflict with landscape or nature conservation policies.

8 Policies

Question 51

Do you agree with the contents of the Canal Facilities and New Marinas policy?

Development Management Policy 24

New Development at Trentham Gardens Estate

The Trentham Gardens Estate is a recreation, leisure, tourism and visitor attraction. Limited development and appropriate infilling will be permitted within the northern area of the estate for outdoor sport and recreation and a high quality hotel.

Development at the Trentham Gardens Estate must meet the following criteria:

- a. Conserve the natural and historic environment including existing buildings, gardens, landscape, flora and fauna;
- b. Enhance recreation / leisure facilities within the Borough;
- c. Limit the impact on the highway network;
- d. Meet the principles and objectives of the Green Belt.

Question 52

Do you agree with the contents of the New Development at the Trentham Gardens Estate policy?

8.9 Design and the Historic Environment

Core Policy 23

Design

Stafford Borough is made up of many different places, each with their own distinctive new and historic built environment, landscape and surrounding spaces. All new development within Stafford Borough must be of a high design standard to enhance the quality of the built environment that reflects and respects the character, setting and local context, including those features that contribute to local distinctiveness of the area. This will be assessed in terms of scale, massing, vertical / horizontal emphasis, materials, colour and setting.

Development must also have regard to Parish Plans and Village Design Statements, site topography, heritage assets such as medieval street patterns and burgage plots, important vegetation including trees or groups of trees and other important natural features that need to be retained. To secure enhancements in the design quality development must, at a minimum, meet the following principles:

- Ensure that all major applications are comprehensively master planned or where appropriate are accompanied by a development brief;
- Be designed, sited and grouped in order to provide access for all;
- Incorporate sustainable construction techniques into the design as stated in the climate change policy;
- Strengthen the continuity of street frontages and enclosure of space, through development that clearly distinguishes between public and private space, including the provision of space for storage of recycling materials;
- Public open space are designed to be usable and productive for the amenity of residents by being overlooked to create a safe environment ensuring high levels of activity;
- Retention of significant biodiversity and landscaping features and creation of new biodiversity areas that are consistent with the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan biodiversity opportunity mapping, the Green Infrastructure Strategy, Staffordshire's Landscape Character Assessment as it relates to Stafford Borough and Historic Landscape Characterisation Assessments;
- Include high design standards that make efficient use of land, promotes activity and reflect the local character, context, density and landscape as well as complementing the biodiversity of the surrounding area;
- Ensure that places inter-connect using important routes and linkages which are pedestrian, vehicle and cycle friendly, whilst allowing for ease of movement, legibility and permeability through a clearly defined and well structured public realm;
- Require the design and layout to take account of noise and light implications together with the amenity of adjacent residential areas;
- Creating a safe environment where streets and public areas are overlooked;
- Ensure car parking is well integrated and discreetly located so that it supports the street scene;
- Require the design and layout of new development to be safe, secure and crime resistant, by the inclusion of measures to address crime and disorder through environmental design and meet "Secured by Design" Standards;
- Development should be well-connected to public transport and community facilities and services, and is well laid out so that all the space is used efficiently, is safe, accessible and user-friendly.
- Designs which fail to have regard to the local context by obscuring historic views and sightlines, do not preserve or enhance the character of the area with locally distinctive materials will not be acceptable.
- A Design and Access Statement (DAS) should demonstrate how the above matters have been addressed or conversely, why it is not practicable or appropriate to do so.

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New development of ten dwellings or more will be expected to achieve at least the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment's (CABE) Silver Standard and, where possible, Gold Standard through a Building for Life (Bfl) assessment and any successor documents, unless it makes the development unviable or it has been sufficiently demonstrated, through a DAS, that each of the twenty Bfl questions has been optimally addressed or conversely why it not practical or appropriate to do so.

Question 53

Do you agree with the contents of the Design policy?

8.224 High quality and inclusive design is a central tenet of the Governments approach to achieving sustainable, well balanced communities that are capable of combating the effects of global climate change. Design is deeply embedded in and is a key driver of, National, Regional and Local Planning Policies, most significantly in [Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development](#) and [Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing](#). Additionally, at both regional and national level this strong commitment to design quality from Government, has produced a suite of design guidance on achieving sustainable communities and high quality design.

8.225 Excellence in design and local distinctiveness in Stafford Borough are important objectives that the Council want to promote, maintain and enhance wherever possible. The significant growth that will take place in Stafford Borough over the period between 2011-2031 offers a unique opportunity achieve high quality designs for all developments. In addition, by planning high quality developments in Stafford we can have a positive impact on the quality of life for both new and existing communities by drawing together the many strands of place-making to create sustainable developments with distinct identities where people want to live. It will also greatly contribute to reducing Stafford Borough's carbon footprint contribute towards the Council's aim of a zero carbon environment by 2016.

Design Quality

8.226 The Council will encourage new, existing and refurbished buildings, streets and public spaces to produce innovative design solutions that enhance the existing character and contribute positively to the local distinctiveness of the area. Of particular importance is a high quality, versatile and well-designed public realm for the creation of more sustainable communities as well as promoting Stafford Borough as an attractive and inclusive place to live.

8.227 In accordance with the Government's DCLG Circular 01/2006 design proposals should follow the robust design process of assessment-involvement-evaluation-design set out in a Design and Access Statement (DAS) for it to be acceptable. This should demonstrate how the applicant has considered the proposal and what is appropriate, considering the site in its context along with a justification of how the design emerged. Furthermore, the DAS should specify the general movement to and through the site and its buildings as well as providing information on how all members of society will be able to use the site. Any statement should clearly demonstrate what groups and people have been or will be discussing the scheme. Additionally, a clear demonstration should accompany the DAS on how information collected during the process has informed the overall design and what decisions have been taken and why.

8.228 The criteria set out in 'Building for Life' published by CABE enables good design to be assessed using 20 criteria for considering character, public space, design and construction and the surrounding environment and community. The Government publication 'The Manual for Streets' aims to assist developers in the creation of higher quality and better-designed streets that contribute to the quality of the built environment and should be used predominantly, but not exclusively in proposals that include new or redesigned residential streets. Further information on general urban design principles is available in the CABE publication 'By Design'.

8.229 Developments should take measures that reduce the opportunity for crime and create a safer and more secure community. Developers should contact Staffordshire Police Authority to ensure that 'Secure by Design' principles are incorporated within all development schemes. This will require particular consideration to the overall layout of developments to increase natural surveillance, design of roads, cycleways and footpaths and landscape design. Further specific consideration should also be given to amenity space and the importance of natural surveillance in reducing the opportunities for crime. Further advice can be found through Staffordshire Police Authority.

Core Policy 24

Historic Environment

The historic environment of Stafford Borough is recognised as a unique and irreplaceable resource. The Borough's rich heritage assets includes designated listed buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens, scheduled ancient monuments, battlefields and other buildings and sites of local historic importance. The Council recognises its duty concerning heritage assets and seeks to maintain a quality historic environment by protecting, conserving or enhancing its heritage assets and their settings.

Development proposals will be informed by the historic environment by;

- Supporting the production of Conservation Area Appraisals, Parish Plans and Village Design Statements to ensure that future development is based on an understanding of local character and context;
- Consulting the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record, and any other relevant existing or emerging documents and, where necessary, carrying out appropriate research or archaeological investigation;
- Using Design and Access Statements to demonstrate how the significance of the heritage asset is to be protected, conserved or enhanced.

Proposals that would affect the significance of a heritage asset will not be accepted unless they provide sufficient information for that impact to be assessed.

Development proposals will be expected to respect the following aspects of the historic environment by promoting high design quality and be sympathetic to the character and appearance of heritage assets taking into account:

- Settlement pattern including street patterns, orientation of buildings and sites, boundaries and density of development;
- The scale, form and massing of buildings and structures;
- Materials, including colours and textures;
- Significant landscape features including open spaces, trees and planted boundaries;
- Significant views and vistas;
- Locally distinctive architectural or historical detail;
- The setting of heritage assets;
- Buried archaeology.

Development and advertisement proposals must protect the significance of heritage assets by avoiding unnecessary loss of historic fabric and detail through the following;

- Alterations and extensions will be expected to protect existing fabric and detail of significance to the heritage asset. For listed buildings this includes internal features, including plans and spaces;
- The use of Article 4 directions where the exercise of permitted development rights would undermine the aims for the historic environment;
- Where loss is unavoidable, appropriate mitigation measures will be put into place, including archaeological investigation or recording.

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Heritage assets will be protected from unnecessary loss by;

- Identifying heritage assets that are considered to be at risk of irreversible harm or loss;
- Encouraging owners to maintain their heritage assets;
- Where necessary the Council will use its statutory powers to serve Urgent Works or Repairs Notices to arrest the decay of its listed buildings;
- Enabling development proposals will only be supported where it is shown that alternative solutions have failed and where it has been demonstrated that the proposed development is the minimum necessary to protect the significance of the heritage asset.

In conjunction with relevant stakeholders the Council will conserve, restore and enhance historic landscapes to provide a valuable recreational, cultural and environmental resource as well as identifying heritage assets that are of national, regional or local importance.

Question 54

Do you agree with the contents of the Historic Environment policy?

8.230 The strategy seeks to preserve, manage and enhance the Borough's heritage; this includes specifically identified features as well as the wider historic environment. The relevant planning guidance is given in [Planning Policy Statement 5 \(PPS5\): 'Planning for the Historic Environment' \(2010\)](#) and the accompanying [Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide](#). Statutory protection for the historic environment is provided by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

8.231 Known individual heritage assets are identified in the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record, whilst a number of existing documents analyse particular aspects of the heritage significance of Stafford Borough. These include Staffordshire County Council's Historic Environment Character Assessments, the emerging Historic Farm Buildings Survey, Historic Character Assessments for Stafford and Stone within the Staffordshire Extensive Urban Survey and Conservation Area Appraisals produced by Stafford Borough Council.

8.232 The quality of the historic environment and the presence of historical assets contributes to the character, distinctiveness and cultural heritage value of Stafford Borough as well as supporting tourism, recreational and green infrastructure objectives. It supports tourism and recreation, from visitors to the Grade II * listed Ancient High House in Stafford town and the Grade I Shugborough Hall with its landscaped estate, to providing attractive leisure walks and routes along the Borough's network of historic canals, all of which are designated as linear Conservation Areas. It also provides a distinctive quality environment for everyday life, including quality spaces for shops and businesses, attractive High Streets and parks, as well as the homes of many of the Borough's residents.

8.233 The local distinctiveness of the Borough owes much to the diverse and rich historic environment, including the settlement patterns of the Borough's towns and villages, some of which date back as far as 1000 AD. Many of these were the centres of local activity supported by local markets and fairs, which acted as local service centres for their rural hinterland. Many of these towns and villages continue to perform this function up to the present day.

8.234 The Borough is particularly rich in terms of its rural and agricultural heritage, including many surviving historic farmsteads and 'model farms' from the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and historic parkland and estates, such as at Shugborough, Trentham, Aqualate and Sandon.

8.235 Much of the historic building stock is in a traditional vernacular style using predominantly locally sourced timber, brick and clay tiles. The Borough also hosts fine examples of polite architecture such as at the Shire Hall, Shugborough Hall and Sandon. As the Borough has grown, buildings from successive periods have

Policies 8

become part of the familiar and cherished local environment of the Borough. Aspects of 20th century development are now considered significant, as at the 1920s model village at Burton Manor, designated as a Conservation Area.

8.236 Within Stafford Borough there are over 800 entries on the statutory list of buildings with special architectural or historic interest. These range from large country houses such as the Grade 1 Shugborough Hall to more modest items such as Mile Posts. Of particular importance is the Elizabethan Ancient High House, constructed in 1594 by the Dorrington family, which is the largest timber framed building in England. Listed buildings are protected by law by virtue of their historic or architectural merits.

8.237 There are 30 Conservation Areas within Stafford Borough designated due to their special architectural or historic interest whose character and appearance it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

8.238 The Council has undertaken a number of conservation area appraisals and associated management plans to assess the qualities and needs of each one, as well as to inform and encourage best practice to achieve the preservation and enhancement of the special qualities of those areas. In order to fully assess proposals that could affect such areas (including those that may fall outside the designated boundary) full details are required in order to fully assess the impact that such a proposal will have.

8.239 A register of historic parks and gardens is kept by English Heritage. Currently four within Stafford Borough are on the Statutory Register; Shugborough (grade I), Trentham Gardens (grade II*), Sandon Park (grade II) and the German Military Cemetery on Cannock Chase (grade II*).

8.240 The Borough is traversed by three canals, having a total length of more than 53 km. These have all been designated as conservation areas and are significant for their industrial heritage. The Trent and Mersey Canal commenced in 1766 being both the first canal in Staffordshire and the first major inland waterway. The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal was completed in 1772 and is part of James Brindley's "Grand Cross" linking the Mersey with the Thames and the Trent with the Severn. The Shropshire Union canal was built between 1827-35 by the engineer Thomas Telford to connect the Midlands to Ellsmere Port on the River Mersey. The 18th and 19th century canal system has left a distinctive legacy of historic buildings and structures, such as listed wet and dry docks at Stone and Norbury Junction, canalside warehouses, lock keepers cottages, canal basins, and many individual locks and bridges.

8.241 Stafford Borough is rich in archaeological remains of many types and periods. This precious resource is finite and easily damaged or destroyed. Currently there are 45 archaeological sites afforded national statutory protection as Scheduled Ancient Monuments, but not all remains that merit protection are scheduled. The County Council Historic Environment Record (HER) records over 1,100 sites of national, regional and local importance and is constantly being updated.

8.242 The unique legacy of the Borough's historic environment should be considered a creative force that will inspire excellence in design whilst retaining character and local distinctiveness, and contribute to the Council's emphasis on the positive management of change.

8.243 The reuse of historic buildings and fabric is inherently sustainable, reducing energy expenditure in the manufacture or sourcing of new construction materials and making maximum use of existing embedded energy. Upgrading thermal performance or installing alternative energy sources can usually be accommodated within historic buildings, but the need to protect the significance of the heritage asset may mean that non-standard approaches will be required.

8.244 The impact of development on a conservation area may also relate to matters affecting its balance of land uses and pattern of daily activity, by threatening vitality and viability through the introduction incongruous layout or form of development, altering the characteristic pattern of spaces between buildings or being out of scale with its surroundings. As with all developments the following matters of design are also relevant height, bulk shape, massing, and proportions, vertical or horizontal emphasis, materials and colour.

8 Policies

8.10 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities

Core Policy 25

Open Space, Sport and Recreation

The Council will, in partnership with other bodies, seek to secure good quality, well maintained open space, sport and recreation facilities. Appendix C of the Stafford Borough's [PPG17 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment](#) sets out detailed provision standards to be delivered through new development as well as Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards. Furthermore local needs identified through the PPG17 Assessment will be delivered for particular areas, as set out in the area based policies, and the following:

- Improving the opportunities for both formal and informal recreation in parks and open spaces for a diverse range of groups, which are managed to nationally recognised quality standards such as Green Flag awards;
- Addressing all deficiencies of both indoor and outdoor sports facilities outlined in the PPG17 Assessment and any subsequent revisions;
- Providing open space, sport and recreation facilities that are commensurate with the settlement size and type;
- Developing a network of play areas for children of all age groups, particularly teenagers;
- Developing, protecting and enhancing open space, public and amenity spaces as well as allotments;
- Protection of existing artificial pitches and identification of new Artificial Turf Pitches across the Borough area;
- Provision of Multi Use Game Areas (MUGAs);
- Addressing the shortfall in mini soccer provision.

Development that results in the loss of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities will be resisted unless alternative facilities can be provided or that redevelopment would not result in a deficiency in the local area. New facilities should be located in areas that are accessible by walking, public transport and cycling and such developments will be particularly welcome in areas with identified deficiencies.

Development of recreation activities in the countryside will be supported provided that there is no significant impact on landscape and nature conservation interests, traffic generation, is appropriate in scale and uses existing buildings where possible. Development associated with recreational activities will be limited to facilities that are necessary and ancillary to the main recreational use.

Question 55

Do you agree with the contents of the Open Space, Sport & Recreation policy?

8.245 At present there are approximately 241 hectares of protected open space and 706 hectares of Green Network as defined in the [Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001](#). These two designations protect informal, as well as more formal spaces such as playing pitches used for football and cricket. The main coverage is in the urban areas of Stafford and Stone where the Green Network provides valuable linkages to the open countryside beyond. However other settlements also have protected areas, many of which provide focal points of activity. There are many other smaller scale open spaces that contribute to public amenity. The Council has commissioned a [PPG17 Assessment and Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy](#) as part of the evidence base for the new Plan.

Policies 8

8.246 There is extensive use of current pitches, particularly for football on a Sunday, and there is an anticipated increase in demand for adult and junior pitches, based on current trends and the growing popularity of girls' football.

8 Policies

8.11 Transport

Core Policy 26

Transport

The use of sustainable transportation will be promoted through best use of traffic and demand management schemes, reducing the reliance on the private car for travel journeys in urban areas, reducing the need to travel generally and helping to deliver the objectives and initiatives of the Government transport policies, Staffordshire Local Transport Plan and any subsequent revisions. This will be achieved through:

- Seeking to reduce the need to travel by private car in urban areas by ensuring that, wherever possible, new development is located close to access points (bus stops, railway stations, and park and ride facilities) along public transport corridors;
- Requiring new developments to produce Transport Assessments and Travel Plans as well as facilitate the provision of safe and well integrated off-street parking;
- Reducing the need to travel through a balanced mix of land uses, retention of local services and encouraging the use of Information & Communication Technology;
- Working with the Local Highway Authority, the Highways Agency and, where appropriate, developers to improve road safety;
- Seeking to reduce the impact of traffic from new development on the local and strategic highway networks by ensuring that the generation of traffic is minimised through sustainable transport measures. These include encouragement for walking and cycling, through links to existing routes, and the provision of facilities such as secure, accessible and sheltered bicycle parking with changing facilities on site. Prospective developers should assess the transport impact of new development in accordance with 'Guidance on Transport Assessment' (DfT / CLG, 2007) and any subsequent revisions. Consideration of the impact on the Highways Agency Strategic Road Network (SRN) should be in accordance with national policy;
- Ensuring that all developments that generate significant traffic flows, including commercial traffic must be located in close proximity to the local and strategic highway network and should have adequate capacity to accommodate the development or can be improved as part of the development;
- Proposals that generate significant levels of traffic, which cannot be accommodated in terms of capacity, road safety and load will not be permitted;
- The implementation of national car parking standards or subsequent local car parking standards in all new development proposals, subject to the above criteria.

Question 56

Do you agree with the contents of the Transport policy?

8.247 This policy reflects national transport policy outlined in [Planning Policy Guidance \(PPG\) 13: Transport](#) and the emerging West Midlands Regional Transport Strategy which will seek to promote the use of sustainable transportation measures through the integration of transportation and land use planning to enable a reduction in the need for travel particularly by the car and promote more sustainable transportation patterns. [Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth](#) sets out a requirement for setting maximum parking standards for non-residential developments.

Managing Transport Demand

8.248 A range of measures are required to facilitate a modal shift away from the private car and to encourage a reduction in the demand for travel, including through Local Travel Plans. The principal mechanism for achieving this modal shift is to promote more effective integration of land use and transportation which enables local day

Policies 8

to day facilities to be located within access by foot or by cycling. Another is to ensure that development which comprises of jobs, shopping, leisure and services offers a range of sustainable travel choices and to ensure that development takes place where travel choice exists.

8.249 Much of the Borough's population outside Stafford and Stone are living and / or working in remote rural areas where the choices of transportation modes are currently limited and the use of private car is generally a necessity. In such cases, the local authority will seek to manage the provision of off street parking and reduce the need for long distance commuting by providing adequate employment opportunities and retention of local facilities in rural areas, so as not to lead to unsustainable increases in car based travel.

Roads

8.250 The local transportation network is important for the day to day access requirements for people in Stafford Borough, particularly in the rural areas. With the scale of development that is proposed in the Core Strategy, including the Western Access Improvement scheme and the Eastern Access Improvement Scheme at Stafford, highway construction and access improvement will be necessary to cope with the proposed growth increases, some of which will also encourage the increased usage of more sustainable forms of transportation. Staffordshire County Council currently identify a number of protected routes within Stafford Borough.

8.251 Development that would generate large levels of traffic should have good access links to the main transportation networks in the Borough to avoid long distance trips that would potentially increase the overall levels of congestion on the road network . Furthermore, it is also critical for safety reasons that new developments do not generate increased usage of heavy goods vehicles along roads which are unequipped for such traffic.

Public Transport

8.252 The key objective is to increase car parking at the Stafford and Stone stations to help further increase patronage levels. The Government has identified a need for additional car parking, particularly at Stafford Rail Station, as part of the West Coast Main Line Strategy, to attract more passengers onto longer distance services. This strategy will help bring about a modal shift from the car to more sustainable transportation.

8.253 Buses have a major role to play to help reduce traffic congestion and improve accessibility to key services. To achieve this, buses need to offer a realistic alternative to the private car and be reliable, frequent and accessible together with bus priority measures for key public transport corridors. Improved passenger comfort, integration with other modes, readily available travel information and through ticketing are essential elements.

8.254 The third [Staffordshire County Council Local Transport Plan](#) beyond 2011 outlines the main improvements that Staffordshire County Council will be implementing for the conventional bus network over this period. The quality of the infrastructure, accessibility, ticketing and real-time passenger will be improved. These improvements will be accomplished through the introduction of a high quality inter-urban bus network; improving the accessibility to key services; improving punctuality and reliability of services and implementing multi operator ticketing. In rural areas, improvements in links between the outlying rural villages and the larger settlements will also be important in increasing accessibility to local services and facilities to reduce social exclusion.

Walking and Cycling

8.255 The Council will work closely with cycling groups and have a very productive relationship with the national Sustainable Transport organisation Sustrans, who are developing the National Cycle network, having delivered links into the National Network in Stafford Borough. Stafford Borough's cycling network will be extended with new routes being added and many others being extended as part of the Borough's commitment to more sustainable forms of transport. Staffordshire County Council are currently preparing a Cycling Policy document to be considered by new developments in the future.

8.256 The Council will provide a range of cycle infrastructure in Stafford, Stone, the major villages, major public buildings, education facilities, tourism and leisure facilities to facilitate a greater uptake of cycling in the borough.

8 Policies

8.257 In accordance with the Council's commitment to sustainable transport we will work with Staffordshire County Council Highways Authority to provide a cycle network in accordance with the following principles; cyclists should generally where possible be accommodated on the carriageway in areas with low traffic volumes and speeds, where traffic volumes are high separate cycle lanes will be provided; cyclists will be provided with direct, barrier-free routes with smooth surfaces that minimise the need for cyclists to dismount. Furthermore, a key priority of the council is to consider the needs of cyclists in the provision of new roads, traffic management and environmental schemes.

8.258 Cyclists are particularly sensitive to traffic conditions. High speeds or high volumes of traffic tend to discourage cycling. If traffic conditions are inappropriate for on-street cycling, the factors contributing to them need to be addressed, if practical, to make on-street cycling satisfactory.

8.259 The Council is committed to improving pedestrian facilities and will negotiate with developers to make improvements which enable the urban environment to become more pedestrian friendly. These facilities will include improvements to the architecture of pedestrian crossing roads; improvements to pedestrian movement around new developments and the creation of safe pedestrian routes for people of all ages, sizes and abilities particularly children and disabled people.

Development Management Policy 25

Parking and Manoeuvring Facilities

The level of car parking provided should be in accordance with the parking standards set out in Appendix B. These, together with residential parking and the level of cycle parking, will be assessed on a flexible site by site basis depending on the provision of public transport and access to local services.

All new development must:

- a. Have safe and adequate means of access, egress and internal circulation / turning arrangements for all modes of transport relevant to the proposal;
- b. Not materially impair highway safety or traffic movement; and
- c. Not detract or conflict with the transport function of the road.

There may be scope to reduce provision to less than maximum standards, but this would be dependent upon:

- The site's relative accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport
- The measures both on-site and off-site that the developer provides to improve its accessibility
- The content of a Travel Plan, in particular the targets, measures and the parking management regime
- The predicted traffic generation
- The ability of mixed use developments to share parking space due to operational arrangements of the different land uses
- The scope for developments to use existing and conveniently available public car parking supply in off-peak periods

Where parking cannot be provided on-site, planning obligations may be sought towards safe and convenient off-site parking provision, and improving or extending public parking facilities.

Question 57

Do you agree with the contents of the Parking and Manoeuvring policy?

Development Management Policy 26

Rights of Way

The layout and design of development proposals will need to ensure provision and improvements in the safety, convenience and attractiveness of facilities for all users and the Public Rights of Way network by:

1. Requiring new developments to include facilities which link to the surrounding Rights of Way network and where feasible are well connected to local centres, public transport facilities and other parts of the settlement;
2. Investigating the possibility of improving existing and creating new facilities, including where appropriate combined walking / cycling / horse-riding routes;
3. Ensuring that all new facilities are designed to encourage their use and to be safe and convenient; and
4. Ensuring that existing public footpaths and bridleways and the enjoyment of them will not be adversely affected by new development, particularly where the Right of Way forms part of a designated National Route and that where diversions of Public Rights of Way are proposed these will only be supported where the alternative route will be equally or more pleasant and convenient.

Improvements will be sought to existing networks through the promotion of new linkages within settlements. Proposals will not be permitted if the function of the existing facilities would be compromised or the Public Right of Way adversely affected.

Question 58

Do you agree with the contents of the Rights of Way policy?

Question 59

Do you agree with the contents of the policies? Are there any policies that are currently missing that you think should be included?

Local Monitoring and Review 9

Local Monitoring and Review 9

9.1 The purpose of monitoring and review is to assess the delivery and implementation of the new Development Plan. The Stafford Borough Annual Monitoring Report provides a robust and effective review and monitoring approach for the Local Development Framework. The Government has set out requirements for Annual Monitoring Reports which are to be based on the period 1st April to 31st March and must be submitted to the Secretary of State no later than the end of December each year. As part of the Annual Monitoring Report information for Stafford Borough is collected and reported on the following national core indicators together with the Sustainability Appraisal indicators:

| BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT | |
|------------------------------|---|
| BD 1 | Total amount of additional employment floorspace- by type |
| BD 2 | Total amount of employment floorspace on previously developed land - by type |
| BD 3 | Employment land available by type |
| BD 4 | Total amount of floorspace for 'town centre uses' |
| HOUSING | |
| H1 | Plan period and housing targets |
| H2(a) | Net additional dwellings- in previous years |
| H2(b) | Net additional dwellings- for the reporting year |
| H2(c) | Net additional dwellings- in future years |
| H2(d) | Managed delivery target |
| H3 | New and converted dwellings on previously developed land |
| H4 | Net additional pitches (Gypsy and Traveller) |
| H5 | Gross affordable housing completions |
| H6 | Housing Quality- Building for Life Assessments |
| ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY | |
| E1 | Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality grounds. |
| E2 | Change in areas of biodiversity importance. |
| E3 | Renewable energy generation |

9.2 More locally specific indicators and targets need to be produced for the new Development Plan. Do you have any suggested local indicators and targets which should be considered in the Development Plan to assess implementation and delivery?

Next Steps 10

Next Steps 10

10.1 Please provide your responses to the Borough Council by ?? so that this information can be used in the next stage of the decision-making process.

10.2 The next stage of the process is to prepare a document called the '*Plan for Stafford Borough - Publication*', setting out policies and the broad direction for future development.

10.3 The following documentation is available providing background information relating to this document as set out below:-

- Evidence Base work on our [gathering evidence](#) page
- [Habitat Regulations Assessment](#)
- [Sustainability Appraisal](#)

10.4 If you wish to discuss this paper in more detail please contact the Forward Planning Team on 01785 619000.

10.5 If you need this information in large print, Braille, other language or on audio cassette please contact 01785 619000

Appendix A - Housing & Employment Provision 11

Appendix A - Housing & Employment Provision 11

Housing provision

The tables below sets out the housing development requirements for Stafford Borough over the Plan period 2011 - 2031 and the assumptions made. To establish how much new development is required the Council has adopted the following approach. The latest 2008 household projection figures for Stafford Borough identify a total demand, including natural change and migration, of 11,523 new homes over the period 2008 to 2033, approximately 500 per year. The total number of commitments as at 31 March 2011 are identified. In the past Stafford Borough has experienced approximately 90% of commitments being delivered as completions. Furthermore the outstanding allocations in the Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 have not been included within the existing commitments figure.

As part of the Stafford Borough Local Development Framework's evidence base a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) was produced in January 2009 and subsequently updated in January 2010 and June 2011. This is a key element of the evidence base to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing to meet the Borough's future needs. The SHLAA is also required by national planning policy set out in [Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing \(PPS3\)](#). The Borough Council has also recently published an updated '5 year land supply statement'.

Having established the number of commitments and SHLAA sites to be discounted and subtracted from the total requirement for Stafford Borough over the Plan period to 2031 it is possible to determine the scale of new development to be allocated through strategic development locations and other areas. However it should be noted that in the past a higher level of development has actually been delivered from existing commitments and unallocated sites so it may be necessary to phase the release of new development.

A discounting assumption has been incorporated as a flexibility allowance to ensure sufficient development is provided through the Plan, subject to annual monitoring of completions and new commitments.

In summary, based at 1 April 2011, the Council has identified that 10,000 homes (500 per year) will be required to be met from the following sources:

Table 7 Housing Provision

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Housing Requirement for Stafford Borough to include Growth Point commitment and Ministry of Defence personnel | 10,000 |
| Total Number of Commitments as at 31 March 2011 | 3,077 |
| Commitments at 31 March 2011 (discounted by 25%)* | 2,307 |
| SHLAA potential developments at 31 March 2011 | 1,715 |
| SHLAA potential developments at 31 March 2011 (discounted by 75%)* | 429 |
| Potential Number of New Homes required | 7,000 |
| Of which Stafford Town (approx) | 5,500 |
| Of which Stone (approx) | 500 |
| Of which rest of the Borough (approx) | 1,000 |

(10)

10 * A discounting assumption has been incorporated as a flexibility allowance to ensure sufficient development is provided through the Plan, subject to annual monitoring of completions and new commitments.

11 Appendix A - Housing & Employment Provision

Employment Provision

The population of Stafford Borough will grow substantially over the plan period. Therefore it will be necessary to provide for increased employment in the principal settlements of Stafford town and Stone town as well as smaller provision of employment land in rural areas to provide a sustainable, balanced, vibrant and self reliant places in which to live and work.

The employment requirement for Stafford Borough is 160 hectares between 2011 - 2031 with provision for 40 hectares to be readily available for every 5 year period. In terms of employment commitments the Meaford Power Station site, 34 hectares in total, is identified with major problems of physical condition and infrastructure by the Staffordshire Employment Land Availability Survey 2009 whilst 8.7 hectares at Hixon Airfield has been allocated in the Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 but not been developed to date. The [Employment Land Review 2009](#) identifies potential employment land as well as planning commitments. This study applied market testing to the portfolio of land to ensure sites are suitable both in type and quality and in their location. In the past employment land completions have taken some time to come forward despite being allocated in the [Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001](#). Therefore due to lengthy lead-in times for new employment development a phasing approach will not be applied to employment land. Furthermore to ensure there is sufficient flexibility included in future provision only 75% of planning commitments have been accounted for, thus incorporating a 25% flexibility allowance to ensure a range of locations are available for development.

Existing allocations and expiring permissions for employment land have been reviewed to see whether reallocation for alternative uses would provide for more sustainable development. The provision of new employment land should complement rather than duplicate the existing stock of sites by creating a more diverse land portfolio increasingly able to meet different market requirements as they arise. New employment sites should be located and defined having regard to their viability, feasibility for implementation and capability for commencement during the Plan period.

In summary, based at 1 April 2011, the Council has identified that 160 hectares of new employment land will be required to be met from the following sources:

Table 8 Employment Provision

| | |
|---|------------|
| Employment Requirement for Stafford Borough (Hectares) | 160 |
| Total Number of Commitments as at 31 March 2011 | 89.9 |
| Commitments at 31 March 2011 (discounted by 25%*) | 67.4 |
| Potential land area of employment required | 93 |
| Of which Stafford Town (approx) | 63 |
| Of which Stone (approx) | 18 |
| Of which rest of the Borough (approx) | 12 |

Appendix B - Car Parking Standards 12

12 Appendix B - Car Parking Standards

Stafford Borough Car Parking Standards

The car parking standards detailed below should generally be taken as a maximum requirement, however, the Borough Council will judge the individual circumstances of each proposed development. For example, a proposal to change the use of an existing building on a restricted site may not be able to meet the standard for the new use. However, even in these cases it will be a basic requirement that no traffic hazard or nuisance should be caused. Any under or over provision of parking will need to be justified by clear material evidence.

The types of development are laid out below:

Commercial Development

Class C1 - Hotels and Hostels

1 garage or parking space per resident staff plus 1 space per 3 non-resident staff at peak working times plus 1 space per bedroom. If other facilities such as bars, restaurants, shops, health clubs are open to non-residents the relevant standards for those uses will also be relevant. Where a developer considers it is not necessary to achieve 100% for the other uses, this must be supported by a clear justification.

Class C2 - Residential Institutions

(i) Residential Care Establishments. 1 garage or parking space per resident staff plus 1 space per non-resident staff present at peak working times plus 1 space per 3 bed spaces for visitors. An ambulance space should also be provided in a position which would not impede site access but located as close as possible to the main entrance of the establishment.

(ii) Hospitals. 1 garage or parking space per resident staff plus 1 space per Doctor, Surgeon or Consultant plus 1 space per 3 other staff plus 1 space per 3 beds for visitors. Additional spaces may be required if an out patients or casualty department exists at the hospital.

(iii) Nursing Homes. 1 space per resident staff plus 1 space per non-resident staff present at peak working times plus 1 space per 3 bed spaces for visitors. An ambulance space should also be provided in a position which would not impede site access but located as close as possible to the main entrance of the establishment.

(iv) Residential Schools (Pupils up to 18 years). 1 garage or parking space per resident member of staff plus 1 per 2 non-resident plus 1 per 20 pupils for parents/visitors.

(v) University, Residential Colleges and Training Centres (Students 16 years plus). 1 garage or parking space per resident staff plus 1 space per non-resident staff plus 1 space per 4 students plus 1 space per 100 students for visitors.

Car/ Other Vehicle Showrooms and Related Services

(i) Car Sales: The staff parking requirement will be as for Class B1 (offices). Customer parking should be provided at a rate of 1 space per 40 square metres of gross sales floor areas plus 1 space per 10 outside display places. Ancillary Workshop/Storage Areas and Parts Departments. 3 car/lorry spaces as appropriate per service bay plus 1 space per 50 square metres for staff and other customer parking.

(ii) General Vehicle Repair and Servicing Garages. 3 car/lorry spaces as appropriate per service bay plus 1 space per 50 square metres for staff.

(iii) Car washing facilities. 5 queuing spaces.

(iv) Specialist Vehicle Repair Centres (i.e. tyres, exhausts etc). 3 car/lorry spaces as appropriate per service bay plus 1 space per 40 square metres of staff parking.

Where retail sales are also present at a facility the appropriate Class A1 standard will normally be required. Spaces will also be required for articulated vehicles and deliveries.

Appendix B - Car Parking Standards 12

Retail Development

Class A1 - Shops

(i) In town centres where public car parking is normally available and is sufficient to meet current and expected demand from the proposed development there will be no requirement for additional provision subject to no loss of existing facilities. On edge of centres or elsewhere 1 space per 20 m² gross floor area up to 1000m² and 1 space per 14m² thereafter.

(ii) Food Retail Units- 1 space per 14m² of gross floor area.

(iii) Retail Warehousing- 1 space per 20m² of gross floor area plus 1 per 100m² for staff parking. Where retail warehouses include garden centres/DIY a higher standard of 1 space per 15m² of gross floor area will be required for customer parking.

Class A3 - Restaurants, pubs and Cafes

In town centres where public car parking is normally available and is sufficient to meet current and expected demand from the proposed development there will be no requirement for additional provision subject to no loss of existing facilities. 1 garage or parking space will be required for each resident staff in any location. Otherwise the following standards will apply; 1 space for 2 staff employed at peak operating times plus 1 space per 5m² or 4 seats in dining/bar areas.

Hot Food Takeaway

2 spaces plus 1 space per 5m² of public floor space for customers. These standards may be relaxed or waived where public parking is readily available nearby.

Transport Cafes

1 space per 3 staff employed at peak working times plus 1 lorry space per 3m² of public floor space.

Business and Industry

Class B1(a) - Offices

1 space per 25m² gross floor area up to 250m² then 1 space per 30 square metres thereafter.

Class B1(b&c) - Research and Development and Light Industry

1 space per 35m² up to 235m² gross floor space; 1 space per 60m² thereafter.

Class B2 - Industry

1 space per 25 m² gross floor space up to 250m² then 1 space per 50 m² thereafter. In cases where ancillary office space does not exceed 100m² no additional provision is necessary, thereafter 1 space per 25m² will be required.

Class B8 - Storage and Distribution

1 space per 80m² of gross floor area in the case of large scale storage and distribution facilities.

12 Appendix B - Car Parking Standards

Residential

The number of car parking spaces required for each residential type is set out below. It is also important, to locate spaces as near as possible to dwellings and to avoid large and unattractive areas of open parking to screen car parking with landscape or structures as far as possible. Indicative diagrams showing car-parking bay dimensions and best/worst practice layouts are included at the end of this chapter.

Class C3 Residential Dwellings

1. Detached or semi-detached

(a) up to 3 bedrooms - 2 spaces (2.4 x 4.8m) for residents and visitors within curtilage of dwelling;

(b) 4 or more bedrooms - 3 spaces (2.4 x 4.8m) for residents and visitors within the curtilage of the dwelling. An extension of a smaller dwelling to 4 or more bedrooms would normally be expected to meet this standard.

2. Forms other than Detached/Semi-Detached

(a) up to 2 bedrooms - 1 space per dwelling plus 1 space per 4 dwellings for visitors. Spaces should be provided within curtilage of dwelling if possible, otherwise communally within curtilage of the development and wherever possible within sight of dwelling and/or within 45 metres thereof;

(b) 3 or more bedrooms - 2 spaces per dwelling plus 1 per 4 for visitors. Spaces should be provided within the curtilage of the dwelling if possible, otherwise communally within the curtilage of the development and wherever possible within sight of the dwelling and/or within 45 metres thereof.

3. Sheltered Housing/Elderly Persons Housing. 1 space per 4 dwellings plus 2 spaces per resident staff plus 1 space per non-resident staff present at peak working times. If development comprises owner-occupied dwellings 1 space per dwelling should be provided communally, preferably adjacent to, but no more than 45 metres from the dwelling, to allow for resident and visitor parking.

4. Residential Conversions, including Flats. 1 space per dwelling plus 1 per 4 dwellings for visitors where possible within the curtilage of the original dwelling. Where conversions provide for more than 2 bedrooms per unit, parking requirements will be based on merits of the proposed development. These standards may be relaxed if the dwellings are provided by a Housing Association or on a shared equity basis.

5. Houses in Multiple Occupation. 1 space per 2 bedsits or bedrooms wherever possible within curtilage of original dwelling.

Leisure Facilities

Class D2 - Assembly and Leisure

(i) Cinemas, Theatres, Bingo and Concert Halls. 1 space per senior member of staff plus 1 space per 10 seats in town centres or 1 space per 4 seats for out of centre developments.

(ii) Halls, Community Centres, Clubs, Dance Halls - Discotheque. 1 per senior/resident staff plus 1 per 3 other staff normally present at peak working times plus 1 per 5 square metres of public floor area for customers.

(iii) Sports and Leisure Centres. 1 space per 2 members of staff present at peak work times; 1 space per 20 square meters indoor playing area for participating customers; 3 spaces per squash court; 1 space per 2 players/officials capable of using outdoor playing space at any one time; 1 space per 10 square metres of swimming pool surface area plus 1 space per 4 seats for spectators; 3 spaces per bowling alley lane; 1 space per snooker or pool table.

(iv) Tennis, Golf, Bowling (Greens) 1 space per 3 square metres of indoor public floor area; 2 spaces per green/court; 1 space per lane of any driving range.

Appendix B - Car Parking Standards 12

(v) Cricket, Football, Rugby. 1 space per 3 square metres of public floor area of buildings; 3 spaces for each team capable of using the facility at any one time.

If areas within the facility are convertible to another use having a higher parking standard requirement, the higher standard will be applied. If bars, restaurants, shops and other ancillary facilities are provided, additional provision should be made at half the appropriate standard for those uses.

In town centres where public car parking is normally available there will be no requirement for additional non-operational parking provision subject to no loss of existing parking facilities and consideration by the Council of potential additional vehicle attraction to the town centre as result of the development.

Other Categories

Class D1 - Non-residential Institutions

(i) Health Centres, Surgeries and Consulting Rooms. 1 space per medical practitioner plus 1 space per staff member present at peak working times plus 3 spaces per consulting room/cubicle.

(ii) Creches, Nurseries and Day Centres. 1 space per 2 staff normally present at peak working times, plus 1 space per 5 child placements and/or adequate pick up/set down points within the curtilage of the facility. Where possible emergency vehicle access should also be provided which cannot be obstructed by any of the above parking provision.

(iii) Schools for Pupils up to 18 years. 1 space per full-time staff member plus 1 space per 30 pupils for parents/visitors.

(iv) Colleges for Students over 16 years. 1 space per full-time staff member plus 2 spaces per 5 students plus 1 space per 4 academic/administrative staff for visitors.

(v) Art Galleries, Museums, Libraries, Public Reading Rooms and Exhibition Halls. 1 space per full-time staff member plus 1 space per 30 square metres public floor area for visitors. In town centres where public parking is available, the need for visitor parking may be relaxed.

(vi) Places of Worship. 1 space per resident member of clergy or staff plus 1 per 2 other clergy/staff plus 1 per 10 seats. If the facility comprises another community use an assessment will have to be made with reference to the standard for community centres and halls.

Appendix C - List of Local Plan Policies replaced 13

Appendix C - List of Local Plan Policies replaced 13

| Local Plan Policies | LDF policy |
|--|--|
| INT 1 Planning Obligations | Core Policy 11: Planning Obligations |
| E & D1 - General Requirements | Core Policy 1: Guiding Principles |
| E & D2 - Consideration of Landscape or Townscape Setting | Core Policy 23: Design |
| E & D3 - Disabled Access Requirements of New Developments | Core Policy 23: Design |
| E & D4 – Sewage, Effluent and Surface Water | Core Policy 5: Climate Change |
| E & D5 – Noise Attenuation Requirements | Development Management Policy 16: Potential “Nuisance” Industrial Activities |
| E & D7 – Development in the Countryside | Core Policy 10: Development in the Countryside |
| E & D8 – Loss of High Quality Agricultural Land | Not to be replaced |
| E & D9 – New Buildings in the Open Countryside | Core Policy 10: Development in the Countryside |
| E & D10 – Inappropriate Development in the Green Belt | Core Policy 17: Green Belt |
| E & D11 – Re-Use of Buildings in the Green Belt | Development Management Policy 6: Re-Use of Buildings in the Green Belt |
| E & D12 – Infill Development of Major Developed Sites | Core Policy 17: Green Belt |
| E & D13 – Redevelopment of Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt | Core Policy 17: Green Belt |
| E & D14 – Minor Infill Development within Settlements | Core Policy 2: Spatial Strategy and Core Policy 8: Development outside Stafford and Stone |
| E & D15 – Agricultural and Forestry Buildings | Core Policy 2: Spatial Strategy and Core Policy 8: Development outside Stafford and Stone |
| E & D16 – Agricultural Diversification | Core strategy Policy 8: Development outside Stafford and Stone and Core Policy 20: Local Economy |
| E & D17 – Adaptation or Re-Use of Existing Rural Buildings | Core Policy 10: Development in the Countryside |
| E & D18 – Development Likely to Affect Conservation Areas | Core Policy 24: Historic Environment |
| E & D19 – Accommodating New Development within Conservation Areas | Core Policy 24: Historic Environment |
| E & D20 – Demolition of Buildings in Conservation Areas | Core Policy 24: Historic Environment |
| E & D21 – Advertisements in Conservation Areas | Core Policy 24: Historic Environment |
| E & D22 – Proposals for Blinds, Canopies and Shutters | Core Policy 24: Historic Environment |
| E & D23 – Development Proposals Affecting Listed Buildings | Core Policy 24: Historic Environment |

13 Appendix C - List of Local Plan Policies replaced

| Local Plan Policies | LDF policy |
|---|---|
| E & D24 – Demolition/Partial demolition of Listed Buildings | Core Policy 24: Historic Environment |
| E & D25 – Proposals to Convert or Extend a Listed Building | Core Policy 24: Historic Environment |
| E & D26 – Protected Open Space | Core Policy 25: Open Space, Sport and Recreation |
| E & D27 – Green Network | Core Policy 14: The Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure |
| E & D28 – Landscape Conservation | Development Management Policy 4: Landscape Character |
| E & D29 – Areas of Designated Landscape Value | Development Management Policy 4: Landscape Character |
| E & D30 – Mitigation of Impact on the Landscape | Development Management Policy 4: Landscape Character |
| E & D31 – Cannock Chase AONB | Core Policy 15: Cannock Chase AONB |
| E & D33 – Preservation of Archaeological Remains | Core Policy 24: Historic Environment |
| E & D34 – Archaeological Evaluations | Core Policy 24: Historic Environment |
| E & D35 – Historic Parks and Gardens | Core Policy 24: Historic Environment |
| E & D36 – Nature Conservation: General Requirements in Consideration of Planning Applications | Core Policy 14: The Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure |
| E & D37 – Nature Conservation: Sites of International Importance | Development Management Policy 5: Safeguarding the integrity of European Sites |
| E & D38 – Nature Conservation: Sites of National Importance | Development Management Policy 3: Sites of National & Local Nature Conservation Importance |
| E & D39 – Nature Conservation: Sites of Regional/Local Importance | Development Management Policy 3: Sites of National & Local Nature Conservation Importance |
| E & D40 – Mitigation and Amelioration of Impact on Sites of Nature Conservation Value | Development Management Policy 3: Sites of National & Local Nature Conservation Importance |
| E & D42 – Tree Preservation Orders | Core Policy 23: Design |
| E & D43 – Trees in Conservation Areas | Core Policy 24: Historic Environment |
| E & D44 - Development Affecting Trees and Hedgerows | Development Management Policy 4: Landscape Character |
| E & D45 – Protection of Ancient Woodlands | Development Management Policy 3: Sites of National & Local Nature Conservation Importance |
| E & D47 – The Submission of Landscaping Schemes | Not to be replaced |
| E & D48 – Landscape Proposals Submitted with Planning Applications | Not to be replaced |
| E & D50 – Land Drainage and Flooding Considerations | Core Policy 13: Climate Change |

Appendix C - List of Local Plan Policies replaced 13

| Local Plan Policies | LDF policy |
|--|--|
| E & D51 – Ground Water Resources | Core Policy 13: Climate Change |
| E & D52 – Development and Water-Based Environments | Not to be replaced |
| E & D53 – Protected Water Resources | Core Policy 13: Climate Change |
| E & D54 – Re-Use of Vacant Land and Buildings | Development Management Policy 22: re-use of vacant land and buildings |
| E & D55 – Development on Contaminated Land | Core Policy 13: Climate Change |
| HOU1 – Development in Existing Residential Areas | Core Policy 1: Spatial Strategy |
| HOU2 – Development Within Residential Development Boundaries | Core Policy 1: Spatial Strategy |
| HOU3 – Residential Development Outside RDBs | Core Policy 10: Development in the Countryside |
| HOU4 – Agricultural and Forestry Workers Dwellings | Core Policy 10: Development in the Countryside and Development Management Policy 12: Rural exception Housing |
| HOU5 – Residential Development: Layout and Design | Core Policy 23: Design |
| HOU6 – Defining Private and Public Areas | Core Policy 23: Design |
| HOU7 – Public Open Space Requirements for New Residential Development | Core Policy 25: Open Space, Sport and Recreation |
| HOU8 – Loss of Open Spaces within Residential Areas | Core Policy 25: Open Space, Sport and Recreation |
| HOU9 – Commuted Sums for Open Space Provision | Core Policy 25: Open Space, Sport and Recreation |
| HOU10 – Subdivision of Existing Residential Property | Development Management Policy 10: Housing Conversions and Subdivisions |
| HOU11 – Replacement Dwellings | Development Management Policy 7: Replacement Dwellings |
| HOU12 – Abandonment of Residential Use | Development Management Policy 7: Replacement Dwellings |
| HOU13 – Extensions to Dwellings | Development Management Policy 8: Extensions to Dwellings |
| HOU14 – Extensions to Dwellings Outside Residential Development Boundaries | Development Management Policy 8: Extensions to Dwellings |
| HOU15 – Structures Treated as Extensions | Not to be replaced |
| HOU16 – Extensions of the Curtilage of a Dwelling | Development Management Policy 9 – Extensions of the Curtilage of a Dwelling |
| HOU17 – Provision of Affordable Housing | Core Policy 19: Affordable Housing |
| HOU18 – Subsidised Affordable Housing | Core Policy 19: Affordable Housing |
| HOU19 – Affordable Housing on Exceptions Sites | Development Management Policy 12: Rural exception housing |

13 Appendix C - List of Local Plan Policies replaced

| Local Plan Policies | LDF policy |
|---|---|
| HOU20 – The Needs of the Elderly and the Disabled | Core Policy 18: Dwelling types and sizes |
| EMP1 – Protection of Employment Land | Core Policy 20: Local Economy |
| EMP2 – Development within Recognised Industrial Estates | Development Management Policy: Development within and outside Recognised Industrial Estates |
| EMP3 – Expansion of Existing Industrial Uses | Development Management Policy: Development within and outside Recognised Industrial Estates |
| EMP4 – Potential “Nuisance” Industrial Activities | Development Management Policy 16: Potential “Nuisance” Industrial Activities |
| EMP5 – Office Development | Core Policy 3: Stafford Town and Core Policy Policy 7: Stone Town |
| EMP6 – B1 Uses in Primarily Residential Areas | Development Management Policy 16: Potential “Nuisance” Industrial Activities |
| EMP7 – Re-use of Existing Buildings | Development Management Policy 21: Re-use of vacant land and buildings |
| EMP8 – Parking and Manoeuvring Facilities | Development Management Policy 24: Parking and Manoeuvring Facilities |
| EMP9 – Design and Landscaping | Core Policy 23: Design |
| EMP10 – Implementation of Landscaping Schemes | Not to be replaced |
| EMP11 – Future Employment Land Provision | Core strategy 1: Spatial Strategy |
| SHO1 – Retail Proposals General Requirements | Core Policy 21: Town, Village and District Centres |
| SHO2 – Core Primary and Primary Retail Frontages | Development Management Policy 18: Primary & Secondary Retail Frontages |
| SHO3 – Secondary Retail Frontages | Development Management Policy 18: Primary & Secondary Retail Frontages |
| SHO4 – Vacant and Upper Floors | Development Management Policy 19: Vacant and upper floors |
| SHO5 – Class A3 Uses | Development Management Policy 17: Class A3, A4 & A5 Uses |
| SHO15 – Small Scale Retail Development | Development Management Policy 21: New retail and leisure development outside the defined town centres |
| SHO16 – Design Consideration for New Retail Development | Core Policy 23: Design |
| RLT1 – Protection of Land with Recreation Value | Core Policy 25: Open Space, Sport and Recreation |
| RLT2 – Loss of Playing Fields and Sports Pitches | Core Policy 25: Open Space, Sport and Recreation |
| RLT3 – Allotment Gardens | Core Policy 25: Open Space, Sport and Recreation |
| RLT4 – Recreation and Tourist Facilities in the Countryside | Core Policy 22: Tourism |

Appendix C - List of Local Plan Policies replaced 13

| Local Plan Policies | LDF policy |
|---|--|
| RLT5 – Ancillary Development Associated with Recreational Uses | Core Policy 25: Open Space, Sport and Recreation |
| RLT6 – Golf Related Development | Core Policy 25: Open Space, Sport and Recreation |
| RLT7 – Rights of Way and Equestrian Development | Development Management Policy 25: Rights of Way |
| RLT8 – Water Based Recreation | Core Policy 22: Tourism |
| RLT9 – Canal Related Development | Development Management Policy 22: Canal facilities and new marinas |
| RLT10 – Recreational Activities Causing Noise or Other Nuisance | Development Management Policy 16: Potential “Nuisance” Industrial Activities |
| RLT11 – Areas of High Scenic Quality | Development Management Policy 4: Landscape Character |
| RLT12 – Development Affecting Public Rights of Way | Development Management Policy 25: Rights of Way |
| RLT13 – Development of Tourist and Visitor Attractions | Core Policy 22: Tourism |
| RLT14 – Hotels and Guest Houses | Core Policy 22: Tourism |
| RLT15 – Extensions to Existing Visitor Accommodation | Core Policy 22: Tourism |
| RLT16 – Touring Caravan and Camping Sites | Core Policy 22: Tourism |
| RLT17 – Holiday Chalets and Static Caravans | Core Policy 22: Tourism |
| RLT18 – Self Catering Holiday Accommodation | Core Policy 22: Tourism |
| RLT19 – Accommodating New Development at Trentham Garden Estate | Development Management Policy 23: New Development at Trentham Gardens Estate |
| RLT20 – Appropriate Infill Uses at Trentham Gardens Estate | Development Management Policy 23: New Development at Trentham Gardens Estate |
| MV1 – Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles | Not to be replaced |
| MV2 – The Introduction of Traffic Calming measures | Core Policy 26: Transport |
| MV3 – Site Specific Proposals | Not to be replaced |
| MV4 – Cycle Routes and Cycle Parking | Core Policy 26: Transport |
| MV5 – Public Transport: Access for the Disabled | Core Policy 26: Transport |
| MV6 – Traffic Management and the Disabled | Core Policy 26: Transport |
| MV7 – Proposed New Roads | Not to be replaced |
| MV8 – Protected Routes | Not to be replaced |
| MV9 – New and Improved Highways | Core Policy 26: Transport |
| MV10 – Land Development Requirements | Development Management Policy 24: Parking and Manoeuvring Facilities |
| MV11 – Parking Requirements for Town and Settlement for Town and Settlement Centres | Development Management Policy 24: Parking and Manoeuvring Facilities |

13 Appendix C - List of Local Plan Policies replaced

| Local Plan Policies | LDF policy |
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| MV12 – Parking Requirements in Other Locations | Development Management Policy 24: Parking and Manoeuvring Facilities |

Glossary 14

14 Glossary

Glossary

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| Affordable Housing | Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. It includes social rented, shared ownership homes and key worker housing |
| Allocations | Sites specified on the proposals map for development. |
| Annual Monitoring Report | Part of the Local Development Framework which the Council is required to prepare annually showing progress in preparing Local Development Documents compared to targets in the Local Development Scheme, and monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of its policies and proposals in Local Development documents. |
| Appropriate Assessment | The purpose of appropriate assessment is to ensure that protection of the integrity of European sites, which are of exceptional importance in respect of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species, such as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), as part of the planning process. |
| Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) | Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a national designation to protect areas of landscape importance. |
| Biodiversity | The whole variety of life encompassing all genetics, species and ecosystem variations, including plants and animals. |
| Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) | A framework used to achieve the conservation of biodiversity based on the targeting resources towards specific priorities. |
| Building Research Environment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) | An assessment method used to determine the environmental performance of new and existing commercial buildings. |
| Brownfield sites | 'Previously-developed land is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. |
| Building for Life (Bfl) | A CABI initiative to improve the design of new housing schemes through assessing the design quality using 20 criteria. |
| Commissioners for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABI) | CABI is a Government agency that promotes good design to improve the built environment in England. |
| Climate Change | Refers to the impact of human activities on the planet which is melting ice caps, raising sea levels, changing weather patterns and raising global temperatures. |
| Code for Sustainable Homes | The Code is the national standard for the sustainable design and construction of new homes. The Code aims to reduce our carbon emissions and create homes that are more sustainable. |
| Community Strategy | The plan which Local Strategic Partnerships are required to prepare for improving the economic, environmental and social well being of local areas and by which Councils are expected to co-ordinate the actions of the public, private, voluntary and community organisations that operate locally. |

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| Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) | CIL is a new charge that Local authorities can levy on development to ensure that it contributes to infrastructure costs. |
| Conservation Area | An area of special architectural and / or historic interest that deserves preservation or enhancement of its character or appearance. |
| Core Strategy | A Development Plan Document setting out the spatial vision and objectives of the planning framework for the Borough. |
| Department of Community and Local Government (DCLG) | The government department responsible for local and regional government, housing, planning, regeneration, social exclusion and neighbourhood renewal to enable the creation sustainable communities. |
| Design and Access Statements (DAS) | Statements are documents that explain the design thinking behind a planning application. These include a written description and justification of the planning application. |
| Development Brief | This is a document which builds upon the scope of local planning policies to guide development proposals for large, complex and/or important sites. |
| Development Management | This is the function of the Council which determines planning applications. |
| Development Plan Document (DPD) | The statutory plan setting out the local planning authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land and buildings in the authority's area. |
| Environment Agency (EA) | Public body charged with protecting and improving the environment in England and Wales. |
| European Site | These are sites that are afforded the highest levels of protection in the UK through European legislation. They include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), candidate (cSAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), proposed (pSPA), European offshore Marine Sites and Ramsar. |
| Flood Risk | This refers to the probability that a river or watercourse will flood and the effect on any particular site or area of land. |
| Gypsies and Travellers | These are persons of a nomadic habitat, but also includes people who may have stopped travelling. |
| Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA) | An assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirements over the lifetime of the plan period. |
| Highways Agency | Executive agency of the Department for Transport which manages and maintains the motorway and trunk road network in England. |
| Greenbelt | The statutory designated open land in the north of the borough (North Staffordshire greenbelt) and the South of the Borough (West Midlands Greenbelt) |
| Greenfield site | Land (or a defined site) usually farmland, that has not previously been developed |

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| Green Infrastructure (GI) | A network of green spaces and natural elements that intersperse and connect our towns and villages. It is the open spaces, waterways, gardens, woodlands, green corridors, wildlife habitats, street trees, natural heritage and open countryside. |
| Highways Agency | The Government agency responsible for key trunk roads and motorways such as the M6. |
| Housing Trajectory | This shows the net and expected housing completions on a year and year basis as measured against the regional target |
| Independent Examination | An examination held in public by a Government appointed Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate. |
| Infrastructure | Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities. |
| Key Diagram | May be used to illustrate the broad strategy for the area, including locations for change or strategic development, major transportation issues, and main patterns of movement and constraints. It provides the means to show links and relationships with other strategies and with the plans of neighbouring areas |
| Lifetime Homes | A housing standard developed by the Joseph Rowntree Federation that enables new housing to be designed to meet the changing needs of the occupiers over time. There are 16 design features to be fulfilled to obtain lifetime homes standard. |
| Listed Building | A building that has statutory protection due to its special architectural or historic interest. The grades of listing extend from I, II* or II with I being the highest. |
| Local Development Document (LDD) | Comprising two main types, Development Plan Documents, which will form part of the statutory development plan, and Supplementary Planning Documents, which do not. Together LDDs form the main part of the Local Development |
| Local Development Framework (LDF) | A portfolio of Local Development Documents which sets out the planning policy framework for the District. It also includes the Local Development Scheme, the Statement of Community Involvement and the Annual Monitoring Report. |
| Local Development Scheme (LDS) | A statutory document setting out the Council's programme for the preparation of Local Development Documents. |
| Local Nature Reserve (LNR) | LNRs are sites of importance for wildlife, geology, education or public enjoyment. |
| Local Transport Plan (LTP) | The Staffordshire Local Transport Plan is the statutory long-term transport strategy for the county which is used by the Department for Transport (DfT) to allocate funds for local transport improvements. |
| Mitigation Measure | A measure designed to avoid, reduce or offset adverse effects of a plan or policy. |

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| Natural England | Formed by bringing together English Nature, the Countryside Agency and the Rural Development Service. Aims to conserve and enhance the natural environment for its intrinsic value, the wellbeing and enjoyment of people and the economic prosperity that it brings. |
| Planning Obligations/ S106 agreements | These are contributions secured by the Council to help provide or fund infrastructure items or services that will help make development acceptable in planning terms. |
| Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) | Guidance produced by central Government setting out its policies on specific planning topics. Being updated and replaced by Planning Policy Statements. |
| Planning Policy Statement (PPS) | Statements produced by central Government setting out its policies on specific planning topics. Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks must take account of and conform to national planning policy. |
| Proposals Map | A map, illustrating clearly on an Ordnance Survey or similar base the spatial extent of policies and proposals, must be prepared and maintained to accompany all Development Plan Documents. This may contain inset maps, where necessary. |
| Ramsar Site | An international designation to protect areas that act as vital habitats for birds. |
| Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) | The statutory replacement for Regional Planning Guidance prepared by the West Midlands Leaders Board and issued by the Secretary of State. It forms part of Stafford Borough's statutory development plan and provides a spatial framework to inform the preparation of Local Development Documents, the Local Transport Plan and regional and sub regional strategies. |
| Registered Social Providers (RSP) | Providers of social housing that are registered with the Housing and Communities Agency (HCA). Most are housing associations but they also include trusts, co-operatives and companies. |
| Renewable Energy | Energy that is derived from sustainable sources such as solar or wind power, as opposed to non-renewable energy derived from fossil fuels such as gas and coal. |
| Rural Diversification | The expansion, enlargement or variation of the range of products or fields of operation of a rural business (branching out from traditional farming activities) |
| Secured by Design | A police initiative supporting the principles of designing out crime through the use of effective security standards and crime prevention in new developments. |
| Special Area of Conservation (SAC) | Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are strictly protected sites designated under the EC Habitats Directive. |
| Spatial Portrait | A description of the area, designed to portray its individual character, key trends and the current 'drivers for change' |
| Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) | Sites of Special Scientific Interest protected by law. |

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| Stakeholders | Individuals and organisations with an interest in a particular area or issue. |
| Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) | Sets out the Council's vision and strategy for the standards to be achieved in involving the community and stakeholders in the preparation of all Local Development Documents. |
| Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) | This is an overview of flood risk from all sources within Stafford Borough's local area. |
| Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) | A component of the LDF evidence base which examines how many houses the borough needs to build to resolve housing need problems |
| Submission Stage | When the council formally hands in documents to the Government for their assessment. |
| Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) | Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems. Measures to increase permeable surfaces in an area therefore allowing a slow release of water rather than fast run-off. |
| Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) | These cover a wide range of issues on which the plan making authority wishes to provide policies or guidance to supplement the policies and proposals in development plan documents. They do not form part of the development plan and they are not subject to independent examination. |
| Sustainability Appraisal (SA) | A tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives (i.e. social, environmental and economic factors). |
| Travelling Showpeople | These are members of a community who travel the country holding fairs and circuses but may include people who may have stopped travelling. |