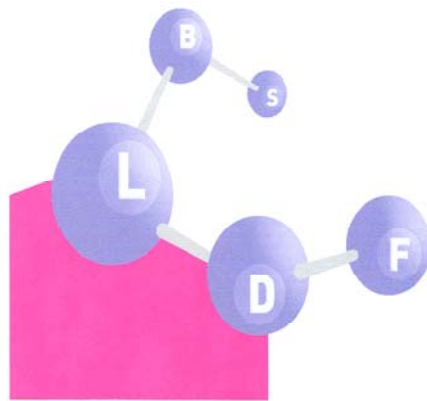




Stafford Borough Local Development Framework

PLANNING
for our FUTURE

**Submission Core Strategy
Development Plan Document
(Modifications to meet GOWM concerns)**

May 2006



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Submission - Core Strategy Development Plan Document

1.0 Introduction

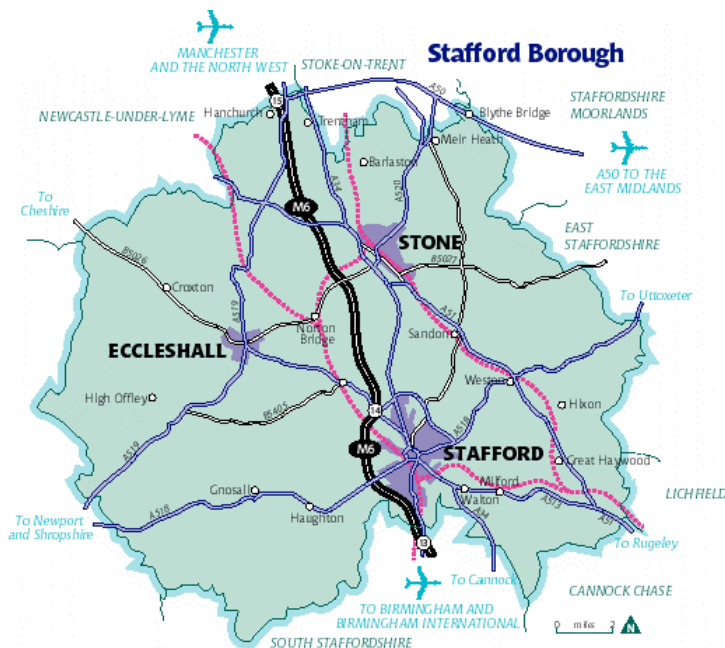
- 1.1 The purpose of planning policies in the Core Strategy Development Plan Document is to deliver the strategic approach for spatial planning across the Borough Council area. The Core Strategy Development Plan Document will be the principal planning document in the Stafford Borough Local Development Framework and will form part of the new Development Plan for Stafford Borough alongside the Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands (RSS). The Core Strategy will aim to cover the same time period as the Regional Spatial Strategy.¹
- 1.2 Sustainability Appraisal is a key part of the process for preparing the Core Strategy Development Plan Document in order to **ensure soundness and** assess the planning policies in terms of sustainable development principles. A number of Sustainability Appraisal Reports have been prepared and consulted upon at each stage of producing the Core Strategy Development Plan Document.
- 1.3 The Government requires Local Authorities to 'front load' the process for preparing Local Development Documents (LDDs). In January and February 2005 the Core Strategy Development Plan Document's Issues and Options Paper was published and consulted upon as part of this 'front loading' process, seeking consensus around policy options. The Issues and Options stage is important for ensuring that the Development Plan Document (DPD) is both soundly based on evidence and relevant to the local area's key issues.
- 1.4 Following consideration of the responses received to the Issues and Options Paper and recommendations in the Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report Members agreed the Core Strategy Development Plan Document Preferred Options Report for consultation. The Preferred Options Report is a statutory stage, as part of the new Development Plan process, for the Stafford Borough Local Development Framework. Consultation on the Preferred Options Report took place in June and July 2005.
- 1.5 Following consideration of the representations received to the Preferred Options Report and recommendations in the Final Sustainability Appraisal Report Members have now agreed this Submission Core Strategy Development Plan Document to be submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination.
- 1.6 The Submission Core Strategy Development Plan Document sets out the vision, spatial objectives and policy options that Stafford Borough Council consider are appropriate to address the needs of ~~for~~ the area. The core policies **have been included to deliver a sound document,** are credibly based upon national and regional policies and aim to deliver key elements of both the Staffordshire County Community Strategy and the Stafford Borough Community Plan. The Core Strategy Development Plan Document contains clear and concise policies for delivering the Borough's spatial strategy. However it will not contain policies that refer to individual sites as these will be dealt with in subsequent Development Plan Documents.

¹ 2001-2021

2.0 Character of the Borough

GENERAL

- 2.1 *Stafford Borough is centrally placed within Staffordshire County. Staffordshire is a large County between the conurbations of Manchester, 50 miles to the north, and Birmingham, 30 miles to the south. The Borough shares boundaries with Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire Moorlands, East Staffordshire, Lichfield, Cannock Chase, South Staffordshire, Telford and Wrekin and North Shropshire.*



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- 2.2 *The Borough covers an area of 230 square miles and has a population of around 120,000 people. There are two main areas of settlement, Stafford with a population of 60,500 and Stone, 6 miles to the north of Stafford within the valley of the River Trent, with a population of approximately 14,500. The majority of the Borough's area is rural in character, with settlements ranging from sub urban areas on the fringe of the Potteries conurbation such as Blythe Bridge, Barlaston, Clayton, Trentham, Meir Heath and Rough Close to large freestanding market towns and villages such as Gnosall, Eccleshall, Hixon, Great Haywood, Little Haywood and Colwich, to more isolated settlements.*

MOVEMENT

- 2.3 *The West Coast Main Line railway runs through the Borough with a principal station at Stafford. Immediately to the south of Stafford the line splits to provide main line services to London Euston or to the South-west via Birmingham. To the north services run to Manchester, Liverpool and Scotland. The West Coast Main Line is likely to be the subject of further upgrading including the potential for junction alterations at Stafford. **Proposals for investment in parking and interchange***

facilities at Stafford Station are included in the Local Transport Plan. Station improvements by the operator are also anticipated.

- 2.4 There is a local perception that the number of services stopping at Stafford has been reduced, as have the range of destinations accessible without changing trains. Other stations in the Borough at Norton Bridge, Stone and Barlaston face an uncertain future. Although the Manchester to London (Trent Valley) line also runs through the Borough there are no principal stations in the Borough; the closest station is at Stoke-on-Trent.
- 2.5 The M6 motorway runs through the Borough in a north-south direction roughly bisecting the Council's area. Junction 13, to the south of Stafford and Junction 14 to the north adjoin the urban area of Stafford while Junction 15 provides access to the northerly parts of the Borough's area and the Potteries Conurbation. Central Government is currently consulting on two concepts (a) for the widening of the M6 or (b) an expressway (Toll Road) immediately adjacent to the M6. Other principal road routes through the Borough include the A34, A449, A518 and A51.
- 2.6 Although accessibility by public transport is regarded as generally acceptable in the urban area of Stafford, elsewhere it is seen as being inadequate or totally lacking. This contributes to a feeling of rural decline for a number of rural residents compounded, in some locations, by the closure of facilities such as post offices and pubs. The larger villages have, however, been retaining and, in some cases, improving their facilities and these may provide the opportunity for increased services to the surrounding settlements. (See Revised Final Sustainability Appraisal Report P58).
- 2.7 Car ownership rates are high in the Borough 1.29 cars per household but falls to 1.09 in Stafford, in rural Parishes exceeds 1.5 and rises to more than 2 in some cases. In the Borough as a whole, over 70% of the people in employment travel to work by car or motor cycle, 5% by public transport or taxi, 10% walk or cycle and 10% work from home.

ENVIRONMENT

- 2.8 The Borough is seen as providing an attractive environment. To the south a major part of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) lies within the Council's area, close to Stafford. To the north, the area around Hanchurch Hills is noted for its landscape attraction. Parts of the area have particular landscape distinction including the large-scale parklands of Shugborough Hall, Sandon Hall and the Trentham Estate. The Borough has over 800 listed Buildings, 29 Conservation Areas, 38 Ancient Monuments and hundreds of sites of Archaeological Interest.
- 2.9 In biodiversity terms the Borough is rich and varied with 17 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), 3 Ramsar sites, 4 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and 2 National Nature Reserves (NNRs). In addition there are more than 100 sites identified locally as Sites of Biological importance (SBIs). The Staffordshire and Stafford Biodiversity Action Plans include details of Habitat and Species Action Plans, Natural Areas and other matters.
- 2.10 There are no requirements for Air Quality Management Schemes in the Borough. The Rivers Trent, Sow and Penk are the principal rivers of the Borough. Protection of floodplain and flood risk minimisation is relevant in Stafford, Stone and elsewhere. Water Quality is relatively good. (See Sustainability Appraisal S17 &19).

GREEN BELT

- 2.11 **Less than a quarter of the Borough area is included in Green Belt. The North Staffordshire Green Belt affects the northern part of the Borough (roughly north of Stone) whilst, the most southerly parts of the Borough (south of Stafford) are within the West Midlands Green Belt. The majority of the area of the Borough, including the urban areas of Stone and Stafford are not within the Green Belt (Refer to the Proposals Map for the Green Belt designation).**

EMPLOYMENT

- 2.12 Stafford and Stone are the main centres of employment within the Borough although there are a significant number of small industrial estates within the rural area of the Borough and a large single employer site at Blythe Bridge.
- 2.13 In recent years, the Borough has seen the loss of significant numbers of traditional major manufacturing employers. At the town of Stafford this has included the closure of British Reinforced Concrete, Venables Timber and Lotus Shoes. In Stone closures have included ABB (formerly GEC Meters) and Fairey / Doulton Industrial Products.
- 2.14 There have been significant job losses at the former GEC/Alstom/Areva site on Lichfield Road, Stafford. This was previously the town's major employer. Structural employment problems resulting from the down-sizing of Alstom were recognised through the SRB6 programme which secured a total of £5 million of SRB (Single Regeneration Budget) funding. Job losses have continued at a number of other manufacturing companies. Down-sizing involving release of land to other uses has occurred at employers including Universal Grinding Wheels (Unicorn), Doxey, Alstom, Stafford and Bibby Sterilin at Stone.
- 2.15 **RAF Stafford, formerly the major UK logistics site for the RAF is to be closed and the site's future is currently uncertain.** The RAF was formerly a significant employer within the town and has a major landholding of previously developed land (PDL), known as 'brownfield' land, on the edge of the town, adjacent to Beaconside together with a number of freestanding sites in the rural area beyond the main site.
- 2.16 These changes have caused a major re-structuring in the economy of the Borough. Additional employment opportunities have developed within the industrial estates and employment sites such as Tollgate, Beaconside Technology Park and Prime Point 14 at Stafford and at the Stone Business Park at Stone. The older industrial estates at Stafford and Stone retain vibrancy as do the industrial estates in the rural areas of the Borough; from the major areas of Hixon to the smaller estates such as Ladfordfields, Great Bridgeford, Raleigh Hall, Eccleshall and Cold Meece, Swynnerton.
- 2.17 Stafford, as the major centre in the Borough, and the County Town of Staffordshire provides a substantial number of public administration, education, health and service jobs. Stafford General Hospital is the major hospital within the sub-region. Likely structural changes in the organisation of the Health, Police, Fire and Ambulance services together with potential changes to local government may have a substantial impact on the employment and economy of Stafford town.
- 2.18 As has been found throughout the County, the rate of development of employment land remain below the target set in the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011 (Refer to the Employment Land Availability Study 2005 – Staffordshire County Council)

EDUCATION

- 2.19 The Stafford Campus of Staffordshire University is a substantial presence in the town with over 5000 students and the largest higher education computer school in the UK.
- 2.20 Stafford also provides six of the seven secondary schools within the Borough and is a significant further education centre through Stafford College.

EMPLOYMENT DEMOGRAPHY

- 2.21 Stafford Borough is, marginally, a net importer of labour but this is only 108 people from the total of 58,660 persons employed; of these 39,970 both live and work in the Borough (2001 Census Special Workplace Statistics). The population of the Borough is generally skilled and well educated. The unemployment rate in the Borough remains relatively low and levels of prosperity higher than national averages.
- 2.22 Stafford town is seen as being on the fringe of the commuter belt to the West Midlands Conurbation In the 2001 Census the net out-flow of residents to employment in the West Midlands from Stafford Town was 1,281 (gross figures 1,970 outward, 689 inward), this may be seen to be limited when compared to the 17,837 people who both live and work in the town. Overall, Stafford Town is a net importer of labour (1,824 people) with a total number of people employed in the town of 31,002 (2001 Census Special Workplace Statistics).
- 2.23 7,846 people are employed in Stone, (2001 Census Special Workplace Statistics) of whom 3,037 also live in the town. Commuting to the West Midlands is relatively minor with a net outflow of 97 (gross figures 232 outward 141 inward). Commuting to and from the Potteries is more significant. Stone was a net importer of labour from the City of Stoke-on-Trent 177 (gross figures 1,023 outward 1,200 inward) and Newcastle-under-Lyme 208 (gross figures 289 outward 497 inward). Stone is a net exporter of labour to Stafford 319 (gross figures 1,013 outward 838 inward). Overall Stone town is also a net importer of labour (475 people)

TOWN CENTRES

- 2.24 Stafford Town Centre remains relatively prosperous and successful. The Stafford Town Centre Study, Chesterton Consultants 2000 reported that Stafford ranked 105th out of 554 centres nationally and 15th out of 49 regionally in an Experian Goad town centre vitality scoring. Retailing within the Borough is primarily concentrated at Stafford. Stafford's role as a retail centre has gradually been improved by new developments of relatively modest scale within and adjacent to the town centre. Re-development of a mixed leisure/residential scheme is being developed at pilgrim place in Stafford town Centre. A consent has been given for a leisure/retail/residential development on a re-use site at Riverside in the town centre of Stafford and a proposal has been submitted for similar uses to the north of the town centre at land off Doxey Road.
- 2.25 Stafford Town Centre does not offer the same range or number of retail facilities as offered by the centres beyond the Borough boundary at Hanley, Wolverhampton or Birmingham and is also affected by centres such as Merry Hill and Telford, where major expansion has occurred. Although these constrain the catchment area and market share of Stafford the town centre has good representation from multiple retailers and independents. Stafford has

~~three modern, predominantly food, superstores, each located adjacent to the town centre.~~

- 2.26 **The Stafford Town Centre Study recommended the maintainance of the existing status of the town centre and enhancement by the identification and gradual implementation of diversification and redevelopment schemes. The town centre remains relatively prosperous and successful. (See Stafford Town Centre Study, Chesterton Consultants 2000)**

- 2.27 **Stafford is strongly represented in convenience goods retailing with three modern, predominantly food, superstores, (Sainsbury, Tesco, Asda) each located adjacent to the town centre with other niche food retailers and neighbourhood supermarkets and other foodstores elsewhere in the town.**

Floorspace (sq m) & Rateable Value (£) Stafford

=	<u>(sq m)</u>	<u>(£)</u>
<u>A1</u>	<u>71,880</u>	<u>7,915,730</u>
<u>A2</u>	<u>10,680</u>	<u>1,121,680</u>
<u>A3</u>	<u>4,780</u>	<u>473,350</u>
<u>Retail</u>	<u>87,580</u>	<u>9,529,550</u>
<u>Offices</u>	<u>60,430</u>	<u>3,575,280</u>

Area of Town Centre Activity ODPM 2002

- 2.28 **In addition to the town centre retailing there are retail parks at Greyfriars to the north and Queensville to the south-west. A further consent for retail development has been given out of centre at the Alstom site.**

- 2.29 **Stone has a smaller but vibrant and attractive retail centre which now includes a food (predominantly) superstore. The town has relatively few multiple retailers but a wide variety of independents.**

Floorspace (sq m) & Rateable Value (£) Stone

=	<u>(sq m)</u>	<u>(£)</u>
<u>A1</u>	<u>13,540</u>	<u>1,382,400</u>
<u>A2</u>	<u>1,030</u>	<u>114,300</u>
<u>A3</u>	<u>Disclosive</u>	<u>61,830</u>
<u>Retail</u>	<u>15,570</u>	<u>1,558,530</u>
<u>Offices</u>	<u>2,950</u>	<u>160,870</u>

~~2.30 Retail Centres beyond the Borough boundary at Hanley, Telford, Wolverhampton and other West Midland Centres all draw customers from the Borough.~~

~~2.31 Leisure facilities are concentrated in the town of Stafford with a cinema, art gallery, theatre, night clubs and leisure centre. Smaller scale facilities are found at Stone with two leisure centres. Both Stafford and Stone have experienced recent growth in bars and restaurants in the town centres leading to a wider choice of facilities and contributing to the evening economy.~~

HOUSING

~~2.32 The Borough is attractive to housing developers and their clients. In the first nine years of the Structure Plan period (from 1996) development rates have been running at an average of 40% above the Structure Plan target. At the same time problems of affordability have increased as house prices have risen significantly (approximately a quadrupling of prices in 10 years) ahead of income levels.~~

~~2.33 The housing stock of Stafford Borough is relatively good according to the Census 2001 with fewer than 25 unfit homes per 1,000 dwellings compared to other districts in Staffordshire (a County average of over 40) and an English average of 60 per 1000. **Overcrowding is relatively low at 3% (See Revised Final Sustainability Appraisal Report Section 10).**~~

~~2.34 The Private Sector House Condition and Energy Survey 2002, commissioned by Stafford Borough Council and using ODPM guidance, identified a higher proportion of unfit housing (8%), with higher percentages found principally in the pre 1919 stock - which forms 17% of the total housing stock. **Energy efficiency is better than national averages (Private Sector House Condition and Energy Survey 2002).** The greatest concentration of unfit and defective housing is found at Stafford town according to the survey. These issues are being addressed through the Housing strategy and by a variety of targeted initiatives and partnerships on condition, grants, adaption and energy efficiency~~

~~2.35 In the 2001 Census 75% of homes were owner occupied with 14% in Council or Housing Association ownership. By comparison with the UK, the Borough has a high percentage of detached houses 38% and a low proportion of converted/shared housing 1.4%. Average household size of 2.36 persons mirrors the national position. Currently the Borough has no areas identified as 'low demand housing'. Homelessness is not a major problem in the Borough and overcrowding is relatively low at 3% (See Sustainability Appraisal Section 10). Energy efficiency is better than national averages (Private Sector House Condition and Energy Survey 2002).~~

~~2.36 The Local Housing Need Survey identifies the scale of the difficulty in meeting housing need. Relatively few affordable homes have been built in the Borough and due to the 'right to buy' the stock of social rented housing continues to decline. **Entry-level house prices are now some 7.5 times average earnings in the Borough.** This deficiency is seen to be particularly acute in the rural areas where few sites meet the threshold beyond which the Council expects an element of affordable housing to be provided. **We work in partnership with social housing providers and developers to maximise the provision of social housing through Planning Obligations including S106 Agreements**~~

- 2.37 Homelessness is a significant issue in Stafford, particularly among young single households requiring support. Housing Corporation grant funding has been secured for a replacement supported accommodation project for single young people. In addition, homeless acceptances are increasing as a percentage of applications in the face of limited local resources. These and other homelessness issues, particularly domestic violence and the housing of offenders are being addressed through an emergent sub-regional debate.
- 2.38 Provision for the gypsy community of the Borough is made on a Council owned site at Stafford but principally by private sites; predominantly in the Hopton area.
- 2.39 Parts of the City of Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough are Housing Market Renewal Areas with major Government funding. The North Staffordshire sub-region is a region skewed by local contrasts. Dominated by a net oversupply of affordable housing in the City of Stoke-on-Trent, the importance and adverse effect of local issues of undersupply and affordability can be overshadowed and overlooked in the North of the Borough. Currently the Borough has no areas identified as 'low demand housing'
- 2.40 Overall the majority of housing development since 1996 has taken place at Stafford (48%) although Stone has also experienced significant growth at 17%. More surprising is the scale of development in the rural area which, between 1996 and 2004, amounted to 35% of the total new housing. A significant proportion of this percentage is made up of conversions of former agricultural buildings.
- 2.41 In recent years there has been a shift in the balance of development away from greenfield sites to the development of previously developed land. Much of this has been on land previously occupied by formerly major employers, such as British Reinforced Concrete, and Lotus Shoes in addition to smaller concerns such as Venables Timber. Further consents have been given for the development of land released by closures of employers, ABB, and Doulton Industrial Products, both at Stone together with downsizing involving land release such as at Universal Grinding Wheels and Alstom at Stafford and Bibby Sterilin at Stone.
- 2.42 There has been evidence of increasing interest in housing development and mixed-use schemes including housing within or adjacent to the town centres of Stafford and Stone. ~~including schemes at Wolverhampton Road, North Walls and South Street, Stafford and Newcastle Road and Mill Street, Stone.~~
- 2.43 ~~In Stafford permission has been granted for mixed use schemes, including residential use, at Pilgrim Place and South Walls, Stafford. Other schemes are under consideration include the former St George's Hospital, a Grade II Listed Building with extensive adjacent areas. This is adjacent to Stafford town centre and is being promoted for a mixed employment/residential scheme which would secure the restoration of the Listed Building.~~

POPULATION DEMOGRAPHY

- 2.44 Most of the Borough's 2001 Census population of 120,600, (2001 Census) live in the urban centres of Stafford and Stone (76,000). The remaining 44,600 (37%) reside in the generally more rural areas which comprise most of the Borough's area of around 230 square miles. Within this area there are more than 50 villages and hamlets; these vary in size, from a population of over 3,500 at

Gnosall to under 100 people. Only 10 settlements have a population greater than 700.

2.45 To the north of the Borough are parts of the suburban fringes of Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent - at Clayton, Blythe Bridge, Trentham and Meir Heath

2.46 The population of the Borough is generally stable, showing only a slight overall increase but a noticeable characteristic is of an ageing population, with a significant projected increase in people over 85 years of age. The changing population structure may have impacts on services both for younger people, including potential school closures and a need for additional facilities to meet the needs of single person households and older people. Current Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) requirements are likely to increase significantly in the RSS review which is now in progress, particularly driven by new household forecasts

3.0 Key Issues

3.1 This section sets out the key issues and constraints affecting the spatial development of the Borough in order to identify key drivers for change. The following key issues have been identified through representations to the Core Strategy DPD – Preferred Options Report and the Issues & Options Paper as well as previous consultations including the Gathering Evidence Questionnaire responses in early 2004, initial work on the Local Development Framework in Spring 2003 and the Local Plan Review Issues Paper in 2001 - 2002:

- a) By March 2005 over 80% of housing provision, allocated for Stafford Borough in the Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011, had already been completed. Stafford Borough is likely to exceed the housing provision set out in the Structure Plan and exceed the annual average rate of housing provision set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy. For further information refer to Core Policy 10.
- b) Of the 150 hectares of employment land provision allocated for Stafford Borough in the Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011, 35 hectares of employment land remains to be committed and is considered to be inadequate for the Stafford Borough area. For the plan period from 2011 – 2021 there is currently no provision for employment land. For further policy information refer to Core Policy 9.
- c) Review of existing allocated Greenfield housing sites is required in light of current Government policy and the overprovision of housing within the Borough, as recorded in the annual Stafford Borough Housing Monitor: Land for New Homes. For further policy information refer to Core Policy 10.
- d) Significant decline in manufacturing employment in Stafford Borough has taken place for a number of years and is continuing to occur throughout the area. For further policy information refer to Core Policy 4 and Core Policy 9.
- e) Re-use of buildings for residential development rather than employment uses in urban and rural areas. In urban areas employment sites are being lost to residential developments. In rural areas opportunities for the diversification of existing buildings to support the rural economy is being undermined by housing

development. This therefore adds the number of residential uses and increases the overprovision of housing in the Stafford Borough area. For further policy information refer to Core Policy 2, Core Policy 3, Core Policy 4 and Core Policy 9.

- f) Declining and ageing population with an increase in single people is leading to an increased demand for housing to meet their needs and is increasing pressure on services and facilities. For further policy information refer to Core Policy 2, Core Policy 3 and Core Policy 10.
- g) Access to key services in rural areas is limited across the Borough area, which has been compounded by the loss of rural services and facilities. For further policy information refer to Core Policy 1 and Core Policy 2.
- h) Areas of poor quality housing are evident in Pre 1919 terraces in the Borough principally in the urban areas of Stafford and Stone. For further policy information refer to Core Policy 3.
- i) Pockets of deprivation within a generally wealthy Borough population are located in a limited number of wards, predominantly in the urban area of Stafford. For further policy information refer to Core Policy 3.
- j) Maintaining Stafford's status as a retail and local governance centre, as trade is lost to nearby centres therefore undermining the trading base and effecting the vitality and viability of the town centre. The local governance centre could be undermined by the re-organisation and restructuring through a number of services. For further policy information refer to Core Policy 1 and Core Policy 3.
- k) Lack of provision for social and community facilities is considered to be an issue within the Borough by some respondents. For further policy information refer to Core Policy 1, Core Policy 2 and Core Policy 3.
- l) Maintaining biodiversity and wildlife corridors has been identified by the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan and the Stafford Borough Biodiversity Strategy. For further policy information refer to Core Policy 6.
- m) Protect and enhance the historic environment to maintain the high quality environment and rich cultural heritage of the Stafford Borough area for residents and visitors. For further policy information refer to Core Policy 6.

3.2 As indicated above the Core Policies within the Core Strategy Development Plan Document will seek to address the key issues listed through policy implementation and delivery. Further background information is available within the Sustainability Appraisal Report and the associated Technical Appendices.

4.0 Vision, Sustainable Development Statement and Spatial Objectives

- 4.1 *It is important that the Vision, Sustainable Development Statement and the Spatial Objectives are unique to the Borough and reflect the circumstances and the characteristics of the area.*

Vision

"The overall vision for Stafford Borough is to create an economically successful, sustainable and adaptable Borough whilst protecting and enhancing the local environment, where:

- The urban area of Stafford supports major new employment development and future sustainable housing provision
- The market town of Stone and the rural areas provide viable local services and facilities to meet local community needs
- Sustainable economic development is encouraged across the Borough

and together they maintain and enhance existing services and facilities, and the high quality environment where all people living and working together, are able to meet their aspirations and needs whilst improving the quality of life for future generations"

- 4.2 *The Stafford Borough Local Development Framework is based on the following Sustainable Development Statement in order to place the principles of sustainable development at the centre of the new Development Plan for the area:*

Sustainable Development Statement

"Within the Borough the Core Strategy, Proposals Map, Development Plan Documents, Area Action Plans and the associated implementation framework will aim to deliver the Government's purpose and guiding principles as set out in the 'Securing the Future: Delivering UK sustainable development strategy' document.

In order to ensure that the implementation of the Local Development Framework's spatial development strategy is consistent with the purpose and guiding principles the policy framework will be monitored and reviewed through relevant indicators and targets as well as being assessed by Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment"

- 4.3 *The Core Strategy Development Plan Document has a number of spatial objectives which underpin the core policies, provide the spatial perspective for the Vision and create links to the individual Development Plan Documents being prepared.*

Spatial Objective 1

To create a Borough where all areas have distinct roles to play with Stafford as the strategic centre, and to encourage cross-border linkages with adjoining Districts. The role of each area and linkage should reflect the distinctive qualities of the locality as a contribution to the overall diversity and character of the Borough whilst mitigating impacts of increased transport movements between settlements.

Spatial Objective 2

To secure an improvement in the quality of life in the rural area of the Borough by maintaining and promoting thriving, balanced, viable, inclusive and sustainable rural communities with access to services and securing the protection and enhancement of its environmental resources.

Spatial Objective 3

To maintain a high and stable level of employment by supporting the diversification and strengthening the modernisation of the Borough's economy whilst ensuring that opportunities for new growth, retention and expansion of existing businesses are linked to meeting the needs of the local community, respecting the local environment.

Spatial Objective 4

Develop the local economy to meet local employment, higher education and learning needs by providing a sufficient number and variety of employment and educational locations and opportunities, including the review of existing under used and derelict sites, whilst respecting the local environment.

Spatial Objective 5

To create a variety and choice of high quality, healthy, affordable and sustainable residential environments with access to local services, which respect the environment.

Spatial Objective 6

Meet housing requirements in the Regional Spatial Strategy, including provision of affordable housing and housing for key workers by enabling new residential developments on previously developed land in settlements (excluding land used for sport and recreation) in preference to Greenfield locations.

Spatial Objective 7

To ensure the quality of the natural environment, including habitats and species, are protected, conserved and enhanced across all parts of the Borough taking care to safeguard sites within local, national and international designations including registered Commons and sites supporting protected species, and habitats and species identified in the local, regional and national Biodiversity Action Plans.

Spatial Objective 8

To encourage improvement of the Borough's transport systems in an integrated, sustainable and accessible way for all, whilst reducing, where possible, the need for travel, increasing active travel (walking and cycling) and protecting the environment through mitigation measures.

Spatial Objective 9

To provide for local community services and facilities in key locations to increase social cohesion and improve health, community pride and effective, viable centres through high quality design whilst respecting the local environment.

Spatial Objective 10

To maintain, improve and enhance high quality, vital and viable town and district centres ensuring that if new development takes place outside of these centres practical linkages are incorporated.

Spatial Objective 11

To conserve and enhance unique and sustainable developed areas and other locations where development takes place to be increasingly attractive places where people wish to live, work, visit and invest, whilst utilising previously developed land respecting local environmental factors in the most effective way and providing a variety and choice of high quality, healthy and sustainable living and working environments.

Spatial Objective 12

To protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment, in particular the Borough's Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens and Sites of Archaeological Value.

Spatial Objective 13

To maintain the principles of Green Belt and protect it from inappropriate development.

Spatial Objective 14

To secure planning obligations in order to ensure that development is acceptable in community planning terms and compensates for any harmful impact.

Spatial Objective 15

To protect ancient woodlands, other managed woodlands and significant trees in Stafford Borough and to increase the area of native broadleaf woodland.

Spatial Objective 16

To improve the Borough's sport, recreation, leisure and tourist facilities in those areas with an identified quality or quantity deficiency of facilities and to provide accessible natural greenspace including woodlands with priority given to local needs whilst sustaining the Borough economy and protecting the environment.

Spatial Objective 17

To encourage the exploitation and development of renewable energy sources wherever they have prospects of being economically attractive, and environmentally and socially acceptable.

Spatial Objective 18

To ensure a balance between the growth of new and existing telecommunication systems and the environmental, social, health and physical impacts of any such development.

Spatial Objective 19

To ensure that the impacts of climate change on the natural environment, including ensuring that new and existing development is not at risk of flooding or detrimental to flooding elsewhere and to ensure pollution control and protection of controlled waters leads to key water resources being maintained for the future for economic, social or environmental benefits.

Spatial Objective 20

To encourage protection and enhancement of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and to the Cannock Chase to Sutton Park Biodiversity Enhancement Area.

5.0 Background Context to the Vision and Spatial Objectives

5.1 This section sets out the general context for the proposed vision and spatial objectives for the Stafford Borough Local Development Framework. The proposed vision and objectives are underpinned by the principles of sustainable development.

5.2 The new Local Development Framework (LDF) should be based on a clear vision for the area and should take account of other policies and strategies affecting Stafford Borough.

5.3 The Council's Corporate Vision and Priorities

On 30 September 2003, the Borough Council agreed a vision for the area, together with four key priorities. In finalising the Council's priorities for 2003-2007 Members considered responses from a consultation exercise designed to feed into the Council meeting.

The Borough Council's vision is to "lead a community and Borough which is prosperous, safe, healthy, clean and green."

In order to achieve this vision, four key priorities were identified:

- **Prosperity** – Working to ensure good employment opportunities and a flourishing economy, retail, leisure and tourism services.
- **Community Safety** – Working to ensure that people are safe in their home and in their neighbourhood.
- **Management of Public Spaces** – Working to ensure clean, tidy and attractive public spaces.
- **Waste Management** – Working to ensure recycling targets for household waste are met.

The corresponding key commitments in the Council's Corporate Vision and Priorities that are relevant to the LDF are set out below:

Prosperity

- P1** Work with the business community to support the local economy and secure competitive advantage for our Borough.
- P2** Ensure that the development of the Borough as a destination for inward investment is supported by provision and encouragement of services, choice within the housing market, leisure opportunities and an environment that also improves the quality of life for residents.
- P3** Ensure the new Local Development Framework (Local Plan) identifies and brings forward new employment sites for the next 10 years.
- P4** Pursue a "fast track" approach to key planning applications, adopt a more proactive stance to pre-application advice prior to submission of planning applications and ensure that recent improvements in the Planning Service are sustained.

- P5** *Work with the Local Strategic Partnership to support the development of the whole Borough as a destination for visitors for retail, culture and tourism purposes.*
- P8** *Support the rural economy through the Market Towns Initiatives and other measures.*
- P9** *Maintain an active role in the North and Southern Staffordshire Partnerships to ensure that Stafford Borough benefits from sub-regional strategies and encourage Advantage West Midlands to invest in the area.*

Community Safety

- CS1** *Play our role within the Stafford Borough Community Safety Partnership to fully support the Police, Fire Service and Ambulance Service in their community safety role, together with other appropriate agencies in reducing crime and the fear of crime.*
- CS2** *Use our planning responsibilities to guide and support physical development which discourages unlawful activity.*

The Management of Public Space

- PS 1** *Work with the Staffordshire County Council and encourage them to invest in highways, transportation and public space to the advantage of our local communities.*
- PS4** *Pay particular attention to our role in partnerships with others in maintaining quality town centres.*
- PS5** *Ensure our green spaces are protected and enhanced using the Local Development Framework and other strategies.*

Waste Management

- WM5** *Remain committed to environmental protection and the pursuit of sustainability, where practical.*

5.4 Stafford Borough Community Plan 2003 - 2006

*In September 2003 the **Stafford Borough Community Plan 2003-06** (described in Government guidance as the Community Strategy) was published by the Local Strategic Partnership, known as the Stafford Partnership, as a joint plan setting out aspirations and proposals from over 300 key local partner organisations and individuals to ensure the economic, environmental and social well-being of the community.*

The Community Plan aims to improve the quality of life in Stafford Borough over the next three years and beyond through the following vision:

“To create a Borough in which people and organisations can face the 21st Century with confidence, a place that is prosperous with a community that cares.”

The Community Plan 2003-06 sets out the strategic direction, by identifying a number of priorities for improving the quality of life in Stafford Borough, centred around nine key themes, which each have a set of objectives:

- Planning for the Future
- Employment Opportunities
- Attracting Resources
- Youth and Community
- Community Safety
- Health and Lifestyle
- Waste Minimisation, Recycling and the Efficient Use of Resources
- Protecting and Enhancing the Environment
- Transportation

5.5 **The Community Strategy for Staffordshire**

In November 2002 'A Community Strategy for Staffordshire' was prepared by the Staffordshire Conference, a partnership of 50 organisations working across the County area. The Community Strategy concentrates on issues that are important to the whole county and supports the strategies produced at district and borough levels.

The aim of the strategy is to improve the quality of life for local communities within Staffordshire, and to contribute to achieving sustainable development by improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of the county and those who live in it.

The community strategy for Staffordshire is built on six areas. These relate to the following:

Community safety - reducing crime and the fear of crime arising from burglary, drug abuse and vandalism, and promoting public safety.

Environment - Conserving and enhancing a distinctive and sustainable natural and built environment.

Health, social care and housing - Improving people's health and well-being and the health and care services they receive, and providing housing for local need.

Lifelong learning and culture - producing better opportunities for education and lifelong learning, and promoting community development (including cultural facilities).

Prosperity - developing the local economy, building on local distinctiveness and assets.

Transport - providing transport facilities and encouraging environmentally friendly means of getting about.

5.6 **Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands**

The vision in Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the West Midlands states that:

"The overall vision for the West Midlands is one of an economically successful, outward looking and adaptable Region, which is rich in culture and environment, where all people, working together, are able to meet their aspirations and needs without prejudicing the quality of life for future generations."

Regional Spatial Strategy has the following set of spatial objectives for the region:

- To make the Major Urban Areas of the West Midlands increasingly attractive places where people want to live, work and invest;
- To secure the regeneration of the rural areas of the Region;
- To create a joined-up multi-centred Regional structure where all areas / centres have distinct roles to play;

- To retain the Green Belt, but to allow an adjustment of boundaries where this is necessary to support urban regeneration;
- To support the cities and towns of the Region to meet their local and sub-regional development needs;
- To support the diversification and modernisation of the Region's economy while ensuring that opportunities for growth are linked to meeting needs and reducing social exclusion;
- To ensure the quality of the environment is conserved and enhanced across all parts of the Region;
- To improve significantly the Region's transport systems;
- To promote the development of a network of strategic centres across the Region; and
- To promote Birmingham as a world city.

5.7 ***The Sustainable Development Strategy for the UK***

The Government's Sustainable Development Strategy for the UK (1999) provides four broad objectives:

- *Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;*
- *Effective protection of the environment;*
- *Prudent use of natural resources; and*
- *Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.*

The Government's update to the Sustainable Development Strategy published in 2005 entitled 'Securing the future – Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy' contains the following purpose and strategic principles:

Purpose

The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations.

For the UK Government and the Devolved Administrations, that goal will be pursued in an integrated way through a sustainable, innovative and productive economy that delivers high levels of employment; and a just society that promotes social inclusion, sustainable communities and personal wellbeing. This will be done in ways that protect and enhance the physical and natural environment, and use resources and energy as efficiently as possible.

Government must promote a clear understanding of, and commitment to, sustainable development so that all people can contribute to the overall goal through their individual decisions.

Similar objectives will inform all our international endeavours, with the UK actively promoting multilateral and sustainable solutions to today's most pressing environmental, economic and social problems. There is a clear obligation on more prosperous nations both to put their own house in order, and to support other countries in the transition towards a more equitable and sustainable world.

Guiding Principles

- Living Within Environmental Limits

Respecting the limits of the planet's environment, resources and biodiversity – to improve our environment and ensure that the natural resources needed for life are unimpaired and remain so for future generations.

- Ensuring a Strong, Healthy and Just Society

Meeting the diverse needs of all people in existing and future communities, promoting personal well being, social cohesion and inclusion, and creating equal opportunity for all.

- Achieving a Sustainable Economy

Building a strong, stable and sustainable economy which provides prosperity and opportunities for all, and in which environmental and social costs fall on those who impose them (polluter pays), and efficient resource use is incentivised.

- Promoting Good Governance

Actively promoting effective, participative systems of governance in all levels of society – engaging people's creativity, energy, and diversity.

- Using Sound Science Responsibly

Ensuring policy is developed and implemented on the basis of strong scientific evidence, whilst taking into account scientific uncertainty (through the precautionary principle) as well as public attitudes and values.

5.8 **Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future**

The Government's Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future (2003) sets out several key requirements for the creation of sustainable communities to be facilitated by the Local Development Framework process including:

- A flourishing local economy to provide jobs and wealth;
- A safe and healthy local environment with well designed public and green space;
- Good public transport and other transport infrastructure both with the community and linking it to urban, rural and regional centres;
- A well integrated mix of decent homes of different types and tenures to support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes; and
- Good quality local public services, including education and training opportunities, health care and community facilities, especially for leisure.

6.0 Policy Context

- 6.1 *In identifying the proposed spatial vision, objectives and core policies for the Submission Core Strategy Development Plan Document the Borough Council has taken account of national and regional policy compliance, deliverability, and local acceptability.*

6.2 National Policy

The Government sets out national policy in Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs), which are currently being replaced by Planning Policy Statements (PPSs). The Government also produces Circulars and Best Practice Guides in order to provide advice to local planning authorities, to encourage a consistent approach to planning across the country.

For more information please refer to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister website at www.odpm.gov.uk

6.3 Regional Policy

Regional planning policy for the West Midlands is set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The RSS provides the regional spatial framework within which Local Development Documents of the Local Development Framework (LDF) will be prepared. The RSS forms part of the statutory development plan alongside the Development Plan Documents of the LDF. The West Midland Economic Strategy is a delivery vehicle for many aspects of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

For more information please refer to the Government Office for the West Midlands website at www.go-wm.gov.uk

6.4 County Policy

The County Council is required to produce a Mineral and Waste Development Framework for the whole County area, of which the proposals covering Stafford Borough's area will be indicated on the Proposals Map where relevant.

For more information please refer to the Staffordshire County Council website at www.staffordshire.gov.uk

6.5 Local Policy

Currently the Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 and the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011 makes up the adopted Development Plan for the area. However this Development Plan now needs to be reviewed and updated. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that existing Development Plans be replaced by Development Plan Documents within Local Development Frameworks. The new Development Plan for Stafford Borough will be made up of the Regional Spatial Strategy and Development Plan Documents within the Local Development Framework, which will provide the spatial framework for the Borough.

The following policies from the Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 will be replaced by the Core Strategy Development Plan Document's core policies:

- HOU1 – Development in existing Residential Areas
- EMP1 – Protection of Employment Land
- EMP9 – Design and Landscaping
- EMP10 – Implementation of Landscaping Schemes
- EMP11 – Future Employment Land Provision

For more information please refer to the Stafford Borough Council website at www.staffordbc.gov.uk

7.0 Submission Core Policies

- 7.1 *The following submission Core Strategy policies have been identified following consultation and community involvement through alternative policy options in the Core Strategy Development Plan Document – Issues and Options Paper and the preferred policy options in the Core Strategy Development Plan Document – Preferred Options Report to provide a local policy context to support national guidance in Planning Policy Guidance Notes / Statements and deliver key elements of the Community Strategies. The core policies in this Development Plan Document (DPD) have been prepared to deliver the spatial objectives as well as aiming to avoid re-iterating national guidance.*
- 7.2 *The Initial and subsequently Final Sustainability Appraisal Reports for the Core Strategy DPD were consulted upon at the same time as the Issues and Options Paper and the Preferred Options Report. Following an assessment of the policy alternatives through the Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report a preferred option was recommended for each Core Policy. The preferred option was then assessed through the Final Sustainability Appraisal Report. The submitted core policies have been re-assessed through the Revised Final Sustainability Appraisal Report. For further information please refer to the Revised Final Sustainability Appraisal Report.*
- 7.3 *The Core Strategy Development Plan Document – Issues and Options Paper contained three alternative policy approaches for each Core Policy area. The alternative approaches related to the level of guidance provided for development, as follows:*
- Option A – Greatest level of guidance and most restriction over development*
 - Option B – Less level of guidance and less restriction over development*
 - Option C – Least level of guidance and least restriction over development*
- 7.4 *For further information about the alternative policy approach beyond this précis please refer to the Core Strategy DPD – Issues and Options Paper. Following consideration of the responses and representations received to the Core Strategy Development Plan Document – Issues and Options Paper and the Preferred Options Report, as well as the recommendations in the Sustainability Appraisal Reports, the following submitted core policies have been prepared.*

8.0 Proposals Map

- 8.1 *The submission Core Strategy Development Plan Document is accompanied by a Proposals Map for the Stafford Borough area. The purpose of the Proposals Map is to show the main proposals, designations, locations for Area Action Plans and areas where specific policies apply. The Proposals Map will be adopted at the same time as the Core Strategy Development Plan Document but revised and updated as subsequent theme-based Development Plan Documents are adopted.*

9.0 Monitoring and Delivery

- 9.1 *A crucial element of preparing the Core Strategy Development Plan Document was to establish a clear monitoring and implementation framework. As part of this monitoring and implementation framework the national core indicators will be reported through the Annual Monitoring Report to assess the delivery of core policies in the Core Strategy Development Plan Document. Where appropriate these national core indicators will also be used to assess the performance of other policies in the theme-based Development Plan Documents.*
- 9.2 *Spatial objectives, targets, milestones, implementation bodies, the timescale for delivery and indicators including the national core indicators from the Government guidance 'Local Development Framework Monitoring: A Good Practice Guide' have been linked to the relevant core policy as set out below.*

*The purpose of this policy is to direct most new development to Stafford **in order to maintain and enhance its status as a centre for retailing and local governance which may be undermined by re-organisation and restructuring of services** whilst retaining and enhancing existing facilities elsewhere **across the Borough**. Stafford is identified within the Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands (RSS) as an 'Other large settlement', a 'Local Regeneration Area' and a 'Strategic Centre'. Furthermore the RSS provides policies for market towns, such as Stone, to accommodate sustainable economic and housing development. Services and facilities referred to in this policy are defined to include the following: retail, health, community, cultural, social, sport, recreation and leisure. **A number of settlements are identified within the rural area of the Borough as a focus for improved services and facilities in order to improve access to such facilities, which are limited for rural communities.** For further information refer to Section 2.0 Character of the Borough and Section 3.0 Key Issues. **Section 16 of the Revised Final Sustainability Appraisal Report shows that Core Policy 1 is stronger in economic and social terms than environmental factors.***

Core Policy 1 will contribute to delivery of the Vision and the following Spatial Objectives as set out below:

Spatial Objective 1

To create a Borough where all areas have distinct roles to play with Stafford as the strategic centre, and to encourage cross-border linkages with adjoining Districts. The role of each area and linkage should reflect the distinctive qualities of the locality as a contribution to the overall diversity and character of the Borough whilst mitigating impacts of increased transport movements between settlements.

Spatial Objective 9

To provide for local community services and facilities in key locations to increase social cohesion and improve health, community pride and effective, viable centres through high quality design whilst respecting the local environment.

Spatial Objective 14

To secure planning obligations in order to ensure that development is acceptable in community planning terms and compensates for any harmful impact.

Spatial Objective 16

To improve the Borough's sport, recreation, leisure and tourist facilities in those areas with an identified quality or quantity deficiency of facilities and to provide accessible natural greenspace including woodlands with priority given to local needs whilst sustaining the Borough economy and protecting the environment.

Spatial Objective 17

To encourage the exploitation and development of renewable energy sources wherever they have prospects of being economically attractive, and environmentally and socially acceptable.

SUBMISSION POLICY

The requirements for new development in the Borough will primarily be met by the re-use of previously developed land and buildings, excluding land used for sport and recreation. Where appropriate planning obligations will be used to secure the implementation of planning policies through acceptable development proposals.

1. Major new employment development, including office and industrial uses and significant sporting facilities will be concentrated in or adjoining the urban area of Stafford. Sustainable housing and tourism development, and providing major services and facilities to the Borough and the surrounding area will take place within the urban area of Stafford
2. The market town of Stone will be a focus for employment and tourism development as well as limited housing development and providing services and facilities to serve its rural hinterland
3. Services and facilities to serve rural areas will be maintained and enhanced in the following settlements:

Gnosall	Eccleshall	Great Haywood
Barlaston	Hixon	Little Haywood & Colwich
4. The retention and appropriate enhancement of existing services and facilities will be sought in other rural settlements
5. Sustainable employment development will be encouraged across the Borough

All new development must:

- (a) mitigate for environmental impacts where appropriate;
- (b) avoid the sterilisation of mineral reserves; and
- (c) protect the natural floodplain through Flood Risk Assessments as well as utilising Sustainable Drainage Systems to control flooding and maintain water quality.

All new developments and renovations will be encouraged to use energy saving systems and provide on-site renewable energy generation, where practical and economically viable, or provide acceptable sustainable energy alternatives.

Indicator

Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development.

Target: Increase provision for Stafford and Stone by 1% average per year (measured from 2007)

Percentage of completed retail, office and leisure development in town centres

Target: 60 – 80% completed in town centres (measured from 2007)

Renewable energy capacity installed by type.

Target: Increase provision by 1% average per year (measured from 2007)

Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality

Target: Less than 1% average per year (measured from 2007)

Milestones 2011, 2016 & 2021

Implementation Bodies

Development industry –	<u>bring forward new development proposals</u>
Landowners –	<u>release land for new development</u>
Environment Agency –	<u>ensure new development meets standards of pollution control and delivers Sustainable Drainage Systems</u>
Stafford Borough Council -	<u>promote, encourage and control new developments as well as energy initiatives</u>

Implementation Strategies

Regional Spatial Strategy
Stafford Borough Community Plan 2003-2006
Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011
Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action Plan for West Midlands
Regional Economic Strategy for the West Midlands 2004-2010
Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food (Defra 2002)
Rural Strategy 2004
EU Water Framework Directive

Timescale for Delivery

2001 - 2021

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that new development maintains and improves the character and quality of life in the rural area and its settlements. The policy aims to encourage sustainable rural communities, including through the provision of local services and facilities, which are limited and considered to be lacking in the rural area of the Borough. In rural areas support for the local economy is being undermined by housing development, which the policy aims to address by meeting local needs. For further information refer to Section 2.0 Character of the Borough and Section 3.0 Key Issues. Further policy details will be set out in Development Plan Document Number 2. Section 16 of the Revised Final Sustainability Appraisal Report shows that Core Policy 2 is particularly strong in environmental terms but also supports economic and social factors.

Core Policy 2 will contribute to delivery of the Vision and the following Spatial Objectives as set out below:

Spatial Objective 2

To secure an improvement in the quality of life in the rural area of the Borough by maintaining and promoting thriving, balanced, viable, inclusive and sustainable rural communities with access to services and securing the protection and enhancement of its environmental resources.

Spatial Objective 11

To conserve and enhance unique and sustainable developed areas and other locations where development takes place to be increasingly attractive places where people wish to live, work, visit and invest, whilst utilising previously developed land respecting local environmental factors in the most effective way and providing a variety and choice of high quality, healthy and sustainable living and working environments.

SUBMISSION POLICY

The essential character and economic and social fabric of rural areas and settlements shall be maintained or improved to meet local needs by:

- a) encouraging development at an appropriate scale and location which assists in supporting existing businesses or diversifying the local economy, to help to underpin or improve services, community facilities and local employment;
- b) the provision of housing to meet the needs of existing rural communities including affordable homes and housing for key workers;
- c) ensuring that development protects, conserves and enhances the rural setting whilst not having undesirable impacts on local infrastructure, facilities and transportation networks;
- d) conserving and enhancing the natural, built, historic and water environments;
- e) maximising the use of previously developed land in preference to greenfield sites; and
- f) ensuring that new development provides adequate foul drainage services to prevent pollution to controlled waters.

Indicator

Affordable housing completions -

Number of affordable houses completed outside Stafford and Stone per year

Target: 10 affordable houses completed (measured from 2007)

Percentage of new housing development on previously developed land in rural areas

Target: 70% by 2011 80% by 2021 (measured from 2007)

Milestones 2011, 2016 & 2021

Implementation Bodies

Development industry -
Landowners -

bring forward new development proposals
release land for new development and farm
diversification schemes

Registered Social Landlords – bring forward affordable housing schemes on
rural exception sites in conjunction with the local
community and work with the development
industry for the provision of affordable housing
through planning obligations and funding from the
Housing Corporation

Stafford Borough Council - promote, encourage and control new developments

Implementation Strategies

Regional Spatial Strategy
Regional Housing Strategy
Stafford Borough Community Plan 2003-2006
Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011
UK Fuel Poverty Strategy 2001
Energy White Paper 2003
Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food (Defra 2002)
Rural Strategy 2004
Housing Strategy 2002

Timescale for Delivery

2001 – 2021

Core Policy 3: Sustainable Urban Living

*The purpose of this policy is to encourage partnership working to deliver quality development schemes in the urban areas of Stafford and Stone. **In an increasingly competitive economy the policy aims to maintain the vitality and viability of the town centres in order to prevent trade being lost to other nearby centres. Within the urban areas there are limited pockets of local deprivation, a perceived lack of social and community facilities together with areas of poor quality housing, which the policy aims to address by improving the overall quality of life across Stafford and Stone.** For further information refer to Section 2.0 Character of the Borough and Section 3.0 Key Issues. Further policy details will be set out in the various detailed Development Plan Documents. **Section 16 of the Revised Final Sustainability Appraisal Report shows that Core Policy 3 performs strongly across economic, social and environmental factors.***

Core Policy 3 will contribute to delivery of the Vision and the following Spatial Objectives as set out below:

Spatial Objective 10

To maintain, improve and enhance high quality, vital and viable town and district centres ensuring that if new development takes place outside of these centres practical linkages are incorporated.

Spatial Objective 11

To conserve and enhance unique and sustainable developed areas and other locations where development takes place to be increasingly attractive places where people wish to live, work, visit and invest, whilst utilising previously developed land respecting local environmental factors in the most effective way and providing a variety and choice of high quality, healthy and sustainable living and working environments.

SUBMISSION POLICY

Sustainable urban living will be achieved by encouraging and implementing initiatives which will enhance the image, improve opportunities for physical activity, create vitality and improve safety, comfort and environmental quality. This approach will be developed through partnerships with other agencies and the development industry, for schemes and proposals which:

- a) Maintain and enhance the viability and sustainability of urban areas whilst facilitating new built development, economic investment and diversification;
- b) enhance the image, attractiveness and accessibility of the town and district centres within the urban areas, boost vitality and encourage new investment;
- c) aim to reclaim and reuse derelict, contaminated, degraded, vacant or underused land and buildings for new development in preference to taking greenfield land;
- d) seek to improve the availability, accessibility, quality and diversity of the housing stock, including the provision of affordable housing;
- e) protect, conserve and enhance the character and quality of the Borough's townscapes and public realm;
- f) protect and enhance environmental quality through the creation, retention, improvement and extension of areas of wildlife value, woodlands, open spaces, access to watercourses and historic assets where relevant;
- g) provide high quality designed developments which will protect water quality, improve the quality of life and enhance the built environment; and
- h) promote more sustainable transport choices and reduce the need to travel.

Indicator

Percentage of completed retail, office and leisure development in town centres

Target: 60 – 80% completed in town centres (measured from 2007)

Affordable housing completions -

Percentage of new housing development classified as affordable housing

Target: 25% classified as affordable housing (measured from 2007)

Milestones 2011, 2016 & 2021

Implementation Bodies

Development industry -	<u>bring forward new development proposals</u>
Landowners -	<u>release land for new development</u>
Registered Social Landlords -	<u>work with the development industry for the provision of affordable housing through planning obligations and funding from the Housing Corporation</u>
Stafford Borough Council –	<u>Economic Development: to encourage land for economic uses</u> <u>Environmental Health: to reduce number of unfit homes and promote energy initiatives</u> <u>Planning: to promote, encourage and control new developments</u>
Town Centre Forum -	<u>to promote vibrant town centres</u>
Local Education Authority -	<u>provision of open space for local communities</u>

Implementation Strategies

Regional Spatial Strategy
Stafford Borough Community Plan 2003-2006
Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011
Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action Plan for West Midlands
Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food (Defra 2002)
Rural Strategy 2004
UK Fuel Poverty Strategy 2001

Timescale for Delivery

2001 - 2021

*The purpose of this policy is to promote economic prosperity and support the Borough's employment base through targeted employment allocations and development proposals. **As a result of the impact from housing development and a significant decline in manufacturing employment across the Borough the policy aims to encourage economic development and re-use of buildings for employment uses in rural areas as well as promote economic growth and stability in urban areas.** For further information refer to Section 2.0 Character of the Borough and Section 3.0 Key Issues. Further policy details will be set out in the Economic Development Control Development Plan Document, Development Plan Document Number 2 and the Site-specific Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document. **Section 16 of the Revised Final Sustainability Appraisal Report shows that Core Policy 4 is strong in economic and social terms but has some negative environmental aspects.***

Core Policy 4 will contribute to delivery of the Vision and the following Spatial Objectives as set out below:

Spatial Objective 3

To maintain a high and stable level of employment by supporting the diversification and strengthening the modernisation of the Borough's economy whilst ensuring that opportunities for new growth, retention and expansion of existing businesses are linked to meeting the needs of the local community, respecting the local environment.

Spatial Objective 17

To encourage the exploitation and development of renewable energy sources wherever they have prospects of being economically attractive, and environmentally and socially acceptable.

Spatial Objective 18

To ensure a balance between the growth of new and existing telecommunication systems and the environmental, social, health and physical impacts of any such development.

SUBMISSION POLICY

Diversification of the Borough's economy will be encouraged through the promotion and development of targeted employment allocations and attracting inward investment to the urban areas of Stafford and, to a lesser extent the market town of Stone, with an emphasis on creating greater opportunities for development, maintaining and enhancing social and environmental benefits and support for existing economic activities by:

- a) enabling the economy to diversify and modernise through the growth of existing businesses and the creation of new enterprises;
- b) maintaining and improving the Borough's economic position;
- c) enhancing the Borough's role as a centre of governance, a high technology business centre and University location within the Regional economy; and
- d) improving accessibility by a choice of means of transport to employment opportunities for the Borough's residents in order to meet local employment needs, maintain viable and sustainable local communities.

Economic growth and tourism opportunities in rural areas will be encouraged by locating development where:

- (i) it includes the re-use of existing buildings and assists with appropriate rural diversification; and
- (ii) it can help create more sustainable communities by generally providing a better balance between housing and employment, and limiting the need for commuting.

Existing economic activities in the Borough will be encouraged to modernise both to stay competitive and to embrace the opportunities offered by new technologies including Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). The potential for existing and new industries to apply renewable energy technology to help address the implications of climate change will be encouraged, where practical and economically viable.

In all cases, the scale and nature of development should ensure that it meets the Borough's economic needs and does not encourage further outward movements of people and jobs from Stafford and Stone as well as the major urban areas identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Indicator

Amount of land developed for employment by type.

Target: To be determined by Regional Spatial Strategy requirements

Amount of land developed for employment, by type, which is in development and / or regeneration areas defined in the local development framework.

Target: To be determined by Regional Spatial Strategy requirements

Percentage of land developed for employment, by type, which is on previously developed land.

Target: 60 – 70% average per annum (measured from 2007)

Employment land supply by type.

Target: To have 10 hectares of employment land immediately available (measured from 2007)

Losses of employment land (i) development / regeneration areas and (ii) local authority area.

Target: Less than 5 hectares per year (measured from 2007)

Amount of employment land lost to residential development

Target: Less than 3 hectares per year (measured from 2007)

Renewable energy capacity installed by type.

Target: Increase provision by 1% average per year (measured from 2007)

Milestones 2011, 2016 & 2021

Implementation Bodies

Development industry -	<u>bring forward new development proposals</u>
Landowners -	<u>release land for new development</u>
Staffordshire County Council –	<u>release land for new development as landowner</u>
Instaffs -	<u>Marketing and economic development promotion</u>
Business Link -	<u>promote Staffordshire as a location for employment</u>
Stafford Borough Council –	<u>development</u>
	<u>encourage local businesses and start-up initiatives</u>
	<u>Economic Development: to encourage land for</u>
	<u>economic uses</u>
	<u>Planning: to promote, encourage and control new</u>
	<u>developments</u>
Learning & Skills Council -	<u>provider and funding for training</u>
Staffordshire University-	<u>provider of education and research facilities</u>
Stafford Tourism Bureau-	<u>promotes sustainable tourism</u>

Implementation Strategies

Regional Spatial Strategy
Stafford Borough Community Plan 2003-2006
Stafford Borough Economic Development Strategy
Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011
Regional Economic Strategy for the West Midlands 2004-2010

Timescale for Delivery

2001 - 2021

*The purpose of this policy is to support the delivery of initiatives in the Local Transport Plan through spatial planning principles for a modern transport network. **The Local Transport Plan seeks to deliver better accessibility, create safer roads and provide effective and efficient highway maintenance, which is to be delivered by Staffordshire County Council as the key implementation body.** For further information refer to Section 2.0 Character of the Borough. Further policy details will be set out in Development Plan Document Number 4. **Section 16 of the Revised Final Sustainability Appraisal Report shows that Core Policy 5 is stronger in economic and social terms than environmental factors.***

Core Policy 5 will contribute to delivery of the Vision and the following Spatial Objective as set out below:

Spatial Objective 8

To encourage improvement of the Borough's transport systems in an integrated, sustainable and accessible way for all, whilst reducing, where possible, the need for travel, increasing active travel (walking and cycling) and protecting the environment through mitigation measures.

SUBMISSION POLICY

The creation and retention of a modern transport network in the Borough will be promoted in order to support development and sustainability of quality living environments and the creation and maintenance of jobs in accessible locations, particularly around public transport nodes. Integrated transport networks will be promoted through the Local Transport Plan to encourage safe and efficient movement in urban and rural areas, whilst protecting and enhancing local biodiversity and water quality.

Reducing the need to travel, reduce the adverse effects of transportation on the quality of life including the environment and the length of journeys will be encouraged by:

- a) locating development in areas which are accessible by the motor car, public transport, cycling and walking;
- b) achieving a balanced mix of land uses and patterns of development to reduce the need to travel;
- c) promoting and assisting journeys by motor cars, public transport, cycling, mobility aids and walking, by making them accessible, safe, convenient and as attractive as possible;
- d) securing Travel Plans where appropriate and requiring the preparation of Transport Assessments for all developments that are likely to have significant transport implications, to determine the measures required on the surrounding highway network to ensure adequate access by all modes of transport. Where appropriate, developer contributions will be sought towards the provision of the Stafford Urban Area Transport Management Strategy (SUATMS);
- e) encouraging the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for the purposes of businesses and for other service provision;
- f) supporting the retention and enhancement of neighbourhood service provision, such as in District Centres;
- g) promoting safer use of routes in town and local areas by encouraging the development of traffic management schemes as determined by local need; and
- h) minimising environmental impacts through mitigation measures.

Indicator

Percentage of completed non-residential development complying with car-parking standards set out in the local development framework.

Target: 70 – 80% (measured from 2007)

Percentage of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major health centre

Target: 60 – 70% (measured from 2007)

Milestones 2011, 2016 & 2021

Implementation Bodies

Highways Agency - Highways Authority (Staffordshire County Council)-	<u>lead construction of M6 widening / expressway</u> <u>Local Transport Plan co-ordination / public transport / traffic management / new roads / road safety / cycling routes & footpaths</u>
Development industry -	<u>new development in appropriate locations and contributions to transport infrastructure</u>
Local Transport operators -	<u>providers of bus, train and other public transport services</u>
West Staffs Transport Partnership -	<u>deliver mobility needs of disadvantaged groups</u>

Implementation Strategies

Regional Spatial Strategy
Stafford Borough Community Plan 2003-2006
Staffordshire County Council Local Transport Plan 2000
Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011
Staffordshire County Council Accessibility Strategy (emerging)
Regional Economic Strategy for the West Midlands 2004-2010
Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food (Defra 2002)
Energy White Paper 2003

Timescale for Delivery

2001 - 2021

*The purpose of this policy is to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment by ensuring that new development is based on sustainable development principles. **The policy aims to protect and enhance the historic environment by maintaining a rich cultural heritage within Stafford Borough as well as protecting and enhancing biodiversity and wildlife corridors in accordance with the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan and the Stafford Borough Biodiversity Strategy.** Environmental capital is defined as being the combination of the assets (i.e. the tangible commodities such as land, trees, fields etc...) with the environmental benefits derived from them, such as leisure opportunities, tranquillity, natural habitats etc... For further information refer to Section 2.0 Character of the Borough and Section 3.0 Key Issues. Further policy details will be set out in Development Plan Document Number 2. Section 16 of the Revised Final Sustainability Appraisal Report shows that Core Policy 6 is particularly strong in environmental terms, has positive social aspects but provides limited support for economic factors.*

Core Policy 6 will contribute to delivery of the Vision and the following Spatial Objectives as set out below:

Spatial Objective 7

To ensure the quality of the natural environment, including habitats and species, are protected, conserved and enhanced across all parts of the Borough taking care to safeguard sites within local, national and international designations including registered Commons and sites supporting protected species, and habitats and species identified in the local, regional and national Biodiversity Action Plans.

Spatial Objective 12

To protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment, in particular the Borough's Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens and Sites of Archaeological Value.

Spatial Objective 15

To protect ancient woodlands, other managed woodlands and significant trees in Stafford Borough and to increase the area of native broadleaf woodland.

Spatial Objective 16

To improve the Borough's sport, recreation, leisure and tourist facilities in those areas with an identified quality or quantity deficiency of facilities and to provide accessible natural greenspace including woodlands with priority given to local needs whilst sustaining the Borough economy and protecting the environment.

Spatial Objective 19

To ensure that the impacts of climate change on the natural environment, including ensuring that new and existing development is not at risk of flooding or detrimental to flooding elsewhere and to ensure pollution control and protection of controlled waters leads to key water resources being maintained for the future for economic, social or environmental benefits.

Spatial Objective 20

To encourage protection and enhancement of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and to the Cannock Chase to Sutton Park Biodiversity Enhancement Area.

SUBMISSION POLICY

Environmental capital will be maintained and improved in order to underpin the overall quality of life across all areas and support wider economic and social objectives.

This will be achieved by:

- a) supporting regeneration, by restoring degraded areas and previously developed land, conserving existing environmental assets and creating new, high quality, built and natural environments;
- b) protecting and enhancing special areas of intrinsic visual or cultural merit within the Borough including registered Commons, the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Hanchurch Hills and Trentham Park;
- c) protecting and enhancing other irreplaceable assets;
- d) protecting and enhancing the distinctive character of different parts of the Borough, including the retention of existing buildings integral to the character of the area where the buildings make a positive contribution;
- e) protecting and enhancing international, national and locally important designated sites, and locations supporting protected species, and developing measures to enable the Borough to contribute to the Area of Concentrated Biodiversity Enhancement identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy, and to achieve its minimum share of Biodiversity Action Plan targets in the Regional Spatial Strategy and the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan including with respect to woodlands;
- f) protecting the natural floodplain from development and utilising Sustainable Drainage Systems to control flooding and maintain water quality;
- g) promote, on a strategic basis, measures that increase the extent and quality of accessible greenspace and encourage the management of features of the landscape of major importance to flora and fauna;
- h) protection and, where possible, enhancement of the Borough's historic assets; and
- i) adopting a character based approach for the protection and enhancement of landscapes.

The loss of irreplaceable environmental assets by development proposals will only be acceptable in exceptional circumstances. With regards to replaceable environmental assets all development proposals must minimise harm including by giving consideration to reasonable alternatives, mitigate and compensate for any loss of environmental capital and should use natural resources more sustainably. In addition proposals will be expected to provide a net gain to environmental assets.

Indicator

Changes in areas and populations of biodiversity importance, including:

- (i) change in priority habitats and species (by type); and
- (ii) change in areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value including sites of international, national, regional or sub-regional significance

Target: Less than 1% average per year (measured from 2007)

Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality

Target: Less than 1% average per year (measured from 2007)

Percentage of eligible open spaces managed to green flag award standard

Target: Increase by 1% average per year (measured from 2007)

Milestones 2011, 2016 & 2021

Implementation Bodies

English Nature -	<u>responsible for all Sites of Special Scientific Interest and liaison with landowners</u>
Environment Agency –	<u>ensure new development meets standards of pollution control, reduces flooding impacts and delivers Sustainable Drainage Systems</u>
English Heritage -	<u>responsible for Listed Buildings and Ancient Monuments when new development occurs</u>
Countryside Agency -	<u>leads countryside initiatives</u>
Staffordshire Wildlife Trust -	<u>responsible for maintaining Sites of Biological Importance and Local Nature Reserves</u>
Development industry -	<u>new development in appropriate locations</u>
Stafford Borough Council -	<u>lead on the Stafford Borough Biodiversity Strategy, responsible for Listed Buildings decisions and Tree Preservation Orders, maintenance of recreation facilities</u>
Local Education Authority –	<u>access to recreation facilities</u>

Implementation Strategies

Regional Spatial Strategy
Stafford Borough Community Plan 2003-2006
Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011
Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action Plan for West Midlands
Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food (Defra 2002)
Energy White Paper 2003
Contaminated Land Strategy
EU Water Framework Directive

Timescale for Delivery

2001 - 2021

*The purpose of this policy is to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development. **There are two areas of Green Belt within Stafford Borough as identified on the Proposals Map, the North Staffordshire Green Belt surrounding the City of Stoke-on-Trent conurbation north of Stone and the West Midlands Green Belt in the south east part of the Borough. The policy aims to provide a spatial planning framework for the Green Belt areas within Stafford Borough. For further information refer to Section 2.0 Character of the Borough. Further policy details will be set out in Development Plan Document Number 1. Section 16 of the Revised Final Sustainability Appraisal Report shows that Core Policy 7 is limited positive economic and social elements and some limited environmental factors.***

Core Policy 7 will contribute to delivery of the Vision and the following Spatial Objective as set out below:

Spatial Objective 13

To maintain the principles of Green Belt and protect it from inappropriate development.

SUBMISSION POLICY

There will be no review or adjustment of currently defined Green Belt boundaries unless required by the Regional Spatial Strategy. The general form and purposes of the adopted Green Belts will be maintained. Inappropriate development within Green Belts will not be permitted, except in very special circumstances (very special circumstances to justify inappropriate development will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations).

Construction of new buildings will only be appropriate if proven through the following circumstances and having regard to national Planning Policy Guidance note 2: Green Belt or its successor documents:

- (a) construction of domestic outbuildings incidental to the enjoyment of an existing building;
- (b) agriculture, forestry, horticulture and equine;
- (c) essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, cemeteries;
- (d) acceptable extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings;
- (e) acceptable infilling in existing villages for affordable housing or essential for rural regeneration to diversify the local economy or improve services or community facilities;
- (f) acceptable infilling or redevelopment of major existing developed sites identified in the Development Plan; and
- (g) other uses compatible with the openness of the Green Belt.

All development within the Green Belt should be appropriate in terms of scale, form, character and siting; it should maintain the visual amenities of the Green Belt and will be subject to other relevant policies.

Indicator

Planning applications and decisions thereon for significant new development or change of use including 5 or more dwellings (residential) or 500 square metres floorspace or more (non-residential) or significant leisure developments within the Green Belt

Target: Decisions in accordance with Greenbelt policy (measured from 2007)

Milestone 2011, 2016 & 2021

Implementation Bodies

Development industry -	<u>appropriate new development in the Green Belt including Major Developed Sites</u>
Stafford Borough Council -	<u>Planning: to control new developments</u>
Landowners -	<u>release land for appropriate schemes in the Green Belt</u>

Implementation Strategies

Regional Spatial Strategy
Stafford Borough Community Plan 2003-2006
Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011

Timescale for Delivery 2001 - 2021

Core Policy 8: High Quality Design

*The purpose of this policy is to achieve high quality of design in all new developments to support the delivery of social, economic and environmental benefits. For further information refer to Section 2.0 Character of the Borough. Further policy details will be set out in Development Plan Document Number 1. **Section 16 of the Revised Final Sustainability Appraisal Report shows that Core Policy 8 has positive economic, social and environmental impacts.***

Core Policy 8 will contribute to delivery of the Vision and the following Spatial Objective as set out below:

Spatial Objective 11

To conserve and enhance unique and sustainable developed areas and other locations where development takes place to be increasingly attractive places where people wish to live, work, visit and invest, whilst utilising previously developed land respecting local environmental factors in the most effective way and providing a variety and choice of high quality, healthy and sustainable living and working environments.

SUBMISSION POLICY

The creation of high quality design for all development in the Borough must be promoted in order to enhance the built environment and support economic, social and environmental objectives for achieving sustainable development.

All new development must:

- (a) adopt appropriate design measures, showing careful attention to the scale, character, setting and compatibility with their surroundings, materials and proposed use;
- (b) respect, maintain and enhance the character, street scene, scale and hierarchy of existing buildings and the spaces between them;
- (c) ensure through careful design and sustainable construction that the development is usable, durable, adaptable and maximises opportunities, where practical and economically viable, to use recycled materials in their construction;
- (d) where appropriate, demonstrate by means of an Access Statement access for all through the provision of safe and convenient access, addressing the needs of all in society, including people with disability;
- (e) adopt design measures to reduce the opportunity for crime and anti-social behaviour;
- (f) make efficient and prudent use of natural resources, including water as well as incorporating waste management, energy efficiency and pollution control measures regarding noise, air, water and light where appropriate;
- (g) contribute to high quality public spaces and opportunities for physical activity;
- (h) provide landscaping within the scheme appropriate to the location; and
- (i) protect and enhance existing areas of biodiversity value and links between them where appropriate.

Design statements will be required for development proposals within Conservation Areas, where appropriate

Indicator

Percentage of eligible open spaces managed to green flag award standard

Target: Increase by 1% average per year (measured from 2007)

Milestones

2011, 2016 & 2021

Implementation Bodies

Development industry -	<u>new development of high quality design</u>
Stafford Borough Council -	<u>Planning: to promote high quality design and control new developments</u>
	<u>Provision of open space and public realm</u>
Landowners -	<u>release land for appropriate schemes</u>
Health Service Agencies -	<u>promotes physical activity</u>
Staffordshire County Council –	<u>Promote public realm and deliver highway design schemes</u>
Community Safety Partnership -	<u>Designing out crime initiatives</u>

Implementation Strategies

Regional Spatial Strategy
Stafford Borough Community Plan 2003-2006
Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011
Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food (Defra 2002)

Timescale for Delivery

2001 – 2021

The purpose of this policy is to meet the employment needs of the Borough. Currently there is a lack of readily available employment land and the Borough is performing poorly through economic productivity and performance indicators. Stafford Borough has, and continues to experience manufacturing decline as well as lose to its employment and knowledge base. This situation will be addressed through the retention of existing employment sites and site allocations through the Site-specific Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document. For further information refer to Section 2.0 Character of the Borough and Section 3.0 Key Issues. Further policy details will be set out in the Economic Development Control Development Plan Document and the Site-specific Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document. **Section 16 of the Revised Final Sustainability Appraisal Report shows that Core Policy 9 is strong in economic terms, has positive social aspects but negative environmental effects.**

Core Policy 9 will contribute to delivery of the Vision and the following Spatial Objective as set out below:

Spatial Objective 4

Develop the local economy to meet local employment, higher education and learning needs by providing a sufficient number and variety of employment and educational locations and opportunities, including the review of existing under used and derelict sites, whilst respecting the local environment.

SUBMISSION POLICY

To achieve sustainable development and economic growth, between 2001 and 2021 an annual average rate of 10 hectares for employment land provision will be made available in Stafford Borough for the industrial, office, warehousing and distribution sectors (Class B Uses). Employment land provision will be reviewed by the Council on a regular basis, subject to employment land requirements identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy.

In allocating sites for employment and considering applications for economic development, where appropriate the Council will have regard to:

- (a) The ability to reuse previously developed land and buildings;
- (b) The nature, characteristics and needs of existing businesses, industries and institutions including the University and the College;
- (c) The availability of existing sites and the character of the surrounding locality;
- (d) Access to the strategic highway and rail networks for the distribution of goods and services;
- (e) The presence of a nearby potential workforce;
- (f) The provision of public transport;
- (g) The availability of public transport, motor car, pedestrian and cycle links between the site and residential areas;
- (h) The capability of existing services being able to be extended or improved to allow for future site expansion, when and if appropriate;
- (i) Viability and market demand, feasibility for implementation and capability for development;
- (j) Establishing and maintaining a portfolio of sustainably located employment sites by ensuring an adequate range and number of sites;
- (k) Stafford's role as the strategic centre within the Borough; and
- (l) The capacity of the strategic highway network.

Development which would lead to the loss of business or general industrial land considered to be necessary to meet market requirements and provide a diverse local portfolio of employment opportunities, will be resisted.

Indicator

Amount of land developed for employment by type.

Target: To be determined by Regional Spatial Strategy requirements

Amount of land developed for employment, by type, which is in development and / or regeneration areas defined in the local development framework.

Target: To be determined by Regional Spatial Strategy requirements

Percentage of 1a, by type, which is on previously developed land.

Target: 60 – 70% average per annum (measured from 2007)

Employment land supply by type.

Target: To have 10 hectares of employment land immediately available

Losses of employment land (i) development / regeneration areas and (ii) local authority area.

Target: Less than 5 hectares per year (measured from 2007)

Amount of employment land lost to residential development

Target: Less than 3 hectares per year (measured from 2007)

Milestones 2011, 2016 & 2021

Implementation Bodies

Table 1 – Current completions and commitments of employment land

Completions – 2001 to 2004	15.31 hectares
Commitments at 2004, including planning permission and sites subject to consent following the signing of Section 106 agreements	118.49 hectares

Development industry - new employment land developments
Landowners - release of new employment land
Advantage West Midlands - employment land schemes and initiatives
Staffordshire County Council – promotes economic development and release of new employment land as landowner
Stafford Borough Council – Economic Development: to encourage land for economic uses
Planning: to promote, encourage and control new developments

Instaffs -	<u>promote Staffordshire as a location for employment development and information provider on new sites</u>
Business Link -	<u>supports local businesses and start-up initiatives</u>

Implementation Strategies

Regional Spatial Strategy
 Regional Economic Strategy for the West Midlands 2004-2010
 Stafford Borough Community Plan 2003-2006
 Stafford Borough Economic Development Strategy
 Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011
 Staffordshire County Council Accessibility Strategy (emerging)
 Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action Plan for West Midlands

Timescale for Delivery 2001 – 2021

Core Policy 10: Residential Development Provision

*The purpose of this policy is to meet the residential requirements for the Borough as set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy. Stafford Borough Council monitors housing completions through the annual Housing Monitor: Land for New Homes. Since 2001 Land for New Homes shows that housing completions has been above the annual average rate of housing provision identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy. Therefore there is no current need to identify sites for housing development and existing Greenfield site allocations will need to be reviewed. Beyond 2011 it is likely that a further review of housing provision will need to take place to ensure there is adequate supply and the annual average rate of housing provision in the Regional Spatial Strategy can be met. For further information refer to Section 2.0 Character of the Borough and Section 3.0 Key Issues. Further policy details will be set out in the Residential Development Control Development Plan Document and the Site-specific Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document. **Section 16 of the Revised Final Sustainability Appraisal Report shows that Core Policy 10 has stronger social aspects, positive economic effects and negative towards environmental factors.***

Core Policy 10 will contribute to delivery of the Vision and the following Spatial Objectives as set out below:

Spatial Objective 5

To create a variety and choice of high quality, healthy, affordable and sustainable residential environments with access to local services, which respect the environment.

Spatial Objective 6

Meet housing requirements in the Regional Spatial Strategy, including provision of affordable housing and housing for key workers by enabling new residential developments on previously developed land in settlements (excluding land used for sport and recreation) in preference to Greenfield locations.

SUBMISSION POLICY

Provision will be made for not more than the housing requirements for Stafford Borough identified in the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, as set out in Table 2 below.

In allocating sites for housing and considering applications for residential development, where appropriate the Council will have regard to the provisions of Planning Policy Guidance 3: Housing or its successor documents and the following:

- (a) The capability of being served by public transport;
- (b) The availability of pedestrian and cycle links, being suitable for people with mobility aids;
- (c) Access to the strategic highway network and proximity to employment locations;
- (d) The capacity of existing health, education services and provision of additional (or improvements to existing) community facilities arising from increased demand;
- (e) The availability of utility services;
- (f) The ability to reuse previously developed land and buildings;
- (g) Viability, feasibility for implementation and capability for development;
- (h) Achieving acceptable densities;
- (i) Provision for housing mix and tenure including affordable housing and specialist needs; and
- (j) The capacity of the strategic highway network.

SUBMISSION POLICY (Continued)

Developments should be consistent with the creation of attractive and safe living environments, be in keeping with their surroundings and must not take valuable open space. Providing a range of housing types and tenures is an essential part of establishing choice for the whole community.

Indicator

Housing trajectory showing:

- (i) net additional dwellings over the previous five year period or since the start of the relevant development plan document period, whichever is the longer;
- (ii) net additional dwellings for the current year;
- (iii) projected net additional dwellings up to the end of the relevant development plan document period or over a ten year period from its adoption, whichever is the longer;
- (iv) the annual net additional dwelling requirement; and
- (v) annual average number of net additional dwellings needed to meet overall housing requirements, having regard to previous years' performances.

Target: To be reported by the housing trajectory (measured from 2007)

Percentage of new and converted dwellings on previously developed land.

Target: 75 – 85% (measured from 2007)

Percentage of new dwellings completed at:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| (i) less than 30 dwellings per hectare; | Target: 15%
(measured from 2007) |
| (ii) between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare; and | Target: 70%
(measured from 2007) |
| (iii) Above 50 dwellings per hectare. | Target: 15%
(measured from 2007) |

Affordable housing completions

Target: 35 affordable homes to be completed per year (measured from 2007)

Milestones 2011, 2016 & 2021

Table 2 – Annual average rates of housing provision for Stafford Borough based on Regional Spatial Strategy requirements and the Ministerial letter dated 15 June 2004.

Annual average rate of housing provision 2001 – 2007	375
Annual average rate of housing provision 2007 – 2011	323
Annual average rate of housing provision 2011 – 2021	206

Implementation Bodies

Table 3 - Current completions and commitments of residential land

Completions – 1 April 2001 to 31 March 2005	2,168 dwellings
Commitments at 2004, including planning permission and sites subject to consent following the signing of Section 106 agreements	1,574 dwellings

Development industry - new residential land developments
Landowners - release of new residential land
Registered Social Landlords – work with the development industry for the provision of affordable housing through planning obligations and funding from the Housing Corporation. In rural areas bring forward affordable housing schemes on rural exception sites in conjunction with the local community

Implementation Strategies

Regional Spatial Strategy
Stafford Borough Community Plan 2003-2006
Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011
Rural Strategy 2004
UK Fuel Poverty Strategy 2001
EU Water Framework Directive

Timescale for Delivery 2001 – 2021

