The Plan For Stafford Borough
Policies Only

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# The Plan for Stafford Borough – Policies Only

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Spatial Principle 1 (SP1) - Presumption In Favour Of Sustainable Development

When considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will work proactively with applicants and communities jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with polices in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application, or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision, the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise, taking into account whether:

i. Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or

ii. Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

Spatial Principle 2 (SP2) – Stafford Borough Housing & Employment Requirements

Stafford Borough will accommodate new growth and investment over the plan period. Throughout the Borough, provision will be made for the development of 500 dwellings per year over the plan period, not including additional requirements for military housing, and provision for gypsies, as well as approximately 8 hectares per year of employment land, to provide for the future needs and prosperity of residents.

Spatial Principle 3 (SP3) – Stafford Borough Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy

The majority of future development will be delivered through the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy based on the following areas:

1. County Town of Stafford
2. Market Town of Stone
3. Key Service Villages of
   - Eccleshall
   - Gnosall
   - Hixon
   - Great Haywood
   - Haughton
   - Weston
   - Woodseaves
   - Barlaston
   - Tittensor
   - Yarnfield
**Spatial Principle 4 (SP4) Stafford Borough Housing Growth Distribution**

In order to achieve the scale of new housing identified in Spatial Principle SP2, the annual targets for the distribution of housing development, supported by necessary infrastructure, will be:

- Stafford 70%
- Stone 10%
- Key Service Villages 12%
- Rest of Borough Area 8%

**Spatial Principle 5 (SP5) – Stafford Borough Employment Growth Distribution**

In order to achieve the scale of new employment identified in Spatial Principle SP2, the annual targets for the distribution of employment land development, supported by necessary infrastructure, will be:

- Stafford 56%
- Stone 12%
- Rest of Borough Area 32%

**Spatial Principle 6 (SP6) – Achieving Rural Sustainability**

Priority will be given to supporting the rural sustainability of the Borough by protecting and enhancing its environmental assets and character whilst sustaining the social and economic fabric of its communities. This will be achieved by promoting:

i. A sustainable rural economy
ii. Conservation or improvement of the rural environment
iii. Appropriate rural housing schemes to achieve sustainable communities
iv. The appropriate re-use of redundant buildings
v. Use of sources for renewable energy

**Spatial Principle 7 (SP7) – Supporting The Location Of New Development**

Settlement Boundaries will be established for the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy defined in Spatial Principle SP3. Development or activities of a scale and nature appropriate to secure the sustainability of each settlement, where in the case of housing proposals this is consistent with the delivery of the proportions of development intended by Spatial Principles SP2, SP3 and SP4, will be supported within the Settlement Boundaries.

Development in other locations (in settlements or in the countryside) will only be supported where:

i. If located within the Green Belt, it is consistent with national policies for the control of development, and Policy E5;
ii. It is consistent with the objectives of Spatial Principles SP6, Policies E2 and C5 in supporting rural sustainability;
iii. It does not conflict with the environmental protection and nature conservation policies of the Plan;
iv. Provision is made for any necessary mitigating or compensatory measures to address any harmful implications.

Settlement Boundaries will be established in accordance with the following criteria. Prior to the establishment of the actual boundaries these principles will be used to assess the acceptability of individual proposals at the Settlements. Settlement Boundaries will be defined to ensure that development within that boundary will, in principle, be acceptable because it:

a) is in, or adjacent to, an existing settlement;
b) is of an appropriate scale to the existing settlement;
c) is accessible and well related to existing facilities;
d) is accessible by public transport, or demonstrates that the provision of such services could be viably provided;
e) is the most sustainable in terms of impact on existing infrastructure, or demonstrate that infrastructure can be provided to address development issues;
f) will not impact adversely on the special character of the area, including not impacting on important open spaces and views, all designated heritage assets including, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and locally important buildings, especially those identified in Conservation Area Appraisals;
g) will appropriately address the findings of the Landscape Character Assessment, and the conservation and enhancement actions of particular landscape policy zone / zones affected;
h) will not lead to the loss, or adverse impact on, important nature conservation or biodiversity sites;
i) will not lead to the loss of locally important open space or, in the case of housing and employment, other locally important community facilities (unless adequately replaced);
j) will not be located in areas of flood risk or contribute to flood risk on neighbouring areas;
k) will ensure adequate vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access as well as cycle and short stay parking facilities on the site; and
l) will not adversely affect the residential amenity of the locality.

Development proposals should maximise the use of brownfield redevelopment sites within the Borough’s towns and villages to reduce the need for greenfield sites. Only where insufficient sites on previously developed land, in sustainable locations, are available to meet new development requirements should greenfield sites be released.
**Policy Stafford 1 – Stafford Town**

Reflecting its role as the County Town at the head of the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy set by Spatial Principle SP3, the strategy for Stafford town will seek to enhance its role by increasing both the range and quality of services and facilities. The strategy will comprise the following elements:

**Housing**

Continue to meet the housing requirements for Stafford Town by providing a total of 7,000 new market and affordable homes, as well as additional provision for Ministry of Defence personnel:

i. Increasing the range and type of housing including a greater number of specialist houses and extra care provision for the elderly;

ii. 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 identified on the Policies Map:
   a. North of Stafford including highway and transport improvements through the Northern Access Improvements
   b. West of Stafford linked to delivery of the Western Access Improvements from Martin Drive to Doxey Road
   c. East of Stafford linked to delivery of the Eastern Access Improvements from Beaconside to St Thomas’ Lane

iii. Sites within the urban area of Stafford town will have good accessibility to services and facilities by walking, cycling and public transport;

iv. 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;

**Employment**

Create employment growth and promote economic diversification by:

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

ii. Supporting further development of Ministry of Defence land at Stafford as a military base in the West Midlands;

iii. 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;

iv. 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 identified on the Policies Map:
   a. North of Stafford
   b. East of Stafford

v. Providing facilities and sites for new start-up businesses, particularly business incubation units for knowledge-based and creative industries.
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. There is substantial evidence provided by applicants 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; and
4. The benefits arising from the development outweighs the retention of the site in its existing use.

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

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

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.

**Stafford Town Centre**

Strengthen Stafford town centre's role for the Borough to support the County Town of Stafford within the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy (Spatial Principle SP3) over the Plan period by:

i. Encouraging the development and expansion of the town centre to provide an increase of 14,000 square metres (net) of non-food (comparison) retailing and 3,400 square metres (net) of food (convenience) retailing and improve the level and quality of the offer as well as establish new development opportunities;

ii. Ensuring that there is 45,000 square metres of new office space and commercial premises within Stafford town centre;
iii. 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:
   a. Kingsmead
   b. Riverside

iv. Strengthening the retail and service function of the primary retail core / shopping area as well as protecting and enhancing its distinctiveness, vitality and viability including the night-time economy;

v. Supporting an enhanced range and diversity of educational, health, cultural and community services and facilities in the town centre;

vi. Improving accessibility to the town centre, particularly by public transport, from the rest of the Borough.

vii. B1 (a) office development should only be permitted on employment sites outside the town centres if it can be proved, through a sequential assessment, that proposed development cannot be located within the town centre or edge of centre sites.

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

Infrastructure

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

i. 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;

ii. Deliver the full Western Access Improvements, including the Western Access Route, between Martin Drive and A34 Foregate Street, the Northern Access Improvements and the Eastern Access Improvements, from Beaconside to St Thomas’ Lane;

iii. Extend existing and create new, cycle and walking paths, as an integral part of new developments in the town;

iv. Improve access to the rail station for all users and secure appropriate levels of parking for both cars and bicycles;

v. Ensuring there is adequate provision for taxis through extending existing or creating new appropriately placed taxi ranks;

vi. Ensure that new developments 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.

Provision of new Green Infrastructure (GI) for Stafford Town at Stafford Common and west of Wildwood 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 and improving the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities through new green infrastructure and by addressing specific qualitative and quantitative deficiencies. New development will support the provision of the following, through Policy I1 and Policies Stafford 2–4:

- New indoor swimming pool
- New indoor multi-use and specialist facilities including opportunities for joint use of educational/community establishments
- Increased number and quality of allotments across the town
- Improved safety and accessibility of children’s play areas
- High quality and adequately sized green spaces
- Adequate access to natural green spaces
- Improved access to multi-sport courts
- High quality range of facilities for teenagers

Tourism

Promote Stafford as a tourist destination with its unique visitor attractions and qualities by:

i. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment, the context and character of its buildings and streets, its rich heritage, archaeological interest and historic street pattern, and encouraging the sustainable use and management of heritage assets;

ii. Ensure new developments are well designed and of high quality whilst respecting the character of the townscape and skyline, and conserving sight lines to historic buildings and their setting;

iii. 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, St. Chad’s Church and St Mary’s Church by facilitating the development of innovative new tourist attractions;

iv. Improving access into the countryside by means other than by the private car, such as public transport, walking and cycling including the use of green links and the canal network.

Environment

Promote Stafford’s unique character and heritage by:

i. Ensuring that development does not damage the integrity of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC), nature conservation interests and Local Nature Reserves, as detailed in Policies N4 to N6;

ii. Ensuring that development is not located in areas of flood risk or contribute to flooding elsewhere;

iii. Ensuring that development does not harm the significance of the town’s heritage assets;

iv. Development is sympathetic to the landscape character;

v. Ensuring that new development does not harm but enhances watercourses in the town.
**Policy Stafford 2 – North Of Stafford**

Within the area North of Stafford identified on the Policies Map a sustainable, well designed mixed use development will be delivered by 2031. Any application for development on a part or the whole of the area should be consistent with a master plan for the whole Strategic Development Location. The master plan for the whole site should be produced by all developers involved in the development of the site and agreed by the Council prior to applications being submitted. Any application for a component of the whole site must be accompanied by a specific master plan which shows the relationship of the application area to the wider Strategic Development Location. The design of the application should not prejudice the delivery or design of the wider Strategic Development Location. Development must deliver the following key requirements:

**Housing**

i. Delivery of approximately 3,100 new homes with 30% being affordable housing in the context of Policy C2 through a mix of housing types, tenures, sizes and styles with proportions of 2, 3 and 4 bedroomed properties in the context of Policy C1;

ii. Provision to meet the needs of an ageing population through new extra care and specialist housing;

**Employment**

iii. At least 36 hectares of new employment land with comprehensive links for a range of transport modes across the A34 to housing development areas;

**Environment**

iv. A comprehensive drainage scheme will be delivered to enable development of the Strategic Development Location which will include measures to alleviate flooding downstream on the Marston Brook and Sandyford Brook;

v. The development will provide on-site renewable or low carbon energy solutions including associated infrastructure to facilitate site-wide renewable energy solutions in the context of Policy N2;

vi. Necessary measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of development on the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation including Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace will be provided;

vii. 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;

**Transport**

viii. An access, transport and travel plan strategy for the Strategic Development Location that maximises travel and accessibility by non-car transport modes via safe, attractive and conveniently designed street, pedestrian and cycling connections within the development and to Stafford town centre, nearby existing and new employment areas. The strategy shall identify road access points to the site and between the site and the existing settlement. It shall also identify construction access arrangements that do not disrupt existing residents
and improvements to transport capacity along the A34, A513 Beaconside Road and the Redhill roundabout;

ix. There will be an interconnected network of streets serving the development producing discernible and distinctive neighbourhoods and places integrated and linked to existing areas;

Design

x. 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, secondary education provision, a library service, health facilities and public open space;

xi. The development will be based on using sustainable construction methods in the context of Policy N2;

Infrastructure

xii. Highway capacity improvements, either through or around the perimeter of the site, or along Beaconside, will be required North of Stafford. Enhanced bus services and improved bus reliability, through bus priority, will be required along the A34 between the site and the town centre as well as real time bus passenger information, increased frequency of existing and new bus services;

xiii. Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS) required through on-site / off-site provision/ management at Cannock Chase;

xiv. Gas infrastructure serving the employment land north of Primepoint will be re-inforced. Gas infrastructure up-grading not required for the housing development other than standard connections into the system. Part of the North of Stafford Strategic Development Location extends over a National Grid high pressure gas pipeline (FM21 Audley to Alrewas). Development within the zone of influence must address the presence of the pipeline and not affect the functioning of this installation;

xv. Flood management scheme and less than greenfield surface water run-off to Sandyford Brook and Marston Brook through open water storage solutions, maximising opportunities for multi-functional open space provision;

xvi. Electricity connections and sewage capacity improvements required to meet additional housing development;

xvii. New primary school provision required as well as a new secondary school or extensions to existing secondary schools;

xviii. A new Destination Park including children’s play areas and multi-use games areas in association with SANGs requirement if provided on-site;

xix. Standard telecommunication connections will be provided to link to the Stafford exchange enabled with Superfast Fibre Access Broadband;

xx. Primary health care provision delivered by increased capacity at existing facilities.

Developer contributions will be required to provide the strategic infrastructure needed to achieve a comprehensive sustainable development at this Strategic Development Location.
Policy Stafford 3 – West Of Stafford

Within the area West of Stafford identified on the Policies Map a sustainable, well designed mixed use development will be delivered by 2031. Any application for development on a part or the whole of the area should be consistent with a master plan for the whole Strategic Development Location. The master plan for the whole site should be produced by all developers involved in the development of the site and agreed by the Council prior to applications being submitted. Any application for a component of the whole site must be accompanied by a specific master plan which shows the relationship of the application area to the wider Strategic Development Location. The design of the application should not prejudice the delivery or design of the wider Strategic Development Location. Development must deliver the following key requirements:

Housing

i. Delivery of approximately 2,200 new homes with 30% being affordable housing in the context of Policy C2, through a mix of housing types, tenures, sizes and styles with proportions of 2, 3 and 4 bedroomed properties;

ii. Provision to meet the needs of an ageing population through new extra care and specialist housing provision close to Stafford town centre;

Design

iii. The development takes place on a ‘neighbourhood’ approach with the provision of a mix of uses including local retail facilities, public open space, social and physical infrastructure, a primary school, and a community building including provision for a library service and health facilities;

iv. New small-scale employment areas providing a total of 5 hectares of new readily available land incorporated into new housing development areas;

v. The development will be based on using sustainable construction methods in the context of Policy N2;

Environment

vi. A comprehensive drainage scheme will be delivered to enable development of the Strategic Development Location which will include measures to alleviate flooding downstream on Doxey Brook and tributaries to the River Sow;

vii. The development will deliver a proportion of on-site renewable or low carbon energy solutions including associated infrastructure in the context of Policy N2;

viii. The high quality of the historic environment in this area must be taken into account and the significance of relevant heritage assets be protected and enhanced, including the setting of Stafford Castle and sight lines to St Mary’s Church in Stafford town centre;

ix. Protect nature conservation interests including Doxey Brook & Burleyfields BAS (Biodiversity Alert Site) and Doxey Marshes SSSI;

x. Necessary measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of development on the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation, including Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace will be provided;

xi. Provision of a network of multi-functional green infrastructure taking into account existing on-site features, such as hedgerows, tree lines, drainage ditches, archaeological remains,
culverted watercourses traversing the site and Public Rights of Way with play areas and green corridors allowing wildlife movement and access to open space;

**Transport**

xii. An access, transport and travel plan strategy for the Strategic Development Location that maximises travel and accessibility by non-car transport modes via safe, attractive and conveniently designed street, pedestrian and cycling connections within the development and to Stafford town centre, nearby existing and new employment areas. The strategy shall identify access points to the site and between the site and the existing settlement. It shall also identify construction access arrangements that do not disrupt existing residents and improvements to transport capacity along the A518 Newport Road and its roundabout;

xiii. Support delivery of the Western Access Improvements and associated transport improvements, specifically providing phase 1 from Martin Drive to Doxey Road;

xiv. There will be an interconnected network of streets serving the development producing discernible and distinctive neighbourhoods and places integrated and linked to existing areas, taking into account the existing Rights of Way network;

**Infrastructure**

xv. Link from Martin Drive spine road to Doxey Road with potential upgrade to railway bridge required for the development west of Stafford as part of the Stafford Western Access Improvements, together with new or enhanced bus routes as well as cycling & walking links to existing routes to the town centre and other key destinations;

xvi. Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS) required through on-site / off-site provision/ management at Cannock Chase;

xvii. Electricity connections and sewage capacity improvements required to meet additional housing development;

xviii. A new primary school will be provided, and financial contributions to support additional capacity with new provision at existing secondary schools;

xix. Creation of a new destination park for children’s play areas and multi-use games areas in association with SANGs requirement if provided on-site;

xx. Standard telecommunication connections will be provided to link to the Stafford exchange enabled with Superfast Fibre Access Broadband;

xxi. Primary health care provision delivered by increased capacity through master planning.

Developer contributions will be required to provide the strategic infrastructure needed to achieve a comprehensive sustainable development at this Strategic Development Location.

**Policy Stafford 4 – East Of Stafford**

Within the area East of Stafford identified on the Policies Map a sustainable, well designed mixed use development will be delivered by 2031. Any application for development on a part or the whole of the area should be consistent with a master plan for the whole Strategic Development Location. The master plan for the whole site should be produced by all developers involved in the development of the site and agreed by the Council prior to applications being submitted. Any application for a component of the whole site must be accompanied by a specific master plan which shows the relationship of the application area to the wider Strategic Development Location. The
design of the application should not prejudice the delivery or design of the wider Strategic Development Location. Development must deliver the following key requirements:

**Housing**

i. Delivery of approximately 600 new homes, subject to provision of phase 1 of the Eastern Access Improvements, through a mix of housing types, tenures, sizes and styles with 30% being affordable housing, in the context of Policy C2 with proportions of 2, 3 and 4 bedroomed properties;

ii. Provision to meet the needs of an ageing population through specialist housing;

**Design**

iii. The development takes place on a 'neighbourhood' approach with the provision of a mix of uses including public open space, social and physical infrastructure (including financial contributions based on additional school places on a needs basis for new facilities at existing primary and secondary schools);

iv. The development will include at least 1 acre for the future expansion of the existing cemetery/crematorium with appropriate landscaping next to adjacent housing and within new road corridors;

v. The development will be based on using sustainable construction methods in the context of Policy N2;

**Employment**

vi. At least 20 hectares of new employment land at Beacon Hill, with comprehensive links to existing and new housing development areas;

**Environment**

vii. A comprehensive drainage scheme will be delivered to enable development of the Strategic Development Location which will include measures to alleviate flooding downstream on the River Sow;

viii. The development will deliver a proportion of on-site renewable or low carbon energy solutions including associated infrastructure to facilitate site-wide renewable energy solutions in the context of Policy N2;

ix. Measures to conserve and enhance heritage assets and landscape character including St Thomas’ Priory, its setting and landscapes such as Blackheath Covert;

x. Protect nature conservation interests including Kingston Covert Site of Biological Interest;

xi. Necessary measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of development on the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation including Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace will be provided;

xii. Provision of a network of multi-functional green infrastructure including natural grasslands, play areas, green corridors allowing wildlife movement and access to open space taking into account existing on-site features such as hedgerows, drainage ditches and archaeological remains;
Transport

xiii. An access, transport and travel plan strategy for the Strategic Development Location that maximises travel and accessibility by non-car transport modes via safe, attractive and conveniently designed street, pedestrian and cycling connections within the development and to Stafford town centre, nearby existing and new employment areas. The strategy shall identify access points to the site and between the site and the existing settlement. It shall also identify construction access arrangements that do not disrupt existing residents;

xiv. The Eastern Access Improvements is a package of complementary sustainable transport measures and highway infrastructure to be funded through a combination of public funds and developer contributions. Developers in the East of Stafford will be required to provide a new link road between Beaconside and St. Thomas' Lane, sustainable transport access, potential highway capacity improvements and traffic management measures along Beaconside and Weston Road. Public funds will contribute towards further sustainable transport measures including the Baswich Walking and Cycling route between Baswich Lane and Weston Road, bus service enhancements, including real time bus passenger information, and potential highway capacity improvements along Baswich Lane;

xv. There will be an interconnected network of streets serving the development producing discernible and distinctive neighbourhoods and places integrated and linked to existing areas;

Infrastructure

xvi. Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS) required through on-site / off-site provision/ management at Cannock Chase;

xvii. Electricity connection to the grid;

xviii. Potable Water - Parts of Stafford town will require reallocation to Peasley Bank Service Reservoir from Butterhill Service Reservoir;

xix. Sewage capacity improvements required due to site topography draining to Beaconside terminal sewage pumping station linked to Brancote sewage treatment works;

xx. Gas reinforcement work required for employment sites;

xxi. Financial contributions based on a demonstrated need for additional school places at existing primary and secondary schools to meet projected growth in pupils and mitigate the education impacts of the development;

xxii. Children’s play areas and multi-use games area in association with SANGs requirement if provided on-site;

xxiii. Standard telecommunication connections will be provided to link to the Stafford exchange enabled with Superfast Fibre Access Broadband;

xxiv. Primary health care provision delivered by increased capacity at existing facilities, based on demonstrated local needs.

Developer contributions will be required to provide the strategic infrastructure needed to achieve a comprehensive sustainable development at this Strategic Development Location.
Policy Stone 1 – Stone Town

Reflecting its role as the key market town in the Borough and the second settlement of the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy set by Spatial Principle SP3, the strategy for Stone town will seek to enhance its role by increasing both its range and quality of services and facilities. The strategy will comprise the following elements:

Housing

Continue to meet the housing requirements for Stone Town by providing a total of 1,000 new market and affordable homes:

i. Increasing the range and type of housing available including a greater number of semi-detached and terraced properties and a greater number of affordable housing;
ii. 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 Strategic Development Location west of Stone identified on the Policies Map;
iii. Sites within the urban area of Stone town will have good accessibility to public transport, services and facilities;
iv. 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;

Employment

Create employment growth and promote economic diversification in Stone by:

i. 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;
ii. 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. The Strategic Development Location for a new employment site is south of Stone Business Park, identified on the Policies Map;

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. Applicants will need to provide 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; and
4. The development outweighs the retention of the sites in its existing use.
iii. 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:

1st. What remedial action / infrastructure works will be required to ensure the retention of the site;

2nd. Identification / re-allocation of the site for mixed uses; and

3rd. Identification / re-allocation of the site for an alternative use

**Stone Town Centre**

Strengthen Stone town centre's role as a Market Town within the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy (Spatial Principle SP3) by:

a. 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;
b. Provide for 1,700 square metres (net) of new convenience (food) retailing and 400 square metres (net) of new comparison (non-food) retailing at Stone town centre;
c. Increase the levels of office space and commercial premises within Stone town centre;
d. 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 specialist and niche retailers;
v. Improving and strengthening both the range and diversity of educational, health, cultural and community services and facilities in the town;
e. Facilitating improvements to the streetscape and the public realm through the enhancement of public spaces that are locally distinctive and strengthen local identity;
f. Ensuring that new development around the railway station is reserved for employment uses.

B1 (a) office development should only be permitted on employment sites outside the town centres if it can be proved, through a sequential assessment, that proposed development cannot be located within the town centre or edge of centre sites.

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

**Infrastructure**

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

i. 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;
ii. Reducing the levels of traffic congestion on A34 and the A520 road through the town centre including improvements in traffic management and public transport;
iii. Extending the existing and creating new cycle and walking paths, as an integral part of new developments;
iv. Improving access to the rail station and secure appropriate levels of parking for both cars and bicycles;
v. Ensuring there is adequate provision for taxis through extending existing or creating new appropriately placed taxi ranks;
vi. Ensuring that new developments 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.

Provision of new Green Infrastructure (GI) for Stone Town through the River Trent area as well as local area schemes for improved GI provision and biodiversity assets within and around the Town.
Facilitate upgrades to Pirehill wastewater treatment works.

Ensure that there is adequate provision of open space, sport and recreational facilities by addressing the following requirements identified in the local evidence base with reference to Sport England’s Sports Facility Calculator. New development will provide high quality facilities by ensuring:

  a) Increased and high quality of allotment provision in the town;
  b) A floodlit Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) is provided;
  c) Improved quality of play areas;
  d) Increased size of green spaces;
  e) High quality multi-use indoor sports facilities in association with community and educational establishments;
  f) Adequate range of facilities for teenagers.

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

  i. Conserving and enhancing the character of Stone town centre, its historic buildings, street patterns and rich heritage;
  ii. 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;
  iii. 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;
  iv. Improving access to the surrounding countryside by means other than the private car such as public transport, walking and cycling.

Environment

  i. Ensure that new developments adopt sustainable drainage techniques (SUDS) in order to reduce surface water flooding;
  ii. Development is sympathetic to the natural landscape;
  iii. Ensure new development protects and enhances the significance of Stone’s many heritage assets;
iv. Ensure that development does not damage the integrity of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC), nature conservation interests and Local Nature Reserves, as detailed in Policies N4 to N6.

**Policy Stone 2 – West & South of Stone**

Within the area West & South of Stone identified on the Policies Map a sustainable, well designed mixed use development will be delivered. Any application for development on a part or the whole of the area should be consistent with master plans for the sites within the Strategic Development Location. The master plans for the sites should be produced by all developers involved in the development of the sites and agreed by the Council prior to applications being submitted. Any application for a component of the whole site must be accompanied by a specific master plan which shows the relationship of the application area to the wider site as part of the Strategic Development Location. The design of the application should not prejudice the delivery or design of the wider site as part of the Strategic Development Location. Development must deliver the following key requirements:

**Housing**

i. Delivery of approximately 500 new homes with 40% being affordable housing in the context of Policy C2 through a mix of housing types, tenures, sizes and styles with proportions of 2, 3 and 4 bedroomed properties;

ii. Provision to meet the needs of an ageing population through new specialist housing;

iii. Integration with the social and physical infrastructure of the existing area and its landscape (including provision for new facilities);

**Design**

iv. Development is of a design and layout with appropriate landscaping that reduces impacts on the surrounding area and landscape;

v. The development will be based on using sustainable construction methods in the context of Policy N2;

vi. The development will provide on-site renewable or low carbon energy solutions including associated infrastructure to facilitate site-wide renewable energy solutions in the context of Policy N2;

**Employment**

vii. 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;

**Environment**

viii. Measures to alleviate flooding and surface water management on the sites and reduce associated implications for the Trent valley corridor through necessary works and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS);

ix. Provision of a network of green infrastructure, including play areas, green corridors allowing wildlife movement and access to open space;

x. Protect nature conservation interests including the Site of Biological Importance;
xi. Necessary measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of development on the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation.

**Transport**

xii. Measures to improve accessibility by non-car transport modes to Stone town centre through walking and cycling connections;

xiii. An access, transport and travel plan strategy for the Strategic Development Location that maximises travel and accessibility by non-car transport modes via safe, attractive and conveniently designed street, pedestrian and cycling connections within the development and to Stone town centre, nearby existing and new employment areas. The strategy shall identify access points to the site and between the site and the existing settlement. It shall also identify construction access arrangements that do not disrupt existing residents and improvements to transport capacity along the B5026 Eccleshall Road, the A34 roundabouts and the A34 / A51 roundabout;

**Infrastructure**

xiv. Provision of a local electricity sub-station and connection to the grid;

xv. Potable water reinforcement required to the trunk main system in Stone;

xvi. Waste water infrastructure investment required for sewage due to known local flooding problems;

xvii. Local highway improvements and enhancements of the B5026 Eccleshall Road, the A34 roundabouts and the A34 / A51 roundabout;

xviii. Gas reinforcement to support housing development;

xix. Additional primary and middle school provision required as well as extensions to the existing secondary school to accommodate projected growth in pupils;

xx. Children’s play areas and multi-use games areas requirement on-site;

xxi. Standard telecommunication connections to be provided to link to the Stone exchange enabled with Superfast Fibre Access Broadband;

xxii. Primary health care provision delivered by increased capacity at existing facilities.

Developer contributions will be required to provide the strategic infrastructure needed to achieve a comprehensive sustainable development at this Strategic Development Location.
Policy E1 Local Economy

The local economy will be sustained by supporting the location, diversity and intensity of new economic development through:

a. Providing and safeguarding an adequate supply (set out in Spatial Principle 5) 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;

b. 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;

c. Improving access to urban and rural employment areas through the provision of improved broadband, public transport services and highway infrastructure, where appropriate;

d. Supporting the rural economy in accordance with Spatial Principle SP6, and encouraging developments consistent with Spatial Principle SP7;

e. Promoting appropriate development within Recognised Industrial Estates, consistent with Policy E2;

f. Encouraging 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, heritage or residents;

g. 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;

h. Within existing employment areas, encouraging new enterprises to locate in more modern, accessible or other suitably designed and landscaped developments;

i. Supporting opportunities for home-office working in appropriate locations where this does not have any adverse impacts on the surrounding area and residential amenity.

Policy E2 Sustainable Rural Development

For those rural areas outside the settlements identified in Spatial Principle SP3, and outside the Green Belt (within which development is controlled in accordance with national guidance, and Policy E5), support will be given to the achievement of rural sustainability by encouraging:

i. development on Recognised Industrial Estates consistent with Policy E3;

ii. provision for the essential operational needs of agriculture, forestry or rural businesses;

iii. provision of infrastructure needed to support a sustainable rural economy;

iv. proposals which meet the essential, local development needs of a community, to be evidenced by the developer, and which cannot demonstrably be met within the Settlements identified by Spatial Principle SP3 and in the context of criteria in Spatial Principle SP7;

v. diversification of the agricultural economy;

vi. proposals which help to conserve or improve the rural environment;
vii. facilities for tourism, consistent with Policy E6;

viii. recreation uses appropriate to a rural location;

ix. provision for renewable energy generation, in accordance with Policy N3;

x. residential development in accordance with Policy C5;

xi. protection of the best and most versatile agricultural land by using areas of poorer quality land in preference to higher quality land for new development.

All development in these areas should, where appropriate and feasible:

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, except where there is an agricultural or other justification for a use in a specific location;

c. be complementary to, and not prejudice, any viable agricultural operations on a farm and other existing viable uses;

d. respect and protect the natural landscape, the built vernacular character of the area, and any designated or undesignated heritage asset;

e. be of a high quality of design, consistent with the requirements of Policy N1;

f. be appropriately designed for its purposes;

g. not be detrimental to the amenity of the area, or it is demonstrated that alternative uses are preferable for reasons of heritage interest;

h. provide appropriate crime prevention measures, including for safety and security.

Provision should be made for any necessary mitigating or compensatory measures to address any harmful implications.

Within rural areas, developments that provide for the sustainable use and re-use of rural buildings for appropriate uses will be permitted where:

a. it gives priority to economic uses before residential uses and it has been demonstrated that every attempt has been made to secure a suitable commercial re-use;

b. in the case of alterations and replacements of residential properties, it accords with Policy C5. Permitted development rights may be removed from dwellings;

c. it is complementary to and does not prejudice any viable agricultural operations on a farm and other existing viable uses;

d. the building is structurally sound and is capable of conversion without the need for extension, or significant alteration or rebuilding;

e. 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. This should be assessed through an appraisal of character and significance of the building including, its context, its sensitivity in terms of landscape setting, and its potential for change. Proposals should have regard to the West Midlands Farmsteads and Landscapes Project or successor documents when making such assessments;
f. 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 settlements identified in Spatial Policy SP3 or those outside the Borough;
g. it will not harm the historic fabric or character of any traditional building or historic farmstead and, in the case of a Listed Building, the proposal will not harm the significance of the building and is supported by an understanding of the significance of the farmstead and its landscape setting;
h. the building is large enough to be converted without the need for additional buildings, new extensions or significant alteration;
i. development does not harm any protected species or habitats on site and provide habitat mitigation and enhancement.

Policy E3 Development within Recognised Industrial Estates

The following are designated as Recognised Industrial Estates:

1. Hixon
2. Hixon Airfield
3. Ladfordfields
4. Moorfields
5. Pasturefields
6. Raleigh Hall

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

a. Light industrial (B1), excluding B1 offices, general industrial (B2), storage and distribution (B8), or appropriate waste management uses;
b. A limited element of retailing where this is ancillary to another main use under (a);
c. Services, facilities and works specifically provided for the benefit of businesses based on, or workers employed within, the Recognised Industrial Estate;
d. Other employment-generating uses to enhance inward investment, such as those related to recreation and tourism, which meet local needs and/or promote the rural economy.

Policy E4 Raleigh Hall & Ladfordfields Recognised Industrial Estates

Deliver a total of 6 hectares of new employment land at Ladfordfields Industrial Estate and 4 hectares of new employment land at Raleigh Hall Industrial Estate, identified on the Policies Map, to support economic activity through delivering the following criteria:

i. Development is of a design and layout that minimises or appropriately mitigates impacts on the surrounding area and landscape;

ii. Measure to alleviate flooding and surface water management on the site and reduce associated implications on nearby watercourses through necessary works and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS);

iii. Protect nature conservation interests;
iv. Measures to improve accessibility by non-car transport modes through walking and cycling connections;

v. An access, transport and travel plan strategy, which shall identify access points to the site, between the site and the local highway network as well as links to the existing settlement. It shall also identify construction access arrangements that do not disrupt existing residents, and improvements to transport capacity along the A519 at Raleigh Hall and along the B5404 at Ladfordfields;

vi. Appropriate landscaping has been delivered to reduce the impact on surrounding areas;

vii. Safeguard the main water pipe running through the Ladfordfields site;

viii. Provision of a local electricity sub-station;

ix. Waste water infrastructure investment;

x. Local highway improvements and enhancements;

xi. Gas reinforcement works.

Policy E5 Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt

The following sites will be identified as previously developed sites (whether redundant or in continuing use, excluding temporary buildings) within the Green Belt, where limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment will be supported for employment purposes consistent with Spatial Principle SP7, which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development;

- Hadleigh Park (Former Creda Works Limited), Blythe Bridge.
- Moorfields Industrial Estate, Swynnerton.
- Former Meaford Power Station, Meaford, Stone.

Policy E6 Tourism

Opportunities for tourism and new visitor accommodation will be promoted and enhanced in appropriate locations where it can be demonstrated through a business case that the use can be sustained in the long-term, throughout Stafford Borough by:

a. Promoting and enhancing the Borough’s landscape and historic character by conserving and enhancing this unique environment, including Stafford and Stone town centres as well as the Borough’s villages;

b. Consistent with Policy E7 (Canal Facilities and New Marinas), encouraging 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;

c. Promoting and enhancing visitor and recreational attractions;

d. Promoting new and existing walking and cycling routes, including towpaths and linkages to national networks through the Borough’s countryside;

e. Supporting tourism opportunities in rural areas to sustain the local economy, in accordance with Policy E2, providing they are sensitively designed and are not detrimental to the natural environment or local amenity, in particular where
appropriate through sensitive management and measures to protect the Special Area of Conservation (SAC);

f. Supporting opportunities that reduce the carbon footprint of the development and promotes sustainable tourism.

Policy E7 Canal Facilities and New Marinas

Proposals for new development alongside canals at settlements within the settlement hierarchy will be supported where they take the opportunity to provide economic uses by creating an active canal frontage and have regard to the canal’s use and accessibility, including safety measures.

Away from settlements in the settlement hierarchy, marinas and moorings with limited service facilities will be accepted provided:

a. Canal related proposals constitute uses that are essential to be located in proximity to the canal;
b. The countryside is protected, in terms of its openness, rural character and attractiveness;
c. The development respects the character of the canal conservation area and the setting of heritage assets along its route;
d. The proposal is appropriate in scale to its locality;
e. The development proposal has minimum or sensitively located lighting, to reduce light pollution and interference with nocturnal wildlife species;
f. Facilities, including car parking, have adequate landscaping and screening, to minimise visual impact;
g. Where located in the Green Belt, the proposal is consistent with Green Belt policies; and
h. There are no permanent moorings for residential purposes.

Proposals for new canal facilities and associated infrastructure will be supported where:

1) Public access is improved and integrated with the canal frontage;
2) The development does not have an adverse effect on water quality;
3) 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;
4) It does not create conflicts between different users of the canal, such as pedestrians and recreation users on / by the water;
5) 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;
6) Adequate provision for short-stay moorings and related facilities are incorporated, where appropriate;
7) The wildlife value of the locality is conserved and, where possible, enhanced including wildlife corridors;
8) The proposal does not have any detrimental affects on area designations identified in the development plan; and
9) The proposal does not conflict with landscape or nature conservation policies.
**Policy E8 Town, Local and Other Centres**

Support will be given to maintaining and enhancing the functions, vitality and viability of the following hierarchy of town, local and other centres:

- **Stafford Town Centre** is the primary comparison and convenience shopping destination serving Stafford Borough as a whole, 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.

- **Stone Town Centre** acts as a key service centre and market town. It is a visitor destination with a vibrant culinary evening economy.

- **Eccleshall Local Centre** acts as a key service centre providing key services and facilities to the local community and an extensive rural hinterland, and includes specialist shops.

- **Village and Neighbourhood Shops** - outside the hierarchy of Town and Local Centres, these serve their immediate locality. These are identified at Barlaston, Gnosall, Great and Little Haywood, Hixon, Tittensor, Weston, Woodseaves, Yarnfield, Stafford Neighbourhood Centres at Baswich, Holmcroft, Parkside, Rising Brook, Wildwood and Weston Road, and Stone Local Centre at Walton. Such facilities will also be supported at Strategic Development Locations to meet local needs.

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 activities;

c. retain and increase the amount of attractive residential provision in town centres, through new build and conversion;

Development proposals at Stafford providing greater than 1,000 square metres gross floorspace and at Stone providing greater than 500 square metres gross floorspace for town centre uses in an edge or out-of-centre location should be the subject of an impact assessment. For local centres the threshold should be 300 square metres gross floorspace.

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 at Stafford.

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

i. The proposed retail development meets local need through the assessment in the NPPF without having a detrimental impact on the hierarchy;
ii. 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.

Support will be given to proposals and activities that protect, provide for, retain or enhance existing town, local and other 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.

Planning permission will be granted for the construction of new Use Class A3, A4 or A5 (restaurants & cafés, drinking establishments and hot food takeaways) premises or change of use of existing premises to a Use Class A3, A4 or A5 use applying the following criteria:

1) The development is within a town, local or other centre defined in the hierarchy with adequate provision and access to public transport, walking and cycling;
2) 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.
Policy T1 Transport

A sustainable transport system will be achieved through:

a. Reducing 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;

b. Requiring new developments to produce Transport Assessments and Travel Plans, where appropriate, including maximising the use of public transport, as well as facilitating the provision of safe and well integrated off-street parking;

c. Working with the Local Highway Authority, the Highways Agency and, where appropriate, developers to improve road safety;

d. Encouraging 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;

e. Provision for lorry parking facilities on the road network, together with adequate space for off-street manoeuvring, loading and unloading;

f. Reducing the need to travel through providing a balanced mix of land uses, retention of local services, and encouraging the use of Information & Communication Technology;

g. Seeking to reduce the impact of traffic from new development on the road networks by ensuring that the generation of traffic is minimised through sustainable transport measures. Ensuring that all developments that generate significant traffic flows, including commercial traffic must be located in close proximity to the primary road network, do not have a negative impact on the network or at junctions, air quality, and nearby communities, and should have adequate capacity to accommodate the development or can be improved or mitigated as part of the development;

h. Proposals that generate significant levels of traffic, which cannot be accommodated in terms of capacity, road safety and load, will not be permitted.

Policy T2 Parking and Manoeuvring Facilities

To ensure adequate parking is provided 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;

c. Not detract or conflict with the transport function of the road;

d. Make provision for parking in accordance with the parking standards as set out in Appendix B.

Residential parking and the level of cycle parking required, will be assessed on a flexible site by site basis depending on the provision of public transport and access to local services for the proposed development.
There may be scope to reduce provision to less than that set out in the parking standards in Appendix B, but this will be dependent upon:

1) The site’s relative accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport
2) The measures both on-site and off-site that the developer provides to improve its accessibility
3) The content of a Travel Plan, in particular the targets, measures and the parking management regime
4) The predicted traffic generation
5) The ability of mixed use developments to share parking space due to operational arrangements of the different land uses
6) The scope for developments to use existing and conveniently available public car parking supply in off-peak periods
Policy C1 Dwelling Types and Sizes

New housing development must provide an appropriate mix of dwelling types, tenures and sizes, including a proportion of affordable housing (Policy C2) and, where possible, specialist provision to respond to the identified needs of the community. To secure the appropriate range of dwelling types, the Council will seek that:

1) All new housing development must be compatible with the character and distinctiveness of the area, in accordance with Policy N1;
2) Housing developments will be required to provide a mix of dwelling types on site. However, the final mix will be determined in line with local needs, Government policy and linked to design issues.

New developments should provide an appropriate range of dwelling types and sizes to provide for a mixture of different households having regard to:

a. The need for housing sizes and types as identified by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment;
b. Indicative current waiting list data for the locality.

Policy C2 Affordable Housing

Residential proposals must provide affordable housing on development sites according to the thresholds set out below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>3 dwellings or more</th>
<th>12 dwellings or more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stafford</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eccleshall, Gnosall, Woodseaves, Barlaston, Tittensor, Yarnfield</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hixon, Great Haywood, Little Haywood, Haughton, Weston</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of Borough Area</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Developers will be expected to provide an independent economic viability assessment if a lower figure is being advocated. Affordable housing must be made available for people on lower incomes, who are unable to afford housing at the prevailing market price or who need to live within the area.

As a general principle, there will be a presumption that affordable housing will be provided on the development site. However, affordable housing provision on an another site in the same settlement could be acceptable. Only in exceptional circumstances, where the developer provides evidence that demonstrates neither on-site nor off-site provision of affordable housing is feasible or viable, will a commuted sum, based on a calculation of the supportable deficit, be considered. On larger sites, 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 should 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.

**Policy C3 Specialist Housing**

To meet the anticipated need to provide additional extra care bed units in Stafford Borough provision of a range of types and tenures will be encouraged by:

a. 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;

b. Ensuring that any new developments are located in accordance with Spatial Principle SP7 at a settlement within the settlement hierarchy, in a sustainable location close to services and facilities, 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;

c. 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 movements.

d. Seeking to secure the provision of new Extra Care facilities through liaison between the Borough Council, Staffordshire County Council and the Staffordshire Cluster Primary Care Trust (PCT) on new major development schemes.

**Policy C4 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 lead to a concentration of such uses damaging to the character and amenity of a street or residential area;

b) Does not necessitate associated extensions or external alterations inconsistent with the character and appearance of the property or its setting within the locality;
c) Provides satisfactory living accommodation in terms of size, amenity, facilities, private open space provision, appearance and general outlook;
d) Provides appropriate levels of on-site parking;
e) Satisfactory sound proofing arrangements are incorporated within and between properties;
f) 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;
g) It would make adequate provision for refuse storage; and
h) For the subdivision or conversion of existing dwellings, where the property is large enough a mix of unit sizes should be provided.

Policy C5 Residential Proposals outside the Settlement Hierarchy

A. New Development

In areas outside the settlements identified in Spatial Principle SP3, proposals for new residential development will need to meet the criteria listed in SP7, together with all of the following criteria:

1. It is demonstrated that provision can not be accommodated within the Settlement Hierarchy (Spatial Principle SP3);
2. A Parish based Local Housing Needs Assessment, and an appraisal of the scheme, shall accompany any planning application, proving that it will meet the defined needs;
3. The development is of a high quality design that reflects the setting, form and character of the locality and the surrounding landscape;

Affordable housing will be permitted on 'rural exception sites' provided that it meets the following criteria:

a. The site is well related to existing development by being within or adjacent to an existing settlement;
b. The site delivers 100% affordable housing (defined as social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing) in perpetuity (there is no Right to Buy or Right to Acquire on rented properties and that shared ownership sales and re-sales are capped at 80%);
c. Provide an element of specialist housing, subject to local need;
d. The housing is justified by a Parish based Local Housing Needs Assessment;

Housing is to be justified on the grounds of local needs, unless the initial and subsequent occupancy of such developments is controlled through planning agreements or conditions via a Registered Provider, to ensure that the accommodation remains available in perpetuity, to meet the need for which it was permitted.

The occupants of affordable housing must be able to demonstrate they are in local housing need and unable to access the housing market. 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.
B. Replacement Dwellings

In areas outside the settlements identified in Spatial Principle SP3, proposals for a replacement dwelling will be supported if all of the following criteria are met:

   a. The present dwelling has a lawful unrestrictive residential use and is not in a state of abandonment, partial or complete demolition or collapse;
   b. The present dwelling is not the result of a temporary planning permission, a temporary form of construction or a caravan / mobile home;
   c. The building is not capable of retention through renovation;
   d. Appropriate measures have been taken to reuse or recycle materials from the original dwelling;
   e. The replacement building will be more energy efficient than that of the original dwelling;
   f. 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;
   g. The number of new dwellings is no more than the number of dwellings to be demolished and replaced;
   h. Any new replacement dwelling 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; and
   i. The existing building is not worthy of retention because it lacks architectural merit and does not harmonise with the established character of the area.

Permitted development rights may be removed from replacement dwellings.

C. Extensions or Alterations

In areas outside the settlements identified in Spatial Principle SP3, extension or alteration of an existing building should not result in additions of more than 70% to the dwelling as originally built unless:

   i) The existing floor area is less than 41 square metres, where development up to 75 square metres will be acceptable, and / or
   ii) The design and appearance of the proposed extension is proportionate to the type and character of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area.

Policy C6 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 as set out in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment. Specific sites will be identified through a Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

Proposals for development to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers will be permitted where they comply with national policy in the Planning for Traveller Sites document or successor publications and the following criteria:

   a. The intended occupants of the site comply with the definition of Gypsies and Travellers or Travelling Showpeople;
b. The development of the site minimises the potential impact on the surrounding landscape, environment, heritage assets and biodiversity;

c. Good design and layout based on Government guidance in 'Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites' or successor documents. Matters to address include pitch sizes, the adequacy of facilities, services and amenities, the utility of outside space for leisure, recreation and for any essential employment related activities;

d. The site does not compromise Green Belt or the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designations;

e. The site has good safe access to the public highway system; adequate space for parking, turning and servicing on site;

f. Adequate disposal of foul effluent ensures that there is no reduction in water quality within the catchment.

**Policy C7 Open Space, Sport and Recreation**

Support will be given to sport and recreation by:

a. Retaining, protecting, supplementing, or enhancing all types of sport, recreation and open space facilities, in order to address deficiencies of both indoor and outdoor facilities outlined in the Open Space, Sport & Recreation Assessment and any subsequent revisions;

b. Encouraging additional provision, and enhancements to existing provision, which will reduce or prevent deficiencies, and requiring new housing development to contribute to provision, to help meet the Local Standards set out in Appendix G;

c. Implementing specific open space proposals detailed in the area based policies.

As a general principle, there will be a presumption that open space, sport and recreation facilities will be provided on the development site. Only in exceptional circumstances will an off site contribution provided by the developer be accepted to develop on another site, where it is proven that on site provision is not feasible or is unviable. Where the developer provides evidence, which demonstrates that neither on-site nor off-site provision of open space, sport & recreation facilities is appropriate a financial contribution, based on a calculation from the Local Standards may be considered.

Development that results in the loss of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities will be resisted unless better facilities in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility 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.
Policy N1 Design

To secure enhancements in design quality, development must, at a minimum, meet the following principles:

Use

a. Ensure that, where relevant the scale, nature and surroundings, major applications are comprehensively master planned or, where appropriate, are accompanied by a development brief;
b. Be designed, sited and grouped in order to provide access for all;
c. New development of ten dwellings or more should demonstrate compliance with the Building for Life 12 assessment and any successor documents, unless it makes the development unviable or it has been sufficiently demonstrated, through a Design & Access Statement, that each of the twelve Building for Life questions has been optimally addressed, or conversely why it is not practical or appropriate to do so;

Form

d. Incorporate sustainable construction and energy conservation techniques into the design in accordance with Policy N2;
e. Require the design and layout to take account of noise and light implications, together with the amenity of adjacent residential areas or operations of existing activities;
f. Retention of significant biodiversity, landscaping features, and creation of new biodiversity areas that take into account relevant local information and evidence;
g. Include high design standards that make efficient use of land, promote activity and takes into account the local character, context, density and landscape, as well as complementing the biodiversity of the surrounding area;
h. Designs must have regard to the local context, including heritage assets, historic views and sight lines, and should preserve and enhance the character of the area including the use of locally distinctive materials;

Space

i. Strengthen the continuity of street frontages and enclosure of space;
j. Development should clearly distinguish between public and private space, and provide space for storage, including for recycling materials;
k. Streets and public open spaces are designed to be usable, easy to maintain and productive for the amenity of residents by being overlooked to create a safe environment;
l. 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;
m. Development should be well-connected to public transport and community facilities and services, and be well laid out so that all the space is used efficiently, is safe, accessible and user-friendly;
n. Where appropriate, development should ensure that there is space for water within the development layout to facilitate the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs).
Movement

o. Ensure that places inter-connect using important routes and linkages, including Rights of Way, 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;

p. Ensure car parking is well integrated and discreetly located.

Policy N2 Climate Change

All development 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. Proposals must take particular account of the need to ensure protection from, and not worsen the potential for, flooding.

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 or underlying contamination, this is not possible;

2. Limit 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, based on the scale and location of the new development.

All new development must provide adequate arrangements for the disposal of foul sewage, trade effluent and surface water to prevent a risk of pollution. Groundwater resources and surface water bodies will be safeguarded, and any development leading to pollution or degradation will not be permitted, unless adequate mitigation measures can implemented that avoid 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. Any development that could lead to the degradation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) status of the waterbody should not be permitted.

Sustainable Construction

All new residential development will be expected to incorporate sustainable design and construction technology to achieve zero carbon development through a combination of fabric energy efficiency, carbon compliance and allowable solutions in line with Government policy.
To implement zero carbon development, the following measures should be considered as part of the design:

1) Reduce water consumption, through the use of low water volume fittings and grey water systems;
2) Orientation to maximise solar gain;
3) High levels of insulation and energy conservation, 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 square metres (net) will be expected to have a BREEAM Very Good rating; and non-residential development greater than 1,000 square metres (net) will be expected to have a BREEAM Excellent rating. A statement will be required to detail how the BREEAM and Zero Carbon Standard will be addressed. If these are considered to be unviable to achieve, evidence must be provided through an independent viability assessment.

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.

Where proposals affect a building of traditional construction, energy efficiency will be expected to be improved as far as possible without prejudicing the character of the building or increasing the risk of long term deterioration of the existing fabric.

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.

Policy N3 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 provided that:

a. The technology is suitable for the proposed location, does not cause harm to residential amenity, the significance of heritage assets and their setting and has limited adverse effects on the surrounding landscape and townscape character;
b. Levels of noise, overshadow, flicker (associated with some wind turbines), or other harmful emissions are minimised and there is no adverse effect on public safety;
c. The technology does not affect the integrity of the water environment, or locally, nationally and internationally designated sites;
d. 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.

**Policy N4 The Natural Environment & Green Infrastructure**

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

a. Implementation of the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan, the Stafford Borough Green Infrastructure Strategy 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;

b. Conservation and enhancement of water courses and their settings for their landscape character, biodiversity and recreational value, particularly for the Borough’s extensive rivers and extensive canal system;

c. Protecting, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment and irreplaceable semi-natural habitats, such as ancient woodlands, and ancient or veteran trees;

d. Increasing the ability of landscapes and ecosystems to adapt to different weather patterns and climate change, by increasing the range and extent of habitats, informed by Biodiversity Opportunity mapping;

e. Ensuring that no new development takes place in areas where environmental risks, particularly flooding, cannot be properly managed;

f. Any new development where damage to the natural environment is unavoidable must include measures to mitigate and / or compensate such impacts, through the establishment of replacement habitats or features, including appropriate site management regimes.

The Borough’s green infrastructure network, as defined on the Policies Map, will be protected, enhanced and expanded:

g. Networks of open spaces for formal and informal recreation, natural corridors, access routes and watercourses will be enhanced and created, where those networks:

i. protect the setting of landscape, heritage and natural (biodiversity and geodiversity) assets;

ii. reverse habitat fragmentation due to having suffered past loss and degradation;

iii. provide recreational opportunities for new and existing communities;

iv. provide open breaks between neighbouring residential areas and business developments.

h. 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.

i. Local landscape and heritage features should:

(i) Be conserved and enhanced and inform the master planning and design of new neighbourhoods;
(ii) be positively managed to conserve and enhance their significance and contribution to the character of the landscape;
(iii) be accessible to local communities, as appropriate, for leisure and recreation.

j. Development will support implementation of the Severn and Humber River Basin Management Plans and not pose a barrier to the meeting of their objectives for any watercourse. To alleviate the effects of climate change and meet the objectives of the Water Framework Directive, new development should:

i. Include measures such as Sustainable Drainage Systems and street trees;
ii. Provide a variety of Green spaces and habitat networks as 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;
v. Where issues have been identified within the Water Cycle Study, developers should submit a Water Statement that includes evidence to demonstrate that there is already adequate sewerage infrastructure in place, or that it will be in place prior to occupation;
vi. Support fish migration through the removal of barriers in river channels such as weirs, or where this is not possible, construction of fish passes.

k. All new developments will:

i. Be set within a well designed and maintained attractive green setting, demonstrated through a detailed management plan where appropriate;
ii. Provide a variety of spaces to meet the needs of people and nature;
iii. Provide safe opportunities for sustainable transport;
iv. Refer to the Staffordshire Ecological Record to ensure natural habitats and species in the locality are protected.

Policy N5 Sites of European, National & Local Nature Conservation Importance

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

a. There will be no adverse effect on the integrity of any European site, or
b. If adverse effects are identified, it can be demonstrated that the proposed mitigation measures show that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of any European site; or
c. if it cannot be ascertained that no adverse effect on integrity will result, the proposed development will only be able to proceed where there is no alternative solution and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

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

1. 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
2. Where development would result in an increase in local and / or diffuse air pollution at European Sites, it would be expected to include measures in line with the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan towards securing an equivalent improvement in air quality, or reduction in emissions from other sources; and
3. 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:

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

Developments 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. Cumulative effects will also be considered.

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

- A Local Nature Reserve
- A Site of Biological Importance or a Biodiversity Alert Site
- A Local Geological Site
- A natural watercourse, lakes, reservoirs, rivers, canals and groundwater areas, including Water Framework Directive protected areas as listed in the Humber and Severn River Basin Management Plans.

will not be permitted unless:

(a) It can be clearly demonstrated that there are reasons for the proposal that 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) 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, protected species or any species or habitat 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.

Where possible, the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats and the recovering of priority species populations will be encouraged in line with the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan.

New developments will be required to include appropriate tree planting, to retain and integrate healthy, mature trees and hedgerows, and replace any trees that need to be removed. Development will not be permitted that would directly or indirectly damage existing mature or ancient woodland, veteran trees or ancient or species-rich hedgerows.

**Policy N6 Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC)**

Development will not be permitted where it would lead directly or indirectly to an adverse impact on the Cannock Chase SAC and the effects cannot be mitigated.

To ensure the Cannock Chase SAC is not harmed, all development that leads to a net increase in dwellings within 15km of the site, as shown on the Policies Map, must take all necessary steps to avoid or mitigate any adverse effects upon the SAC’s integrity. This may include contributions to habitat management; access management and visitor infrastructure; publicity, education and awareness raising; provision of additional recreation space within development sites where they can be accommodated and, where they cannot, by contributions to off site alternative recreation space; and measures to encourage sustainable travel.

The effective avoidance and / or mitigation of any identified adverse effects must be demonstrated to the Council as the Competent Authority, and secured by means of a suitable mechanism (e.g. Legal agreement) prior to approval of the development.

**Policy N7 Cannock Chase AONB**

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

- a. Conserve and enhance the special landscape character, heritage and distinctiveness of the locality;
b. Conserve and enhance important viewpoints, protect the context and safeguard views out of and into the AONB;
c. Require appropriate new developments to be suitably located and have regard for existing landscape features and tree screening;
d. Support suitably located small, well designed sustainable developments, where it is required to meet the needs of the local community;
e. Have regard to the principles set out in the Cannock Chase AONB management plan for managing recreational activities;
f. Promote access to the AONB through sustainable forms of transportation, particularly by means other than the car;
g. Therefore, any proposals for new development (including changes of use) within, or likely to adversely affect the landscape and scenic beauty of Cannock Chase AONB or its setting, will only be allowed where the proposal will enhance the visual, nature conservation and / or historic assets of the landscape.

**Policy N8 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 and the Historic Environment Character Assessment.

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

a. The elements of the landscape that contribute to the local distinctiveness of the area (including heritage assets, cultural character and biodiversity);
b. Historic elements of the present day landscape that contribute significantly to landscape character;
c. The setting and views of or from heritage assets, including conservation areas, Registered Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and assets identified in the Historic Environment Record;
d. 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. Further details are included in Policy N1.

**Policy N9 Historic Environment**

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

Development and advertisement proposals will be expected to sustain and, where appropriate enhance the significance of heritage assets and their setting by understanding the heritage interest, encouraging sustainable re-use and promoting high design quality. All potential loss of or harm to
the significance of a heritage asset, including its setting, will require clear justification, taking into account:

i. Settlement pattern including street patterns, orientation of buildings and sites, boundaries and density of development;
ii. The scale, form and massing of buildings and structures;
iii. Materials, including colours and textures;
iv. Significant landscape features including open spaces, trees and planted boundaries;
v. Significant views and vistas;
vi. Locally distinctive architectural or historical detail;
vii. The setting of heritage assets;
viii. Archaeological remains and potential;
ix. Traditional permeable building construction.

Development proposals must conserve and protect the significance of heritage assets by avoiding unnecessary loss of historic fabric and detail of significance. For listed buildings this includes internal features, floor plans and spaces.

Where harm to significance is unavoidable, appropriate mitigation measures will be put into place, including archaeological investigation (including a written report) or recording. This information should be deposited at the County Record Office and be available to the general public.

Heritage assets will be conserved and enhanced by:

1. Identifying heritage assets that are considered to be at risk of irreversible harm or loss;
2. Encouraging owners to maintain their heritage assets;
3. Where necessary the Council will use its statutory powers to serve Urgent Works or Repairs Notices to arrest the decay of its listed buildings;
4. 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 accordance with national advice;
5. The use of Article 4 directions where the exercise of permitted development rights would undermine the aims for the historic environment.
Policy I1 Infrastructure Delivery Policy

New development that provides additional residential or commercial development will be supported by appropriate levels of physical, social and environmental infrastructure at a timely stage, as identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

The appropriate levels of contributions for infrastructure will be secured in a variety of ways, including the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule, Section 106 agreements, and legal agreements to ensure new developments contribute to new and/or improved infrastructure and services (including community needs). In assessing such requirements, the viability of developments will also be considered when determining the extent and priority of development contributions.