



# High Offley Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2011 - 2031

## Basic Conditions Statement



SUBMISSION TO STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL.

# High Offley Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2011 – 2031 Basic Conditions Statement

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## High Offley Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2011 – 2031 Basic Conditions Statement

### 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This statement has been prepared by High Offley Parish Council to accompany its submission version of the High Offley Parish Neighbourhood Plan. These two documents along with a Consultation Statement will be submitted to Stafford Borough Council, under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood (General) Planning Regulations 2012.

1.2. A Basic Conditions statement has been prepared to demonstrate how the pre-submission High Offley Parish Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions set out in **paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990**. A Neighbourhood Plan must meet these conditions if it is to proceed to a referendum and be made. The Basic Conditions are:

- Have regard to national policy and guidance from the Secretary of State
- Contribute to sustainable development
- Have general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area or any part of that area
- Doesn't breach or is otherwise compatible with EU obligations – this includes the SEA Directive of 2001/42/EC
- In order to consider the requirements to be compatible with EU obligations, two further basic conditions are set out in regulations. They are that a plan or order must not have a significant adverse effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site and where a Neighbourhood Development Order proposes certain types of development, an assessment of the effects of the order on the environment must be undertaken and its findings taken into account.
- In addition, Neighbourhood Plans must be compatible with human rights law.

The outcome of the referendum on membership of the EU makes no immediate difference to the requirement on EU obligations, until such a time as Parliament passes relevant legislation.

1.3. This statement addresses each of these points and explains how the requirements of the Basic Conditions have been met.

### 2. BACKGROUND

2.1. High Offley Parish Council is the qualifying body who is responsible for the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council submitted proposals to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish of High Offley based on the parish boundary.

2.2. Following a six week public consultation, the High Offley Parish Neighbourhood Plan area was formally approved and designated by Stafford Borough Council in March 2016. Subsequently, a Neighbourhood Plan Working Group was developed consisting of parish council members and local people from the parish. This group has met regularly to prepare the pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan.

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- 2.3. The pre-submission High Offley Parish Neighbourhood Plan has been developed through effective consultation with the people of High Offley parish, including key stakeholders within the area. A robust community consultation supports the evidence base and justification for the development of the draft plan and more importantly the policies.
- 2.4. The feedback of an extensive survey identified key priorities for the Neighbourhood Plan to address and provided comprehensive feedback to support the Neighbourhood Plan. The Consultation Statement, which accompanies the Basic Conditions Statement and the High Offley Parish Neighbourhood Plan details the consultation exercises that have taken place, and summarises the key findings of the survey.
- 2.5. The Parish Council has worked alongside officers at Stafford Borough Council throughout the preparation of the draft plan.

### **3. PRE-SUBMISSION PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

- 3.1. The Neighbourhood Plan has undergone a pre-submission public consultation for the statutory six week period between 1st December 2018 and 19th January 2019. The comments received have been recorded and considered and summarised in the submitted Consultation Report.

### **4. WHAT IS BEING PROPOSED IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

- 4.1. The pre-submission High Offley Parish Neighbourhood Plan proposes a range of planning policies. It establishes a settlement boundary for Woodseaves which includes sites for new housing development, some permitted and some proposed sites. The Plan seeks to protect the open green space and encourage leisure activity within the rural parts of the parish to help achieve some sustainable development.
- 4.2. The Plan sets out a vision to deliver five key priorities underpinned by subsequent planning policies. The five key priorities of the pre-submission High Offley Parish Neighbourhood Plan are:
  - Housing
  - Traffic and Parking
  - Local Green Space
  - Tourism & Leisure
  - Telecommunication
- 4.3. The policies in the pre-submission High Offley Parish Neighbourhood Plan relate to the development and use of land in the designated Neighbourhood Area and have been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and processes set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Plan period covers the whole of the Parish for the period up to 2031, which is the same period as the current Plan for Stafford Borough.

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4.4. The Plan does not deal with County matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure or any other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The Plan does not relate to more than one Neighbourhood Area and there are no other Neighbourhood Plans in place within the neighbourhood area.

### 5. CONFORMITY WITH NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY AND THE PLAN FOR STAFFORD BOROUGH

5.1. The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with regard to national policies as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and local strategic planning policies set out in the Local Plan – the Plan for Stafford Borough (PFSB).

5.2. The PFSB sets out a development strategy which includes a sustainable settlement hierarchy. This has been identified to deliver a sustainable pattern of growth and to meet the scale of housing and employment need over the plan period.

5.3. The PFSB provides a clear framework for delivering housing in the towns of Stafford and Stone and the 11 Key Service Villages (KSVs). The scale and distribution of growth is set out in the development strategy of the PFSB Spatial Principles.

5.4. Spatial Principle 4 requires the provision of 1200 dwellings to be delivered across the 12 KSVs and 800 dwellings for the rural parts of Stafford Borough. A large proportion of these targets are already committed through granted planning permissions. The pre-submission High Offley Parish Neighbourhood Plan, particularly policies 1 and 2 help support the PFSB and contribute to achieving the housing provision by delivering approximately 19 new dwellings within the Woodseaves defined settlement boundary and a further 5 new dwellings are planned in the rural area of the Parish Neighbourhood Plan. The LPA is aware that the total numbers in spatial principle 4 are minimum numbers. However as the numbers increase the LPA is keen to ensure that the ratio of allocations, Stafford: Stone: Key Service Villages: Rural areas, remains the same.

5.5. The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan, especially Policy 7, will support Spatial Principle 5 and help contribute to delivering new employment space for the rest of Stafford Borough. This is achieved by encouraging home based working and expanding upon a range of small scale sustainable economic activities within the rural area through the conversion of existing buildings, reuse or conversion of barn and farm buildings.

5.6. The High Offley Parish Neighbourhood Plan sets out a total of 8 local policies that have been developed over a three year period since March 2016. During that time the NPPF has been updated. The table below shows these policies and how they conform to the PFSB and the NPPF February 2019 and NPPF March 2012.

Paragraph 213 in the NPPF February 2019 states However, existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).

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<b>High Offley Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policies</b>	<b>Plan for Stafford Borough</b>	<b>National Planning Policy Framework</b>
<p><b>Policy 1 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT</b>  <i>The Woodseaves Settlement Boundary has been defined and is indicated on the map in page 15. Proposals for new housing development within the defined settlement boundary will be supported in line with the site development proposals stated on page 19. New housing development will be supported at sites 3, 5, 14 &amp; 20 in the Rural Area in line with the site development proposals stated on page 19. Self build / custom build house proposals will be supported at new housing sites stated on page 19.</i></p>	<p>SP2.-. Stafford Borough Housing and Employment requirements</p> <p>SP3 – Stafford Borough Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy</p> <p>SP4 – Stafford Borough Housing Growth Distribution</p> <p>SP6 – Achieving Rural sustainability</p> <p>SP7 – Supporting the location of New Development</p>	<p>NPPF 2019</p> <p>11. Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable Development.</p> <p>3. Plan-making Non-strategic policies Paragraph 29</p> <p>5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes Paragraphs 59, 61, 63, 68a, 69. Rural housing Paragraph 78</p> <p>6. Building a strong, competitive economy Supporting a prosperous rural economy Paragraph 83 b,c,d.</p> <p>NPPF 2012 Paragraphs 14,15,16 – Sustainable Development</p> <p>Core Planning principles Paragraph 17 – Empowering local people &amp; Brownfield sites</p> <p>Paragraph 184 – Neighbourhood Planning</p>
<p><b>Policy 2 HOUSING TYPES</b>  <i>New housing development should provide a mix of housing types. Innovative self- build and custom designed properties within sites will be supported. The provision of 2 storey houses, and bungalows, within housing developments will be supported, but new 3 storey dwellings will not be acceptable, being out of character within the Parish.</i></p>	<p>C1 – Dwelling types and sizes</p> <p>C3 – Specialist Housing</p>	<p>NPPF 2019</p> <p>5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes Paragraph 61</p> <p>NPPF 2012</p> <p>Paragraph 50 – Wide choice of homes Paragraph 59 - guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height.</p> <p>Paragraph 159 – Housing needs types of housing</p>

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<p><b>Policy 3 BUILDING DESIGN</b></p> <p><i>New building of high quality design will be supported where it:-</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Responds to local character and the form of surrounding buildings.</i></li> <li>• <i>Retains wildlife habitats, trees, hedges etc. that will continue to enhance the character of the local area.</i></li> <li>• <i>Make provision for adequate, accessible and visually unobtrusive provision for waste and recycling bins.</i></li> <li>• <i>Includes Photo Voltaic electricity generation up to 4kWh and electric vehicle charging points.</i></li> <li>• <i>Meets the Lifetime home revised criteria July 2010 for all new bungalows.</i></li> <li>• <i>Ensures all new boundaries except primary boundaries will be hedges.</i></li> </ul>	<p>SP6 – Achieving Rural sustainability</p> <p>SP7 - Supporting the location of new development</p> <p>N1 Design</p> <p>N2 Climate Change</p> <p>C3 – Specialist Housing</p>	<p>NPPF 2019</p> <p>9. Promoting sustainable transport paragraph 105</p> <p>12. Achieving well-designed places paragraphs 124,125,126, 127</p> <p>14.Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change paragraph 151c</p> <p>NPPF 2012</p> <p>Paragraph 58, and 60 – Requiring Good design</p> <p>Paragraph , 97 contribute to energy generation</p>
<p><b>Policy 4 TRAFFIC AND PARKING</b></p> <p><i>The development of additional parking provision close to the school, Pub, or shop and improvements to highway safety will be supported. Site 6A has been identified to provide additional parking at the Cock Inn. All new parking provision including residential properties will provide permeable surfaces such as gravel, brick, block, cellular paving and grass reinforcement to reduce rainwater run-off.</i></p>	<p>SP6 – Achieving rural sustainability</p> <p>E1 – Local economy</p> <p>T2 - Parking and Manoeuvring Facilities</p>	<p>NPPF 2019</p> <p>9. Promoting sustainable transport paragraph 105</p> <p>NPPF 2012</p> <p>Paragraph 69 – Healthy communities</p>
<p><b>Policy 5 LOCAL GREEN SPACE</b></p> <p><i>The areas of open land on Willowcroft (LGS1), the School Playing Field (LGS2) and in front of the bungalows on High Offley Road (LGS3) are to be designated as local green space. No development will take place on these sites, other than in very special circumstances. Space for recreation, the retention and improvement of existing informal and formal recreational resources will be supported. See Local Green Space map on page 16.</i></p>	<p>C7 – Open space, sport and recreation</p> <p>N1 – Design</p> <p>N4 – The natural environment and green infrastructure</p>	<p>NPPF 2019</p> <p>8. Promoting healthy and safe communities, Open space and recreation Paragraphs 97,99,100.</p> <p>NPPF 2012</p> <p>Paragraph 58 – incorporation of green and other public space</p> <p>Paragraph 70 – provision of valued facilities</p> <p>Paragraph 73 – Access to open spaces</p>

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		Paragraph 74 – Protect open spaces
<b>Policy 6 TOURISM AND LEISURE</b> <i>Bed and Breakfast accommodation, small campsites and small-scale canal moorings (with no buildings) for long term boat storage up to a maximum of 40 boats will be supported, subject to consideration of traffic impacts and residential amenity in the locality. Proposed sites are identified on pages 18 &amp; 19.</i>	E6 Tourism	NPPF 2019
	E7 Canal Facilities and New Marinas	6. Building a strong, competitive economy.  Supporting a prosperous rural economy Paragraph 83 a,b,c.  NPPF 2012
<b>Policy 7 HOMEWORKING</b> <i>Small-scale businesses will be supported provided it can be demonstrated that: (a) residential amenity and character of the neighbourhood, or rural character, will not be unacceptably harmed by virtue of noise and disturbance, smell, traffic generation, health and safety impacts, scale, design, appearance or nature of operations; (b) the operation of the business activity can be contained within the existing curtilage of the premises; (c) the operation of the business activity does not require substantial external modification of the premises.</i>	SP5 - Stafford Borough Employment Growth distribution	NPPF 2019  6. Building a strong, competitive economy.
	SP6 - Achieving Rural Sustainability  E1 - Local Economy E2 - Sustainable Rural Development N1 - Design	Supporting a prosperous rural economy Paragraph 81 d.  NPPF 2012  Paragraph 19, 20 and 21 - Building a strong and competitive economy  NPPF 2012 paragraph 28 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy
<b>Policy 8 MOBILE PHONE INFRASTRUCTURE</b> <i>Should an additional mast be required for other mobile networks then land has been allocated next to the existing mast in the neighbouring field belonging to Home Farm. See Map of site 17.</i>	E2 - Sustainable Rural Development	NPPF 2019  10. Supporting high quality communications infrastructure Paragraph 112  NPPF 2012  Paragraphs 42 & 43 Supporting high quality communications infrastructure



**6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

- 6.1. One of the basic conditions underlying a Neighbourhood Plan should be that it contributes towards the achievement of sustainable development.
- 6.2. The Government's approach towards sustainable development is set out in the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#). This is essentially about enabling growth for the current needs of the population and for future generations to come.
- 6.3. The NPPF describes three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:
- An Economic Role - Contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
  - A Social Role - Supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being;
  - An Environmental Role - Contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 6.4. There are many ways of demonstrating how Neighbourhood Plans contribute towards achieving sustainable development. Although Neighbourhood Plans are not required to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal, such an approach can be used to show how Neighbourhood Plans support the achievement of sustainable development. In order to do this, it is necessary to identify sustainability objectives that comprise a balance of socio-economic and environmental benefits.
- 6.5. For the purpose of the High Offley Parish Neighbourhood, an approach has been undertaken using the sustainability objectives applied in the Plan for Stafford Borough, to show how the policies of the draft plan compare against sustainability objectives and contributes towards achieving sustainable development. The sustainability objectives are listed below.

**SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES**

**Economic Objectives**

1. *To create high, stable and equitable levels of employment*
2. *To ensure high and stable levels of economic diversity and competitiveness that recognises social and environmental issues*
3. *To sustain the vitality and viability of Stafford Borough's towns and villages, and their communities*
4. *To support the needs of the local rural economy and communities*
5. *To reduce vulnerability to the effects of climate change such as risk of flooding, on public well-being, the economy and the environment.*

**Social Objectives**

6. *To ensure that everyone has the opportunity of a decent and affordable home*
7. *To improve opportunities for access for all to work, education, health and local services*
8. *To reduce and prevent crime, and reduce the fear of crime*
9. *To reduce the impact of noise and light pollution*
10. *To improve health, safety and well-being across the whole community.*

**Environmental Objectives**

11. *To reduce societal contributions to climate change*
12. *To protect and enhance biodiversity*
13. *To protect and conserve soil*
14. *To protect and enhance water quality of the Borough's rivers whilst maximising their carrying capacity and achieving sustainable water resource management.*
15. *To protect, enhance and, where necessary, restore designated landscape areas and town character, scenic beauty, local distinctiveness, and historic and cultural character.*

**Community Objectives**

16. *To create a sense of community identity and belonging*
17. *To ensure tolerance, respect and engagement with people from different cultures, backgrounds and beliefs recognising their rights and responsibilities*
18. *To ensure that all individuals and groups in society have the opportunity to effectively engage in issues relating to their community*
19. *To encourage a strong, inclusive, community and voluntary sector*
20. *To engender a sense of civic and neighbourhood values, responsibility and pride.*

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6.6. The sustainability objectives shown above have been applied in the Appraisal Table below

<b>HIGH OFFLEY PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICIES – SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES</b>					
<b>Sustainability objectives</b>					
<b>ECONOMIC</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1. Housing Development	Compatible	Neutral	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible
2. Housing types	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Neutral
3. Building Design	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible
4. Traffic & Parking	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible
5. Local Green Space	Neutral	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible
6. Tourism and Leisure	Neutral	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible
7. Homeworking	Neutral	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible
8. Mobile Phone Infrastructure	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible
<b>SOCIAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
1. Housing Development	Compatible	Compatible	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
2. Housing types	Compatible	Compatible	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
3. Building Design	Compatible	Compatible	Neutral	Compatible	Compatible
4. Traffic & Parking	Neutral	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible
5. Local Green Space	Neutral	Compatible	Neutral	Neutral	Compatible
6. Tourism and Leisure	Neutral	Neutral	Compatible	Neutral	Compatible
7. Homeworking	Neutral	Compatible	Compatible	Neutral	Neutral
8. Mobile Phone Infrastructure	Neutral	Compatible	Compatible	Neutral	Compatible
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
1. Housing Development	Neutral	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible
2. Housing types	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Compatible
3. Building Design	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible
4. Traffic & Parking	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Neutral
5. Local Green Space	Neutral	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible
6. Tourism and Leisure	Neutral	Compatible	Neutral	Compatible	Neutral
7. Homeworking	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Neutral	Neutral
8. Mobile Phone Infrastructure	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
<b>COMMUNITY</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
1. Housing Development	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible
2. Housing types	Compatible	Neutral	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible
3. Building Design	Compatible	Neutral	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible
4. Traffic & Parking	Neutral	Neutral	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible
5. Local Green Space	Compatible	Neutral	Compatible	Neutral	Compatible
6. Tourism and Leisure	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible	Neutral	Neutral
7. Homeworking	Neutral	Neutral	Compatible	Neutral	Neutral
8. Mobile Phone Infrastructure	Neutral	Neutral	Compatible	Neutral	Neutral

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- 6.7. The appraisal above indicates that most of the policies contained in the High Offley Parish Neighbourhood are either compatible or neutral compared with the sustainability objectives. Neutral is considered as having no effect at all, while compatible shows support towards achieving a sustainability objective.
- 6.8. The Parish Council is satisfied that this appraisal shows the High Offley Parish Neighbourhood contributes towards achieving sustainable development.

### **7. COMPATIBILITY WITH EU AND HUMAN RIGHTS OBLIGATIONS**

- 7.1. The Neighbourhood Plan proposes to secure new housing developments within a defined settlement boundary. It seeks to encourage new economic activity through the use of existing buildings and also safeguard open spaces that are considered of high value to the Parish.
- 7.2. In order to meet the basic conditions of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, the Neighbourhood Plan including the proposals and policies set out in the plan must be screened / assessed to determine whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) or a Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) is required and if any significant environmental effects are likely to occur from the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.3. Stafford Borough Council has prepared and carried out a screening assessment on the High Offley Parish Neighbourhood and has determined that in their opinion, the plan meets the basic conditions of not breaching, and otherwise being compatible with EU Obligations and Human Right requirements. The screening assessment confirms there are no likely significant environmental effects arising from the High Offley Parish Neighbourhood and a SEA or HRA will not be required. An extract from the Screening Assessment can be found at Appendix 1.
- 7.4. There are no European sites within the Neighbourhood Area.
- 7.5. A reform in Neighbourhood Planning Regulations took place with effect from February 2015, which require Neighbourhood Plan areas to submit either a statement of reasons; environmental report; or an explanation of why the plan is not subject to the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive to accompany a Neighbourhood Plan when it is submitted to a local planning authority. The screening assessment undertaken by Stafford Borough Council fulfils this statutory requirement and will accompany the final submission of the High Offley Parish Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.6. The Neighbourhood Plan has had regard to EU obligations and the human rights requirements. It is compatible with all requirements.

**Appendix 1 outcome of SEA and HRA screening.**

Extract from High Offley Draft Neighbourhood Plan Screening Assessment, October 2018, Stafford Borough Council.

3.3. To decide whether the Plan might have significant environmental effects (stage 8), its potential scope should be assessed against the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The criteria from Schedule 1 of the Regulations are set out below.

**1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to**

- the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,
- the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,
- environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme,
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).

**2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to**

- the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,
- the cumulative nature of the effects,
- the transboundary nature of the effects,
- the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),
- the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
- the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
  - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,
  - exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,
  - intensive land-use,
  - the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

3.4. Appendix 1 and 2 apply the above criteria to measure any likely significance effects on the environment arising from the draft High Offley NP.

**SEA Screening Outcome**

3.5. As a result of the assessment above, it is considered unlikely that any significant environmental effects will occur from the implementation of the High Offley NP that were not considered and dealt with by the Sustainability Appraisal of the Plan for Stafford Borough (PFSB). As such the High Offley NP does not require a full SEA to be undertaken.

## 4. HRA Screening

4.1. The box below illustrates the stages of HRA related to assessing potential impacts from planning policy documents.

### *Stage 1 Screening*

- Identify international sites in and around the plan / strategy area
- Examine conservation objectives
- Identify potential effects on Natura 2000 sites
- Examine other plans and programmes that could contribute to 'in combination' effects
- If no effects are likely - report that there is no significant effect. If effects are judged likely or uncertainty exists - the precautionary principle applies, proceed to stage 2.

### *Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment*

- Collate information on sites and evaluate impact in light of conservation objectives
- Consider how plan 'in combination' with other plans and programmes will interact when implemented (the Appropriate Assessment)
- Consider how the effect on integrity of sites could be avoided by changes to the plan and the consideration of alternatives
- Develop mitigation measures (including timescale and mechanisms)
- Report outcomes of AA and develop monitoring strategies. If effects remain, following the consideration of alternatives and development of mitigation measures, proceed to stage 3.

### *Stage 3 Assessment where no Alternatives and impacts remain*

- Identify 'imperative reasons of overriding public interest' (IROPI)
- Identify/ develop potential compensatory measures

4.2. Stafford Borough Council has carried out Stage 1 Screening on the draft High Offley NP.

4.3. There are 6 European sites in Stafford Borough which may be affected by policies in the draft High Offley NP:

- Cop Mere RAMSAR
- Aqualate Mere RAMSAR
- Motte Meadows SAC
- Cannock Chase SAC
- Chartley Moss SAC
- Pasture fields Salt Marsh SAC

4.4. The PFSB was subject to a full Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) including appropriate assessment and identification of mitigation measures. Some of the possible effects identified in the HRA, which relate to the sites above include: water quality deterioration, eutrophication, air pollution, surface water run-off, nitrogen deposition, and increased visitor pressure.

4.5. In light of the HRA it is considered the draft High Offley NP does not propose anything which departs from the strategy set out in the PFSB. The PFSB contains a number of policies which aim to protect the SACs integrity and address water quality issues. These policies include Policy N5 - Sites of European, National and Local Nature Conservation Importance; Policy N6 - Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC); and Policy N7 - Cannock Chase AONB.

4.6. The HRA carried out on the PFSB concluded that implementation of the Plan would not result in likely significant or in combination effects. As a result the Council does not consider that implementation of the draft High Offley NP would result in likely significant or in combination effects on Natura 2000 sites.

**HRA Stage 1 Screening Outcome**

4.7. As a result of the assessment above, it is considered unlikely that any significant environmental effects will occur from the implementation of the draft High Offley NP that were not considered and dealt with by the Habitats Regulation Assessment carried out on the PFSB. As such the draft High Offley NP does not require a further HRA work to be undertaken.