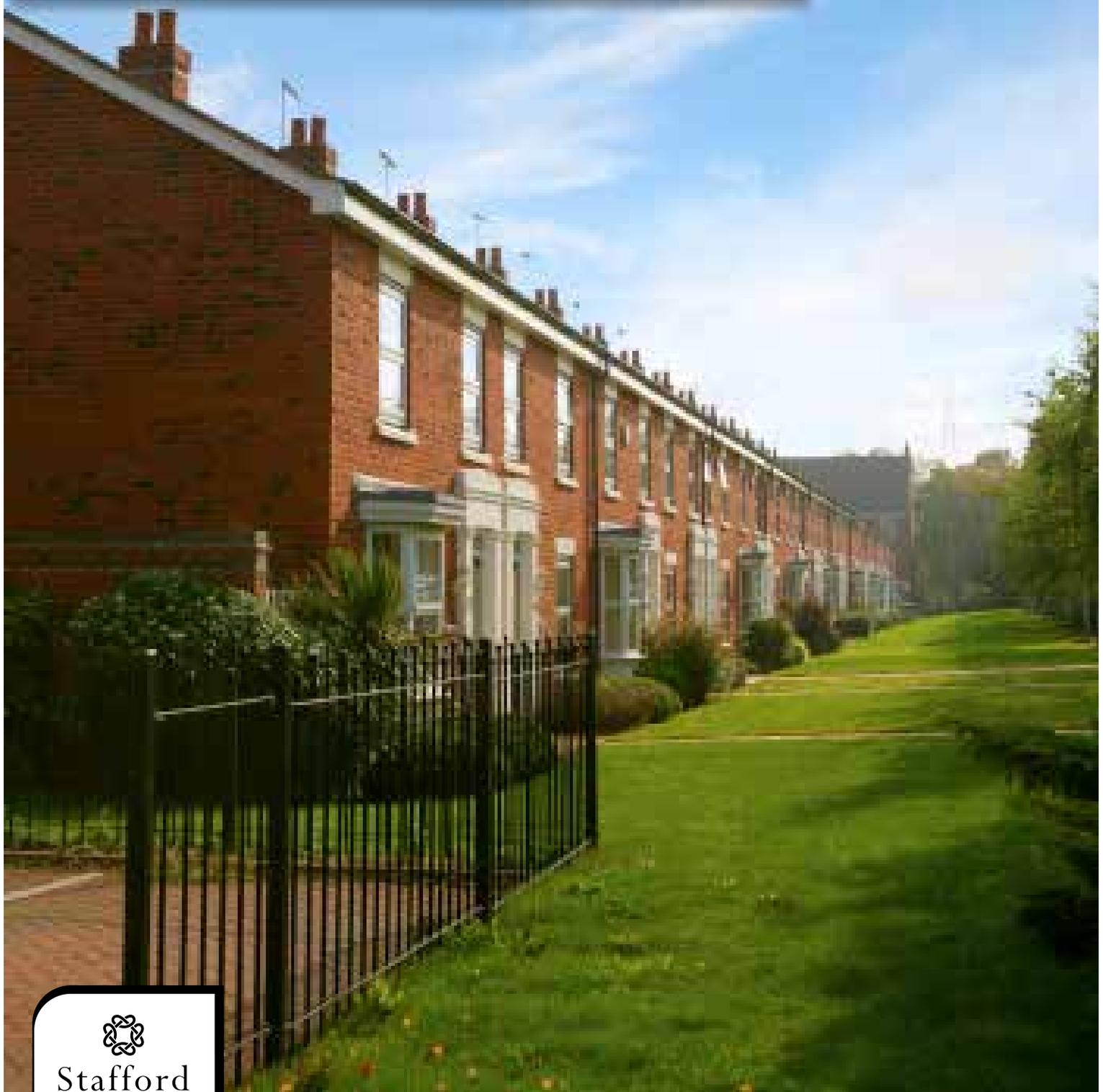


The Plan for **Stafford Borough**



Stafford
BOROUGH COUNCIL

1 Introduction	3
 Where are we now?	
2 Spatial Portrait for Stafford Borough (Where are we now?)	6
3 Policy Influences (National and Local)	10
4 Key Issues	13
 Where do we want to be?	
5 Spatial Vision and Key Objectives	15
 Stafford Borough Development Strategy	
6 Development Strategy	20
7 Stafford	35
8 Stone	60
 Stafford Borough Policies	
9 Economy	72
10 Transport	83
11 Communities	87
12 Environment	96
13 Infrastructure	114
 How will we know if the Plan works?	
14 Local Monitoring and Review	118
 Appendices	
15 Glossary	119
16 Appendix A - Local Plan Evidence Base	123
17 Appendix B - Car Parking Standards	125
18 Appendix C - Nature Designations List	129
19 Appendix D - Infrastructure	139
20 Appendix E - Performance Indicators and Targets	147
21 Appendix F - Housing Trajectories	161

Contents

22 Appendix G - Local Space Standards	165
Map 1 Stafford Borough and its Regional Context	6
Map 2 Stafford Borough Key Diagram	33
Map 3 Stafford Town Key Diagram	40
Map 4 Development to the North of Stafford Town	47
Map 5 Stafford North Concept Diagram	48
Map 6 Development to the West of Stafford	52
Map 7 Stafford West Concept Diagram	53
Map 8 Development to the East of Stafford	57
Map 9 Stafford East Concept Diagram	58
Map 10 Stone Town Key Diagram	64
Map 11 Development to the West and South of Stone	69
Map 12 Stone West & South Concept Diagram	70
Map 13 Renewable Energy Opportunities in Stafford Borough	102

What is the Plan for Stafford Borough?

1.1 The Plan for Stafford Borough is the first part of the new Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001. The Local Plan will guide where new development will take place across the Borough area, describe what changes will occur, and identify how places will be shaped in the future.

1.2 The Local Plan is comprised of two documents: the Plan for Stafford Borough which sets out strategic policies, identifies Strategic Development Locations for housing and employment and more detailed topic based policies for deciding planning applications; the second document will be a Site Allocations Development Plan Document, to be produced during 2014 / 2015. Together these documents will replace the Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 and all its policies, to provide the framework for planning and development management until 2031.

1.3 The purpose of the Local Plan is to set out a vision for the development of the Borough, objectives to guide growth, and policies to make sure that new development meets local needs in line with national policy. The Local Plan is supported by a range of other planning policy documents, such as Supplementary Planning Documents, the Statement of Community Involvement and Annual Monitoring Reports. For more information about these documents please visit the Forward Plans section of the Council website at: www.staffordbc.gov.uk/planning-policy

Sustainability Appraisal

1.4 The Council is required to ensure that planning policy documents are subject to a Sustainability Appraisal, which incorporates the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment. The purpose of a Sustainability Appraisal is to help establish the best approach to development amongst all reasonable alternatives. Appraising the social, environmental and economic effects of all potential strategies and policies in the new Local Plan will ensure that decisions are made that accord with the principles of sustainable development, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework.

1.5 A Sustainability Appraisal framework was prepared in 2007, which identified relevant sustainability objectives for the Borough and facilitated an assessment during the preparation of the Plan for Stafford Borough, through a series of Sustainability Appraisal reports. The Sustainability Appraisal has therefore informed the spatial strategy, vision, objectives and policies of the Plan for Stafford Borough. Further information can be found at www.staffordbc.gov.uk/sustainability-appraisal

Preparation of the Plan

1.6 Between 2008 and 2012 Stafford Borough Council carried out a series of consultation and information gathering exercises, to prepare a vision, establish key issues and objectives, consider strategic options for Stafford Borough and alternative development strategies together with key policies, through the following documents:

- January & February 2008 - The Plan for Stafford Borough: Borough wide Development Strategy
- June & July 2008 - Principles for Settlement Development
- February & March 2009 - Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough: Issues & Options
- February & March 2010 - Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough: Draft Core Policies
- November 2010 to January 2011 - Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough: Local Choices
- September & October 2011 - The Plan for Stafford Borough: Draft Publication
- May to July 2012 – The Plan for Stafford Borough: Strategic Policy Choices

1.7 The 'Borough-wide Development Strategy' identified six alternative development strategy options for Stafford Borough ranging from all development focused on Stafford town to widespread dispersal across many settlements. The result of the Sustainability Appraisal and the key recommendation from the consultation was for new development to be focused on Stafford, Stone and one or more of the principal settlements.

1.8 The subsequent 'Principles for Settlement Development' document established three key categories of settlements across the Borough, showing how each category could experience different levels of growth that would be appropriate for the particular settlements across the Borough. The general principle of setting out a hierarchy for different levels of development for particular settlements was generally supported.

1.9 The 'Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough - Issues and Options' consultation included a spatial vision and key objectives, development principles and a range of development location options around Stafford, Stone and key settlements previously categorised in the Principles for Settlement Development. The document set out two growth scenarios. The reason for identifying two scenarios was that, at the time, the Regional Spatial Strategy

1 Introduction

was being considered through an Examination and there was the possibility that a higher target for housing would be outlined for Stafford Borough. The accompanying Sustainability Appraisal assessed draft plan objectives along with site location options, highlighted the sustainability issues with each location and set out policy recommendations.

1.10 The 'Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough: Draft Core Policies' set out core planning policy areas and draft policy wording related to sustainable development and climate change, environmental protection, housing, economy, historic environment, design, open space, sport, recreation and transport

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

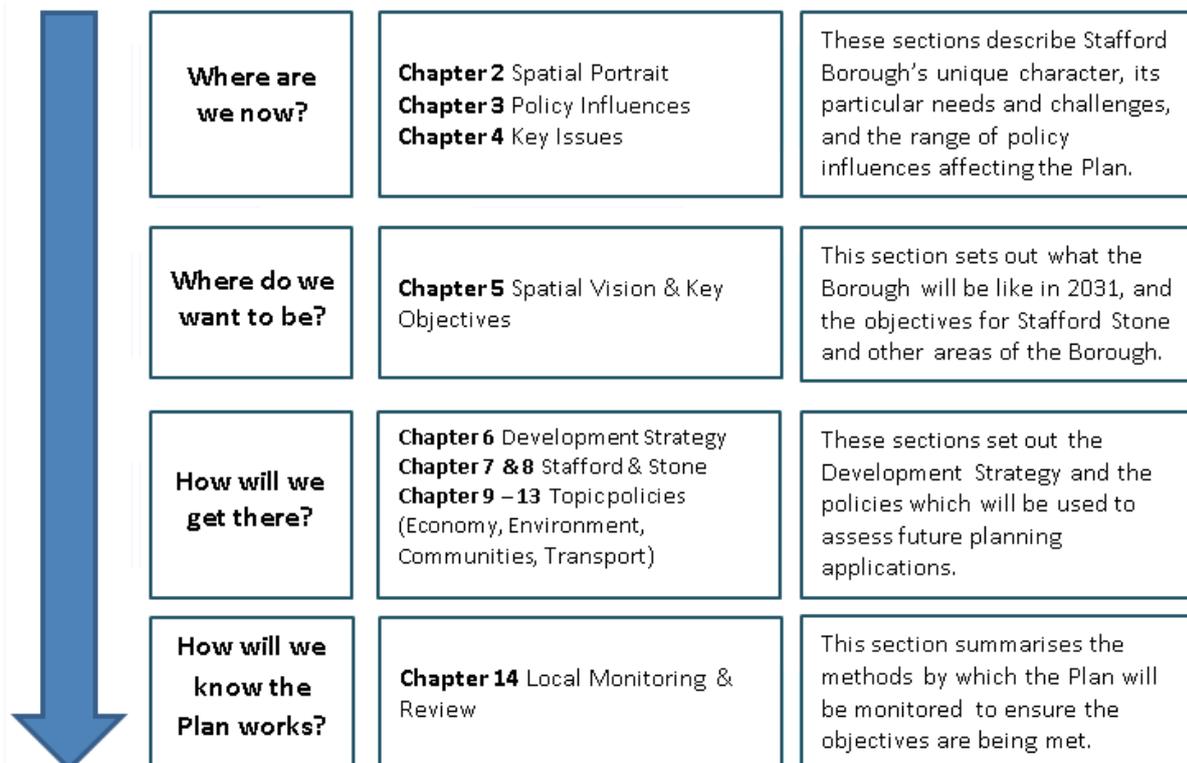
1.12 In September & October 2011 'The Plan for Stafford Borough: Draft Publication' sought views on the development strategy locations for strategic growth and revised core policy wording. Many development management policies, which will be used alongside core policies to assess future planning applications, were also set out.

1.13 In March 2012 the National Planning Policy Framework was published, which provided the opportunity to establish the key messages through the 'Plan for Stafford Borough: Strategic Policy Choices' document, which was consulted upon during May to July 2012.

1.14 The 'Plan for Stafford Borough: Publication' document was published in January 2013 and the statutory stage of seeking representations on soundness and legal compliance took place. The document was submitted for independent examination in August 2013.

Structure of the document

1.15 The following diagram introduces the Plan for Stafford Borough and shows the contents of each section of the document:



1.16 The appendices provide more background detail on infrastructure delivery, set out standards for parking and open space, a glossary and monitoring information.

Use of the Plan for Stafford Borough

1.17 The components of this document are inter-related and need to be considered, and delivered, as a package. Individual policies and proposals should be seen as elements of an overall approach to the future spatial planning of Stafford Borough. This has one specific practical consequence, which relates to cross-referencing between policies and proposals. Where they are particularly important, key cross-references are identified within some policies. However, in general, not all linked policies are stated. Identifying all linked policies is not practically possible, because it is difficult to determine in advance which policies might be relevant. In addition, including detailed cross-references would not result in a concise and readable document. When considering any particular aspect of the Plan for Stafford Borough, it may also be necessary to consider the rest of the document. All policies apply wherever relevant, and whether or not a specific cross-reference has been made. This principle will apply to the Plan for Stafford Borough as a whole. All the relevant documents will need to be read together when considering a specific development proposal or issue.

Further Information

1.18 For further information on the Plan for Stafford Borough, the Local Plan or any other planning policy enquiries, please contact the Forward Planning team using the details below:

Forward Planning team

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Civic Centre

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STAFFORD

ST16 3AQ

Telephone: 01785 619000

Fax: 01785 619473

E-mail: forwardplanning@staffordbc.gov.uk

1.19 All documents are available on the Borough Council's website at www.staffordbc.gov.uk/planning-policy. If you require this document in an alternative format (e.g. large print) please contact the Forward Plans team using the details above.

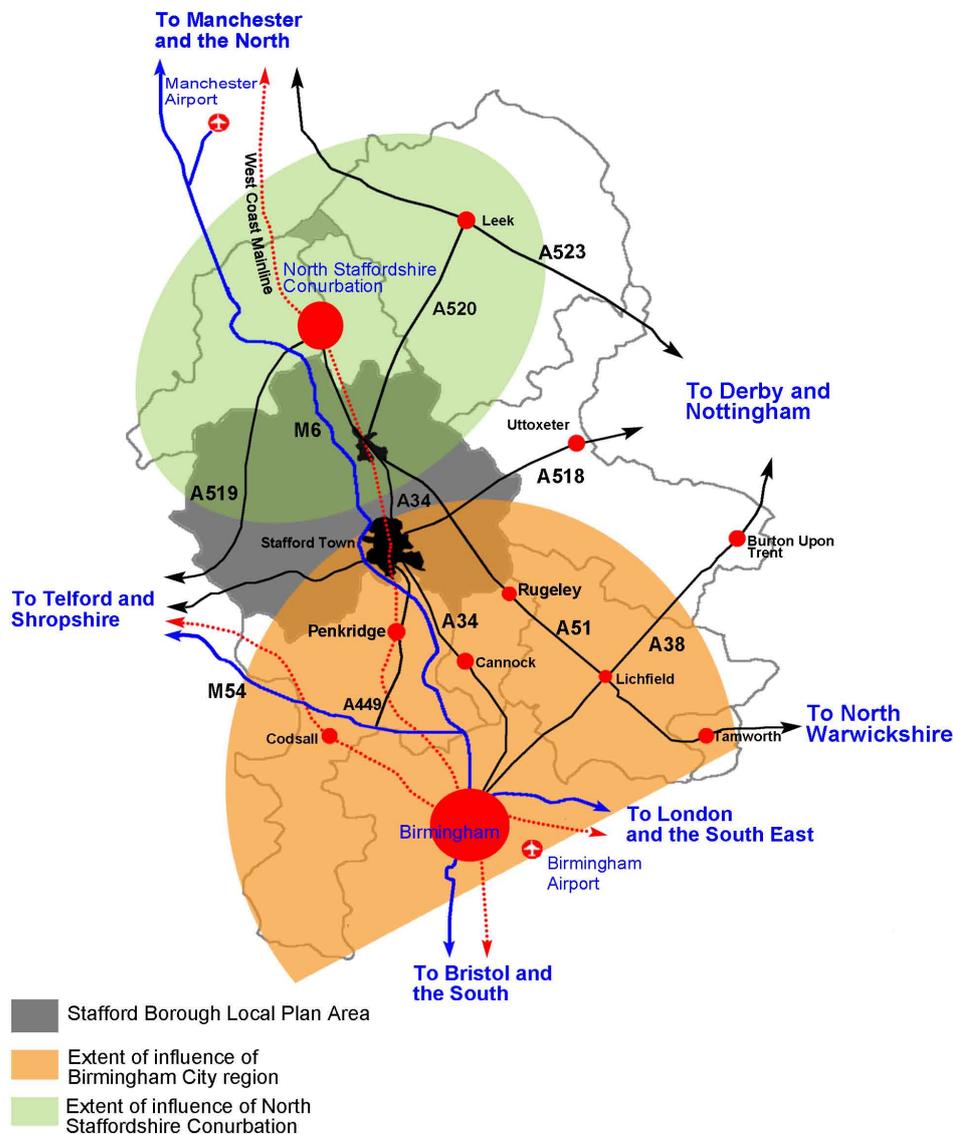
2 Spatial Portrait for Stafford Borough (Where are we now?)

SPATIAL PORTRAIT

2.1 Stafford Borough covers an area of over 230 square miles and is centrally placed within the North Staffordshire sub-region of the West Midlands. It is a predominately rural district with Stafford and Stone as its key urban centres. It lies between the North Staffordshire conurbation, comprising of Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle under Lyme, to the north and the Birmingham city region to the south. To the west it adjoins the Borough of Telford & Wrekin as well as rural areas of Shropshire. The Borough also adjoins the Staffordshire districts of Staffordshire Moorlands, East Staffordshire, Lichfield, Cannock Chase and South Staffordshire.

2.2 The proximity of the Borough to other districts, along with transport links to the region and the rest of the UK are highlighted in the illustration below. Much of the Borough is self contained, nevertheless the North Staffordshire Conurbation exerts a key economic influence on the northern aspect of the Borough, whilst to the south the Birmingham city region zone of influence extends to Stafford town, its hinterland, and much of southern Staffordshire.

Map 1 Stafford Borough and its Regional Context



Green Belt

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

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

Population

2.4 The population of the Borough is over 130,600 people (2011 Census), the majority of which are located in the principal towns of Stafford and Stone. The rural areas are predominately characterised by dispersed pattern of villages and hamlets, which vary in size, from a population of over 3,700 at Gnosall to under 200 people at Aston by Stone. Whilst these settlements do have a limited range of services, they are economically and functionally linked to other larger centres including Stafford. By 2026 it is predicted that a quarter of the population will be over the age of retirement

Housing

2.5 There are currently 56,055 houses within the Borough as at April 2010. The majority of these (75.92%) are owner occupied. The number of empty homes remaining empty for more than 6 months represents 1.5% of the housing stock.

2.6 The housing stock of Stafford Borough is relatively good according to the Census 2001 with fewer than 25 unfit homes per 1,000 dwellings. This compares to a County average of over 40 and an English average of 60 per 1,000. Overcrowding is relatively low at 3%.

2.7 House price levels within Stafford Borough have increased by 9% since 2005 but have been decreasing more recently due to underlying economic conditions. The increases in house prices, coupled with the increased ratio of house prices to incomes, have resulted in acute affordability problems for first time buyers and those on low incomes, particularly in rural areas.

Defence

2.8 There is a substantial military site on the north eastern edge of Stafford town. The Ministry of Defence (MOD) currently employs approximately 600 personnel at Beaconside Barracks, MOD Stafford. By 2015 / 2016 the level of personnel is expected to have increased by around 1,100 together with their dependents following the relocation of troops from Germany.

Economy

2.9 Stafford Borough currently performs very well in terms of achieving sustainable growth when compared to other Districts, with 73% of the Borough's economically active population living and working within its boundary. Marginally more people commute into Stafford Borough than those who commute outside the Borough to work. However over 39,000 people both live and work in the Borough. The population of the Borough is generally skilled and well educated.

2.10 In socio-economic terms, Stafford Borough has a relatively low level of deprivation, except for a number of wards in the north and south west of Stafford town. Unemployment remains relatively low and levels of prosperity higher than national averages. Much of the economy relies on the provision of public services (39.6%), such as health and social care, education and public administration within the County town of Stafford. This is attributed to the fact that Stafford is the main County and Borough administrative centre.

2.11 After public administration, education and health, the second most important sector locally for employee jobs is the distribution, hotels and restaurants sector which provides 13,100 employee jobs or 21.5% of the employment in Stafford Borough. Recent developments have taken advantage of the Borough's excellent links to the M6 motorway in particular, suggesting that there is potential for further development in the distribution and warehousing sector.

2.12 In recent years there has been a sharp decline in employment among the manufacturing sector. Between 2001 and 2006 some 3,900 manufacturing jobs were lost in the Borough, which represents a 32.5% decrease in employment in the sector. However, there are key manufacturing sites at Alstom and Evode sites in Stafford town. Small to medium sized businesses (SMEs) can be found on the Borough's industrial estates. Staffordshire University and Stafford's Technology Park play a significant role in the Borough, acting as key locations for employment, facilitating the establishment of a cluster of medical technology companies as well as other modern technology based businesses.

2.13 Inward investment has always been an important source of job growth to the local area, assisted by good location, site availability, labour skills and costs. In terms of empty industrial units, less than 12% of the existing industrial stock remains empty.

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

Environment

2.14 The natural environment is rich in biodiversity, and much of the landscape is characterised by flat low lying land undulating between the natural corridors of the Rivers Penk and Sow. Outside of these corridors much of the land is intensively farmed agricultural land that is interspersed with extensive ancient and semi-natural woodland and natural grasslands. There are several areas of high landscape and nature conservation quality both within and adjoining the Borough. Part of Cannock Chase lies in the south-east of the Borough. Cannock Chase as a whole forms the largest area of lowland heathland in the West Midlands and is designated both for its landscape and natural conservation interest. Stafford Borough is also important for its biodiversity and areas of nature conservation, many of which are internationally and nationally designated sites. These resources are major assets in terms of tourism, providing areas for recreation and wildlife habitats.

2.15 The Historic Environment is a precious and irreplaceable asset which must be conserved for future generations. The town centres of Stafford, Stone and many of the rural villages have historic cores which are designated as Conservation Areas. Outside of these settlements Trentham Gardens, Sandon Park, Shugborough Park and the German Military Cemetery at Cannock Chase are designated as Historic Parks and Gardens.

2.16 The Borough contains numerous historic buildings, including 819 listed buildings and 30 Conservation Areas, with a review programme currently taking place. Whilst the majority of Listed Buildings in the Borough are in good or reasonable repair, a number of buildings are in severe disrepair threatening the loss of historic detail and fabric. Three of these are Grade I or Grade II* listed buildings registered by English Heritage's Heritage at Risk Register 2011.

Transport and Accessibility

2.17 Stafford Borough's location ensures that it benefits from excellent north-south transportation links: Two M6 motorway junctions are located adjacent to Stafford town providing good accessibility to the North West, the rest of the West Midlands region and beyond via the M6 and M6 Toll. However, connections in the east-west direction are less evident. Stafford town is also served by the West Coast mainline, with a significant number of trains stopping at the towns of Stafford and Stone, providing links to the major cities including London.

2.18 Stafford and Stone have regular bus services that connect them to each other and their hinterlands. Stafford town is a hub for local bus services through the Borough, providing links to its surrounding area and a variety of other destinations including Lichfield, Cannock, Wolverhampton, Newport, Uttoxeter, Stone and the Potteries. Stone acts as a more localised hub for services to Stoke on Trent and its rural hinterlands. The most rural parts of Stafford Borough have more limited services, the frequency of which depend on their proximity to other main routes through the area.

Settlements

Stafford (population 65,716 people - 2011 Census)

2.19 Stafford town is the principal administrative centre for the County and Borough Councils, acting as a sub-regional centre of governance for a number of County-wide services including Police and Fire services, the local Health Authority, a range of Government bodies and other agencies. The town is the Borough's major employment centre, having the largest shopping centre within the Borough and contains the largest concentration of commercial premises and multiple retailers, as well as many of the key visitor attractions which provide tourism related employment. Furthermore, the town contains a large range of 'stand alone' employers and a number of industrial estates / business parks.

2.20 Stafford town centre is the principal cultural centre of the Borough, serving the rest of the Borough and visitors, offering facilities which include a theatre, cinema and art gallery. Stafford is the principal location for sporting, leisure and indoor recreational uses in the Borough. Tourism and hotel facilities are focused, but are not exclusively located, at Stafford. Victoria Park in Stafford consists of 3.7 hectares of accessible open space and is managed to Green Flag Standard.

2.21 As the county town of Staffordshire, Stafford has been the focus for administrative and public buildings since the medieval period. Much of the medieval street and burghage plots from this period are visible in the modern street layout. Extensive building took place within the town during the 17th and 18th Centuries, with several houses surviving from this period. The most prominent buildings are in the town centre, including the Shirehall, the Elizabethan Ancient High House, St Chad's and St Mary's Churches. To preserve this heritage, Stafford Town Centre has been designated a Conservation Area, and historically important buildings within the town have been conserved for the future generations.

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

Stone (population 16,385 people - 2011 Census)

2.22 Stone is the second largest market town within the Borough and provides a range of sport, recreation and community facilities, as well as providing a focus for the wider rural area. Stone is a canal town, being situated midway along the Trent and Mersey Canal. The town is located alongside the River Trent, whilst the North Staffordshire Green Belt provides a natural definition to the town's northern boundary.

2.23 Stone has a strong sense of identity which is derived from the architectural and historic quality of its historic buildings. The historic core of the town, which is a designated Conservation Area and has many 18th and 19th Century Listed Buildings, is characterised by its narrow streetscape and post medieval spine which still provides the form for the town's shopping area.

2.24 Stone acts as a focus for retail, commercial and industrial uses as well as being the key focal point for a number of festivals throughout the year. The town is 'The Food and Drink Capital of Staffordshire' and provides a diverse choice of cuisine, from traditional home cooked food through to Indian, Thai, Chinese, Italian and fine specialist dishes. Additionally, throughout the year Stone has monthly farmers markets as well as hosting various themed food markets such as the French, European and World markets. Adding to the vibrancy of Stone, is the Stone Festival in June and the highly successful Food and Drink Festival which takes place in October.

Rural Areas (Population 48,768 people - 2011 Census)

2.25 The Stafford Borough area is locally distinctive in terms of character, landscape and natural resources, characterised by large tracts of unspoilt countryside and numerous historic settlements and buildings that give rural areas their own distinct character and form major attractions for visitors to the area.

2.26 There are a large number of villages and hamlets across Stafford Borough, ranging considerably in size and role including the largest village of Gnosall with a population of 3,783, Eccleshall (population 2,541), Barlaston (population 2,434), Little Haywood & Colwich (population 2,431), Great Haywood (population 1,854) and Hixon (population 1,713) providing services and facilities to their surrounding rural areas.

2.27 The most northern parts of the Borough about the suburban fringes of Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent at Clayton, Blythe Bridge, Trentham, and Meir Heath.

3 Policy Influences (National and Local)

3.1 This section of the document explains the key influences for the Development Plan through local-led and national policy approaches. The Government's approach behind its changes to the planning system is to encourage local determination rather than top-down national or regional decision-making.

3.2 Nevertheless the Plan for Stafford Borough must be prepared in line with national planning policies, which set out the higher level policy framework for local areas to achieve sustainable development by building a strong and competitive economy, strong and healthy communities, and protecting the environment.

National Policy

3.3 The central aim of National Government's planning policies is to deliver sustainable development by balancing economic, social and environmental roles, by meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

3.4 The Government's strategy for securing sustainable development is outlined in the 'UK Sustainable Development Strategy - Securing the Future' through five guiding principles and four priorities, which are outlined below:

The Principles are:

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

The Priorities are:

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

3.5 At a national level, to ensure that local authorities fulfil the objectives of promoting and facilitating sustainable development, the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012. The Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development delivered through:

- 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 the co-ordinating 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; and
- 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.

3.6 The Plan for Stafford Borough provides locally distinctive policies in order to deliver new development and address particular local issues, in the context of a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Throughout the remainder of this document there are direct links to relevant elements of the National Planning Policy Framework that will be applied through the Plan for Stafford Borough to guide decision-making for the planning applications process.

Policy Influences (National and Local) 3

Duty to Co-operate & Cross border issues

3.7 The Localism Act and the NPPF set out a requirement for local authorities to fulfil a Duty to Co-operate on planning issues, to ensure that approaches are consistent, and to address issues that have cross border implications with neighbouring authorities and key statutory agencies.

3.8 Stafford Borough has had, and continues to have, on-going discussions on cross boundary planning issues with other Councils, particularly in Staffordshire. A number of key cross boundary issues, require a complementary approach including flood risk, provision of infrastructure including transport links, sustainability, the distribution of housing associated with local housing markets, employment needs through the Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership as well as protection of the environment and the landscape. To provide further context to these matters, Stafford Borough Council has worked on a number of joint evidence based studies on strategic housing markets, renewable energy and surface water management.

3.9 A key cross border issue being addressed through joint working with other authorities and the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership is on the Habitat Regulations Assessment for the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) within the AONB. There are a number of pressures on the SAC from recreation, air quality and water abstraction which need to be considered as part of the new Plan for Stafford Borough and its strategy.

3.10 The Council is working with neighbouring authorities to the north, in relation to the North Staffordshire conurbation, to balance development requirements in Stafford Borough with the urban regeneration initiatives of the conurbation and reduce out-migration from this area. This is particularly relevant to future development in the north of the Borough at Stone as well as other settlements within and outside of the North Staffordshire Green Belt area.

3.11 On 20th May 2013 the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) was formally revoked through the Regional Strategy for the West Midlands (Revocation) Order 2013. Nevertheless since 2008 the Plan for Stafford Borough has been prepared in the context of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, which has made an important contribution to shaping the new Local Plan. Through the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy process a significant body of evidence was developed which has had some relevance in the local context. However as the majority of this evidence was produced between 2006 and 2009 it is increasingly lacking in relevance as new information is published.

3.12 A number of cross-border relationships and issues have been highlighted through the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy process and subsequently progressed with neighbouring authorities and other key partners. The West Midlands RSS evidence base highlighted a requirement to provide a new 50 hectare Regional Logistics Site with access to multi-modal transport facilities to serve the Black Country, to be located in southern Staffordshire. Stafford Borough Council will continue to co-operate with partners and relevant parties to ensure that further studies are completed in order that the issue of providing a Regional Logistic Site in the West Midlands Region is addressed. If a preferred location is identified with implications for Stafford Borough this may be considered through a partial review of the new Local Plan. Furthermore, land south of Stafford was identified as a cross border issue to be considered by Stafford Borough Council and South Staffordshire District Council when preparing their new Plans. The West Midlands RSS review process stated that "Dependant upon the outcome of local studies, some of the Stafford town allocation could be made, adjacent to the settlement, in South Staffordshire District." Both Councils have been in dialogue concerning future development south of Stafford and a number of evidence based studies have been carried out as well as meetings with relevant landowners and developers. The Plan for Stafford Borough is based on the clear conclusion that development in this location is both less practical and less sustainable than at other locations around Stafford town, and it is therefore not proposed to identify significant development south of Stafford in the new Plan.

Neighbourhood Planning

3.13 The Localism Act legislates for communities to be able to shape the future development of their neighbourhoods through a new process of 'neighbourhood planning'. Neighbourhood Development Plans can be brought forward by Parish Councils or community groups which have been designated as 'neighbourhood forums'. As set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood to deliver sustainable development, but must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Local Plan for needs and priorities.

3.14 Parish Councils or community groups which have been designated as 'neighbourhood forums' will be encouraged to prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans to identify where new development will take place to support the Borough's development requirements set out in the Plan for Stafford Borough.

3 Policy Influences (National and Local)

Stafford – Growth Point

3.15 The strategy for growth at Stafford is key to providing for the Borough's community. Providing simply for local need and not in-migration will undermine the local economy. The implications of not providing for local communities in the future would be to price out many people from the housing market, not meet objectively assessed needs, reduced investment in Stafford and Stone town centres, less job creation and employment development, as well as poorer quality infrastructure such as schools, roads, health services and utilities.

3.16 In July 2008 Stafford was announced as a Growth Point by the previous Government. Stafford Borough was designated as a new Growth Point by the Government because of its location, its potential for regeneration, its need for substantial affordable housing and the need for new infrastructure improvements such as transport and communications, health care, education, recreation and leisure. In supporting Stafford Borough as a Growth Point, the Government at that time committed to a long-term partnership with Stafford Borough Council and Staffordshire County Council by recognising their ambitions for growth, subject to the statutory regional and local planning processes.

3.17 The Councils remain committed to these objectives for growth to support Stafford's future, since these will help to secure major benefits both for the town and the Borough as a whole through delivering sustainable communities. It is therefore a key role for the new Local Plan to help deliver this growth and to maximise the potential for continued inward investment and sustainable development, as well as resolve existing pressures through the delivery of key infrastructure. Achieving these ambitions will depend on a range of public and private funding programmes, including developer contributions.

Stafford Borough Strategic Partnership

3.18 Stafford Borough Strategic Partnership came into effect in April 2011 and is made up of a number of key organisations that have agreed to work together on projects in connection with the prosperity and well being of the Borough community. The Partnership mirrors and supports the Staffordshire Partnership model. The Strategic Partnership incorporates statutory functions in respect of Health and Well-being, Children and Young People and Community Safety.

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

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

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

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

3.21 The Plan for Stafford Borough will directly support the wider partnership priorities through spatial planning, namely the priorities concerning housing, employment, environmental and leisure policies. This Partnership activity will also support the work of the Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

Key Issues 4

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

Key Issues and Challenges

- **Delivering and Managing the Borough's Growth:** Stafford Borough was designated as a Growth Point to facilitate long term sustainable growth and realise its full economic potential, through the provision of a range of housing and employment opportunities. The addition of more residential development will enable Stafford Borough to realise its full potential as a key sub regional centre, facilitating sustainable economic growth and creating high value jobs and inward investment. A key challenge for the Borough will be to deliver this level of growth without compromising the quality of life of the existing residents or the local attractiveness that draws people into the Borough. The Plan seeks to co-ordinate partner organisations to deliver the necessary services and infrastructure to support this growth over the plan period.
- **Providing affordable homes:** Demand for housing in Stafford Borough is high from a combination of natural demographic change, an increased growth in single person households and inward migration from adjoining areas. Affordability is particularly acute in rural areas and Stone Town, due to an influx of more affluent residents seeking a rural setting and relatively good accessibility. This has led to the exclusion from the housing market of particular groups, including young people, single parent families and those on below average wages. Therefore, the provision of affordable housing is a key priority to be addressed by the new Local Plan.
- **Adapting to Local Demographic Change:** In line with national trends, the population demographic of Stafford Borough is ageing. However, within the Borough this trend is even more pronounced, and by 2025 the projected numbers of people over 64 years of age is expected to increase by 49.4% to 34,800 people, whilst the number of people aged over 85 years will almost double. Currently, there is inadequate provision of specialist housing across Stafford Borough, including extra care units. Meeting the needs of the growing elderly population will be a key challenge for the new Local Plan.
- **Sustaining the attractive and distinctive quality of the natural and built environment:** The Borough is exemplified by its rich variety of wildlife and biodiversity, including the Cannock Chase AONB and Special Area of Conservation (SAC), three RAMSAR sites and numerous national, regional and local designations. There are also Local Biodiversity Action Plan species; ancient species-rich hedgerows and ancient woodlands. Complementing the natural environment is a rich and characterful built heritage in both the urban and rural areas. Therefore, a key challenge for the new Local Plan will be to maintain and enhance these irreplaceable assets whilst also delivering sustainable growth.
- **Ensuring that the District can prepare for and respond to climate change:** Climate change is a significant challenge facing everyone and is likely to have a direct impact on local businesses and local communities in Stafford Borough through a greater risk of droughts, a greater risk of flooding and increase pressure on drainage systems, particularly in winter, and more challenging circumstances for agricultural production due to increased temperatures combined with increased flooding. Action must be taken locally to adapt to climate change and to reduce the district's contribution to the problem. Steering new development away from areas prone to flooding, as well as implementing appropriate measures into new development, will reduce the impact of climate change.
- **Maximising access to services and reducing the need to travel:** Stafford Borough is a diverse area with Stafford, Stone and other settlements providing services and facilities to an extensive rural hinterland. Supporting and enhancing access to services and facilities in these settlements is a key requirement to achieve continued sustainable development in the future and reduce the need to travel further afield, thus supporting climate change measures. There has been evidence of some services and facilities being reduced in rural areas over recent years, such as Post Office provision. Therefore a key challenge for the new Local Plan will be to find the appropriate means of sustaining or increasing provision and access to key services and facilities across the Borough.

4 Key Issues

- **Providing additional employment opportunities that meet local needs, concerns and aspirations for a diverse local economy:** Stafford Borough has a low unemployment rate and above average household income. However, a very high proportion (40%) of the Borough's workforce are employed in public administration, health and education, much of which will contract in the coming years due to government imposed austerity measures. Stafford has also experienced a rapid contraction of its manufacturing base in recent years leading to large scale job losses, many of which have not been replaced due to limited private sector job growth. A key challenge for the new Local Plan is to provide more private sector employment and supporting the local economy by increasing the range of higher skilled jobs available in key growth areas such as emerging high technology and creative industries, with the aspiration of retaining highly skilled graduates from Staffordshire University.
- **Bringing necessary regeneration benefits to the Borough, including those that will contribute to the success of its town and other settlements:** It is important that Stafford Borough's towns and village centres continue to thrive as the primary focus for shopping, services and facilities to meet the commercial and community needs to sustain the viability and vitality of these centres and their rural hinterlands. This is a difficult challenge given the structural shift in retailing to ever larger centres outside the Borough with a large array of choice. Therefore a key task for the new Local Plan will be to address the need for regeneration of the larger settlements of Stafford and Stone, whilst also strengthening and enhancing, where appropriate, localised services and facilities of the appropriate villages.

Spatial Vision and Key Objectives 5

5.1 The following locally specific Vision has been used to guide the Plan for Stafford Borough through until 2031 and beyond by differentiating how the character of particular towns, villages and places in the area might change over time. Other elements of the Plan consider the Borough's distinctive localities of Stafford, Stone and the rural areas.

Spatial Vision

By 2031 Stafford Borough will have:

- a. retained and enhanced its high quality unique character made up of the County Town of Stafford, the market town of Stone and extensive rural area containing smaller towns and historic villages;*
- b. provided high quality designed developments including recreation, open space and sport provision;*
- c. a range of housing types and tenures to meet the needs of the Borough, including for the ageing population, affordable housing and provision for gypsies and travellers;*
- d. reduced the need to travel, through the provision of increased services and facilities in key locations to sustain the surrounding rural areas;*
- e. addressed issues of climate change, including a reduction of carbon emissions and flood risk with sensitively delivered renewable energy schemes;*
- f. improved accessibility to services and facilities by providing safe, attractive and convenient sustainable connections from and to new developments;*
- g. been protected, conserved and enhanced to provide an exceptionally high quality of environmental, historic and landscape character;*
- h. community supported Neighbourhood Plans in place*
- i. delivered new development, where possible through the re-use of brownfield land and land not of high environmental value, in sustainable locations at Stafford, Stone and the Borough's selected villages;*

By 2031 the County Town of Stafford will have:

- j. provided an enhanced national and regional profile through major new housing and employment developments as the Growth Point, supported by a range of new infrastructure provision;*
- k. achieved a strengthened and diverse economy with high quality jobs, based on specialist industries, including Small & Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and the Ministry of Defence;*
- l. increased educational attainment at all levels and retained high quality graduate skills delivered by further education facilities and bolstered by significant inward investment;*
- m. significant levels of high quality housing including affordable and specialist housing as well as extra care provision in recognition of an ageing population;*
- n. major town centre investments and exceptional levels of accessible community services and facilities;*
- o. provided new green infrastructure / biodiversity enhancement schemes;*

By 2031 the market town of Stone will have:

- p. conserved and enhanced the local character of the town and its canal side vistas;*
- q. a vibrant local economy and community activities;*
- r. an increased mix of high quality residential developments supporting first class business development;*
- s. provided new green infrastructure / biodiversity enhancement schemes;*

5 Spatial Vision and Key Objectives

By 2031 the Borough's Villages will have:

- t. delivered a range of new housing at selected villages to provide for objectively assessed needs;*
- u. avoided development in flood risk areas;*
- v. increased the availability of accessible and enhanced high quality services and facilities, including public transport provision;*
- w. provided new green infrastructure / biodiversity enhancement schemes;*
- x. supported a diverse and regenerated rural economy;*

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

The Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and its setting, the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and the Green Belt areas within Stafford Borough will have benefited from a sustainable approach to strategic housing development. This approach will have been tailored to delivering accessible natural green-space for residents and workers, and will have maintained and enhanced the character of these important local resources' as well as their unique environmental qualities and openness.

5.2 To deliver the Vision for Stafford Borough, the new Plan for Stafford Borough will aim to achieve the following key objectives for the different parts of the Borough:

Key Objectives - Stafford

- 1. Provide new high quality homes between 2011 - 2031 across of range of sites including accommodation for an ageing population and military personnel*
- 2. Create new communities supported by district centres, open space, sport & recreation provision, new health centres including GP surgeries and new primary schools*
- 3. Deliver mitigation measures against any significant adverse impacts on the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation*
- 4. Avoid development in flood risk areas*
- 5. Provide new high quality employment land between 2011 - 2031 across a range of sites that mitigates against adverse impacts, made available for new research and development facilities as well as growth opportunities to provide new businesses for graduate employment and inward investment to diversify the economy*
- 6. Enhance existing, and provision of significant, new green infrastructure and habitats in the area through green links, such as the canal, from the surrounding open countryside and the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty into the heart of Stafford to encourage healthy living for leisure time activities, whilst safeguarding and enhancing the landscape setting*
- 7. New open space, sport and recreational facilities, including indoor and outdoor provision, to meet the needs of an increasing population*
- 8. Deliver major new mixed use town centre retail schemes to make Stafford a significant sub regional centre for retailing, leisure and cultural attractions*
- 9. Provide new development at Stafford to encourage greater retention of high quality Further & Higher Education professionals in the area and up-skill educational attainments*

Spatial Vision and Key Objectives 5

10. Support the role of public sector organisations who have their headquarters or a significant presence in Stafford including Staffordshire University, Stafford College, Staffordshire Police, the Ministry of Defence, the Prison Service and Health Service co-ordination

11. Deliver the Western Access Improvements to improve the transport network to the west of Stafford town centre, deliver the Northern Access Improvements and implement the Eastern Access Improvements

12. Deliver the conservation and enhancement of Stafford's heritage assets, including the character and appearance of its conservation areas

Key Objectives - Stone

13. Provide new high quality homes in mix and tenure across a range of sites that mitigate against any adverse impacts and support the sustainable community

14. Deliver a new health centre for Stone as part of future community facilities

15. Provide new high quality employment land across a range of sites which mitigates against adverse impacts, made available for new research and development facilities, as well as growth opportunities to provide for expansion to new and existing businesses to diversify the economy

16. Provide infrastructure, including an upgraded electricity distribution network, new sewage facilities, green infrastructure links, enhanced public transport and new education provision through housing developments

17. Deliver new town centre developments to enhance Stone for retail, leisure, canal and river based activities, and community facilities

18. New open space sport and recreational facilities including indoor and outdoor provision to meet the needs of the community

19. Safeguard and enhance the landscape setting through new green infrastructure provision, avoiding development in flood risk areas and habitat creation including the role of the Trent Valley corridor through the town in terms of biodiversity, accessibility, recreation and community uses

20. Conserve and enhance the historic character and heritage assets of Stone and secure the sustainable use and management of its historic buildings

Key Objectives - Areas outside of Stafford & Stone

21. Provide for high quality new small scale housing development at appropriate villages that reflects their distinctive local character

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

23. Provide increased rural employment through agricultural and livestock businesses, renewable energy schemes, low impact hi-tech industries in agricultural buildings and sensitive new tourist attractions that enhance the high quality environment of the area

24. Deliver new employment land through the expansion of existing industrial areas

25. Provide new high quality homes, including new affordable homes, on appropriate sites in existing villages, to support sustainable rural communities in the future

26. Support increased habitat maintenance, restoration and creation, and the encouragement of a diverse range of species as part of the strategic green infrastructure network across the Stafford Borough area, whilst also protecting designated sites, including the Special Areas of Conservation

27. New open space, sport and recreational facilities to meet the needs of the community, including through increased multi-use provision such as community halls

28. Encourage the sustainable management of heritage assets, especially those identified as at risk, and deliver development which respects local character and distinctiveness

5 Spatial Vision and Key Objectives

5.3 Based on the Spatial Vision and Key Objectives set out above the following development strategy is proposed for the Stafford Borough area to deliver new development proposals. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out core planning principles to underpin plan-making and decision-taking, which will guide the Local Plan policies. Taking forward the Spatial Strategy identified above will be achieved through a number of strategic spatial principles and policies, which will translate the vision and objectives into action and a strategic direction for the Plan during the period to 2031.

Development Strategy 6

6 Development Strategy

6.1 A key role of the new Plan for Stafford Borough is to set out the scale and distribution of new housing and employment development. This chapter defines the Spatial Principles for the new Local Plan covering:

1. The overall presumption in favour of sustainable development
2. The scale of housing & employment Borough-wide
3. The sustainable settlement hierarchy (which settlements should be the main focus of growth)
4. The distribution of housing growth between the settlements in the hierarchy
5. The distribution of employment growth
6. Achieving rural sustainability
7. Appropriate mechanisms for achieving the distribution of development

6.2 The new Plan needs to provide at least a 15-year timescale from the date of its approval, to ensure that the development strategy and provisions are delivered for the Stafford Borough area. Therefore the Plan period will cover the period 2011 to 2031. A Key Diagram, presented at the end of this section, illustrates key principles of the Plan's approach to the spatial development of the Borough during this period.

1. The Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

6.3 The National Planning Policy Framework establishes a fundamental "Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development," which should guide all development decisions. As such, it is important that this fundamental principle is recognised as the foundation of the Plan for Stafford Borough and, for this reason, it is set out as the first of the Spatial Principles (SP) that establishes the development strategy for the Borough

SPATIAL PRINCIPLE 1 (SP1) - PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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

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

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

- i. Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or**
- ii. Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.**

2. The Borough-wide scale of housing and employment

6.4 The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), adopted in 2004, sets out the strategic policy context for Stafford Borough. This set out housing requirements for the region, including a figure of 2,900 new houses for Staffordshire County as an annual average rate of housing provision. The apportionment for Stafford Borough equals 5,602 over the Plan period 2001 – 2021, at an annual average rate of 280 new houses. No figures were set out for employment land provision either at a County or District level within the RSS. However, although never completed, revisions to the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy covering the period 2006 - 2026, which reached the Examination in Public stage, stated that the County Town of Stafford should be enhanced in order to provide services for local communities and act as a driver of economic growth, with at least 7,000 new homes suggested and a further 3,000 new homes to be built across the rest of the Borough area, including Stone, an annual average rate of 550. In addition, higher level growth scenarios were also proposed for Stafford Borough ranging from 10,100 to 13,100 houses. However, the Examination in Public held as part of the West Midlands RSS process concluded that a figure above 11,000 new homes for the Borough would be problematic in terms of delivery and impact on neighbouring authorities, not least on the North Staffordshire conurbation. Furthermore, the national planning policy context has now progressed since evidence was prepared as part of the West Midlands RSS review process, with the latest position and the Stafford Borough approach set out below.

6.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) now sets out a new context for the provision of new development. It requires local authorities to meet locally-established needs, having a clear understanding of housing and business requirements for the area, using the evidence base including a Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, viability studies and the Employment Land Review. It is therefore necessary, as the NPPF indicates, to establish the appropriate scale of development for the area based on objectively assessed needs.

6.6 In terms of future housing numbers, advice in the NPPF states that there should be a significant increase in the delivery of new homes, with local authorities responsible for establishing the right level of local housing provision in their area, and identifying a long term supply of housing land based on objectively assessed development needs. This means that the Plan for Stafford Borough must establish the level of housing across the area and identify where it will be delivered.

6.7 A number of factors should be taken into account when establishing future housing requirements for the Borough, including past completion rates, existing commitments and information from the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment to show the potential scope for supply, population and household projections over the Plan period, as well as other aspirations associated with future growth linked to employment.

6.8 Taking these considerations into account, the overall level of housing and employment proposed in the Plan for Stafford Borough is established by the following Spatial Principle. The derivation of the figures in SP2 is explained below.

SPATIAL PRINCIPLE 2 (SP2) – STAFFORD BOROUGH HOUSING & EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS

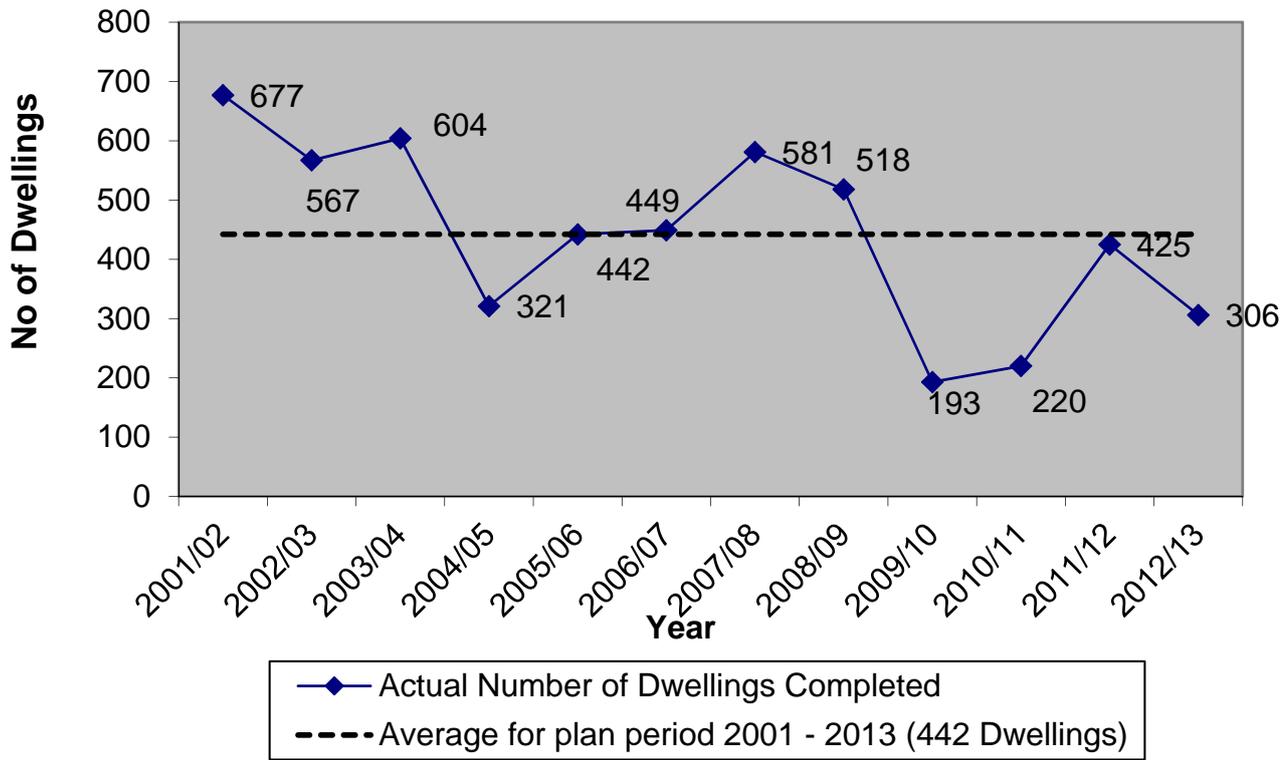
Stafford Borough will accommodate new growth and investment over the plan period. Throughout the Borough, provision will be made for the development of 500 dwellings per year over the plan period, not including additional requirements for military housing, and provision for gypsies, as well as approximately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

Establishing the Scale of Housing Provision

6.9 In terms of past completion rates, the table below sets out the number of new homes built each year in the Borough since 2001, which equates to approximately 442 each year.

6 Development Strategy

Dwelling Completions 2001-2013



Year	Number of Dwellings Completed
2001/2002	677
2002/2003	567
2003/2004	604
2004/2005	321
2005/2006	442
2006/2007	449
2007/2008	581
2008/2009	518
2009/2010	193
2010/2011	220
2011/2012	425
2012/2013	306
Total	5303
Average	442

Development Strategy 6

6.10 Stafford Borough had 306 housing completions in 2012/13, and as of 31st March 2013 has given planning permission for 2,781 new houses to be built, which are yet to be completed. Furthermore evidence from the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment identifies a considerable additional supply of sites, which suggests that the availability of suitable sites will not be a constraint to whatever overall scale of housing is proposed.

6.11 With regards to the future demand for new housing in the Stafford Borough area, national statistics from the Government provide information on population growth forecasts and the number of new households likely to form. For Stafford Borough, the latest 2010 population projections show an increase of 19,900 residents from 126,100 to 146,000 people in 2035. These figures include natural change and migration from other areas. The 2008 household projections to 2033 showed an increase of 11,523 households, from 52,999 to 64,522 households who will be looking for houses in our area. This is an average of approximately 461 new houses per year over the period 2008 to 2033. However the 2011 interim household projections covering the period 2011 to 2021 identify an increase from 55,706 in 2011 to 59,874 in 2021, which is an average of approximately 417 new houses per year.

6.12 It should be noted that the household projection figure is made up of 'local need' (i.e. natural change: the balance of births over deaths and reduction in average household size) and 'in-migration' elements, with the split for Stafford Borough being approximately 30% local need and 70% in-migration mainly from surrounding areas, the majority being from Cannock Chase District, South Staffordshire District and the City of Stoke-on-Trent. The Government, through the NPPF, has stated that local authorities should provide for the locally assessed requirements of their area. Pressures for continued in-migration are likely to remain from neighbouring areas in the short to medium term. In light of meeting objectively assessed needs it is sensible to plan for these, not least because it is consistent with the growth aspirations for Stafford town, and its developing sub-regional role, as set out in the Spatial Vision and Key Objectives earlier. This approach has also been supported by neighbouring local authorities through Duty to Co-operate cross-border meetings on the Plan for Stafford Borough: Strategic Policy Choices document.

6.13 With regard to new housing requirements for military personnel, a separate provision for up to 350 Service Family Accommodation properties will be delivered as part of the new Local Plan in order to facilitate military personnel returning from abroad. Currently, such in-migration movements are not included within the population and household projection figures prepared by the Office for National Statistics.

Establishing the Scale of Employment Provision

6.14 To support economic development, the NPPF states that new Local Plans should set out a clear economic strategy for an area, and encourage local growth and inward investment to meet anticipated requirements in the local authority area by identifying strategic sites and overcoming potential barriers such as a lack of infrastructure, services or housing provision.

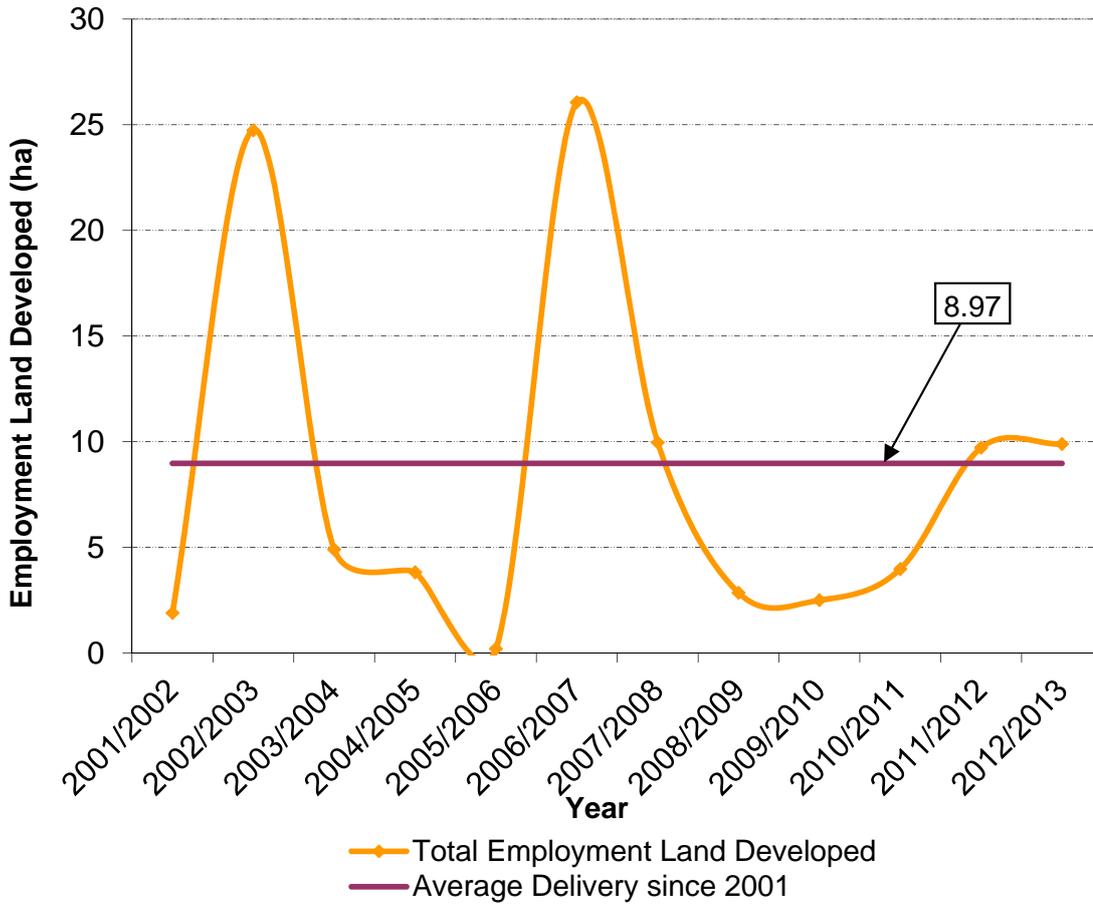
6.15 During the last 10 years approximately 8 hectares of employment land have been completed each year, although completion levels do fluctuate over time as shown below.

6.16 Evidence prepared through the Employment Land Review 2010 for Stafford Borough in terms of identifying future employment land supply considered two approaches: continuation of past trends; and, a labour demand led approach. The two approaches yielded significantly different results. The continuation of past trends approach looking at rolling forward historical development patterns to establish a predicted land requirement yield of 166 hectares over a 20 year period. However, the labour supply approach, which seeks to predict levels of land needed to serve predicted future growth in employment, provides a yield of only 25 hectares over the same period. This is because in the future the new economic sectors predicted to grow in the Stafford Borough area need less land and, in addition, the number of employee jobs is anticipated to decrease over the next 20 years.

6.17 If Stafford Borough continues to develop its employment land in line with past trends it is likely that new sites for employment land will need to be identified to deliver a balanced portfolio. However, if future employment development follows the forecast in the labour supply projections, limited new employment land will need to be identified.

6 Development Strategy

Total Employment Land Developed 2001-2013



Year	Total Employment Land Developed
2001/2002	1.9
2002/2003	24.74
2003/2004	4.9
2004/2005	3.82
2005/2006	0.21
2006/2007	26.06
2007/2008	9.96
2008/2009	2.85
2009/2010	2.5
2010/2011	3.98
2011/2012	9.72
2012/2013	9.89
Average	8.97

Development Strategy 6

6.18 The key consideration for identification of employment land in Stafford Borough is linked to the Spatial Vision and Key Objectives of the Borough and how the vision will relate to employment land requirements. This growth vision suggests much higher employment land requirements and the need to identify new land, rather than a non-growth development approach where employment growth could be achieved on existing sites, in order to deliver sustainable communities and new inward investment.

3. The Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy

6.19 Having established the scale of housing and employment provision for the Borough, the most appropriate and efficient way to determine the best location for this future growth is to define a Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy, taking into account the level of infrastructure, services and facilities currently available, those areas with the most scope for future provision as well as accessibility to existing and future facilities. The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, referred to in an earlier section, set out a clear settlement hierarchy approach based on the County Town of Stafford as the key focus for development followed by Stone as a 'market town' and then smaller settlements in the rural area where local housing requirements could be met. This approach is still broadly relevant, and has been reconsidered and elaborated in developing the strategy as part of the Plan for Stafford Borough. Given the scale of development required in Stafford Borough over the Plan period it will be necessary to allocate greenfield land in sustainable locations, as there is insufficient previously developed land in sustainable locations available to meet the requirements.

6.20 Different towns, villages and rural areas within Stafford Borough have various pressures, problems, and characteristics worthy of protection and conservation, as well as new opportunities which could be realised by new development or regeneration. The area is home to over 130,000 people. Over 60% of the population live in the County Town of Stafford and the market town of Stone whilst the remainder live in the rural area, where there are a number of larger villages such as Eccleshall, Gnosall, Hixon, Barlaston, Great Haywood, Little Haywood and Colwich as well as smaller villages and hamlets. Stafford Borough is well connected to the national transport network through the M6 motorway and rail services, being attractive to residents, businesses and visitors to the area but issues of accessibility remain in some rural areas.

6.21 The NPPF sets out future planning policies at the national level, to which Local Plan policies needs to conform. The NPPF's core planning principles provide a focus for planning policies to make effective use of land, by promoting mixed use developments to create more vibrant places and encouraging multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas. With regards to rural areas, the NPPF states that "To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities." In addition, the NPPF also states that Local Plans should promote a strong rural economy including the retention of local services and community facilities in villages.

6.22 Within this context, the Plan for Stafford Borough identifies the following hierarchy of settlements, as the basis for establishing the future sustainable pattern of growth and facilities. The derivation of the hierarchy and roles of the settlements are explained below.

SPATIAL PRINCIPLE 3 (SP3) – STAFFORD BOROUGH SUSTAINABLE SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

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

1. County Town of Stafford

2. Market Town of Stone

3. Key Service Villages of Eccleshall, Gnosall, Hixon, Great Haywood, Little Haywood / Colwich, Haughton, Weston, Woodseaves, Barlaston, Tittensor and Yarnfield

6.23 At the top of the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy is the County Town of Stafford. Stafford is located on the national road and rail network and has the highest level of services and facilities in the Borough area, which means it will have the greatest potential to provide for major new development. As part of Stafford's future, it is vital to maintain and enhance high levels of local sustainability, such that the majority of local people can access local jobs and services without having to travel significant distances. This will mean that housing growth should be complemented by local employment, retail and leisure growth, together with new transport and social infrastructure to ensure Stafford continues to be a vibrant and active community. Stafford is the principal administrative centre for the County and Borough Councils, acting as a sub-regional centre of governance for a number of County-wide

6 Development Strategy

services including Police and Fire services, the local Health Authority, and a range of Government bodies and other agencies. The future role of Stafford town, and the growth aspirations consistent with that expanding role, have already been set out in the Spatial Vision and Key Objectives.

6.24 Next in the hierarchy is Stone. The market town of Stone has a distinctive local character whilst having the potential for growth, reflecting its size and range of facilities, having experienced significant housing development in recent years. New development will require an upgrade to the local electricity network, although gas supply and waste water capacity are not significant constraints.

6.25 Below Stafford and Stone, an assessment of services and facilities for settlements across the Stafford Borough area has identified those settlements with the capacity to deliver sustainable communities and limit the need to travel to Stafford and Stone. It is proposed that the largest of these, with the most potential for the location of sustainable development with good access to current and future services, should be defined as the next tier in the hierarchy, to be known as Key Service Villages. From the assessment Eccleshall, Gnosall, Haughton, Hixon, Great Haywood, Little Haywood and Colwich, Weston and Woodseaves are Key Service Villages in terms of the range of facilities and potential from the other settlements. Barlaston, Tittensor and Yarnfield also have a significant number of services and facilities but are surrounded or abut the North Staffordshire Green Belt.

6.26 The Key Service Villages are all located on main transport links running through the Borough with Eccleshall, Gnosall, Haughton, Great Haywood, and Little Haywood and Colwich having good accessibility to Stafford whilst Hixon, Weston, Barlaston, Tittensor and Yarnfield have good links to Stone. Woodseaves is well related to Eccleshall and links through to both Stafford and Stone.

6.27 In terms of the individual Key Service Villages, all of the locations have sufficient available land to accommodate future growth, as identified through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. However there are other factors that need to be considered, such as level of services and facilities, environmental designations, transport links and access to employment. Therefore, it may be appropriate for different Key Service Villages to have different levels of development based on these factors and their individual characteristics, as set out below.

6.28 Eccleshall has a historic centre designated by a Conservation Area, with a significant level of services and facilities for a relatively small population, as well as having the Raleigh Hall Recognised Industrial Estate nearby.

6.29 Gnosall has the largest population outside of Stafford and Stone, a significant health facility and good transport links to Stafford, and Newport in Shropshire. Its historic core is designated as a Conservation Area. Although there are some retail services and facilities at Gnosall, there is a lack of local employment in the settlement, leading to out commuting for work to Stafford, Newport and beyond.

6.30 Hixon has major employment provision nearby at the industrial estates of Hixon Airfield, Hixon and Pasturefields, together with good transport links, although the settlement lacks a range of retail facilities for its size.

6.31 Great Haywood and neighbouring Little Haywood / Colwich have a range of community facilities including schools, a health centre and local retailing, although there is limited employment provision. Furthermore, the settlements have environmental designations nearby, including the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, floodplain, nature conservation sites, two Conservation Areas and the Shugborough Estate Registered Park & Garden.

6.32 Haughton has limited employment provision but some community facilities including a primary school and local shops.

6.33 Weston is a historic settlement located on the Stoke to London railway and the Trent & Mersey Canal, which is designated as a Conservation Area. The settlement has limited employment provision but good links to Hixon's industrial estates, as well as some community facilities, including a primary school, local retailing and limited health care provision.

6.34 Woodseaves has a primary school but limited retail and community facilities as well as a lack of employment provision, although there are good transport links to Eccleshall and Stafford together with the Ladfordfields Recognised Industrial Estate.

6.35 Tittensor has a primary school and significant local employers in the locality, with excellent transport links along the A34 to the City of Stoke-on-Trent and to Stone but there are limited retail and community facilities.

Development Strategy 6

6.36 Yarnfield has some retail and community facilities including a primary school as well as good transport links to Stone. Yarnfield has a Major Developed Site in the Green Belt adjoining the settlement.

6.37 In July 2009 the Stafford Borough Infrastructure Strategy – Stage 1 report set out the existing infrastructure provision in areas outside of Stafford and Stone, based on a range of sites identified at the Key Service Villages. The report concluded that there are no major physical constraints to delivery of new development at Key Service Villages, although it was noted that Woodseaves is a significant distance from a gas connection point. A range of improvements would be required to facilitate development and manage its impact on sites, requiring developer contributions as well as service provider funding.

6.38 Clearly there is a diverse range of other settlements not identified as Key Service Villages across the rural area based on size, level of existing services & facilities, population, accessibility and environmental constraints. Parts of the rural area have exceptionally high landscape and nature conservation designations with attractive villages. However, these locations generally have fewer services and facilities and therefore it is not considered appropriate for these villages to be included in the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy.

4. The Distribution of Growth between the Settlements in the Hierarchy

6.39 Based on the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy across the Borough, as set out above in Spatial Principle SP3, the scale of new development distributed between the settlements, and in particular between the tiers of the hierarchy, needs to be defined in order to ensure that the right proportion of development is directed to the most appropriate settlements with access to sufficient services and facilities to support development. Proportions of new development to different areas were considered through the Plan for Stafford Borough - Strategic Policy Choices consultation in May to July 2012. The Plan proposes that development be distributed according to the following target proportions.

SPATIAL PRINCIPLE 4 (SP4) – STAFFORD BOROUGH HOUSING GROWTH DISTRIBUTION

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

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

6.40 It should be noted that new development will need to be provided, generally, outside of the existing built up areas of these settlements because the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment identifies insufficient infill sites to deliver the scale of new development required in most of the settlements. However, this will not be feasible at Barlaston, Tittensor and Yarnfield as these settlements are surrounded partly or wholly by the North Staffordshire Green Belt. Therefore, less development in settlements surrounded by the North Staffordshire Green Belt may mean proportionately more development to other identified settlements.

6.41 The distribution proposed in Spatial Principle SP4 needs to be considered against the existing distribution of population, and in the context of experience of past planning policies. The 2001 Census population distribution was as follows:

- Stafford – 52%
- Stone – 12%
- Key Service Villages – 16%
- Rest of the Borough area – 20%

6.42 In the context of the 2001 distribution, the previous Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 sought to concentrate development in the main settlements, and provided a number of housing allocations at Stafford, Stone and at the Key Service Villages across the Stafford Borough area with the following distribution:

- Stafford - 78%
- Stone - 17%

6 Development Strategy

- Key Service Villages - 5%

6.43 However, having monitored the number of housing completions and commitments over a number of years, it is evident that the following distribution of development has generally occurred during the period from 2001 to the present:

- Stafford - 48%
- Stone - 17%
- Remainder of Borough - 35%

6.44 This distribution occurred because a significant number of housing completions have taken place on infill sites within village boundaries and barn conversions in less sustainable locations across the rural area. Furthermore, this trend seems, without intervention, set to continue. Currently there are approximately 35% of housing commitments identified in the rural areas with 55% at Stafford and 10% at Stone.

6.45 The new Plan for Stafford Borough is proposing to ensure that the distribution of development is delivered to reflect the level of services and facilities available through the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy established in Spatial Principle SP3. It represents a return towards the proportions intended by the previous Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001, but modified to reflect current circumstances and the growth aspirations for Stafford town in particular.

6.46 The distribution proposed in Spatial Principle SP4 reflects the consideration of alternative development strategies through the successive consultation stages of preparing the current Plan, and taking account of the Sustainability Appraisal process. As a result new development focused on the County Town of Stafford, the market town of Stone and a number of principal settlements has been identified as the most sustainable choice for distributing new development.

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

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

6.49 What are the practical implications of the scale of housing which will result, and how feasible will it be to identify appropriate individual sites and proposals? Evidence prepared through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment shows that there is more than a sufficient supply of housing land available across Stafford Borough's area, including around Stafford, Stone and the Key Service Villages, to actually achieve this distribution.

6.50 The table below sets out the housing development implications for Stafford Borough at 500 new homes per year over the Plan period 2011 - 2031. To establish how much new development is required by the Plan's proposals, the Council has adopted the following approach. The total number of commitments as at 31 March 2013 are identified. In the past Stafford Borough has experienced approximately 90% of commitments being delivered as completions. Furthermore the outstanding allocations in the Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 have not been included within the existing commitments figure.

6.51 As part of the Plan's evidence base, a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) was produced in January 2009 and subsequently updated in January 2010, June 2011, June 2012, December 2012 and August 2013. This is a key element of the evidence base to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing to meet the Borough's future needs, as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Borough Council has also recently published an updated '5 year land supply statement'.

6.52 Having established the number of commitments to be discounted and subtracted from the total requirement for Stafford Borough over the Plan period to 2031, it is possible to determine the scale of new development that needs to be brought forward by site allocations or other proposals. A discounting assumption has been incorporated as a flexibility allowance to ensure sufficient development is provided through the Plan, subject to annual monitoring of completions and new commitments.

6.53 In summary, the Plan proposes that 10,000 homes (500 per year: Spatial Principle SP2) will be provided in the period to 2031 in the following locations:

Development Strategy 6

Housing Provision	
Housing Requirement for Stafford Borough	10,000
Housing Completions 1/4/2011 to 31/3/2013	731
Potential Number of New Homes – Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy	
Stafford Town Total requirement	7,000
Completions - 1/4/2011 to 31/3/2013	262
Commitments at 31/03/2013 (discounted by 10%)	1,505
New provision	5,233
Stone Town Total requirement	1,000
Completions - 1/4/2011 to 31/3/2013	109
Commitments at 31/03/2013 (discounted by 10%)	291
New provision	600
Key Service Villages Total requirement	1,200
Completions - 1/4/2011 to 31/3/2013	134
Commitments at 31/03/2013 (discounted by 10%)	529
New provision	537
Rest of Borough Area Total requirement	800
Completions - 1/4/2011 to 31/3/2013	226
Commitments at 31/03/2013 (discounted by 10%)	358
New provision	216

6.54 As set out above the scale of new provision is for 10,000 new houses over the Plan period with requirements across Stafford, Stone, the Key Service Villages and other areas of the Borough. The latest Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) identifies that there is sufficient potential housing land available and deliverable across all of these areas to meet the new provision. The NPPF states that "*local planning authorities must identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements, with an additional buffer of 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Local authorities with a record of persistent under delivery should increase the buffer to 20%*". Further delivery of housing land is identified in the SHLAA as being deliverable in this time period.

5. The Distribution of Employment Growth

6.55 The employment land requirement set out in Spatial Principle SP2 for Stafford Borough is 160 hectares between 2011 – 2031. Where should this growth be most effectively distributed? The population of Stafford Borough will grow substantially over the plan period, and it is proposed to provide for increased employment in the principal settlements of Stafford town and Stone town as well as smaller provision of employment land in rural areas to provide sustainable, balanced, vibrant and self reliant places in which to live and work. Spatial Principle SP5 defines the broad distribution of employment land proposed, which is consistent with, and supportive of, that adopted for housing in Spatial Principle SP4.

6 Development Strategy

SPATIAL PRINCIPLE 5 (SP5) – STAFFORD BOROUGH EMPLOYMENT GROWTH DISTRIBUTION

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

Stafford 56%

Stone 12%

Rest of Borough Area 32%

6.56 What do these proportions, together with the overall requirement of 160 hectares of land for development mean, in terms of new sites which need to be identified and brought forward?

6.57 Existing allocations and expiring permissions for employment land have been reviewed to see whether reallocation for alternative uses would provide for more sustainable development through the Employment Land Review 2012. The provision of new employment land should complement rather than duplicate the existing stock of sites by creating a more diverse land portfolio increasingly able to meet different market requirements as they arise, having regard to their viability, feasibility for implementation and capability for commencement during the Plan period. To ensure there is sufficient flexibility included in future provision, additional capacity has been identified at the Strategic Development Locations, with further provision guided by the criteria set out in Spatial Principle 7.

6.58 The implications of Spatial Principles SP2 and SP5 in terms of new land required are shown in the following table:

Employment Provision (hectares)	
Employment Requirement for Stafford Borough (hectares)	160
Employment Completions 1/4/2011 to 31/3/2013	1.68
Stafford Town Total requirement	90
Commitments - 31/03/2013	61.74
New provision	28.26
Stone Town Total requirement	20
Commitments - 31/03/2013	0
New provision	20
Rest of Borough Area Total requirement	50
Commitments at 31/03/2013	37.20
New provision	12.8

6. Achieving Rural Sustainability

6.59 The focus of the strategy so far has been largely on the scale of change, and its direction towards Stafford, Stone and the Key Service Villages. However, a key objective of the Plan is to enable an appropriate proportion of new development across the rural areas of the Borough. The achievement of rural sustainability is therefore a key element to be delivered through the Local Plan and necessary to meet the national policy approach set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. This means balancing the qualities of the rural environment with the need to promote sustainable rural communities where people can have good local access to services, facilities and work. The approach is summarised in the following Spatial Principle:

SPATIAL PRINCIPLE 6 (SP6) – ACHIEVING RURAL SUSTAINABILITY

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

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

6.60 This policy approach is partly delivered by the identification of the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy in Spatial Principle SP3, through the continued sustainability of these communities in the future. Nevertheless outside of these settlements, and specifically in the area outside the Settlement Boundaries which will be defined for each of these settlements, the policy approach in the other settlements and the countryside to seek to achieve rural sustainability will involve a wide range of measures and approaches, as set out in the Policies (Chapters 9 – 14). In particular, Policy E2 provides specific guidance about the approaches which need to be taken in the rural areas, outside the Green Belt, to achieve a sustainable rural economy; and Policy E3 addresses the particular role which a number of freestanding industrial estates in rural areas, which have become known as 'Recognised Industrial Estates', have in supporting the Borough's economy. Policy C5 provides specific guidance on residential developments outside of settlement boundaries including in the Green Belt.

7. Appropriate mechanisms for achieving the distribution of development

6.61 To deliver the necessary scale and distribution of housing and employment development set out in the Spatial Principles SP2, SP3, SP4 and SP5, a series of mechanisms will be used through the new Local Plan.

6.62 A key element of the approach is that new Settlement Boundaries will be established for each of the settlements listed in Spatial Principle (SP3), which comprise the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy. The boundaries for each settlement in the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy will be established in order to provide sufficient scope for the proposed scale of development of housing, employment and other uses, within the defined settlement. A differential policy approach towards supporting or discouraging development will therefore operate either side of that boundary. The following Spatial Principle explains the approach to development that will be adopted either side of the boundary, and the criteria that will be adopted in defining the boundary itself.

6.63 The location of settlement boundaries for each of the settlements listed in Spatial Principle 3 (SP3) will be established in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document. The settlement boundaries may be established through Neighbourhood Plans in the meantime, but will also be shown in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document. Prior to the actual definition being achieved through these processes, the criteria established in Spatial Principle 7 (SP7) will be used to judge the acceptability of individual development proposals.

SPATIAL PRINCIPLE 7 (SP7) – SUPPORTING THE LOCATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

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

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

- i) If located within the Green Belt, it is consistent with national policies for the control of development, and Policy E5;

6 Development Strategy

ii) It is consistent with the objectives of Spatial Principles SP6, Policies E2 and C5 in supporting rural sustainability;

iii) It does not conflict with the environmental protection and nature conservation policies of the Plan;

iv) Provision is made for any necessary mitigating or compensatory measures to address any harmful implications.

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

a) is in, or adjacent to, an existing settlement;

b) is of an appropriate scale to the existing settlement;

c) is accessible and well related to existing facilities;

d) is accessible by public transport, or demonstrates that the provision of such services could be viably provided;

e) is the most sustainable in terms of impact on existing infrastructure, or demonstrate that infrastructure can be provided to address development issues;

f) will not impact adversely on the special character of the area, including not impacting on important open spaces and views, all designated heritage assets including, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and locally important buildings, especially those identified in Conservation Area Appraisals;

g) will appropriately address the findings of the Landscape Character Assessment, and the conservation and enhancement actions of particular landscape policy zone / zones affected;

h) will not lead to the loss, or adverse impact on, important nature conservation or biodiversity sites;

i) will not lead to the loss of locally important open space or, in the case of housing and employment, other locally important community facilities (unless adequately replaced);

j) will not be located in areas of flood risk or contribute to flood risk on neighbouring areas;

k) will ensure adequate vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access as well as cycle and short stay parking facilities on the site; and

l) will not adversely affect the residential amenity of the locality.

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

6.64 The purpose of establishing a boundary is that a different approach to development is implemented on either side. Within the boundary, there would be a presumption in favour of supporting housing and employment development, subject to any other relevant planning considerations. Outside the boundary, this principle would be reversed, and only small scale development would be accepted in exceptional, tightly controlled, cases as defined in the Plan's policies.

6.65 In due course, it is intended that development allocations for specific sites will be identified within the Settlement Boundaries (and the Boundaries themselves) through the Neighbourhood Planning process, or through the preparation of a Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

6.66 In addition to the above, new development proposals should not lead to the sterilisation of significant mineral resources, or compromise the continued operation or expansion of any existing waste management facilities as defined in the Minerals and Waste Local Plans prepared by the Mineral and Waste Planning Authority. In due course the Policies Map will be updated with relevant Local Plan allocations and designations.

Stafford 7

7.1 The following Area Section defines Strategic Development Locations for both housing and employment at Stafford. This includes associated infrastructure, services and facilities immediately adjacent to the existing built up area to allocate an appropriate number of new houses and employment areas in the right locations and amounts. The policies are structured and supported by justification text to explain the policy approach and delivery mechanisms for the Plan, which also need to be considered in the context of the detailed topic-based policies. The policies provide more detail in terms of implementation of the Stafford Borough Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy set out in Spatial Principle SP3.

POLICY STAFFORD 1 – STAFFORD TOWN

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

Housing

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

- i. Increasing the range and type of housing including a greater number of specialist houses and extra care provision for the elderly;
- ii. Providing a range of development locations for new homes over the Plan period to 2031 including for affordable housing. This will include new housing development at the following Strategic Development Locations identified on the Policies Map:
 - a. North of Stafford including highway and transport improvements through the Northern Access Improvements
 - b. West of Stafford linked to delivery of the Western Access Improvements from Martin Drive to Doxey Road
 - c. East of Stafford linked to delivery of the Eastern Access Improvements from Beaconside to St Thomas' Lane
- iii. Sites within the urban area of Stafford town will have good accessibility to services and facilities by walking, cycling and public transport;
- iv. Strategic Development Locations adjacent to Stafford's urban area will minimise the impact on surrounding landscapes, be fully accessible by public transport with facilities to encourage walking and cycling;

Employment

Create employment growth and promote economic diversification by:

- i. Supporting the Science and Technology park at Beaconside as a high quality location for knowledge based industries;
- ii. Supporting further development of Ministry of Defence land at Stafford as a military base in the West Midlands;
- iii. Supporting the continuing retention and growth of existing public and private sector employers as well as targeting new businesses through the provision of a range of premises, support and advice;
- iv. Providing opportunities for new enterprises and businesses by allocating new employment sites with good transport links that contribute to sustainable development. New employment sites will be included in the following Strategic Development Locations identified on the Policies Map:
 - a. North of Stafford

7 Stafford

b. East of Stafford

v. Providing facilities and sites for new start-up businesses, particularly business incubation units for knowledge-based and creative industries.

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

1. There is overriding evidence to demonstrate that the current use is presently causing and has consistently caused significant nuisance or environmental problems that could not have been mitigated; or
2. The loss of jobs would not result in a reduction in the range and diversity of jobs available within Stafford Borough; and
3. There is substantial evidence provided by applicants to show the premises or site has been marketed both for its present use and for potential modernisation or regeneration for alternative employment-generating uses; and
4. The benefits arising from the development outweighs the retention of the site in its existing use.

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

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

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

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

Stafford Town Centre

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

- i. Encouraging the development and expansion of the town centre to provide an increase of 14,000 square metres (net) of non-food (comparison) retailing and 3,400 square metres (net) of food (convenience) retailing and improve the level and quality of the offer as well as establish new development opportunities;
- ii. Ensuring that there is 45,000 square metres of new office space and commercial premises within Stafford town centre;

iii. Promoting mixed use development on larger development sites, particularly those that are within the town centre, through a phased approach for the major regeneration plan on the following sites:

a. Kingsmead

b. Riverside

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

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

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

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

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

Infrastructure

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

i. Supporting the introduction of better bus services, by increasing service levels, frequency and punctuality of services between Stafford town centre and other parts of the Borough;

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

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

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

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

vi. Ensure that new developments are capable of providing safe and convenient access by foot, cycle, public and private transport that addresses the needs of all, particularly those with disabilities.

Provision of new Green Infrastructure (GI) for Stafford Town at Stafford Common and west of Wildwood Park together with local area schemes that respond to the characteristics, local needs and opportunities for improved GI provision and biodiversity assets of the town.

Increasing and improving the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities through new green infrastructure and by addressing specific qualitative and quantitative deficiencies. New development will support the provision of the following, through Policy I1 and Policies Stafford 2 – 4:

- New indoor swimming pool

- New indoor multi-use and specialist facilities including opportunities for joint use of educational / community establishments

7 Stafford

- Increased number and quality of allotments across the town
- Improved safety and accessibility of children's play areas
- High quality and adequately sized green spaces
- Adequate access to natural green spaces
- Improved access to multi-sport courts
- High quality range of facilities for teenagers

Tourism

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

- i. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment, the context and character of its buildings and streets, its rich heritage, archaeological interest and historic street pattern, and encouraging the sustainable use and management of heritage assets;
- ii. Ensure new developments are well designed and of high quality whilst respecting the character of the townscape and skyline, and conserving sight lines to historic buildings and their setting;
- iii. Increasing tourist opportunities for visitors through additional high quality accommodation, promoting links with the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Staffordshire County Showground, the Shire Hall Gallery, Ancient High House, Stafford Castle, St. Chad's Church and St Mary's Church by facilitating the development of innovative new tourist attractions;
- iv. Improving access into the countryside by means other than by the private car, such as public transport, walking and cycling including the use of green links and the canal network.

Environment

Promote Stafford's unique character and heritage by:

- i. Ensuring that development does not damage the integrity of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC), nature conservation interests and Local Nature Reserves, as detailed in Policies N4 to N6;
- ii. Ensuring that development is not located in areas of flood risk or contribute to flooding elsewhere;
- iii. Ensuring that development does not harm the significance of the town's heritage assets;
- iv. Development is sympathetic to the landscape character;
- v. Ensuring that new development does not harm but enhances watercourses in the town.

7.2 The purpose of the Stafford town policy is to help shape the future of the key settlement, the County Town, at the head of the Borough's Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy, which will play a major role in delivering the fundamental growth aspirations and benefits intended by the Local Plan. It will provide guidance for new development at Stafford, which is intended to deliver the greatest level of development over the Plan period. In accordance with Spatial Principle SP4, and to ensure delivering sustainable development in line with the National Planning Policy Framework, most of the Borough's housing and employment growth will be concentrated at Stafford Town, as it has the greatest level of services and facilities, jobs and transport links.

7.3 Evidence prepared through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment for Stafford town shows that there is insufficient land within the existing town to deliver the housing provision identified. Therefore, significant levels of new housing will be required on greenfield land on the edge of Stafford Town, to be delivered through the Strategic Development Locations and associated infrastructure requirements in partnership with developers and landowner interests. Following an assessment of potential directions of growth for Stafford, through the Stafford Borough Infrastructure Strategy published in July 2009, areas to the north, west and east were identified as being

most deliverable, as land to the south has environmental constraints being close to the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation as well as having access issues. The Key Diagram below illustrates the location of the Strategic Development Locations for Stafford town which provide significant new development to the north, west and east. In order to ensure sustainable communities for the future housing, and employment provision is identified to the north and east of Stafford, supported by strong transport links to M6 motorway Junction 14 via the A513 Beaconside road and the Eastern Access Improvements whilst housing provision west of Stafford is close to the town centre for accessible employment opportunities, as well as access to the national railway network via Stafford railway station and supported by the proposed Western Access Improvements.

Housing

7.4 As set out previously in the Development Strategy section the total housing requirement for Stafford town is 7,000 new homes. This means, in addition to completions since the Plan period began, and current permissions, provision for 5,233 dwellings on new sites is required. Provision is also made for 350 new homes for Ministry of Defence (MOD) personnel, reflecting the needs identified by the MoD. Analysis of the population information for the County Town of Stafford shows that although the over 65 year olds are a significant group, a range of housing will be important for existing and migrating households as well as encouraging Staffordshire University graduates and retired military personnel to settle in the Borough. New housing developments in Stafford must provide for specialist needs and the elderly including retirement homes and specialist accommodation, lifetime homes and extra care schemes. Increasing and enhancing the provision of educational, health and community facilities will also provide for increased growth, including for the elderly population.

Employment

7.5 To support the delivery of future sustainable communities at Stafford Town, and reflecting economic objectives in the National Planning Policy Framework, a significant element of the Borough's employment provision is proposed at Stafford under Spatial Principle 5. A key priority for Stafford Town is to diversify its employment base to deliver significant employment growth over the plan period. It is anticipated that the primary drivers for new employment growth will be the development of small and medium scale high technology industries that builds on the information and multimedia technologies from emerging University graduates. The Borough has failed in recent times to retain graduates in these growth industries. Therefore, a step change is necessary to retain graduates in the town to help nurture a more prosperous economy within the local area. To achieve this will require a combination of housing, job opportunities and a high quality environment for leisure time activities in the locality.

7.6 Beacon Barracks / MOD Stafford will be retained for military purposes and is the preferred location for two Signal Regiments returning from Germany in 2015. Stafford Borough Council and the MOD will continue to work in close partnership to ensure that future development links in with the existing local communities of the town. Therefore, it is unlikely that any of the MOD land will be released for other uses.

Environment

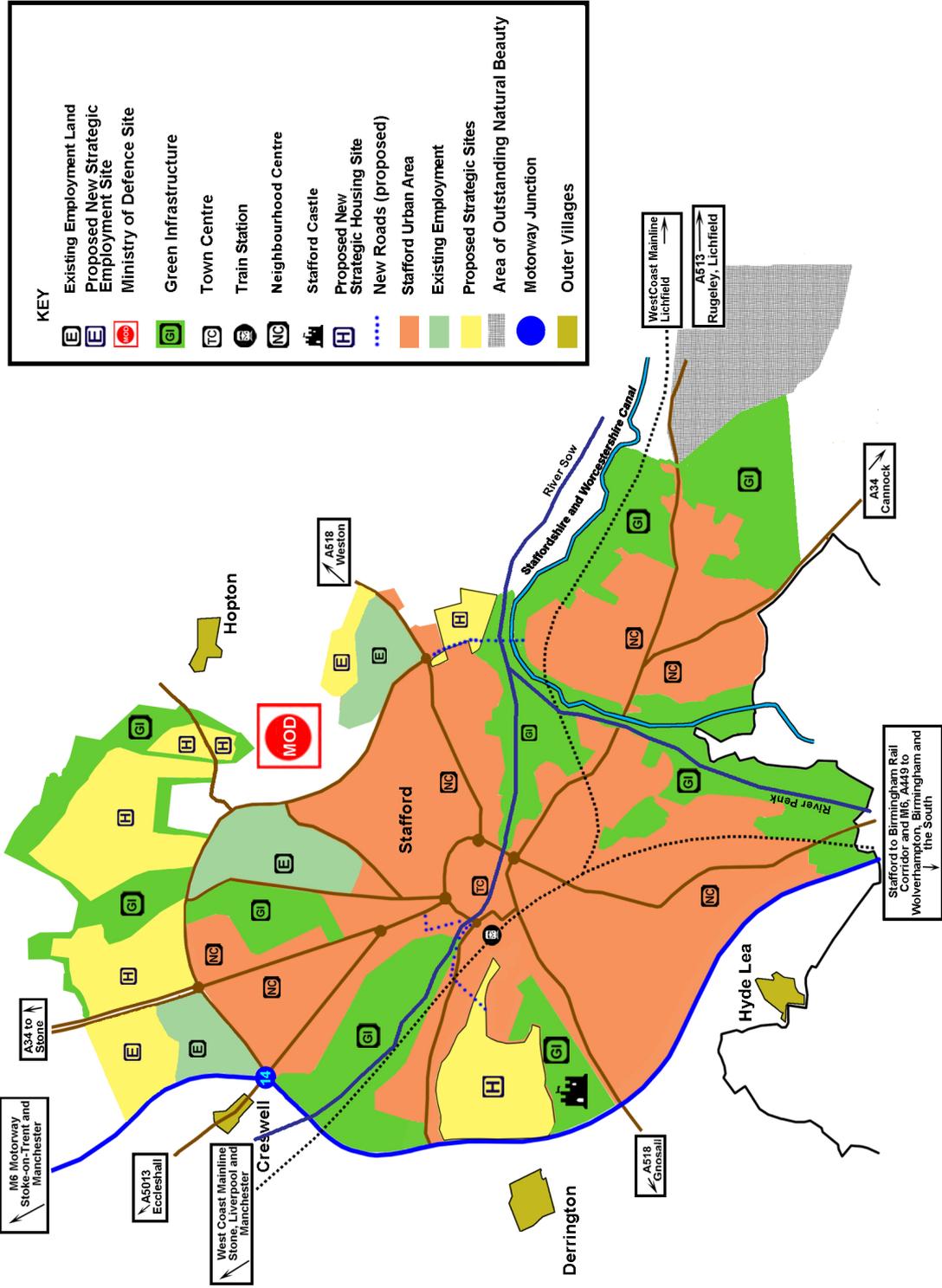
7.7 National planning policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework highlights the importance of Green Infrastructure (GI). The scale of growth at Stafford town will increase pressure on local GI assets, which could impact on the town's biodiversity and landscape character. As part of the Green Infrastructure Strategy, two key proposals are recommended for Stafford town to increase biodiversity, recreational opportunities and provide flood protection benefits: creation of the Penk & Sow Natural Parkland; and enlarging Stafford Common into a community park, as illustrated on the map below, and defined on the Policies Map. To support GI, no development is proposed in the flood plain areas of Stafford, and the river corridors through the town will be important to provide increased recreational provision and walking / cycling links, including canal tow paths to other parts of Stafford as well as links to the open countryside.

7.8 The Borough Council's Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy identifies a number of deficiencies in both the quality and quantity of provision. It is important to ensure that deficiencies are addressed in Stafford and that new development provides further open space, sport and recreation provision for the local community. In Stafford, key outdoor sport and recreation provision is located at Victoria Park, Wildwood Park and Rowley Park, known as Destination Parks.

7 Stafford

Map 3 Stafford Town Key Diagram

Stafford Town Key Diagram



7.9 Stafford Town and outlying areas include a number of heritage assets that should be conserved for the future. Staffordshire County Council have recently produced a Historic Landscape Characterisation Study, which highlights the sensitivities of the landscape around Stafford Castle in particular. In addition, a Historic Environment Character Assessment has been carried out which specifies that developing in both the west and east of the town will have the greatest impact on the Historic Environment, whilst development to the north will have least impact. With an increased emphasis for new retail and office development in the town centre, the loss of character and sight lines between heritage assets could increase, which should be minimised through controlling the height of new developments. A Conservation Area Appraisal that analyses the particular significance of the Stafford Town Conservation Area has been published. Furthermore, an Extensive Urban Survey is also being progressed for Stafford town to provide further information on heritage assets

Stafford Town Centre

7.10 A key objective in the strategy for Stafford town centre is to support and enhance its attractive sense of place, through the implementation of high quality urban design, an attractive public realm and streetscape. This will also attract visitors and encourage inward investment. A key principle for town centre developments is the need to provide high quality, well designed buildings and public spaces, which are capable of being used by all age groups and are safe, accessible, and durable.

7.11 Being at the head of the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy, defined in Spatial Principle SP3, the County Town of Stafford's town centre will have significant retail development, large scale office developments and uses that attract large numbers of people, including major cultural, indoor sport, tourist, social, leisure and community venues. The town represents the heart of retail, leisure and cultural provision for the Borough, with the majority of shoppers travelling from a wide catchment area to access high-order purchases. However, in recent years there has been significant development in comparison and convenience goods, with three superstores on the edge of the centre, and retail parks at The Hough, The Green, and Madford Retail Park.

7.12 The National Planning Policy Framework requires Development Plans to define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, based on a clear definition of primary and secondary frontages in designated centres. The town centre and primary shopping area boundaries for Stafford town are defined on the Policies Map.

7.13 Stafford is a strong sub-regional centre, which clearly shows signs of vitality and viability. However, if the town is to enhance its retail and leisure role in the future, it is evident that there is a clear need for development / redevelopment to take place in close proximity to the established retail core to enable key retail and leisure operators to enter the local market and to ensure that such attractions will be closely linked to the established retail core, thereby maximising the benefits of such investment. Without this development, there is a danger that further investment will occur outside Stafford Town Centre, thereby further exacerbating the reduction in market share identified over the last 10 years, detailed in the Stafford & Stone Town Centre Capacity Assessment. Furthermore, planned developments in competing centres such as Hanley and Wolverhampton will further erode the market share of Stafford which, where possible, must be countered through securing investment and development at the heart of the County Town.

7.14 Whilst there are signs that Stafford Town Centre is a vital and viable town centre, there is evidence that the centre could be much stronger and could benefit significantly from additional retail development in the right location. Discussions with key retailers currently not present within Stafford Town Centre underlines the fact that there are a significant number of key operators seeking a presence within Stafford, but who are currently unable to achieve this due to a lack of quality modern accommodation which meets their requirements. As a result, a proactive approach is being taken through the identification of two town centre locations for new development at Riverside and Kingsmead to take forward potential opportunities within and on the edge of Stafford Town Centre to meet this anticipated future need over the next plan period.

7.15 Following a review of the extent of Primary and Secondary Frontages and the Primary Shopping Area, and consideration of the mix of uses, it has been established that the Primary Shopping Area should cover the main area with predominant retail activity. The primary frontages are those areas which hold a key retail role to the street and areas which include national and multiples attractions. Secondary frontages are those areas which hold less retail activity but are more likely to provide a wider range of occupiers (such as banks, restaurants and other service provision). Primary and secondary frontages are not specifically identified on the Policies Map due to the dynamic nature of Stafford town centre and its mix of uses. However, the need for a primary and secondary frontages policy (and the location of defined frontages if a differential policy approach is appropriate) will be considered in the subsequent Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

7 Stafford

7.16 Based on current shopping patterns and the strong performance of existing facilities, there is a demonstrable need for further retail floorspace within the Borough. Having assessed the performance of each foodstore, the Town Centre Capacity Assessment study (January 2011), updated in May 2013 through the Stafford and Stone Town Centre Retail Capacity report, identified that certain facilities are trading much better than expected, suggesting a need for greater competition and choice. Based on forecast increases in expenditure and current 'over-trading', there is a need for further retail floorspace within the Borough. Furthermore there remains capacity for new convenience goods floorspace in Stafford in the medium to long term, after taking into account recent retail developments. The study found that future capacity for comparison (non-food) goods will be met through existing permissions in the short term, predominantly through the consented Riverside redevelopment, but capacity is expected to increase in the longer term.

Neighbourhood Centres

7.17 The key diagram of Stafford, set out previously, shows a number of Neighbourhood Centres across the town which provide services and facilities, including daily retail convenience outlets. These Centres are identified within the retail hierarchy as part of Policy E8 and will be defined on the Policies Map when the Site Allocations Development Plan Document is prepared. In relation to the scale and location of new housing, additional Neighbourhood Centres will be required.

Infrastructure

7.18 It is fundamental to the delivery of the growth aspirations for Stafford town that the necessary infrastructure is in place, at the right time, to support the proposed developments. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan that accompanies the Plan for Stafford Borough addresses these matters specifically, and is considered in more detail in Chapter 13. Comments here are made on the infrastructure requirements of Stafford town as a whole, and specific requirements relating to each of the Strategic Development Locations are discussed under the respective site policies. In the case of these major sites, the fine details of the necessary infrastructure provision will be developed as part of the Master Plans which will be prepared for each site, as required by each site policy

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

7.20 Transport improvements will need to take place to address the traffic and travel consequences of new development and to mitigate existing problems. Full transport assessments of the individual new developments will be required. The Borough Council and County Council have worked closely to ensure that the Plan for Stafford Borough and the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan are in step and mutually supportive. The proposed location of development and the way that development is carried out is very important in helping to achieve these priorities and in reducing the need to travel.

7.21 A key consideration in terms of new housing development in Stafford is the provision of additional foul sewerage capacity to accommodate new development flows. Large parts of the Stafford sewerage system were originally designed to accept both foul and storm water in the same pipe, and during heavy rainfall the capacity in parts of the sewerage system can be exceeded resulting in localised sewer flooding. To ensure the additional development flows do not increase flood risk, it is envisaged that some localised sewer capacity improvements will be required to provide additional capacity to coincide with development construction. In addition to localised capacity improvements, further strategic capacity improvements will be required at Lammascote sewage pumping station, which pumps the majority of sewage flows from the north, west and city centre direct to Brancote sewage treatment works. Severn Trent have advised that whilst there is some limited capacity at Lammascote there will need to be more extensive sewerage capacity improvements to accommodate medium to long term development. More detailed hydraulic sewer modelling is currently ongoing to identify the scope of sewerage improvement work to meet the new housing development being allocated across Stafford.

7.22 The clean water supply to Stafford is provided by a number of boreholes and three storage reservoirs located north, south east and south west of the town. The current network has spare capacity to the north of Stafford from the Peasley Bank Storage Reservoir. No distribution network reinforcement is required to support the growth in Stafford town, however some areas of the town will need to have the water supply allocated to Peasley Bank service reservoir in the north from Butterhill Service Reservoir in the south west.

7.23 With regards to community infrastructure provision, new development will be required to deliver education contributions through the development of new primary schools and additional capacity for secondary education at Stafford due to the scale of growth. Schools can also play a role in providing community access to sports facilities

outside school hours, to meet growing community needs. As previously mentioned, an increasingly ageing population will need to be provided for through extra care and specialist housing schemes, supported by new health centres in Stafford town.

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

7 Stafford

Stafford - Strategic Development Locations

POLICY STAFFORD 2 – NORTH OF STAFFORD

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

Housing

- i. Delivery of approximately 3,100 new homes with 30% being affordable housing in the context of Policy C2 through a mix of housing types, tenures, sizes and styles with proportions of 2, 3 and 4 bedroomed properties in the context of Policy C1;
- ii. Provision to meet the needs of an ageing population through new extra care and specialist housing;

Employment

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

Environment

- iv. A comprehensive drainage scheme will be delivered to enable development of the Strategic Development Location which will include measures to alleviate flooding downstream on the Marston Brook and Sandyford Brook;
- v. The development will provide on-site renewable or low carbon energy solutions including associated infrastructure to facilitate site-wide renewable energy solutions in the context of Policy N2;
- vi. Necessary measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of development on the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation including Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace will be provided;
- vii. Existing hedgerows and tree lines to be retained and enhanced to support the provision of a network of green infrastructure including wetlands and water corridors, play areas, green corridors allowing wildlife movement and access to open space;

Transport

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

Design

- x. The development takes place on a 'neighbourhood' approach with the provision of a mix of uses including local retail facilities, social and physical infrastructure, a primary school, secondary education provision, a library service, health facilities and public open space;
- xi. The development will be based on using sustainable construction methods in the context of Policy N2;

Infrastructure

- xii. Highway capacity improvements, either through or around the perimeter of the site, or along Beaconside, will be required North of Stafford. Enhanced bus services and improved bus reliability, through bus priority, will be required along the A34 between the site and the town centre as well as real time bus passenger information, increased frequency of existing and new bus services;
- xiii. Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS) required through on-site / off-site provision / management at Cannock Chase;
- xiv. Gas infrastructure serving the employment land north of Primepoint will be re-inforced. Gas infrastructure up-grading not required for the housing development other than standard connections into the system. Part of the North of Stafford Strategic Development Location extends over a National Grid high pressure gas pipeline (FM21 Audley to Alrewas). Development within the zone of influence must address the presence of the pipeline and not affect the functioning of this installation;
- xv. Flood management scheme and less than greenfield surface water run-off to Sandyford Brook and Marston Brook through open water storage solutions, maximising opportunities for multi-functional open space provision;
- xvi. Electricity connections and sewage capacity improvements required to meet additional housing development;
- xvii. New primary school provision required as well as a new secondary school or extensions to existing secondary schools;
- xviii. A new Destination Park including children's play areas and multi-use games areas in association with SANGs requirement if provided on-site;
- xix. Standard telecommunication connections will be provided to link to the Stafford exchange enabled with Superfast Fibre Access Broadband;
- xx. Primary health care provision delivered by increased capacity at existing facilities.

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

Context

7.25 Development to the north of Stafford is located beyond the main residential areas to the north of the town and the Primepoint employment area, with the MOD Beacon Barracks to the east. The key housing areas are to be located north of the A513 Beaconside road with the key employment area north of Primepoint and west of the A34 leading north towards Stone. The area will have implications for the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation which will require mitigation measures to address the recreational impacts of the new housing development.

7 Stafford

Proposed Development

7.26 The land north of Stafford will comprise two housing sites delivering a total of approximately 3,100 new homes and an employment site delivering 36 hectares as an extension to the existing Primepoint employment area next to Junction 14 of M6. Primary and secondary schools are within 20-30 minutes walking distance of some areas of the development, although the GP surgery on Holmcroft Road is further away. It should be noted that part of the area has outline planning permission for 400 new houses.

Development Requirements and Implementation

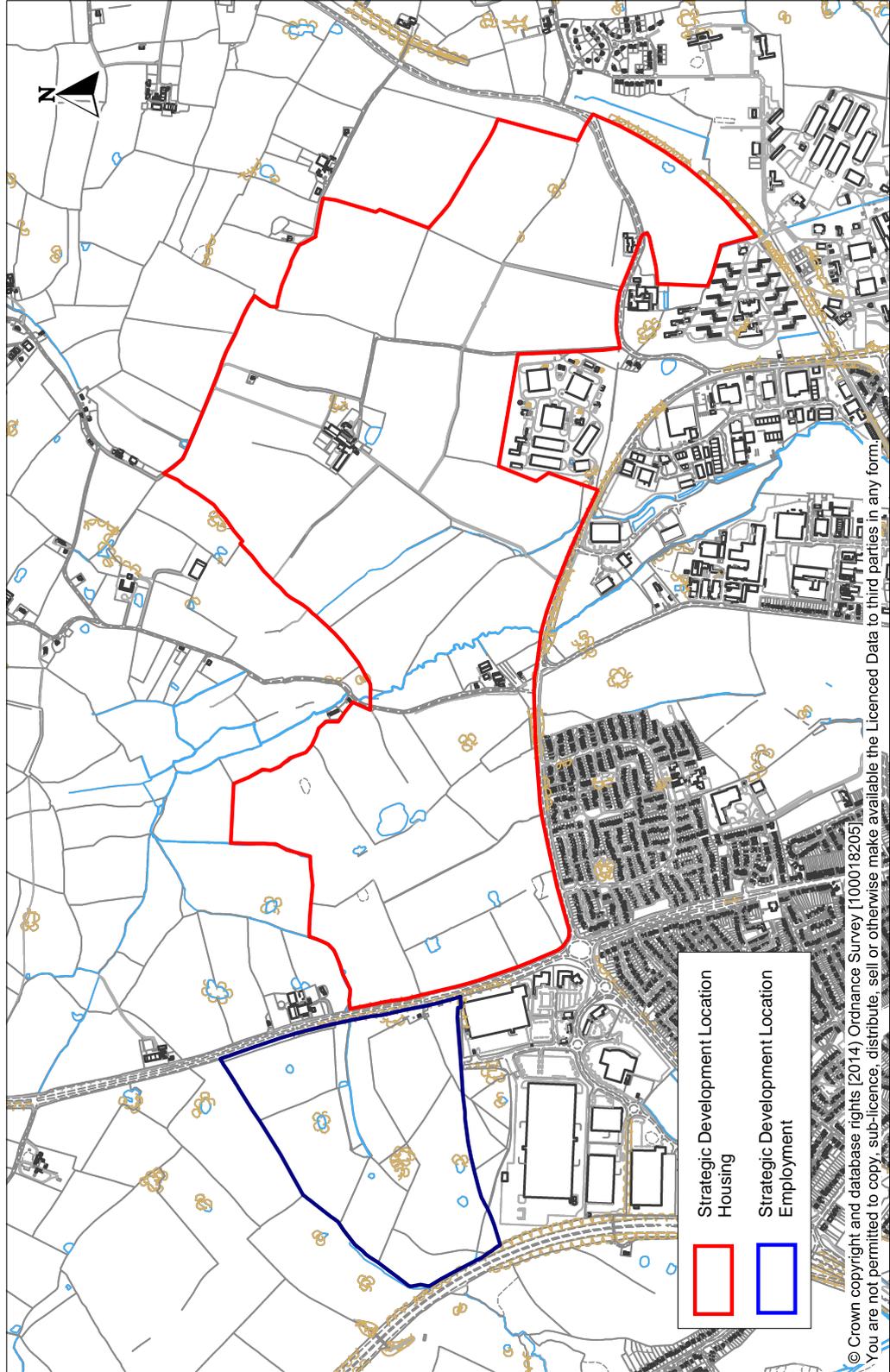
7.27 Infrastructure requirements are listed in the Policy, and further details are provided in Appendix D. Of these requirements the following have been identified as critical to the delivery of the Strategic Development Location:

- Highway capacity improvements along the A513 Beaconside as well as transport improvements with new or enhanced bus routes as well as cycling & walking links to existing routes to the town centre and other key destinations. This infrastructure will overcome severance issues along the A513 Beaconside road to integrate the existing community of Parkside with the new developments to the north.
- Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS) required through on-site / off-site provision / management at Cannock Chase to provide recreational areas for communities to use rather than using the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation.
- Planned electricity reinforcement works and connection to the grid in order to meet the needs of the new communities.
- Flood management scheme and less than greenfield surface water run-off to Sandyford Brook and Marston Brook through open water storage solutions, maximising opportunities for multi-functional open space provision. This infrastructure will address surface water run-off issues and contribute to new green infrastructure north of Stafford.

7.28 Based on current information from the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, and working in partnership with developers for the land north of Stafford, it has been established that the scale of development is capable of delivering the infrastructure requirements listed.

Map 4 Development to the North of Stafford Town

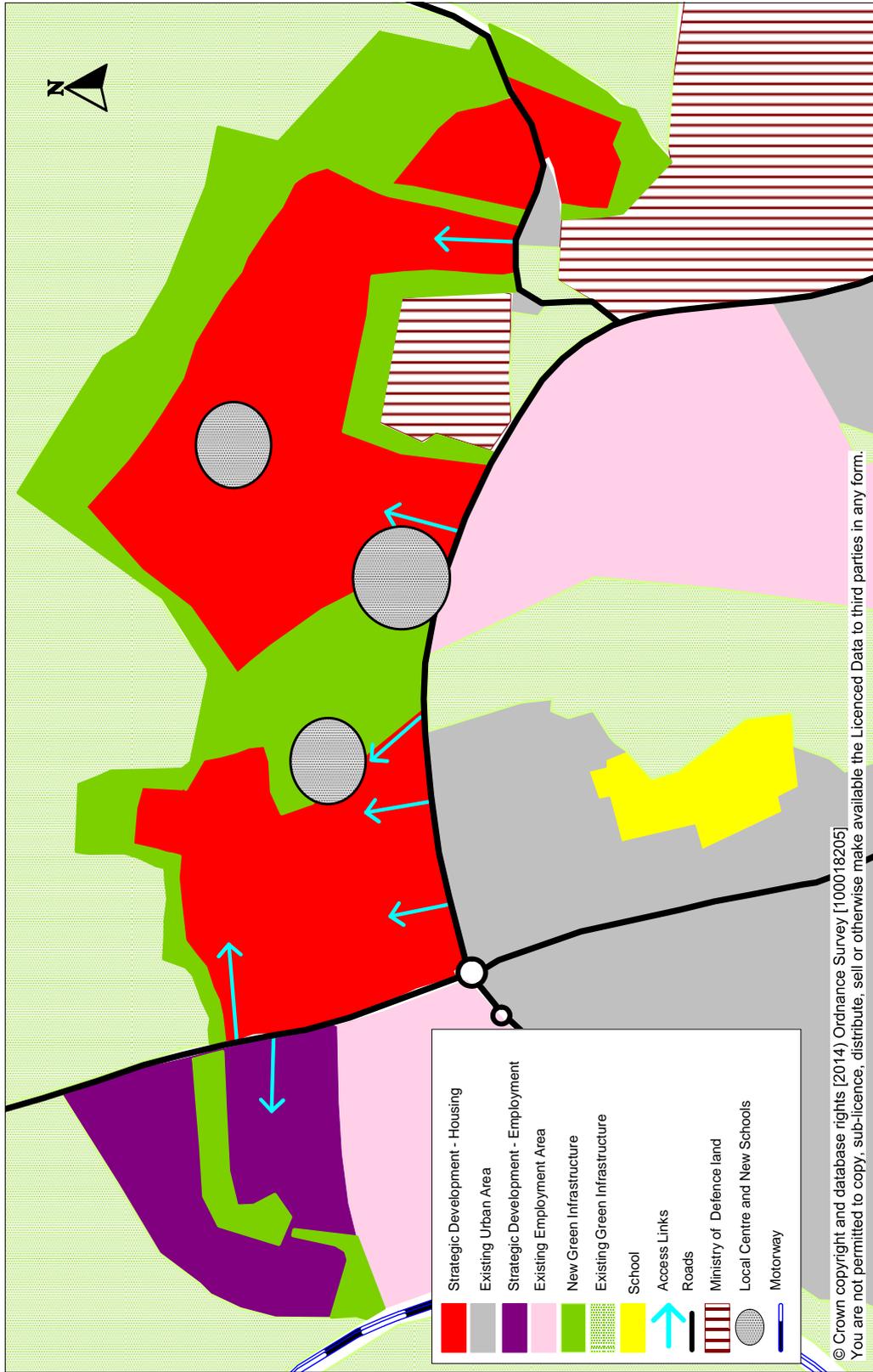
Development North of Stafford



7 Stafford

Map 5 Stafford North Concept Diagram

Stafford North Concept Diagram



POLICY STAFFORD 3 – WEST OF STAFFORD

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

Housing

- i. Delivery of approximately 2,200 new homes with 30% being affordable housing in the context of Policy C2, through a mix of housing types, tenures, sizes and styles with proportions of 2, 3 and 4 bedroomed properties;
- ii. Provision to meet the needs of an ageing population through new extra care and specialist housing provision close to Stafford town centre;

Design

- iii. The development takes place on a 'neighbourhood' approach with the provision of a mix of uses including local retail facilities, public open space, social and physical infrastructure, a primary school, and a community building including provision for a library service and health facilities;
- iv. New small-scale employment areas providing a total of 5 hectares of new readily available land incorporated into new housing development areas;
- v. The development will be based on using sustainable construction methods in the context of Policy N2;

Environment

- vi. A comprehensive drainage scheme will be delivered to enable development of the Strategic Development Location which will include measures to alleviate flooding downstream on Doxey Brook and tributaries to the River Sow;
- vii. The development will deliver a proportion of on-site renewable or low carbon energy solutions including associated infrastructure in the context of Policy N2;
- viii. The high quality of the historic environment in this area must be taken into account and the significance of relevant heritage assets be protected and enhanced, including the setting of Stafford Castle and sight lines to St Mary's Church in Stafford town centre;
- ix. Protect nature conservation interests including Doxey Brook & Burleyfields BAS (Biodiversity Alert Site) and Doxey Marshes SSSI;
- x. Necessary measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of development on the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation, including Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace will be provided;
- xi. Provision of a network of multi-functional green infrastructure taking into account existing on-site features, such as hedgerows, tree lines, drainage ditches, archaeological remains, culverted watercourses traversing the site and Public Rights of Way with play areas and green corridors allowing wildlife movement and access to open space;

Transport

- xii. An access, transport and travel plan strategy for the Strategic Development Location that maximises travel and accessibility by non-car transport modes via safe, attractive and conveniently designed street, pedestrian and cycling connections within the development and

7 Stafford

to Stafford town centre, nearby existing and new employment areas. The strategy shall identify access points to the site and between the site and the existing settlement. It shall also identify construction access arrangements that do not disrupt existing residents and improvements to transport capacity along the A518 Newport Road and its roundabout;

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

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

Infrastructure

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Context

7.29 Development to the west of Stafford is located south west of Stafford town centre across the main West Coast mainline, beyond the main residential areas to the west of the town and the M6 motorway. The key housing areas are to be located north of the A518 Newport Road, Stafford Castle and the golf course. The area will have implications for the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation which will require mitigation measures to address the recreational impacts of the new development and the component of the site that floods.

Proposed Development

7.30 The land west of Stafford will comprise of various housing sites on previous industrial areas and greenfield land delivering a total of approximately 2,200 new homes. A primary school and GP surgery are within 20-30 minutes walking distance of the area, although the King Edwards secondary school is further away. English Heritage has recently published 'The setting of heritage assets: English Heritage guidance' (2011) and 'Seeing the history in the view: a method for assessing heritage significance within views' (2011). These will need to be used to guide development on the site in terms of the setting of Stafford Castle and other heritage assets, together with the Stafford Historic Environment Character Assessment (April 2009).

Development Requirements and Implementation

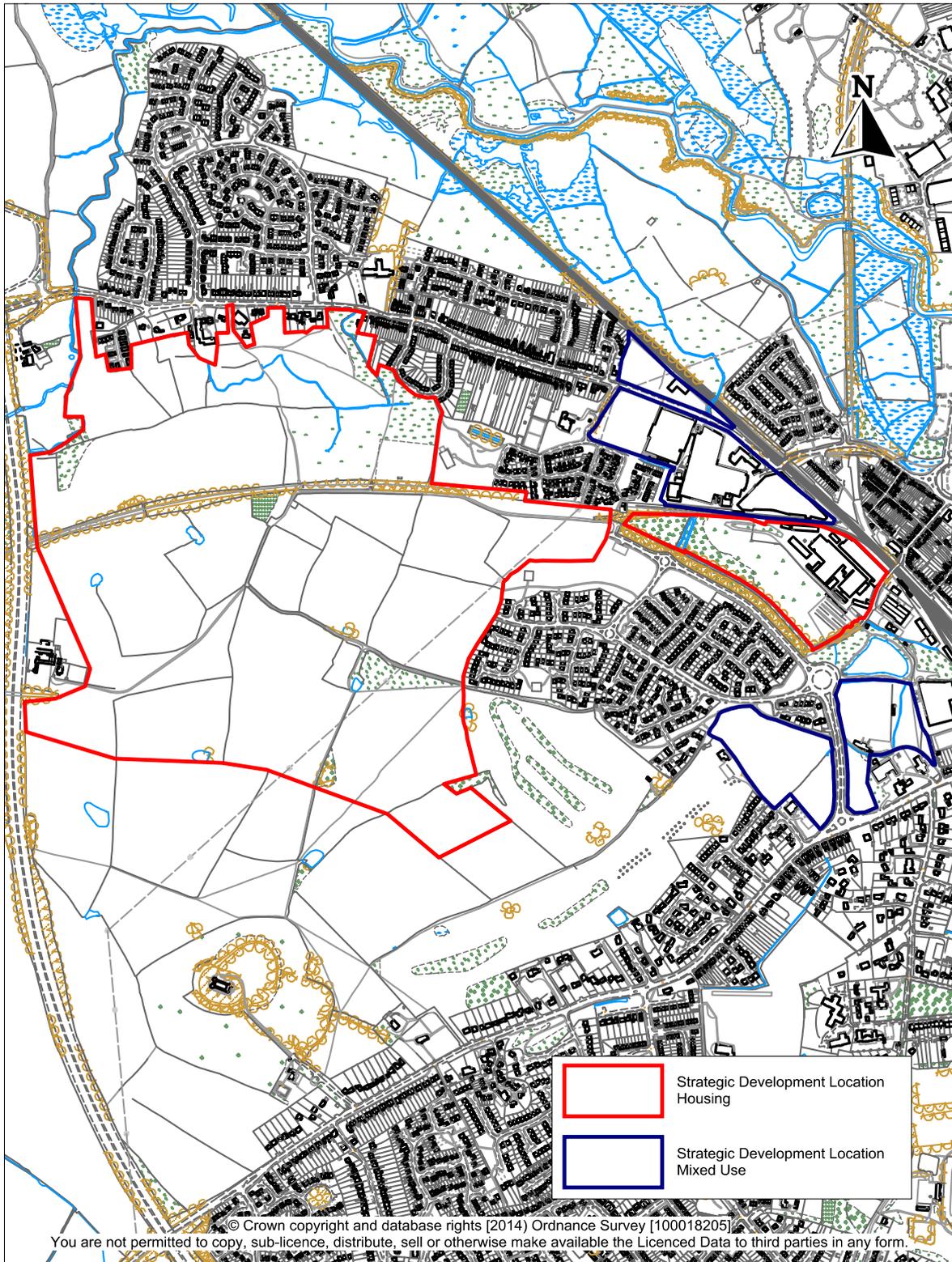
7.31 Infrastructure requirements are listed in the Policy, and further details are provided in Appendix D. Of these requirements the following have been identified as critical to the delivery of the Strategic Development Location.

- Link from Martin Drive spine road to Doxey Road with upgrade to railway bridge required for the development west of Stafford as part of the Stafford Western Access Improvements, together with new or enhanced bus routes as well as cycling & walking links to existing routes to the town centre and other key destinations. This infrastructure is required to provide access routes to the main development areas.
- Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS) required through on-site / off-site provision / management at Cannock Chase to provide recreational areas for communities to use rather than using the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation.
- Connection to the electricity grid in order to meet the needs of the new communities.
- Reinforcement required for potable water through a new main from the local trunk main or from the outlet main at Butterhill Direct Supply Reservoir in order to meet the water resource needs of the new communities.
- Sewage capacity improvements required to meet additional housing development in order to meet the water resource needs of the new communities.

7.32 Based on current information from the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, and working in partnership with developers for the land west of Stafford, it has been established that the scale of development is capable of delivering the infrastructure requirements listed

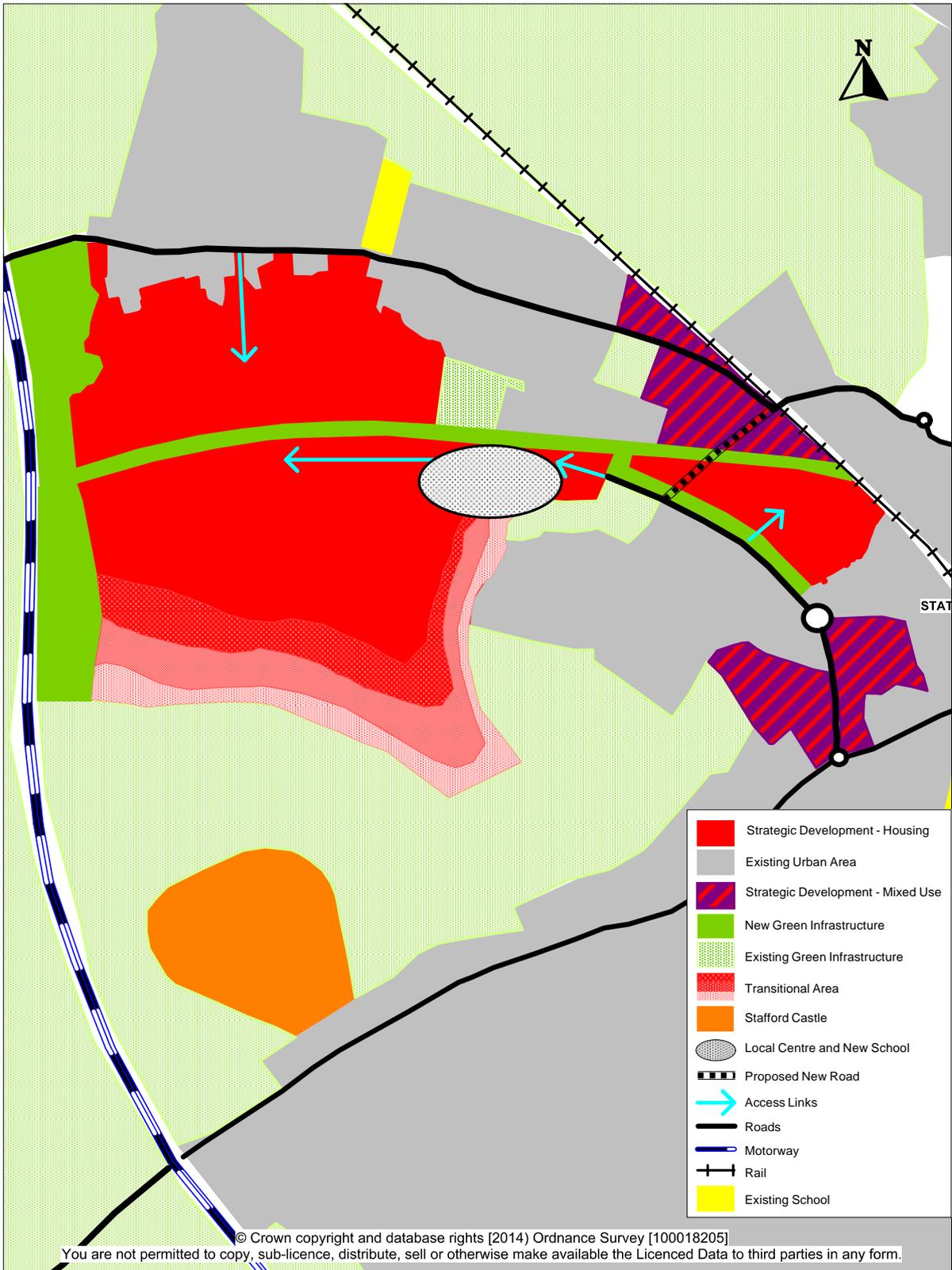
Map 6 Development to the West of Stafford

Development to the West of Stafford



Map 7 Stafford West Concept Diagram

Stafford West Concept Diagram



7 Stafford

POLICY STAFFORD 4 – EAST OF STAFFORD

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

Housing

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

Design

- iii. The development takes place on a 'neighbourhood' approach with the provision of a mix of uses including public open space, social and physical infrastructure (including financial contributions based on additional school places on a needs basis for new facilities at existing primary and secondary schools);
- iv. The development will include at least 1 acre for the future expansion of the existing cemetery / crematorium with appropriate landscaping next to adjacent housing and within new road corridors;
- v. The development will be based on using sustainable construction methods in the context of Policy N2;

Employment

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

Environment

- vii. A comprehensive drainage scheme will be delivered to enable development of the Strategic Development Location which will include measures to alleviate flooding downstream on the River Sow;
- viii. The development will deliver a proportion of on-site renewable or low carbon energy solutions including associated infrastructure to facilitate site-wide renewable energy solutions in the context of Policy N2;
- ix. Measures to conserve and enhance heritage assets and landscape character including St Thomas' Priory, its setting and landscapes such as Blackheath Covert;
- x. Protect nature conservation interests including Kingston Covert Site of Biological Interest;
- xi. Necessary measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of development on the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation including Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace will be provided;
- xii. Provision of a network of multi-functional green infrastructure including natural grasslands, play areas, green corridors allowing wildlife movement and access to open space taking into account existing on-site features such as hedgerows, drainage ditches and archaeological remains;

Transport

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

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

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

Infrastructure

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

xvii. Electricity connection to the grid;

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

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

xx. Gas reinforcement work required for employment sites;

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

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

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

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

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

Context

7.33 Development to the east of Stafford is located beyond the main residential areas to the east of Stafford and employment areas at Beacon Park and the Technology Park close to Staffordshire University's campus. The key housing areas are to be located south of the A518 and Stafford Fire Station with the key employment area north of A518 extending the Beacon Park industrial location. The area is within 3 kilometres of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation which will require mitigation measures to address the recreational impacts of the new development.

7 Stafford

Proposed Development

7.34 The land east of Stafford will comprise of various greenfield housing sites delivering a total of approximately 600 new homes and an employment area delivering a total of 20 hectares. The area is covered by a limited public transport service, although there are opportunities for walking and cycling connections as the area is close to Stafford. A primary school is within 20-30 minutes walking distance of the area as well as the GP surgery and a secondary school. It should be noted that planning permission has been granted for 21.6 hectares at the location identified for new employment land development, which would therefore deliver this element of the Strategic Development Location.

Development Requirements and Implementation

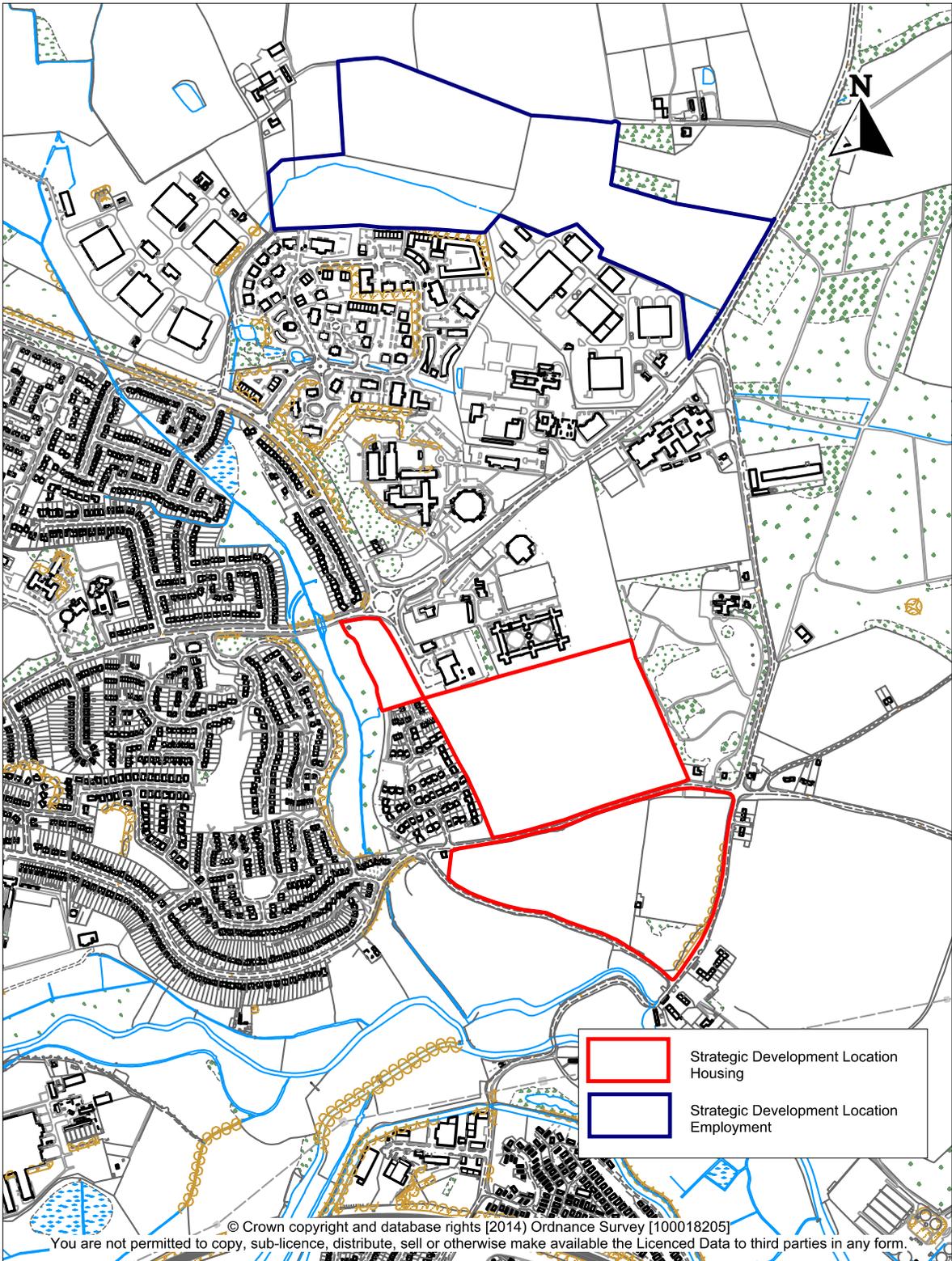
7.35 Infrastructure requirements are listed in the Policy, and further details are provided in Appendix D. Of these requirements, the following have been identified as critical to the delivery of the Strategic Development Location:

- The Eastern Access Improvements including transport improvements along A513 Beaconside and A518 Weston Road, the Eastern Access Route from Beaconside to St Thomas' Lane together with principal access to the sites. This infrastructure is required to provide access routes to the main development areas.
- Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS) required through on-site / off-site provision / management at Cannock Chase to provide recreational areas for communities to use rather than using the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation.
- Connection to the electricity grid in order to meet the needs of the new communities.
- Potable water reinforcement works for the water supply in order to meet the water resource needs of the new communities.
- Sewage capacity improvements required due to site topography draining to Beaconside terminal sewage pumping station linked to Brancote sewage treatment works. This infrastructure is required to meet the water resource needs for the new communities.

7.36 Based on current information from the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and working in partnership with developers for the land east of Stafford, it has been established that the scale of development is capable of delivering the infrastructure requirements listed

Map 8 Development to the East of Stafford

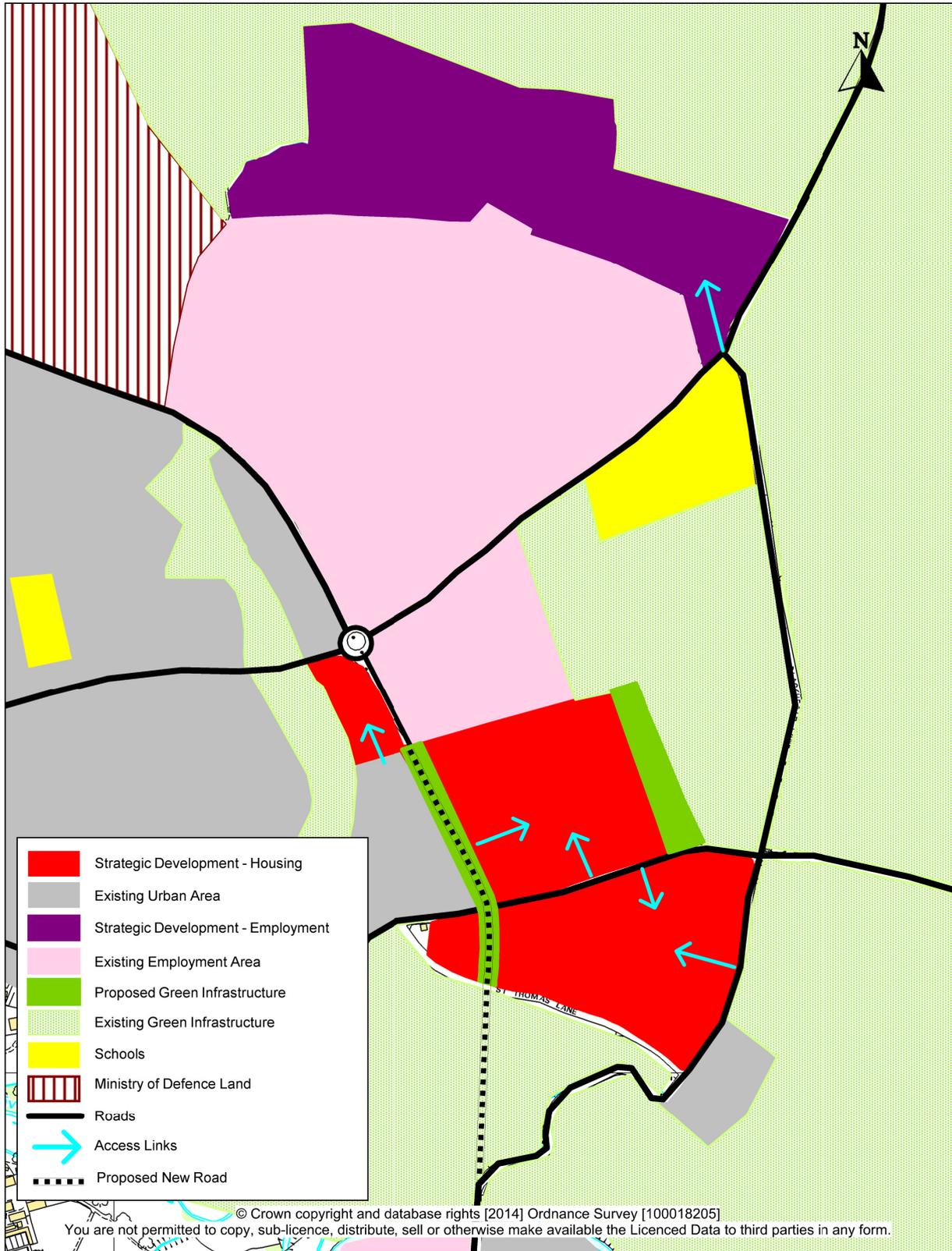
Development to the East of Stafford



7 Stafford

Map 9 Stafford East Concept Diagram

Stafford East Concept Diagram



Stone 8

8 Stone

8.1 The purpose of the Stone town policy is to help shape the future of the second key settlement within the Borough's Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy, the market town of Stone, which will play a significant role in delivering new growth aspirations and benefits intended by the Local Plan. It will provide guidance for new development at Stone in accordance with Spatial Principle SP3, and to ensure delivery of sustainable development in line with the National Planning Policy Framework. A significant level of development will be concentrated in the town as it is a sustainable location with services and facilities, job opportunities and transport links, as well as Stone supporting the surrounding rural hinterland.

POLICY STONE 1 – STONE TOWN

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

Housing

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

- i. Increasing the range and type of housing available including a greater number of semi-detached and terraced properties and a greater number of affordable housing;
- ii. Providing a range of development locations for new homes over the Plan period to 2031 including for affordable housing. This will include new housing development at the Strategic Development Location west of Stone identified on the Policies Map;
- iii. Sites within the urban area of Stone town will have good accessibility to public transport, services and facilities;
- iv. The Strategic Development Location adjacent to Stone's urban area will minimise the impact on surrounding landscapes, be fully accessible by public transport with facilities to encourage walking and cycling;

Employment

Create employment growth and promote economic diversification in Stone by:

- i. Supporting the continued retention and growth of existing public and private sector businesses, as well as targeting new businesses through the provision of a range of business premises, support and advice;
- ii. Providing opportunities for new enterprises and businesses by allocating new employment sites with good transport links, as well as support and facilities for new start-up businesses. The Strategic Development Location for a new employment site is south of Stone Business Park, identified on the Policies Map;

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

1. There is overriding evidence to demonstrate that the current use is presently causing and has consistently caused significant nuisance or environmental problems that could not have been mitigated; or
2. The loss of jobs would not result in a reduction in the range and diversity of jobs available within Stafford Borough; and
3. Applicants will need to provide substantial evidence to show the premises or site has been marketed both for its present use and for potential modernisation or regeneration for alternative employment-generating uses; and
4. The development outweighs the retention of the sites in its existing use.

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

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

Stone Town Centre

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

- a. Encouraging the development and expansion of the town centre to provide a vibrant place where people can meet, shop, eat and spend leisure time in a safe and pleasant environment;
- b. Provide for 1,700 square metres (net) of new convenience (food) retailing and 400 square metres (net) of new comparison (non-food) retailing at Stone town centre;
- c. Increase the levels of office space and commercial premises within Stone town centre;
- d. Enhancing different uses in the primary shopping area as well as protecting and enhancing its distinctiveness, vitality and viability through a greater diversity of independent specialist and niche retailers;
- v. Improving and strengthening both the range and diversity of educational, health, cultural and community services and facilities in the town;
- e. Facilitating improvements to the streetscape and the public realm through the enhancement of public spaces that are locally distinctive and strengthen local identity;
- f. Ensuring that new development around the railway station is reserved for employment uses.

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

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

Infrastructure

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

- i. Improving accessibility to Stone town centre, particularly by public transport, from the surrounding villages through better bus services with increased service levels, frequency and punctuality of services;
- ii. Reducing the levels of traffic congestion on A34 and the A520 road through the town centre including improvements in traffic management and public transport;
- iii. Extending the existing and creating new cycle and walking paths, as an integral part of new developments;
- iv. Improving access to the rail station and secure appropriate levels of parking for both cars and bicycles;

8 Stone

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

vi. Ensuring that new developments are capable of providing safe and convenient access by foot, cycle, public and private transport addressing the access needs of all, including those with disabilities.

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

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

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

Tourism

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

- i. Conserving and enhancing the character of Stone town centre, its historic buildings, street patterns and rich heritage;
- ii. Supporting canal based regeneration initiatives in Stone town centre that enhance the context and character of the canal as a focal point and tourist attraction;
- iii. Increasing tourist opportunities for visitors through additional high quality accommodation, promoting links with the surrounding countryside via the Trent and Mersey canal, the River Trent and by facilitating the development of innovative tourist attractions;
- iv. Improving access to the surrounding countryside by means other than the private car such as public transport, walking and cycling.

Environment

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

8.2 Evidence prepared through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment for Stone town shows that there is insufficient land within the existing town to deliver the housing provision identified. Therefore, major new housing will be required on greenfield land on the edge of Stone, to be delivered through a Strategic Development Location and associated infrastructure requirements in partnership with developers and landowner interests. Following an assessment of potential directions of growth for Stone, through the Stafford Borough Infrastructure

Strategy published in July 2009, the area west of Stone was identified as the most deliverable for housing development and south of Stone Business Park for employment development. Land north of Stone is within the North Staffordshire Green Belt and areas east of the town are constrained due to access issues across the West Coast mainline railway.

8.3 The Key Diagram below illustrates the location of the Strategic Development Locations for Stone town to provide new housing development to the west and new employment development to the south of the town. This housing and employment provision will ensure a sustainable community for the future, with new housing having strong accessible links to Walton local centre and Stone town centre, whilst the employment area is supported by transport links via the A34 to the M6 motorway.

Housing

8.4 In terms of housing type, Stone and environs has a significant oversupply of detached properties to the detriment of mid sized units such as semi-detached properties and terraced housing. There is also a pressing need for more affordable housing to meet current and future demand. The tenure is similar to Stafford Town with the majority being owner occupiers. Analysis of the population information for Stone shows that the over 65 year olds will increasingly be a significant group. However, an element of family housing will still be required to provide for local needs. Increasing and enhancing the provision of educational, health and community facilities will support increased housing growth including for the elderly population.

Employment

8.5 Stone has a number of significant employers providing jobs for hundreds of people. In recent years new employment development has taken place at Stone, in particular at Stone Business Park. However, there is also evidence of existing employment sites being redeveloped for housing. The Council has completed an assessment of existing employment areas and established that the majority of these locations should be retained for employment in order to sustain a balanced future community. The potential supply of employment land, together with a highly skilled workforce, creates the opportunity for attracting new employers to the town.

Environment

8.6 The most important recreational amenity areas for the town centre is the River Trent corridor, including the multi-functional community resource, and much valued Trent and Mersey Canal, which traverses the town centre boundary. The canal provides an excellent leisure facility for both boaters, as well as walkers and cyclists along the towpath and is an important asset, designated along its length as a Conservation Area and containing many listed buildings. Furthermore, Westbridge Park also provides a valuable recreational space for indoor and outdoor events throughout the year, known as a Destination Park. As part of the Green Infrastructure (GI) strategy, the key recommendation for Stone is the creation of a canal and riverside park alongside the River Trent, the Trent and Mersey Canal and the associated floodplain. The river corridors through the town will be important to provide increased recreational provision and walking / cycling links to other parts of Stone Town as well as links to the open countryside, facilitating improvement of biodiversity, accessibility, flood protection, provide for better quality leisure facilities, and create tourism opportunities.

8.7 As part of proposed new housing development on the edge of Stone, green infrastructure will be a key element for future local communities. This includes the provision of links such as walking and cycling routes, as well as provision of an increased quantity and better quality open space, sports and recreation facilities for both future and current residents in Stone Town.

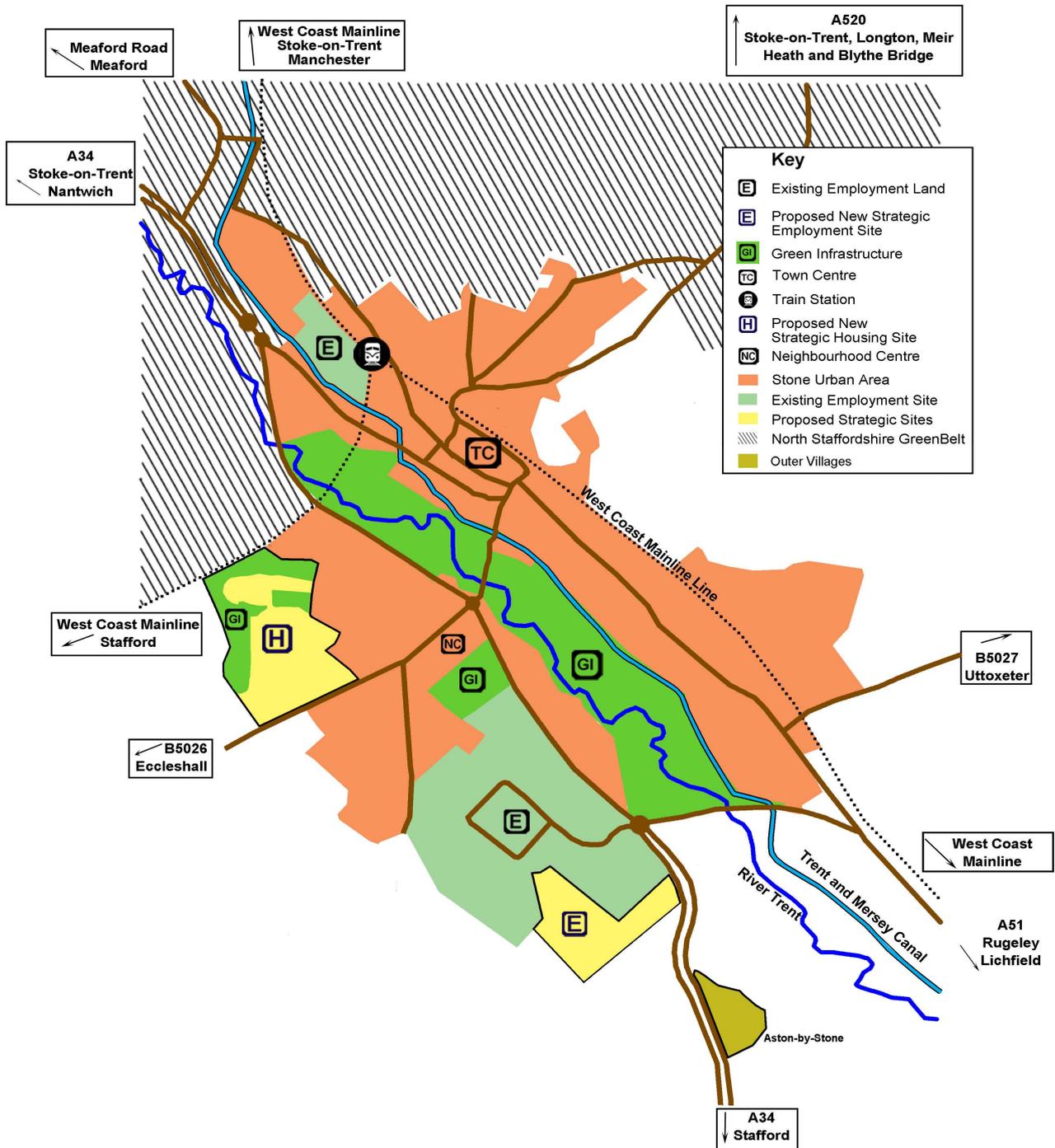
8.8 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Stafford Borough was completed and published in February 2008, which identified the extent of the floodplain affecting the urban area of Stone. These floodplain areas have a significant role to play in terms of green infrastructure. No new development should take place on low-lying land adjacent to the River Trent due to water resource and flood risk implications.

8.9 A number of historic assets are important to Stone, including the Stone Conservation Area, which encompasses the historic High Street, important 19th Century residential suburbs and the canal environs. The Historic Environment Character Assessment indicates that development to the east is likely to have a greatest impact on the historic environment of Stone. Areas identified as having the least impact upon the historic environment mostly lie to the west of the town. For further information on heritage assets in Stone please view the Stone Extensive Urban Survey.

8 Stone

Map 10 Stone Town Key Diagram

Stone Town Key Diagram



Stone Town Centre

8.10 A key objective in the strategy for Stone town centre is to support local economic growth and encourage further investment for both Stone and its surrounding hinterland. The success of Stone town centre is due to the diverse range of complementary mixed use developments including leisure, retail, residential, employment and recreational use, enabling the town centre to appeal to a wide range of age and social groups.

8.11 The National Planning Policy Framework requires Plans to define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, based on a clear definition of primary and secondary frontages in designated centres. The town centre and primary shopping area boundaries for Stone town are defined on the Stone Town Inset Map.

8.12 Following a review of the extent of Primary and Secondary Frontages and the Primary Shopping Area, and consideration of the mix of uses through the Stafford and Stone Town Centre Capacity Assessment, it has been established that the Primary Shopping Area should cover the main area with predominant retail activity. The primary frontages are those areas which hold a key retail role to the street and areas which include national and multiples stores. Secondary frontages are those areas which hold less retail activity but are more likely to provide a wider range of occupiers (such as banks, restaurants and other service provision). Primary and secondary frontages are not specifically identified on the Policies Map due to the dynamic nature of Stone town centre and its mix of uses. However, the need for a primary and secondary frontages policy (and the location of defined frontages if a differential policy approach is appropriate) will be considered in the subsequent Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

8.13 Based on current shopping patterns and the strong performance of existing facilities, there is a demonstrable need for further retail floorspace within the Borough. Having assessed the performance of each foodstore, the Town Centre Capacity Assessment study (January 2011), updated in May 2013 through the Stafford and Stone Town Centre Retail Capacity report, identified that certain facilities are trading much better than expected, suggesting a need for greater competition and choice. Based on forecast increases in expenditure and current 'over-trading', there is a need for further retail floorspace within the Borough. Furthermore there remains a quantitative and qualitative need for a medium sized foodstore in Stone in the immediate future, after taking into account recent retail developments. The study found that future capacity for comparison (non-food) goods could be absorbed in Stone town centre, based on the existing market share being retained.

8.14 The Town Centre Capacity Assessment evidence has identified retail capacity at Stone, although there are no specific proposals to provide for this provision. In line with the National Planning Policy Framework, the focus of new development should be at Stone town centre with sites considered through a sequential approach (edge of centre, then out of centre) to ensure continued vitality and viability of the existing centre.

Neighbourhood Centre

8.15 The key diagram of Stone, set out previously, shows a Neighbourhood Centre at Walton, which provides services and facilities, including daily retail convenience outlets. This Centre is identified within the retail hierarchy as part of Policy E8 and will be defined on the Policies Map when the Site Allocations Development Plan Document is prepared. In relation to the scale and location of new housing it is not anticipated that an additional Neighbourhood Centre will be required as part of new residential development.

Infrastructure

8.16 It is fundamental to the delivery of the growth aspirations for Stone that the necessary infrastructure is in place, at the right time, to support the proposed developments. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan which accompanies the Plan for Stafford Borough addresses these matters specifically, and is considered in more detail in Chapter 13. Comments here are made on the infrastructure requirements of Stone as a whole, and specific requirements relating to the Strategic Development Location (SDL) are discussed under the SDL site policy. In the case of the SDL sites, the fine details of the necessary infrastructure provision will be developed as part of the Master plan, which will be prepared as required by the site policy.

8.17 Over recent years traffic movements on principal routes bisecting Stone have increased pressure on the road network during peak periods. The greatest pressures are on the A34 at the Walton and Stone Business Park roundabouts as well as through the centre of Stone on the A520 road. As a result of new development at Stone over the Plan period it may be necessary to implement transport management schemes in order to reduce traffic pressures.

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

8.19 An important consideration in terms of new residential development at Stone will be the potential impact of additional foul water flows on the current sewerage system. During times of heavy rainfall the capacity in parts of the sewerage system can be exceeded resulting in localised sewer flooding. Depending on the location of development additional sewerage capacity may be required to reduce flood risk. New development to the west of

8 Stone

Stone will drain via an existing sewage pumping station at Westbridge Park where capacity assessments will be required to determine whether further capacity is required. Any capacity improvements will need to coincide with development construction.

8.20 Information from Severn Trent Water has identified that any "on site" mains required for particular developments will need to be met by landowners and developers. Off site reinforcement will be required to secure levels of service to Stone. Current proposals are to reinforce the trunk main network in Stone. It is planned that this is constructed by 2016.

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

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

POLICY STONE 2 – WEST & SOUTH OF STONE

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

Housing

- i. Delivery of approximately 500 new homes with 40% being affordable housing in the context of Policy C2 through a mix of housing types, tenures, sizes and styles with proportions of 2, 3 and 4 bedroomed properties;**
- ii. Provision to meet the needs of an ageing population through new specialist housing;**
- iii. Integration with the social and physical infrastructure of the existing area and its landscape (including provision for new facilities);**

Design

- iv. Development is of a design and layout with appropriate landscaping that reduces impacts on the surrounding area and landscape;**
- v. The development will be based on using sustainable construction methods in the context of Policy N2;**
- vi. The development will provide on-site renewable or low carbon energy solutions including associated infrastructure to facilitate site-wide renewable energy solutions in the context of Policy N2;**

Employment

- vii. At least 18 hectares of new employment land south of Stone Business Park with comprehensive links for a range of transport modes to housing development areas;**

Environment

- viii. Measures to alleviate flooding and surface water management on the sites and reduce associated implications for the Trent valley corridor through necessary works and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS);
- ix. Provision of a network of green infrastructure, including play areas, green corridors allowing wildlife movement and access to open space;
- x. Protect nature conservation interests including the Site of Biological Importance;
- xi. Necessary measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of development on the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation.

Transport

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

Infrastructure

- xiv. Provision of a local electricity sub-station and connection to the grid;
- xv. Potable water reinforcement required to the trunk main system in Stone;
- xvi. Waste water infrastructure investment required for sewage due to known local flooding problems;
- xvii. Local highway improvements and enhancements of the B5026 Eccleshall Road, the A34 roundabouts and the A34 / A51 roundabout;
- xviii. Gas reinforcement to support housing development;
- xix. Additional primary and middle school provision required as well as extensions to the existing secondary school to accommodate projected growth in pupils;
- xx. Children's play areas and multi-use games areas requirement on-site;
- xxi. Standard telecommunication connections to be provided to link to the Stone exchange enabled with Superfast Fibre Access Broadband;
- xxii. Primary health care provision delivered by increased capacity at existing facilities.

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

Context

8.23 Development to the west of Stone is located beyond the main residential areas to the west of Stone and north of the B5026 towards Eccleshall. A primary school and GP surgery are within 20-30 minutes walking distance of the area, although Alleynes secondary school is further away and as such may rely on public transport or the private car. The key employment area south of Stone is west of the A34 and extends the Stone Business Park industrial location. There are good links to Stafford and the City of Stoke on Trent by public transport.

8 Stone

Proposed Development

8.24 The land west of Stone will comprise a greenfield housing site delivering a total of approximately 500 new homes and the employment area south of Stone will deliver a total of at least 18 hectares. The Strategic Development Location for housing has been included in the event that sufficient provision does not come forward through infill development.

Development Requirements and Implementation

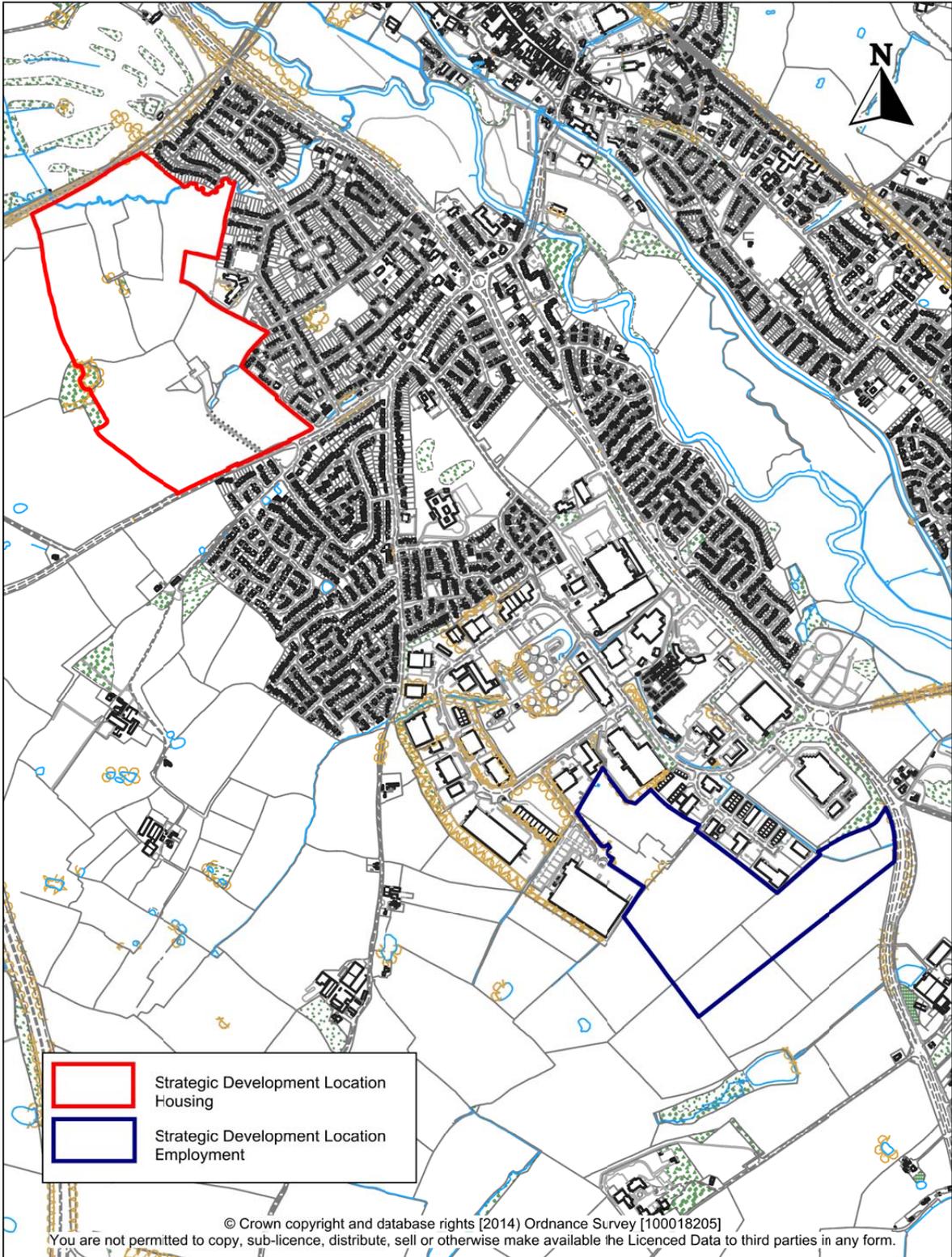
8.25 Infrastructure requirements are listed in the Policy, and further details are provided in Appendix D. Of these requirements the following have been identified as critical to the delivery of the Strategic Development Location:

- Provision of a local electricity sub-station and connection to the grid in order to meet the needs of the new development.
- Potable water reinforcement of water supply required in order to meet the water resource needs of the new development
- Waste water infrastructure investment required for sewage due to known local flooding problems in order to meet the water resource needs of the new development

8.26 Based on current information from the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, and working in partnership with developers for the land west of Stone, it has been established that the scale of development is capable of delivering the infrastructure requirements listed.

Map 11 Development to the West and South of Stone

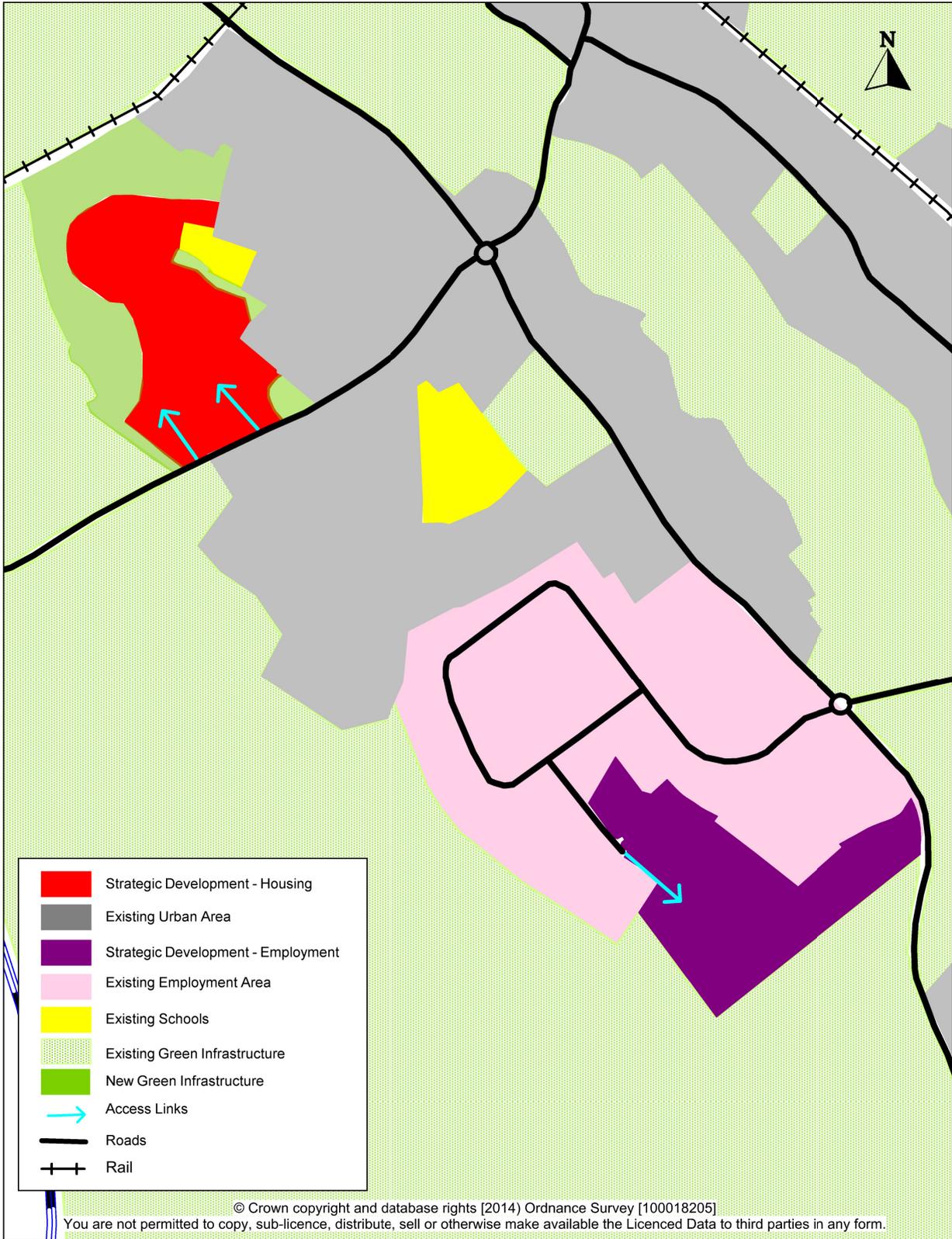
Development to the West and South of Stone



8 Stone

Map 12 Stone West & South Concept Diagram

Stone Concept Diagram



Economy 9

9 Economy

Policy E1 Local Economy

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

- a. Providing and safeguarding an adequate supply (set out in Spatial Principle 5) and variety of land, buildings and utility services, including site expansions, conversion and re-use, for current and future employment uses for both small and large businesses;
- b. Promoting Stafford Borough as a location for new business start-ups, new enterprise and incubator units, and Information Technology capacity sectors in urban and rural areas that are in accordance with other elements of the development strategy;
- c. Improving access to urban and rural employment areas through the provision of improved broadband, public transport services and highway infrastructure, where appropriate;
- d. Supporting the rural economy in accordance with Spatial Principle SP6, and encouraging developments consistent with Spatial Principle SP7;
- e. Promoting appropriate development within Recognised Industrial Estates, consistent with Policy E2;
- f. Encouraging farm / rural diversification for employment or service generating uses, including live / work units, to promote sustainable rural communities, preferably by re-using existing buildings, which are appropriate in size and scale, in or adjacent to villages, do not lead to significant traffic generation and are not detrimental to the local environment, landscape, heritage or residents;
- g. Increasing the levels of skills and educational attainment of the Borough's workforce, to promote the area as a place to invest through delivery of enhanced higher and further education facilities;
- h. Within existing employment areas, encouraging new enterprises to locate in more modern, accessible or other suitably designed and landscaped developments;
- i. Supporting opportunities for home-office working in appropriate locations where this does not have any adverse impacts on the surrounding area and residential amenity.

9.1 The National Planning Policy Framework states that the planning system must support sustainable economic growth, through the creation of jobs and prosperity to meet the development needs of business. Policies in new Local Plans should be flexible enough to accommodate needs, to respond rapidly to changes in economic circumstances, whilst facilitating flexible working practices. The policies set out in this section of the Plan for Stafford Borough will enable future decision-making to achieve these NPPF objectives in the local context.

9.2 In recent years, there has been a severe contraction of the Borough's traditional manufacturing industries resulting in severe job losses. In contrast to many other districts, Stafford has a particularly high level of public sector workers. Within this context, it will be beneficial to shift the economic base away from public sector employment to more private sector employment. One of the key aspirations to be addressed by the new Local Plan is to facilitate growth in new, high technology areas, such as that in creative computing, as well as developing a low carbon economy by developing and nurturing its existing skills base.

9.3 To facilitate this transformation, it will be necessary to adapt current processes and develop re-skilling programmes to take advantage of these opportunities, and to support specialist technology incubator units through creating better links with Staffordshire University and local businesses. It is also essential that support is provided to existing clusters (such as for medical technology industry at Staffordshire technology park).

9.4 Therefore, ensuring that there is an adequate supply of quality employment land, as detailed in Spatial Principle 5, to take advantage of opportunities to sustain and enhance the Borough's economic performance is a key delivery issue for the Plan. These policies will improve the quality and range of employment opportunities. The Stafford Borough employment land review identified a 'range, quantity and quality' of sites that can be used for employment generating developments in the future.

9.5 The Borough's excellent transportation links have ensured that logistics / warehousing and distribution have reduced some of the economic impact of manufacturing downsizing. However, in order to diversify the Borough's future economy, it would be advantageous to move away from logistics / warehousing and distribution to focus on more sustainable high technology manufacturing and to better fulfil the potential of technology graduates emanating from Staffordshire University.

Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy

9.6 Consistent with Spatial Principle SP6, a key aspect of the Plan is to give appropriate support to achieving rural sustainability, and a prosperous rural economy. In addition to the principles established by Policy E1, more specific guidance about the approaches to be taken in the rural areas (outside the Green Belt) is given in the following policy:

Policy E2 Sustainable Rural Development

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

- i. development on Recognised Industrial Estates consistent with Policy E3;
- ii. provision for the essential operational needs of agriculture, forestry or rural businesses;
- iii. provision of infrastructure needed to support a sustainable rural economy;
- iv. proposals which meet the essential, local development needs of a community, to be evidenced by the developer, and which cannot demonstrably be met within the Settlements identified by Spatial Principle SP3 and in the context of criteria in Spatial Principle SP7;
- v. diversification of the agricultural economy;
- vi. proposals which help to conserve or improve the rural environment;
- vii. facilities for tourism, consistent with Policy E6;
- viii. recreation uses appropriate to a rural location;
- ix. provision for renewable energy generation, in accordance with Policy N3;
- x. residential development in accordance with Policy C5;
- xi. protection of the best and most versatile agricultural land by using areas of poorer quality land in preference to higher quality land for new development.

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

- a. make use of suitable existing buildings or previously developed land before proposing new buildings or development of Greenfield land;
- b. be well related to an existing farmstead or group of buildings, or be located close to an established settlement, except where there is an agricultural or other justification for a use in a specific location;
- c. be complementary to, and not prejudice, any viable agricultural operations on a farm and other existing viable uses;
- d. respect and protect the natural landscape, the built vernacular character of the area, and any designated or undesignated heritage asset;
- e. be of a high quality of design, consistent with the requirements of Policy N1;
- f. be appropriately designed for its purposes;

9 Economy

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

e. the form, bulk and general design of the building is in keeping with its surroundings, and the proposal and any associated development will not harm the character of the countryside and the landscape setting. This should be assessed through an appraisal of character and significance of the building including, its context, its sensitivity in terms of landscape setting, and its potential for change. Proposals should have regard to the West Midlands Farmsteads and Landscapes Project or successor documents when making such assessments;

f. the building is well related to an existing settlement and has access to local services and / or is close to a regular public transport service to settlements identified in Spatial Policy SP3 or those outside the Borough;

g. it will not harm the historic fabric or character of any traditional building or historic farmstead and, in the case of a Listed Building, the proposal will not harm the significance of the building and is supported by an understanding of the significance of the farmstead and its landscape setting;

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

i. development does not harm any protected species or habitats on site and provide habitat mitigation and enhancement.

9.7 The National Planning Policy Framework states that planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas to create jobs and prosperity. Policies in new Local Plans should support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise, including agricultural diversification, as well as promoting the retention and development of local services and facilities. Furthermore, the NPPF specifically supports sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments to benefit rural businesses, whilst respecting the character of the countryside. The policies set out in this section of the Plan for Stafford Borough will deliver future decision-making to achieve these NPPF objectives through the local context. A Supplementary Planning Document will provide further guidance on the Re-use of Rural Buildings.

9.8 Stafford Borough's rural economy has a very important role to play in providing jobs and maintaining the traditional skills base within areas such as agriculture, horticultural and forestry. To enable rural businesses to fulfil their potential, businesses will be given the flexibility to develop and seize diversification opportunities; in order to generate extra employment in the area. Central to promoting rural employment will be to encourage a greater mix of economic development, including rural tourism / leisure, renewable energy (e.g. biomass and anaerobic digestion) and other new uses of land and buildings.

9.9 Economic development in rural areas covers a wide range of development, including: agriculture, horticulture and forestry, mineral extraction, energy production, tourism development and the conversion of redundant farm buildings for retail, residential, leisure, office, industrial and storage uses. Economic development in rural areas can also comprise other uses that are employment generators, such as care homes, rural nursery schools and main stream schools.

9.10 The impact of proposals on the fabric and character of an existing farmstead should be assessed through an appraisal of the character and significance of the building including its context, its sensitivity in terms of landscape setting and its potential for change. Proposals should have regard to the West Midlands Farmstead and Landscapes Project or successor documents when making such assessments.

Recognised Industrial Estates

9.11 Stafford Borough has a number of significant rural employment concentrations, which provide a focus for new development to support a prosperous rural economy outside of Stafford and Stone. The Employment Land Review, as part of the Local Plan's evidence base, identifies potential land for economic uses. Paragraph 22 of the NPPF states planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. It is still important to protect and maintain existing employment development at Recognised Industrial Estates (RIEs). However two RIEs at Ladfordfields and Raleigh Hall have reached capacity for further development and therefore require opportunities for new investment as well as enabling existing firms to expand during the plan period.

9.12 The expansion of RIE's supports the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy in Spatial Principle 3, providing valuable growth for the local economy in rural areas, in line with the NPPF, by supporting jobs for local people and helping to reduce rural to urban commuting. At Ladfordfields and Raleigh Hall RIEs, expansion is allocated to deliver the employment requirements in Spatial Principle 5 to meet the needs of existing employers, support local economic development and employment in rural areas, whilst not undermining the character of the open countryside. In this way the function and purpose of the RIE's reflects and helps to implement the Plan's overall development strategy.

9.13 The Recognised Industrial Estates (RIEs) are listed in the following Policy. The formal boundaries of the Recognised Industrial Estates will be identified in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document, with the exception of Ladfordfields and Raleigh Hall RIEs, for which specific proposals are advanced in this document.

Policy E3 Development within Recognised Industrial Estates

The following are designated as Recognised Industrial Estates:

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

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

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

9 Economy

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

9.14 Favourable consideration will be given to proposals in these areas for employment uses (Class B uses of the Use Class Order, excluding B1 offices) subject to the existing character of the industrial area and other factors. A number of industrial estates have capacity for further development, which will provide opportunities for new investment as well as enabling existing firms to expand during the plan period.

9.15 The expansion of RIE's supports the development strategy and provides valuable growth for the local economy in rural areas, in line with the NPPF, by providing jobs for local people and helping to reduce rural to urban commuting. Specific consideration is given to the Ladfordfields and Raleigh Hall RIEs because development proposals have been advanced and opportunities taken to meet the needs of existing employers, support local economic development and employment in rural areas whilst not undermining the character of the open countryside.

Policy E4 Raleigh Hall & Ladfordfields Recognised Industrial Estates

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

- i. Development is of a design and layout that minimises or appropriately mitigates impacts on the surrounding area and landscape;**
- ii. Measure to alleviate flooding and surface water management on the site and reduce associated implications on nearby watercourses through necessary works and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS);**
- iii. Protect nature conservation interests;**
- iv. Measures to improve accessibility by non-car transport modes through walking and cycling connections;**
- v. An access, transport and travel plan strategy, which shall identify access points to the site, between the site and the local highway network as well as links to the existing settlement. It shall also identify construction access arrangements that do not disrupt existing residents, and improvements to transport capacity along the A519 at Raleigh Hall and along the B5404 at Ladfordfields;**
- vi. Appropriate landscaping has been delivered to reduce the impact on surrounding areas;**
- vii. Safeguard the main water pipe running through the Ladfordfields site;**
- viii. Provision of a local electricity sub-station;**
- ix. Waste water infrastructure investment;**
- x. Local highway improvements and enhancements;**
- xi. Gas reinforcement works.**

9.16 Employment development north of Eccleshall is located west of the existing Raleigh Hall industrial estate, east of the A519. Employment development at Ladfordfields west of Great Bridgeford, is located north of the B5405 leading towards Woodseaves. Both locations have good transport links to Stafford, the City of Stoke-on-Trent and the M6.

9.17 The land west of Raleigh Hall industrial estate will deliver a total of 4 hectares employment area and the land north of Ladfordfields industrial estate will deliver a total of 6 hectares employment area.

9.18 Infrastructure requirements are listed in the Policy, and further details are provided in Appendix D. Of these requirements, the following have been identified as critical to the delivery of the Strategic Development Location:

- Water Main running through the Ladfordfields site may require diversion to a new route.
- Provision of a local electricity sub-station to provide for development needs.
- Waste water infrastructure investment to provide for development needs.

9.19 Based on current information from the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, and working in partnership with developers, it has been established that the scale of development is capable of delivering the infrastructure requirements listed.

Major Developed Sites (brownfield sites) in the Green Belt

9.20 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's commitment to maintaining Green Belts to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open through five key purposes. Policies in new Local Plans should establish Green Belt boundaries and should only be altered in exceptional circumstances. The existing Green Belt boundaries in Stafford Borough will be maintained and the Green Belt protected from inappropriate development as defined by Government policy. The policy set out in this section of the Plan for Stafford Borough identifies previously developed sites (brownfield land) within the Green Belt to achieve NPPF objectives for sustainable development. The NPPF also states that there is a general presumption against all new development within the Green Belt apart from agriculture, forestry, some recreational and outdoor uses or minerals operations.

9.21 There are also a number of significant brownfield sites located in the North Staffordshire Green Belt, known as Major Developed Sites. In order to encourage re-development of these areas for new employment provision, to support inward investment and job creation opportunities in the North Staffordshire conurbation, these are identified on the Inset Maps at Hadleigh Park (previously known as Creda / Indesit works), the former Meaford Power Station, and Moorfields Industrial Estate.

Policy E5 Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt

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

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

9.22 The majority of the Borough's area, including the urban areas of Stone and Stafford, is not within the Green Belt. Less than a quarter of the Borough area is identified as Green Belt designation, located to the south east of Stafford as part of the West Midlands Green Belt Area (1,810 ha) and to the north of Stone forming part of the North Staffordshire Green Belt Area (9,266 ha). The precise boundaries of these Green Belt areas are identified on the Policies Map.

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

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

9 Economy

9.25 Stafford Borough Council will not be identifying safeguarded land through the new Plan as there is sufficient scope of land to serve the development needs of Stafford Borough beyond the planned period. Stafford Borough Council has identified 3 major locations that are listed as Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt defined with a boundary. The NPPF allows for limited infill development or redevelopment of existing major developed sites within the Green Belt.

Tourism

9.26 Consistent with Spatial Principle SP6, a key aspect of the Plan is to give appropriate support to achieving a prosperous rural economy, including tourism, through Policy E5 and Policy E6. Tourism in Stafford Borough has helped create and maintain employment locally and generate substantial revenue for the local economy. The tourism sector in Stafford Borough is intimately linked with the quality of the natural and built environment, and many visitors come to enjoy the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Shugborough Park estate, Trentham Estate and Gardens, the Monkey Forest, Stafford Castle, the Staffordshire County Showground, the Ancient High House and Stone canal town with its regular festivals.

Policy E6 Tourism

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

- a. Promoting and enhancing the Borough's landscape and historic character by conserving and enhancing this unique environment, including Stafford and Stone town centres as well as the Borough's villages;**
- b. Consistent with Policy E7 (Canal Facilities and New Marinas), encouraging water-based recreation and continuing the regeneration and restoration of the extensive canal system across Stafford Borough to maximise water based transport, walking and cycling without undermining water quality, flood risk areas, nature conservation and biodiversity;**
- c. Promoting and enhancing visitor and recreational attractions;**
- d. Promoting new and existing walking and cycling routes, including towpaths and linkages to national networks through the Borough's countryside;**
- e. Supporting tourism opportunities in rural areas to sustain the local economy, in accordance with Policy E2, providing they are sensitively designed and are not detrimental to the natural environment or local amenity, in particular where appropriate through sensitive management and measures to protect the Special Area of Conservation (SAC);**
- f. Supporting opportunities that reduce the carbon footprint of the development and promotes sustainable tourism.**

9.27 To support the development of tourism and provide facilities that will benefit the local economy and community, provision will be made for new tourist facilities in areas that can accommodate additions, without adversely affecting the environment. Stafford Borough Council will continue to work with other tourism organisations to best provide tourism in the Borough including the Staffordshire Destination Management Partnership. Examples of tourism activities within Stafford Borough include Staffordshire County Libraries and Archives, the Museum and Shire Hall Gallery, Shugborough Park estate, Trentham Estate and Gardens, the Monkey Forest, the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Stafford Castle, St Chads church, the Staffordshire County Showground, the Ancient High House, as well as local market events.

9.28 The towns and villages of the Borough act as the principal focus for visitors and accommodation, particularly the larger towns of Stafford and Stone. In the smaller villages and hamlets, tourism development will be used to strengthen the local economy and reduce the impact of the declining agricultural sector. However, this must be compatible with its rural location, as poorly controlled tourist development in rural areas can damage the character of the environment that attracts tourists initially.

Policy E7 Canal Facilities and New Marinas

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

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

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

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

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

9.29 A network of waterways links towns and villages taking cyclists, walkers and boaters through countryside. The market town of Stone has the Trent and Mersey canal at its heart, bringing visitors from far and wide to this busy market town. In Great Haywood there is a 200 boat marina, on the edge of Cannock Chase, and there is a new marina near Aston-by-Stone. The Shropshire Union canal passes through the west of the Borough, attracting significant interest at Gnosall and Norbury Junction, whilst the Staffordshire and Worcestershire canal brings

9 Economy

tourists into the Borough from the south. The extensive canal network has significant potential for restoration and expansion. The Newport Branch Canal formerly linked the Shropshire Union Canal at Norbury Junction to Newport and to the Shrewsbury Canal; its restoration is being progressed by the Shrewsbury & Newport Canals Trust. The Stafford Riverway Link Community Interest Company has been established to promote the restoration of the historic canal and river link from the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal to Stafford town centre.

Town and Local Centres

9.30 The role of the Borough's market towns and service villages will be protected and enhanced by working with partners (including Staffordshire County Council and Makelt Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent). The aim is to support appropriate new retail, commercial and service development in order to maintain the vitality and viability of town and village centres, provide services as locally as possible and minimise the need to shop by car. Policy E8 sets out the key responsibilities of the Local Plan as required by the National Planning Policy Framework by defining the retail hierarchy of centres, promoting a prosperous rural economy and appropriate uses in the town centres. The boundaries of the town centres (and their primary retail areas) are defined on the Inset Maps. The boundaries of the Stafford and Stone primary and secondary frontages, Eccleshall Local Centre and the village and neighbourhood shops will be defined in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

Policy E8 Town, Local and Other Centres

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

- **Stafford Town Centre is the primary comparison and convenience shopping destination serving Stafford Borough as a whole, with a vibrant night time economy including arts and cultural activities, attracting significant numbers of trips from adjoining parts of the Borough as well as developing a key role as a tourist destination within Staffordshire.**
- **Stone Town Centre acts as a key service centre and market town. It is a visitor destination with a vibrant culinary evening economy.**
- **Eccleshall Local Centre acts as a key service centre providing key services and facilities to the local community and an extensive rural hinterland, and includes specialist shops.**
- **Village and Neighbourhood Shops - outside the hierarchy of Town and Local Centres, these serve their immediate locality. These are identified at Barlaston, Gnosall, Great and Little Haywood, Hixon, Tittensor, Weston, Woodseaves, Yarnfield, Stafford Neighbourhood Centres at Baswich, Holmcroft, Parkside, Rising Brook, Wildwood and Weston Road, and Stone Local Centre at Walton. Such facilities will also be supported at Strategic Development Locations to meet local needs.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

ii. The proposal will not result in the loss of local amenity particularly in terms of noise, litter, smell, parking and traffic creation and trading hours.

Support will be given to proposals and activities that protect, provide for, retain or enhance existing town, local and other centre assets. Loss of an existing facility will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the facility is no longer needed, or it can be established that the services provided by the facility can be served in an alternative location or manner that is equally accessible by the local community.

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

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

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

9.31 The National Planning Policy Framework states that planning policies should be positive, promote competitive town centre environments through vitality and viability, as well as set out policies for the management and growth of centres over the Plan period. Policies in new Local Plans should define the network and hierarchy of centres including town centres and primary shopping areas, reflect the individuality of centres, whilst retaining and enhancing existing markets. A sequential test should be applied for planning applications to ensure main town centre uses are located in town centres as well as an impact assessment of developments over the thresholds identified in Policy E8, which are based on the evidence provided in the Stafford and Stone Retail Capacity Assessment - Update (2013). The policies set out in this section of the Plan for Stafford Borough will deliver future decision-making to achieve these NPPF objectives through the local context. Furthermore, the Town Centre Capacity Assessment evidence has reviewed the retail needs and capacity for Stafford and Stone town centres. The Area Based Chapters for Stafford and Stone provide further details of the capacity that exists, with specific proposals within Stafford town centre to focus development at this location rather than on the edge of or beyond the town centre boundaries. A Shopfronts & Advertisements Design Supplementary Planning Document will provide further guidance on design to owners and occupiers of shops and other commercial premises who are considering external alterations to premises or new build projects.

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

9.33 These policies will be implemented, in conjunction with the other policies in the plan, through the determination of planning applications for retail developments that are consistent with the existing retail hierarchy in the Borough. This will enable the creation of new retail floorspace to enhance both job creation and the economic vitality of the Borough. Master Plans will be expected to be prepared by developers for comprehensive redevelopments in town centres, with further details set out in the area chapters for Stafford and Stone.

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

Transport 10

10.1 The use of sustainable transportation will be promoted through best use of traffic and demand management schemes, reducing the reliance on the private car for travel journeys in urban areas, reducing the need to travel generally, and helping to deliver the objectives and initiatives of the Government transport policies, the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan, the Stafford Borough Integrated Transport Strategy and any subsequent revisions. Policy T1 sets out the main principles for delivering sustainable transport across the Stafford Borough area in line with Spatial Principle SP1 and SP3. Policy T2 provides detailed matters to be addressed when delivering specific development proposals.

Policy T1 Transport

A sustainable transport system will be achieved through:

- a. Reducing the need to travel by private car in urban areas by ensuring that, wherever possible, new development is located close to access points (bus stops, railway stations, and park and ride facilities) along public transport corridors;**
- b. Requiring new developments to produce Transport Assessments and Travel Plans, where appropriate, including maximising the use of public transport, as well as facilitating the provision of safe and well integrated off-street parking;**
- c. Working with the Local Highway Authority, the Highways Agency and, where appropriate, developers to improve road safety;**
- d. Encouraging walking and cycling, through links to existing routes, and the provision of facilities such as secure, accessible and sheltered bicycle parking with changing facilities on site. Prospective developers should assess the transport impact of new development in accordance with 'Guidance on Transport Assessment' (DfT / CLG, 2007) and any subsequent revisions. Consideration of the impact on the Highways Agency Strategic Road Network (SRN) should be in accordance with national policy;**
- e. Provision for lorry parking facilities on the road network, together with adequate space for off-street manoeuvring, loading and unloading;**
- f. Reducing the need to travel through providing a balanced mix of land uses, retention of local services, and encouraging the use of Information & Communication Technology;**
- g. Seeking to reduce the impact of traffic from new development on the road networks by ensuring that the generation of traffic is minimised through sustainable transport measures. Ensuring that all developments that generate significant traffic flows, including commercial traffic must be located in close proximity to the primary road network, do not have a negative impact on the network or at junctions, air quality, and nearby communities, and should have adequate capacity to accommodate the development or can be improved or mitigated as part of the development;**
- h. Proposals that generate significant levels of traffic, which cannot be accommodated in terms of capacity, road safety and load, will not be permitted.**

Policy T2 Parking and Manoeuvring Facilities

To ensure adequate parking is provided all new development must:

- a. Have safe and adequate means of access, egress and internal circulation / turning arrangements for all modes of transport relevant to the proposal;**
- b. Not materially impair highway safety or traffic movement;**
- c. Not detract or conflict with the transport function of the road;**
- d. Make provision for parking in accordance with the parking standards as set out in Appendix B.**

10 Transport

Residential parking and the level of cycle parking required, will be assessed on a flexible site by site basis depending on the provision of public transport and access to local services for the proposed development.

There may be scope to reduce provision to less than that set out in the parking standards in Appendix B, but this will be dependent upon:

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

10.2 The National Planning Policy Framework states that policies should facilitate sustainable development, promoting accessibility through planning the mix and location of new development, using technology to reduce the need to travel and maximise sustainable transport solutions, although this will vary between urban and rural areas. The policies set out in this section of the Plan for Stafford Borough will deliver future decision-making to achieve these NPPF objectives through the local context.

10.3 A range of measures are required to facilitate a modal shift away from the private car and to encourage a reduction in the demand for travel, including through Local Travel Plans. The principal mechanism for achieving this modal shift is to promote more effective integration of land use and transportation, as set out in Spatial Principle 1, which enables local day to day facilities to be located within access by foot or by cycling. Another is to ensure that development which comprises of jobs, shopping, leisure and services offers a range of sustainable travel choices and to ensure that development takes place where travel choice exists. However, opportunities for walking and cycling to local services and facilities will still be largely restricted to urban areas, with rural areas still relying on the private car.

10.4 Much of the Borough's population outside Stafford and Stone are living and / or working in remote rural areas where the choices of transportation modes are currently limited and the use of private car is generally a necessity. In such cases, the local authority will seek to reduce the need for long distance commuting by providing adequate employment opportunities and retention of local facilities in rural areas.

10.5 The local transportation network is important for the day to day access requirements for people in Stafford Borough. With the scale of development that is proposed in the Plan for Stafford Borough, including the Western Access Improvements, the Northern Access Improvements and the Eastern Access Improvements at Stafford, highway construction and access improvement will be necessary to cope with the proposed growth increases, some of which will also encourage the increased usage of more sustainable forms of transportation. The Council considers that the route from St Thomas' Lane to the junction with Baswich Lane and Cornwall Drive will need to be improved within the Plan period as part of the Eastern Access Improvements. Evidence suggests that there are significant transport benefits for these improvements. The route is identified on the Stafford Area Inset Map; it will be delivered subject to available resources, further assessment work and a fully designed cost effective scheme.

10.6 Development that would generate large levels of traffic should have good access links to the main transportation networks in the Borough to avoid long distance trips that would potentially increase the overall levels of congestion on the road network. Furthermore, it is also critical for safety reasons that new developments do not generate increased usage of heavy goods vehicles along roads which are unequipped for such traffic. New development should be sustainable and be able to demonstrate that any impact on the network can be sufficiently accommodated, as demonstrated by evidence based testing.

Transport 10

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

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

10.9 Increased car parking has been achieved at Stafford railway station to help further increase patronage levels, as part of the West Coast Main Line Strategy, to attract more passengers onto longer distance services. This strategy will help bring about a modal shift from the car to more sustainable transportation.

10.10 The Councils work closely with cycling groups and have a very productive relationship with the national Sustainable Transport organisation Sustrans, who are promoting the National Cycle network. Stafford Borough's cycling network will be extended with new routes being added and many others being extended as part of the Borough's commitment to more sustainable forms of transport.

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

Communities 11

Communities 11

11.1 The National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should meet the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area through a housing strategy. To deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen home ownership and create sustainable communities, the new Local Plans will need to plan for a mix of housing based on trends and needs, identify size, type, tenure and range of housing to meet demand, as well as deliver affordable housing. Wherever possible, in order to achieve sustainable long term use, the Borough Council will encourage a minimum of three habitable rooms to be provided in new homes, particularly in the case of affordable houses. The following policies set out in this section of the Plan for Stafford Borough will enable future decision-making to achieve these NPPF objectives through the local context, delivering the Spatial Principles SP1 and SP2.

Policy C1 Dwelling Types and Sizes

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

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

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

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

11.2 Recent consultations with local communities and stakeholders has identified that there is a general need for more dwellings of smaller households for a range of household types and sizes, that are easily adaptable and provide enough flexibility to take account of people's changing needs over a lifetime. Moreover, demographically, Stafford Borough is shifting towards increased levels of one person households as individuals live longer, with a commensurate decrease in the levels of married couple households; a trend which will increase the need for smaller properties over the Plan period.

Policy C2 Affordable Housing

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

Area	3 dwellings or more	12 dwellings or more
Stafford	n/a	30%
Stone	n/a	40%
Eccleshall, Gnosall, Woodseaves, Barlaston, Tittensor and Yarnfield	n/a	40%
Hixon, Great Haywood, Little Haywood, Haughton, Weston	n/a	30%
Rest of Borough Area	30%	30%

11 Communities

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

As a general principle, there will be a presumption that affordable housing will be provided on the development site. However, affordable housing provision on an another site in the same settlement could be acceptable. Only in exceptional circumstances, where the developer provides evidence that demonstrates neither on-site nor off-site provision of affordable housing is feasible or viable, will a commuted sum, based on a calculation of the supportable deficit, be considered. On larger sites, the Council will expect on-site affordable housing to be clustered in small groups of up to 15 homes, distributed across a development, rather than in a single area, and their appearance should be indistinguishable from that of open market homes.

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

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

11.3 To inform the Plan's approach, a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) prepared for the West Midlands North Housing Market Area was completed in 2008, and updated in 2012. The study was carried out in conjunction with key partner organisations including Registered Providers, developers, estate agents and local authorities. The aim of the study was to analyse and provide robust evidence to inform future housing requirements, with the main findings as follows:

- The majority of the housing within Stafford Borough is owner occupied
- Stafford West has a preponderance of large detached dwellings with few semi-detached or terraced properties
- Stone has a significant oversupply of detached dwellings with few semi-detached or terraced properties
- Stafford town has a well balanced stock of houses with some oversupply of smaller properties
- There is an increased requirement for 2 & 3 bedrooomed houses across the Borough.

11.4 Based on the information contained within the studies, the Borough Plan requires that new housing must be more closely aligned with the needs of the local community. This should be reflected in the size and design (including flexibility of future use), tenure of the accommodation, the relationship to facilities and housing mix.

11.5 Many people who move into the Borough can afford to pay higher prices for their housing than many existing residents. Wage increases are not keeping pace with increases in house prices. Combined, these factors have had the effect of pricing some local people out of their own communities. Therefore, affordability is a key issue in Stafford Borough.

11.6 Government policy as set out in the NPPF defines affordable housing as 'social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market'. Intermediate housing provides the opportunity for local people and key workers, who are unable to afford open market prices, to access the housing market.

11.7 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment undertaken in 2008 and 2012 examined the affordable housing requirement within the Borough. The updated study identified the need for 210 new affordable homes per year, equivalent to approximately 42% of the total housing provision for the Borough each year. In 2011, the affordable housing viability study set out the scale of affordable housing which could be achieved in the current market across the Borough area. The key findings were as follows:

- On most sites, 30% affordable housing is achievable for development
- On sites to the west of Stafford and in Stone up to 40% affordable housing could be achievable

11.8 One of the key themes of the new Local Plan is to provide for an appropriate level of affordable housing in Stafford Borough over the Plan period, with a minimum affordable housing target set at 30% to meet affordable housing requirements. Where the evidence identifies that a higher percentage of affordable housing can be achieved, this will be sought.

Policy C3 Specialist Housing

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

- a. Resisting development that would lead to a reduction in the number of extra care premises unless it can be demonstrated that a replacement facility was being built or that such a use was unviable;**
- b. Ensuring that any new developments are located in accordance with Spatial Principle SP7 at a settlement within the settlement hierarchy, in a sustainable location close to services and facilities, are self contained, and are accessible by both public and private transport. New development should make adequate provision for off-street car parking within any development scheme;**
- c. Allowing for the extension of existing residential / nursing homes and conversion of existing sheltered accommodation providing that:**
 - i. The development is compatible with the character of the local area;**
 - ii. There is adequate and well located car parking and the site is accessible by both public and private transport;**
 - iii. The development does not have an adverse impact on the amenity of adjoining properties through excessive noise, light pollution, loss of privacy and excessive traffic movements.**
- d. Seeking to secure the provision of new Extra Care facilities through liaison between the Borough Council, Staffordshire County Council and the Staffordshire Cluster Primary Care Trust (PCT) on new major development schemes.**

11.9 A range of housing and care facilities to support the diversity of needs across the Borough will be delivered, including Continuing Care Retirement Communities, Sheltered Housing, Retirement Villages, Residential Care Homes and support for independent living in homes.

11.10 Specialist housing provides a range of housing options to adults and children with a variety of care and support needs to enable them to live independently. This includes provision for older people (known as Extra-care / Flexi-care housing) and other groups, such as people with learning disabilities, mental health issues, drugs and alcohol misusers, young homeless etc... The Department of Health's strategy for older people is outlined in the 2008 document "Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society".

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

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

11 Communities

Predicted Population Increase

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

Predicted Increase in the Number of People Post retirement Age

	2006	2025	2026	2006 - 2025 % increase	2006 - 2026 % increase
Age Group					
80-84	3,200	5,600	5,800	75	81.3
85+	2,800	5,900	6,100	110.7	117.9

11.13 There is currently an identified need for 954 (net) Extra Care Units in Stafford Borough up until 2030, as evidenced in the Staffordshire Flexi-care Housing Strategy. To meet this level of service provision, there would need to be an increase in the levels of provision of 20.2 units per 1,000 aged 65+ from the current level of 1.3. The majority of the need will have to be addressed by private units, although significant provision should also be delivered as social rented and shared equity units. A number of planning applications are coming forward for Extra Care Housing in Stafford town involving Staffordshire County Council land-holdings to meet some of the provision identified. However, this type of supply will need to continue in the future in order to provide for the predicted increase in people of post retirement age.

11.14 In addressing this large requirement for Extra Care Units, there is a concern that large concentrations of such developments may have an adverse effect on the local community and service provision, particularly health services. Therefore, the Council will consider schemes within settlements of the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy and will consult with its partners (such as Staffordshire County Council and Staffordshire Cluster Primary Care Trust or successor organisations) and other relevant service providers to ascertain the best locality for such developments in accordance with the acknowledged need. Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs) are typically self-contained schemes able to support resident's health and social needs without recourse to existing local facilities.

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

Policy C4 Housing Conversions and Subdivisions

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

- a. The proposal does not lead to a concentration of such uses damaging to the character and amenity of a street or residential area;**
- b. Does not necessitate associated extensions or external alterations inconsistent with the character and appearance of the property or its setting within the locality;**
- c. Provides satisfactory living accommodation in terms of size, amenity, facilities, private open space provision, appearance and general outlook;**
- d. Provides appropriate levels of on-site parking;**

- e. Satisfactory sound proofing arrangements are incorporated within and between properties;
- f. It would not involve the self-containment of basement areas or other parts of any property having inadequate light or low ceilings or which would result in a poor outlook from main windows;
- g. It would make adequate provision for refuse storage; and
- h. For the subdivision or conversion of existing dwellings, where the property is large enough a mix of unit sizes should be provided.

11.16 Across the Stafford Borough area a number of planning decisions are made each year on subdivision and conversion of existing dwellings and other buildings for residential use. To ensure the character and distinctiveness of existing areas are maintained, such proposals will be considered in the context of the design standards set out in Policy N1.

Policy C5 Residential Proposals outside the Settlement Hierarchy

A. New Development

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

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

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

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

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

The occupants of affordable housing must be able to demonstrate they are in local housing need and unable to access the housing market. Each occupant of rural exception housing must demonstrate that they are unable to secure or maintain a dwelling in the open market, due to lack of available capital or income.

B. Replacement Dwellings

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

11 Communities

- a. The present dwelling has a lawful unrestrictive residential use and is not in a state of abandonment, partial or complete demolition or collapse;
- b. The present dwelling is not the result of a temporary planning permission, a temporary form of construction or a caravan / mobile home;
- c. The building is not capable of retention through renovation;
- d. Appropriate measures have been taken to reuse or recycle materials from the original dwelling;
- e. The replacement building will be more energy efficient than that of the original dwelling;
- f. The replacement building is of a similar floor area, volume and massing as the original, whilst respecting the character of the existing site and its surroundings;
- g. The number of new dwellings is no more than the number of dwellings to be demolished and replaced;
- h. Any new replacement dwelling should be positioned on the footprint of the existing dwelling, unless on design, landscape, highway safety, residential amenity, or other environmental grounds a more appropriate location can be agreed; and
- i. The existing building is not worthy of retention because it lacks architectural merit and does not harmonise with the established character of the area.

Permitted development rights may be removed from replacement dwellings.

C. Extensions or Alterations

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

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

11.17 Policy C5 relates to residential development proposals (excluding gypsy and traveller pitches) outside of the settlement hierarchy including areas of Green Belt. For Stafford Borough the strategy intends that the primary locations for delivering new market and affordable housing will be the settlements within the Settlement Hierarchy, defined in Spatial Principle SP3. In the Green Belt areas of Stafford Borough the National Planning Policy Framework's Green Belt policies will be applied when considering new developments. In rural areas national planning policy states that local planning authorities should be responsive to local circumstances and plan to reflect local needs, particularly affordable housing, including through rural exception sites where appropriate. National planning policy states that new isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided unless it is to meet identified needs such as agricultural, forestry or other workers who have to live at or in the immediate vicinity of their place of work. Furthermore, Government policy supports the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside where this would meet sustainable development objectives. Re-use for economic development purposes will usually be preferable, but residential conversions may be more appropriate in some locations, and for some types of building. Planning authorities should therefore set out in new Local Plans their policy criteria for permitting the conversion and re-use of buildings in the countryside for economic, residential and any other purposes, including mixed uses.

11.18 Buildings of historic or architectural importance or interest, or which otherwise contribute to local character, should be retained unless exceptional circumstances prevail. To protect the rural character of the Borough, the Council will ensure that replacement dwellings and extensions to existing properties are strictly controlled to ensure that such development, either individually or cumulatively, does not have an adverse impact on the character of the individual properties or their surroundings. Where the proposal relates to the replacement of a dwelling of traditional style and construction, replacement will only be acceptable where the application is accompanied by a structural survey that demonstrates the demolition of the existing dwelling is necessary, as it cannot be viably altered or renovated to provide an acceptable standard of accommodation. This is to prevent the indiscriminate

replacement of existing dwellings in the rural areas, particularly where these are dwellings of traditional style or construction, as it is considered that this will lead to a gradual erosion of the Borough's heritage and character. It is therefore preferable to make appropriate alterations or renovations.

Policy C6 Provision for Gypsies, Travellers & Travelling Show-people

Provision will be made for the delivery of sufficient good quality, appropriately located residential pitches to satisfy local need as set out in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment. Specific sites will be identified through a Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

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

- a. The intended occupants of the site comply with the definition of Gypsies and Travellers or Travelling Showpeople;**
- b. The development of the site minimises the potential impact on the surrounding landscape, environment, heritage assets and biodiversity;**
- c. Good design and layout based on Government guidance in 'Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites' or successor documents. Matters to address include pitch sizes, the adequacy of facilities, services and amenities, the utility of outside space for leisure, recreation and for any essential employment related activities;**
- d. The site does not compromise Green Belt or the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designations;**
- e. The site has good safe access to the public highway system; adequate space for parking, turning and servicing on site;**
- f. Adequate disposal of foul effluent ensures that there is no reduction in water quality within the catchment.**

11.19 The Planning Policy for Traveller Sites document (published in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework) states that local planning authorities should meet the needs of gypsies and travellers over a reasonable period, whilst ensuring access to services and facilities, as well as protecting the environment. New Local Plans should set pitch targets to address accommodation needs in collaboration with neighbouring local planning authorities as well as identify specific sites. The policy set out in this section of the Plan for Stafford Borough will deliver future decision-making to achieve these objectives through the local context.

11.20 A principal objective of the new Plan is the provision of adequate housing to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers, which are protected under Section 19A of the 1976 Race Relations Act. To inform our approach, a comprehensive Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment was published in February 2013. The aim of the study was to ascertain the levels of additional pitch provision over the period 2011 to 2031. The main findings of the study show a need to provide a total of 44 new pitches. This study is an update of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment published in 2008. New provision will be identified through a Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

11.21 The number of pitches to be delivered, and the timespan for delivery, may be subject to updating following subsequent reviews of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment or relevant Government policy. Provision for new sites will be made through a Site Allocations Development Plan Document. Any requirements for Travelling Showpeople will be delivered in conjunction with other local planning authorities in the sub-region, based on a revised Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment and Government policy. The Council is committed to work with its neighbouring authorities to produce an update to the current Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment, by 2016.

11 Communities

Policy C7 Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Support will be given to sport and recreation by:

- a. Retaining, protecting, supplementing, or enhancing all types of sport, recreation and open space facilities, in order to address deficiencies of both indoor and outdoor facilities outlined in the Open Space, Sport & Recreation Assessment and any subsequent revisions;
- b. Encouraging additional provision, and enhancements to existing provision, which will reduce or prevent deficiencies, and requiring new housing development to contribute to provision, to help meet the Local Standards set out in Appendix G;
- c. Implementing specific open space proposals detailed in the area based policies.

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

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

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

11.22 The National Planning Policy Framework states that the planning system has an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. Policies in new Local Plans should deliver social, recreational and cultural facilities and services to meet the needs of the local community through access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation. Through new Local and Neighbourhood Plans there will be the opportunity for local communities to identify Local Green Space to be specifically designated. The policy set out in this section of the Plan for Stafford Borough will guide future decision making to achieve these NPPF objectives through providing the local context for open space, sport and recreation in order to assist delivery of the following strategic projects, with further details to be provided through a new Open Space, Sport & Recreation Supplementary Planning Document:

- New strategic green infrastructure
- A “core path” network of walking and cycling routes
- An enhanced network of artificial turf pitches
- Improved indoor sports provision
- Destination play areas
- Destination teenage areas.

11.23 As part of the new Local Plan’s evidence base an Assessment and Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy has been prepared identifying deficiencies in quality and quantity. The evidence base was updated in June 2013 by the Green Infrastructure, Greenspace and Sport and Recreation Provision Strategy. To address deficiencies in open space, sport and recreation provision arising from new development, the Council will seek financial contributions to deliver the standards set out in Appendix G. Furthermore there are also detailed provision standards set out for new development within Natural England’s Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards, which includes Woodland Access Standards.

Environment 12

12 Environment

Design

12.1 Achieving an effective spatial strategy for Stafford Borough over the Plan period, and delivering Spatial Principle SP1, will be determined through protecting, enhancing and maintaining a high quality environment. In this Chapter policies on design quality, the historic environment, mitigating climate change, natural environment and green infrastructure, sites of nature conservation interest, landscape character, and the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (including the Special Area of Conservation) provide further details to deliver this strategy.

Policy N1 Design

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

Use

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

Form

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

Space

- i. Strengthen the continuity of street frontages and enclosure of space;
- j. Development should clearly distinguish between public and private space, and provide space for storage, including for recycling materials;
- k. Streets and public open spaces are designed to be usable, easy to maintain and productive for the amenity of residents by being overlooked to create a safe environment;
- l. Require the design and layout of new development to be safe, secure and crime resistant, by the inclusion of measures to address crime and disorder through environmental design and meet "Secured by Design" Standards;

m. Development should be well-connected to public transport and community facilities and services, and be well laid out so that all the space is used efficiently, is safe, accessible and user-friendly;

n. Where appropriate, development should ensure that there is space for water within the development layout to facilitate the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs).

Movement

o. Ensure that places inter-connect using important routes and linkages, including Rights of Way, which are pedestrian, vehicle and cycle friendly, whilst allowing for ease of movement, legibility and permeability through a clearly defined and well structured public realm;

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

12.2 High quality and inclusive design is a central tenet of the Government's approach to achieving sustainable, well balanced communities that contribute positively to making places better for people, through the National Planning Policy Framework. This strong commitment to design quality from Government is emphasised through a suite of design guidance on achieving sustainable communities and high quality design. New Local Plan policies must set out the quality of development required to reflect the character of the local area. The policy set out in this section of the Plan for Stafford Borough will deliver future decision-making to achieve these NPPF objectives through the local context. A Design Supplementary Planning Document has been prepared to improve the quality of new development in Stafford Borough by setting out important design principles and key requirements.

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

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

12.5 All new development within Stafford Borough must be of a high design standard to enhance the quality of the built environment that reflects and respects the character, setting and local context, including those features that contribute to local distinctiveness of the area. This will be assessed in terms of scale, massing, orientation, plan form, vertical / horizontal emphasis, materials, colour and setting. Development must also have regard to Parish Plans and Village Design Statements, site topography, heritage assets such as medieval street patterns and burgage plots, important vegetation including trees or groups of trees and other important natural features that need to be retained.

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

12.7 The criteria set out in 'Building for Life 12', published by The Design Council, enables good design to be assessed using 12 criteria. The Government publication, 'The Manual for Streets,' aims to assist developers in the creation of higher quality and better-designed streets that contribute to the quality of the built environment and should be used predominantly, but not exclusively in proposals that include new or redesigned residential streets. Further information on general urban design principles is available in the CABI publication 'By Design'.

12 Environment

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

Policy N2 Climate Change

All development must incorporate sustainable design features to facilitate a reduction in the consumption of natural resources, improve the environmental quality and mitigate against the impact of climate change. Proposals must take particular account of the need to ensure protection from, and not worsen the potential for, flooding.

Sustainable Drainage

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

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

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

Sustainable Construction

All new residential development will be expected to incorporate sustainable design and construction technology to achieve zero carbon development through a combination of fabric energy efficiency, carbon compliance and allowable solutions in line with Government policy.

To implement zero carbon development, the following measures should be considered as part of the design:

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

All non-residential development up to 1,000 square metres (net) will be expected to have a BREEAM Very Good rating; and non-residential development greater than 1,000 square metres (net) will be expected to have a BREEAM Excellent rating. A statement will be required to detail how the BREEAM and Zero Carbon Standard will be addressed. If these are considered to be unviable to achieve, evidence must be provided through an independent viability assessment.

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

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

Recycling

New development will be expected to provide recycling facilities, ensure waste minimisation and facilitate greater use of recycling, including during the development process, through Site Waste Management Plans.

12.9 The National Planning Policy Framework states that the planning system has a key role for addressing reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability to, and providing resilience to, the impacts of climate change, including mitigation and adaptation, as well as delivering renewable and low carbon energy. Government policy and associated technical guidance sets out specific details in terms of considering development in areas at risk of flooding, through the Sequential and Exception Tests, in order to steer new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding. The policies set out in this section of the Plan for Stafford Borough will deliver future decision-making to achieve these NPPF objectives through the local context.

12.10 There is significant scientific evidence that human activity is changing the Earth's climate and that man-made emissions are the primary cause for this change. It is likely to have a significant effect on the local climate of Stafford Borough with an increasing incidence of extreme weather events, particularly warmer and dryer summers, as well as greater risks of flooding events. The impacts of climate change are not just physical: the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change concluded that it will have a long-lasting economic impact. Responses from previous consultations in Stafford Borough indicate that climate change is an issue of concern for residents and should be dealt with through the new Local Plan. In particular, concerns were raised about down stream flooding events caused by inappropriately sited development as well as support for the promotion of higher build standards in new developments and adaptation of existing buildings. The overall approach taken to climate change and its effects is to minimise potential impacts of climate change on the existing and future residents of the Borough.

12.11 Fossil fuels, such as oil, are finite resources and their rate of depletion is steadily increasing by industrialised nations and through the effects of globalization on newly industrialising nations. A number of environmental interests have raised concern over Peak Oil referring to when Oil Production reaches its maximum before it declines irreversibly. Planning policy concerns that may arise from Peak Oil will include implications on housing, waste management and recycling, economic development along with infrastructure, and services and facilities, which will need to be considered in the context of Stafford Borough through Policy N2 and other Local Plan policies.

12.12 Climate change is a key priority area for Government at the national level, articulated through The Climate Change Act, 2008, which sets out a legally binding framework to reduce carbon emissions. Existing policy direction is provided by The UK Sustainable Development Strategy, 2005 and the Planning and Energy Act, 2008 as well as recently introduced National Policy Statements (NPS). At the local level, the Council is seeking to fulfil its commitment under the Staffordshire Declaration on climate change to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in the Borough. To achieve this, the Plan for Stafford Borough will provide an effective platform that promotes resilience against climate change by implementing sustainable development, enhanced building design, increasing energy self sufficiency and minimising development in areas that flood.

12.13 To achieve the Government's objectives, the new Plan needs to address issues of sustainable drainage, renewable energy and sustainable construction. New development is proposed away from the flood risk areas identified by the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), which are largely centred on the network of rivers such as the Trent, Penk and Sow, their tributaries and some minor surface water flooding in the larger settlements of

12 Environment

Stafford and Stone. Furthermore, the Water Cycle Study and Surface Water Management Plan indicate water quality needs to improve across the Borough to achieve good qualitative and quantitative status of all water bodies to comply with the Water Framework Directive.

12.14 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) can also be used to assist flood management from new and existing developments with respect to surface water drainage discharges. Furthermore, SUDS are cost effective, environmentally and aesthetically attractive solutions with low environmental impact that allows surface water run-off to be released slowly back into the environment. The inclusion of SUDS should be done at the earliest stages of the process to ensure that they are successfully designed, built and maintained. Specific guidance on SUDS is contained in the CIRIA Sustainable Drainage Systems manuals. Developers are also advised to refer to the guidance on SUDS contained in the Southern Staffordshire Outline Water Cycle Study.

12.15 The Council is committed to the principle that all new development should contribute substantially to reducing carbon emissions and the impacts of new development on climate change. To achieve this, new housing developments will be required to achieve a zero carbon standard in line with Government policy. For non residential development the Building Research Establishment (BRE) has developed an environmental assessment method (BREEAM) for commercial buildings that addresses a wide range of environmental and sustainability issues, awarding credits linked to a star rating.

12.16 Provision of recycling facilities will be achieved through new development by employing best practice technology to optimise the opportunities for recycling and minimise waste during both construction and occupation of developments, including for commercial and industrial premises.

Policy N3 Low Carbon Sources & Renewable Energy

Development of schemes for the generation of renewable energy resources and initiatives for a low carbon economy, will be supported provided that:

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

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

12.17 The National Planning Policy Framework states that, to help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy, local planning authorities should contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources. This should be achieved by promoting a positive strategy for renewable and low carbon sources, designing policies to maximise renewable and low carbon development, addressing adverse cumulative landscape and visual impacts, identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and securing development of such sources, as well as supporting community-led initiatives. Further details for assessing the likely impacts of potential wind energy development when identifying suitable areas are set out in the National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure.

12.18 The Council will actively encourage and support proposals for renewable energy technologies, where it can be demonstrated that renewable technology and its associated infrastructure, either individually or cumulatively, has limited adverse effects on radar and aviation, the residential amenity of the locality, designated sites of biodiversity and nature conservation, National and Internationally designated areas, and the surrounding landscape, townscape and heritage assets.

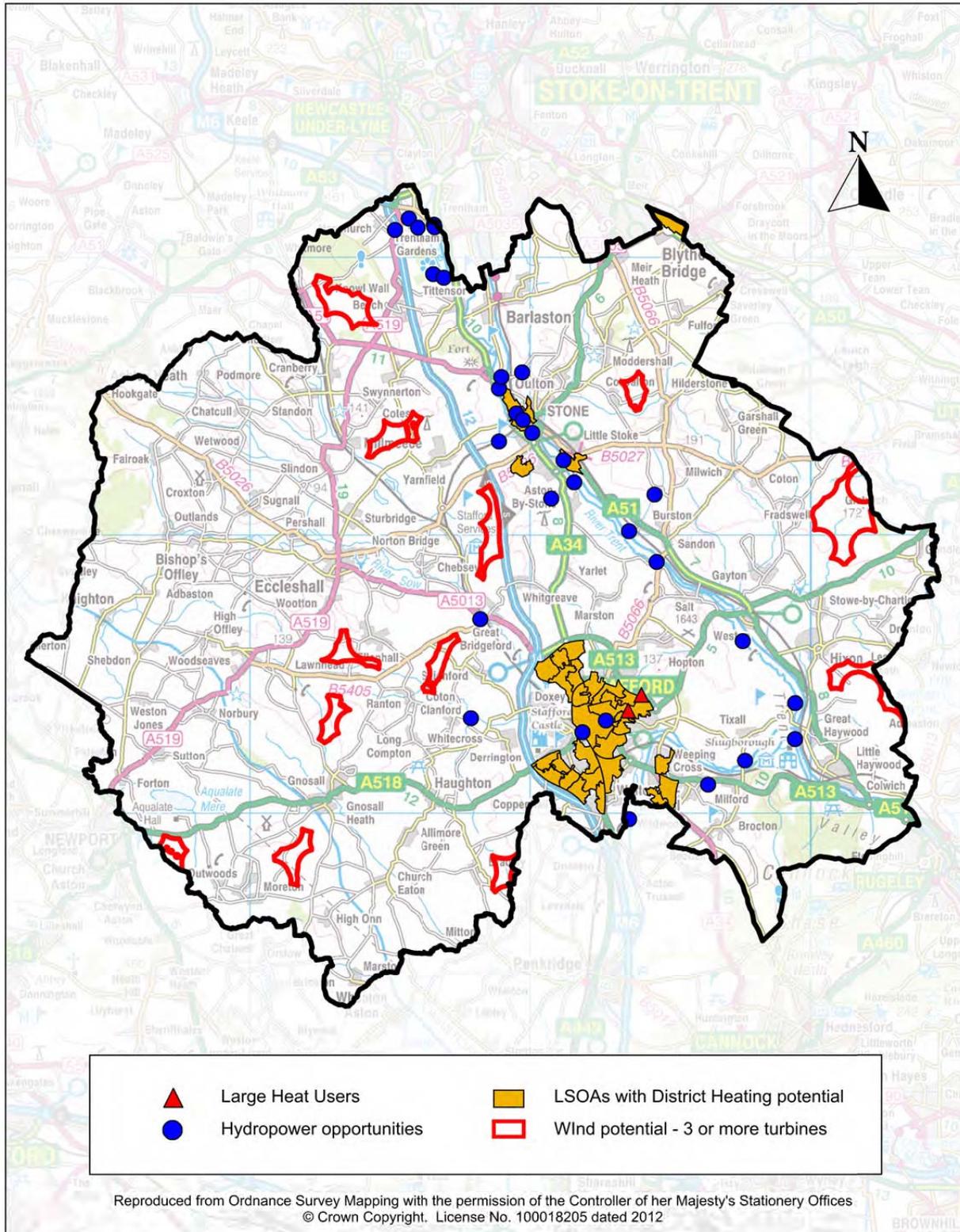
Environment 12

12.19 The principal sources of renewable energy within Staffordshire County are biomass / energy crops, anaerobic digestion, wind and solar. Currently, within Stafford Borough, the principal source of renewable energy is the Eccleshall Biomass project. Its power output of 2 mega watts supplies electricity to 2,000 households by utilising locally grown biomass crops, supplemented by waste collections. Overall, approximately 2.5% of the Borough's energy demand is supplied from renewable energy sources.

12.20 Furthermore, it is anticipated that substantial investment in equipment and energy infrastructure in certain locations may be required to provide for renewable energy in the future. The Staffordshire County-wide Renewable / Low Carbon Energy Study has estimated that the authority is capable of meeting a proportion its energy demand through renewable energy sources by 2020. The study has identified that Stafford Borough's greatest opportunity lies in the direction of wind energy and biomass sources. It is therefore recognised that demand may arise for large scale renewable energy facilities to utilise local resources, with new development managed through the criteria-based policy. Map 13 illustrates the physical opportunities for renewable energy schemes across the Stafford Borough area from the study. Clearly a range of other factors will also need to be taken into account in determining whether any specific proposal will be acceptable. Therefore, future proposals in Stafford Borough will need to be considered in the context of criteria listed in Policy N3 and relevant National Policy Statements on energy infrastructure.

12 Environment

Map 13 Renewable Energy Opportunities in Stafford Borough



The Natural Environment & Green Infrastructure

12.21 The National Planning Policy Framework states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing landscapes, minimising impacts on biodiversity, and achieving net gains. New development should not undermine the local environment and ensure remediation or mitigation of pollution, contaminated and unstable land. Policies in new Local Plans should set out the strategic approach to biodiversity networks and green infrastructure, whilst protecting significant designations. The policies set out in this section of the Plan for Stafford Borough will enable future decision-making to achieve these NPPF objectives through the local context

12.22 Ensuring that the environmental quality of Stafford Borough is maintained and, where possible, enhanced is a key issue to be addressed by the Local Plan, as well as protecting key environmental assets. The natural environment and Green Infrastructure (GI) should be enhanced, as they make a significant contribution to the Borough's identity and provide valuable recreation space.

12.23 Stafford Borough has a diverse array of environmental assets. The quality and diversity of these assets are what makes the Borough truly distinctive. These assets range from high quality landscapes such as the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to local wildlife sites. The Borough is particularly rich in biodiversity, having internationally recognised sites such as SACs (Special Areas of Conservation), SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and Ramsar sites. At a more local level, LNRs (Local Nature Reserves), SBIs (Sites of Biological Importance) and BASs (Biodiversity Alert Sites) make a valuable contribution to biodiversity alongside Local Geological Sites. Furthermore, the river corridors of the Penk, Sow and Trent provide valuable wildlife habitats. Biodiversity and geological conservation or geodiversity are not only intrinsically valuable to the Borough's residents but also contributes to human well-being.

12.24 Biodiversity is defined as the variety of life-forms and the role that they play. This includes the whole range of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, plants, invertebrates, plants, fungi and micro-organisms. It also includes both common and rare species, as well as genetic diversity within species. Stafford Borough contains an abundance of biodiversity and natural habitats that support a variety of wildlife habitats, associated species and geological conservation or geodiversity, remnants of a much richer and more abundant resource which has been fragmented and diminished. Whilst some habitats are being improved through conservation measures there remain significant threats to particular species and habitats.

12.25 The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, Section 4 (October 2006) introduced a new Biodiversity Duty, which applies to all public authorities, including local authorities. Its implications are summarised in 'Guidance for Local Authorities on implementing the Biodiversity Duty', published by the Government's Department of Farming & Rural Affairs (DEFRA), which states that biodiversity conservation includes enhancement as well as protection. Local authorities should consider biodiversity outside of designated areas and ensure biodiversity is fully considered in development proposals. This is further reiterated in the NPPF para 117, which indicates that Local Authorities should promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations, linked to national and local targets, and identify suitable indicators for monitoring biodiversity in the Plan.

12.26 To ensure that the damage done to natural habitats and landscapes is repaired, the Staffordshire Biodiversity Partnership has prepared the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan (SBAP) since 1998. The SBAP covers species and habitats that are of regional, national and local importance. The plan utilises an ecosystems approach, to focus conservation efforts on the areas that will result in the greatest benefit for ecological networks, habitats and species. By integrating biodiversity objectives with other environmental, social and economic needs, the SBAP aims to provide a sustainable living and working environment that benefits both people and nature. The current SBAP contains 14 "Ecosystem Action Plans" (EAPs) and one Rivers Action Plan, to prioritise conservation management at a landscape level and contribute to local, regional and national conservation targets.

12.27 The protection and enhancement of biodiversity and open spaces should be seen as integral to sustainable development, through the development of an overall 'Green Infrastructure' network of green spaces, landscapes and natural elements that intersperse and connect settlements and surrounding areas.

12.28 Green infrastructure is defined as:

'A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits to local communities.'

12 Environment

12.29 Green Infrastructure should be multi-functional resources capable of providing the landscape, ecological services and quality of life benefits that are required by the communities they serve. To aid the delivery of this network, a Green Infrastructure Strategy has been produced, which sets out key recommendations for Stafford and Stone and strategic interventions across the Borough, including biodiversity intervention zones, watercourse and movement corridors, strategic open spaces and landscape quality. The Plan for Stafford Borough is a crucial mechanism in delivering green infrastructure through setting out policies and identifying the Green Network on the Policies Map.

12.30 Approximately 241 hectares of protected open space and 706 hectares of Green Network was defined in the Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001. These two designations protect informal, as well as more formal spaces such as playing pitches used for football and cricket. The main coverage is in the urban areas of Stafford and Stone where the Green Network provides valuable linkages to the open countryside beyond. However other settlements also have protected areas, many of which provide focal points of activity. There are many other smaller scale open spaces that contribute to public amenity.

Policy N4 The Natural Environment & Green Infrastructure

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

a. Implementation of the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan, the Stafford Borough Green Infrastructure Strategy and guidance including 'Biodiversity by Design' or any other successor documents to increase and enhance biodiversity, in terms of habitats and species as well as geological conservation or geodiversity through appropriate management for a network of:

- i. Designated Sites (international, national, regional and local);**
- ii. Biodiversity Action Plan habitats and species populations;**
- iii. Wildlife Corridors and Ecological Networks;**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- i. protect the setting of landscape, heritage and natural (biodiversity and geodiversity) assets;**
- ii. reverse habitat fragmentation due to having suffered past loss and degradation;**
- iii. provide recreational opportunities for new and existing communities;**
- iv. provide open breaks between neighbouring residential areas and business developments.**

h. The network of existing access routes will be improved and expanded to allow sustainable commuting, including:

- i. shared surfaces to reduce vehicle speeds;**
- ii. providing safe, attractive and well-signed walking and cycling routes between residential areas, employment centres, green spaces and the wider countryside.**

i. Local landscape and heritage features should:

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

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

- i. Include measures such as Sustainable Drainage Systems and street trees;**
- ii. Provide a variety of Green spaces and habitat networks as a flood storage / management function (where appropriate);**
- iii. Provide adequate development easement from watercourses (culverted or otherwise);**
- iv. Incorporate proposals for deculverting and renaturalisation of watercourses;**
- v. Where issues have been identified within the Water Cycle Study, developers should submit a Water Statement that includes evidence to demonstrate that there is already adequate sewerage infrastructure in place, or that it will be in place prior to occupation;**
- vi. Support fish migration through the removal of barriers in river channels such as weirs, or where this is not possible, construction of fish passes.**

k. All new developments will:

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

Sites of Nature Conservation Importance

12.31 The planning system has an important part to play in meeting the UK's national and international commitments for habitats and species. Local authority planning is the key mechanism for determining the location, scale and nature of development and ensuring biodiversity is integrated into planning policies. 'European sites' are those that have the highest level of protection in the UK through legislation. These include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), proposed Special Protection Areas (pSPA), European Offshore Marine Sites, and Ramsar sites. It should be noted that impacts on European Sites can occur at some distance away. Therefore, an assessment of impacts for European Sites outside the Borough may be required for some developments.

12 Environment

12.32 Within Stafford Borough there are the following European sites:

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

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

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

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

- Mottey Meadows SAC

12.35 The Habitats Regulations Assessment is a European Directive requirement - Local Authorities should consider and assess whether development proposals and policies set out in local planning policy documents would affect European Sites, with the aim being to ensure that the plan or project, such as a planning application, will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European Site, or affect the features for which it was designated.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Developments likely to affect Sites of Special Scientific Interest will not be permitted unless the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the nature conservation value of the site itself and the national policy to safeguard the national network of such sites. Cumulative effects will also be considered.

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

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

will not be permitted unless:

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

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

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

Where development is permitted the Council will require developers to:

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

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

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

Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

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

- Water abstraction
- Air Quality
- Recreation

12 Environment

12.37 A Partnership has been set up to carry out further work and establish suitable mitigation measures and implementation to address possible negative impacts. This work currently defines where mitigation measures should be considered around the Cannock Chase SAC, as detailed in Policy N6. Planning applications may be required to provide information relating to the possible negative impacts highlighted above. Stafford Borough Council is committed to providing the necessary evidence and guidance to assist applicants in providing sufficient information in relation to planning applications. Stafford Borough Council is also committed to producing a Visitor Impacts Mitigation Strategy. Potential measures could include:

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

Policy N6 Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

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

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

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

Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

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

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

12.40 Government policy stated in the NPPF affords nationally designated areas such as the Cannock Chase AONB the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The Cannock Chase AONB provides a valuable asset to the residents of Stafford Borough and the adjoining districts of Lichfield, South Staffordshire and Cannock Chase. The Cannock Chase AONB also acts as a resource for the development of sustainable tourism, as well as contributing to the quality of life locally.

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

Policy N7 Cannock Chase AONB

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

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

12.42 National policy requires Councils to move from local landscape designations to a comprehensive assessment of Landscape Character. This approach has the benefit of assessing the whole of an area's landscape, rather than focusing on particular locations, including major developments within designated landscape areas. Staffordshire County Council has developed a Landscape Character Assessment process, which requires that the landscape be broken down into Character Areas. It places the Borough in 3 Character Areas:

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

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

12.44 Staffordshire County Council has also carried out a detailed Historic Landscape Characterisation Assessment for the County area, including Historic Environment Character Assessments for Stafford Borough, which is available as part of the evidence base for the new Plan.

Landscape Character**Policy N8 Landscape Character**

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

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

12 Environment

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

New development should reinforce and respect the character of the settlement and the landscape setting, through the design and layout that includes use of sustainable building materials and techniques that are sympathetic to the landscape. Further details are included in Policy N1.

The Historic Environment

12.45 The historic environment of Stafford Borough is recognised as a unique and irreplaceable resource. The Borough's rich heritage includes designated listed buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens, scheduled ancient monuments, battlefields and other buildings and sites of local historic importance. The Council recognises its duty concerning heritage assets and seeks to maintain a quality historic environment by protecting, conserving or enhancing its heritage assets and their settings. In conjunction with relevant stakeholders, the Council will conserve, restore and enhance historic landscapes to provide a valuable recreational, cultural and environmental resource as well as identifying heritage assets that are of national, regional or local importance.

12.46 Development proposals will be informed by the historic environment by:

- Consulting the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record, the Historic Landscape Characterisation study, the Historic Environment Character Assessment, the Extensive Urban Survey, the West Midlands Farmstead survey, Conservation Area Appraisal, Parish Plans and Village Design Statements and any other relevant existing or emerging documents and, where necessary, carrying out appropriate research or archaeological investigation to ensure that future development is based on an understanding of local character and context;
- Using Design and Access Statements and Heritage Statements to demonstrate how the significance of the heritage asset and its setting is to be protected, conserved or enhanced.

Policy N9 Historic Environment

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

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

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

viii. Archaeological remains and potential;

ix. Traditional permeable building construction.

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

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

Heritage assets will be conserved and enhanced by:

- 1. Identifying heritage assets that are considered to be at risk of irreversible harm or loss;**
- 2. Encouraging owners to maintain their heritage assets;**
- 3. Where necessary the Council will use its statutory powers to serve Urgent Works or Repairs Notices to arrest the decay of its listed buildings;**
- 4. Enabling development proposals will only be supported where it is shown that alternative solutions have failed and where it has been demonstrated that the proposed development is the minimum necessary to protect the significance of the heritage asset in accordance with national advice;**
- 5. The use of Article 4 directions where the exercise of permitted development rights would undermine the aims for the historic environment.**

12.47 The National Planning Policy Framework states that the new Local Plan should deliver a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including the irreplaceable resource of heritage assets. Decision-making must take account of the available evidence and expertise concerning the significance of heritage assets affected by proposals. The policies set out in this section of the Plan for Stafford Borough will deliver future decision-making to achieve these NPPF objectives in the local context. Statutory protection for the historic environment is provided by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

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

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

12.50 The Plan for Stafford Borough has a strategy which seeks to preserve, manage and enhance the Borough's heritage; this includes specifically identified features as well as the wider historic environment. The unique legacy of the Borough's historic environment should inspire excellence in design whilst retaining character and local distinctiveness, and contribute to the Council's emphasis on the positive management of change. Known individual heritage assets are identified in the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record, whilst a number of existing documents analyse particular aspects of the heritage significance of Stafford Borough. These include Staffordshire County Council's Historic Environment Character Assessments, the emerging Historic Farm Buildings Survey, Historic Character Assessments for Stafford and Stone within the Staffordshire Extensive Urban Survey and Conservation Area Appraisals produced by Stafford Borough Council.

12 Environment

12.51 Within Stafford Borough there are over 800 entries on the statutory list of buildings with special architectural or historic interest. These range from large country houses such as the Grade 1 Shugborough Hall to more modest items such as Mile Posts. Listed buildings are protected by law by virtue of their historic or architectural merits.

12.52 Whilst the majority of the listed buildings in the Borough are in good or reasonable repair, a number of buildings are in severe disrepair threatening loss of historic detail and fabric. Three of these buildings are Grade I or Grade II listed Buildings at Risk as registered by English Heritage. To supplement the national Buildings at Risk register, Stafford Borough maintains a local Grade 2 Buildings at Risk register.

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

12.54 There are 30 Conservation Areas within Stafford Borough designated due to their special architectural or historic interest whose character and appearance it is desirable to preserve or enhance. A register of historic parks and gardens is kept by English Heritage. Currently four within Stafford Borough are on the Statutory Register; Shugborough (Grade I), Trentham Gardens (Grade II*), Sandon Park (Grade II) and the German Military Cemetery on Cannock Chase (Grade II*).

12.55 The character or appearance of Conservation Areas can be harmed by the introduction of incongruous layouts or forms of development, altering the characteristic pattern of spaces between buildings, or being out of scale with the surroundings. As with all developments the following matters of design are also relevant: height, bulk, shape, massing, proportions, vertical or horizontal emphasis, materials and colour. Further details are contained in Policy N1. The impact of development on a Conservation Area may also relate to matters affecting balance of land uses and pattern of daily activity, that could threaten its vitality and viability.

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

Infrastructure 13

13 Infrastructure

13.1 The National Planning Policy Framework states that careful consideration must be given to viability and costs to ensure plans are deliverable. The scale of development must not be subjected to such a scale of obligations and policy burdens to threaten deliverability. New Local Plans should set out local standards in order that cumulative impacts of existing and proposed local standards can be assessed. Cumulative impacts should enable development to come forward through the economic cycle.

13.2 The growth requirements for Stafford Borough over the plan period will place additional pressure on existing infrastructure, and will therefore require improvements to be made to existing infrastructure, along with the provision of new infrastructure. Apart from specific requirements related to individual Strategic Development Locations as set out in Appendix D (for which the individual development will need to make provision), the burden of providing the necessary new infrastructure will, where possible, be shared by all other developments, commensurate to its scale.

Policy I1 Infrastructure Delivery Policy

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

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

13.3 To assess the infrastructure requirements, the Council has prepared an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), in conjunction with infrastructure providers and other delivery agencies, to determine the appropriate level of provision to deliver the Plan for Stafford Borough. The IDP sets out the critical infrastructure requirements to support the delivery of the Plan. It has been prepared in close consultation with key infrastructure delivery organisations, such as the Local Highway and Transportation Authority, the Local Education Authority, the Environment Agency, utility companies, relevant health organisations and private sector partners. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan, together with subsequent updates (which will be subject to consultation) sets out the necessary infrastructure required under the following categories:

- Physical infrastructure
- Environmental infrastructure
- Social infrastructure

13.4 The appropriate level of contributions for infrastructure, other than affordable housing or to address costs related to specific development sites, will be secured partly through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This is a flexible, new, local levy which the Council will charge on most new developments. CIL will enable the impact of small and medium sized developments, both cumulatively and individually, to contribute to the provision of infrastructure. This would not have been the case in the past when many such developments would have been below the thresholds to contribute to infrastructure provision.

13.5 In determining the required level of contribution, Stafford Borough Council will prepare a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule, at a level that is economically viable for the majority of development. A viability analysis is being undertaken as part of the introduction of CIL and will be reassessed on a regular basis to take account of prevailing market conditions over time. Where appropriate, contributions from a number of developments may be pooled to address a cumulative impact.

13.6 The IDP is concerned primarily with critical infrastructure upon which the delivery of the Plan for Stafford Borough will be dependent. The purpose of the IDP is to help guide the delivery of the Plan by setting out:

- Responsibilities for delivery;
- Timing of provision;
- Dependencies with proposed development;

Means of funding / delivery

13.7 The IDP also provides a longer term role by setting out a framework for enabling the Council and its delivery partners to work together to programme and monitor infrastructure delivery and land use development through the implementation of the Plan. The IDP also provides an evidence base to justify the need for a proposed Community Infrastructure Levy in Stafford Borough, in so far as it demonstrates the existence of a gap between the costed assessment of need and the estimated level of funding availability to meet the identified infrastructure requirements.

13.8 The majority of schemes required to enable the delivery of the Plan will be located in and around Stafford Town. These comprise two distinct types of intervention:

- Highway enhancements to overcome capacity constraints and provide site access, improved public transport, walking and cycling that are essential to enable the sustainable development of proposed Strategic Development Locations (SDLs), and;
- A local transport package for Stafford Town comprising traffic management, parking, bus passenger information and walking and cycling enhancements. Unlike the SDL related schemes, these are not time critical in terms of their phasing, in relation to the planned location for development.

Utilities

13.9 Electricity Supply - All major infrastructure works required to accommodate the proposed levels of development set out in the Plan have been identified for delivery by the infrastructure provider in the first 5 years of the Plan. Site connections will need to be put in place as the Strategic Development Locations come forward. These will need to be commissioned by the site developer / landowner as part of the on-site infrastructure works and accounted for as a development cost. The indicative costs vary considerably for each of the proposed SDLs and require further investigation by the landowner / developers, to assess their potential impact on development viability.

13.10 Gas Supply – There are no known infrastructure requirements to support the levels of proposed residential development at Stafford Town. However, reinforcement works will be required at some of the larger strategic employment sites (including Land East of Stafford), and may also be required at Eccleshall, Great Haywood, Little Haywood, Yarnfield and Woodseaves, subject to developments coming forward in these settlements. These works would be a cost on each development.

13.11 Water Supply – as the IDP indicates, there is sufficient capacity in the reservoirs in the area to supply the water demands associated with new development. This has been confirmed by hydraulic modelling results completed by Severn Trent Water. All three Strategic Development Locations at Stafford Town can be supported with some distribution network rezoning. The strategic location at Stone will require some infrastructure reinforcement to support delivery. It is expected that this reinforcement would be funded by Severn Trent Water and is currently planned for delivery in the period 2014-2015. Network rezoning is likely to be required at Stafford in the period 2016-2020. A new Water Pumping Station is likely to be required in the eastern rural area (Stowe) in the period 2021-2025.

13.12 Waste Water - Sewerage capacity improvements will be required to accommodate development in all three SDLs in Stafford. Severn Trent has already allocated funding to pay for these capacity improvements with timing of improvement work to be phased to coincide with development phasing. Investment is already underway at Brancote sewerage treatment works to accommodate development in Stafford. Subject to more detailed hydraulic modelling waste water capacity improvements are not envisaged to accommodate the proposed level of development in Stone, however should this be required, a lead in time of 2-3 years may be required depending on the extent of the required improvements. All capacity improvements will be funded by Severn Trent Water.

13.13 Broadband - Stafford exchange has been enabled with Superfast Fibre Access Broadband. This will enable future development in Stafford to benefit, at no additional cost for developers / landowners, over standard telecommunications infrastructure.

Social Infrastructure

13.14 Two primary healthcare projects currently in development in Stafford Town will provide additional capacity to serve the proposed Strategic Development Locations (SDLs). Browning Street is anticipated to provide sufficient capacity to accommodate the existing population growth associated with the Northern SDL. A project to the east

13 Infrastructure

of the Town would serve the Eastern SDL. There is currently sufficient capacity to serve the demands arising from the first phases of the Western SDL, although the surgery at Castlefields may need to be expanded in the medium term to serve later phases.

13.15 Staffordshire County Council (SCC) has advised that it will consider specific needs of Strategic Development Locations on an individual basis. In the short term (Years 1-5 of the Plan for Stafford Borough), the strategy is focussed on increasing capacity in existing schools. SCC confirm that where there is demand, modest alterations to existing schools, such as new classrooms, pupil space and toilets, will be developed. Over the medium term (5 year plus), the County Council has identified the need for additional primary schools to serve each of the SDLs, and where appropriate these will form an integral component within each SDL master plan. There is more uncertainty about the form of provision of additional secondary education in Stafford Town, as the expansion of existing schools will, in most cases, require land acquisition. The provision of a new secondary school has not been ruled out in the medium term.

Environmental Infrastructure

13.16 The provision of significant new green infrastructure, including a network of Green Spaces and destination parks in Stafford Town and Stone, is a key objective of the Plan. Within Stafford a key determinant of the amount, type and location of green infrastructure provision will be that required to mitigate the potential impact of new development on the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

13.17 The overall principle of mitigation measures comprise a package of either (a) on-site open space provision, (b) management of Cannock Chase, and (c) contributing towards 'Suitable Alternative Natural Green space' (SANGS) elsewhere. These measures have been demonstrated to meet the requirements of the Habitats Directive elsewhere in the UK and form a critical component of the infrastructure required to deliver the Plan for Stafford Borough. This has the potential to present a significant opportunity for the multi-functional use of green infrastructure in the design of Strategic Development Locations at Stafford, including land for essential flood attenuation on the Northern SDL, publicly accessible open space, destination parks, and waterway and landscape restoration. The production of an agreed delivery plan and the identification of appropriate sites will be achieved, through agreement with Natural England.

Delivery Strategy

13.18 The Borough Council has been working in partnership with the promoters of the Strategic Development Locations to assess the potential for new development, and the associated infrastructure and other site requirements, to prepare master plans. Through this process, all parties have been involved in identifying key risks associated with infrastructure delivery and potential mitigation measures such as alternative layouts, mix of uses, or phasing. Work on each of the master plans will address the delivery of the infrastructure requirements identified in this IDP, including where necessary through viability appraisal to demonstrate deliverability.

13.19 A particularly important issue address through the work on the master plans is the approach to developer contributions (s106 and s278 agreements), which will be specific to the requirements of each site. The Council will seek to secure financial and in-kind contributions towards strategic and site specific infrastructure, including in accordance with CIL Regulations, where appropriate, to embed infrastructure into the design of the schemes.

13.20 For the Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) at Stafford and Stone, s106 agreements will be the primary source of developer contributions towards critical infrastructure. However, some infrastructure will also be funded through the forthcoming Community Infrastructure Levy (as distinct from s106 obligations), with the Council publishing a list identifying those items on which it intends to spend CIL, thereby enabling it to continue to utilise s106 to deliver infrastructure. This will require careful consideration and regular review, in tandem with the monitoring and review of the IDP.

13.21 The viability of the development proposed in this Plan, particularly of the Strategic Development Locations, has been assessed throughout the preparation of the Plan. The Council has worked alongside landowners and developers, and the relevant infrastructure providers and statutory agencies, to understanding how viable development, which meets the necessary requirements, can be achieved. Detailed analysis has been undertaken through the preparation of the IDP, and the Affordable Housing Viability Study (2011), and through working with the promoters of the SDLs, in the on-going preparation of master plans for these sites. This process will continue, to ensure that delivery of the Plan is resilient to potential influences.

13.22 The state of the wider economy and the national and local housing markets will be major influences on the implementation of the strategy. Such wider factors are likely to influence the timing of development in particular. The Plan does not rely on a significant number of dwellings to come forward on the three Stafford SDLs nor the

Infrastructure 13

Stone housing SDL in the first 5 years of the Plan period. So, even in the event of limited development of the SDLs by 2016, the risk to the delivery of the Plan in the short term (i.e. 2011-2016) is negligible. The Plan is intended to provide a robust framework to guide development, irrespective of the precise timings of development, in terms of its establishment of the broad scale of change, the proportions of growth towards each settlement, and the establishment of the directions of growth around each settlement

13.23 The most significant of the infrastructure requirements, which are expected to be capable of being met within the timescales required, are those relating to:

- Electricity connection charges (East Stafford and Stone)
- Green Infrastructure including SANGs provision (all SDLs)
- Flood alleviation (North Stafford SDL)
- Western Access Improvements including the link from Martin Drive to Doxey Road (West Stafford SDL), the Northern Access Improvements to include highway capacity improvements to address traffic pressures on A513 Beaconside (North Stafford SDL) and the Eastern Access Improvements including a new link road from Beaconside to St Thomas' Lane (East Stafford SDL)

13.24 A summary of other critical infrastructure required to deliver the Plan is set out below, which will be kept under review through the Infrastructure Delivery Plan:

- Highway, public transport, pedestrian and cycling – the full Stafford Western Access Route, other highway capacity improvements and complementary sustainable transport infrastructure to include junction improvements, bus priority, new bus services and extensions to existing services, real time bus passenger information, and new walking and cycling routes as detailed in the Stafford Borough Integrated Transport Strategy;
- Electricity infrastructure / Grid connections – Strategic Development Locations at Stafford and Stone to deliver on-site electricity infrastructure as a development cost with all off-site infrastructure to be funded by National Grid;
- Gas infrastructure – costs to be met by developers triggered as sites come forward;
- Water supply – on-site infrastructure to be funded by landowners / developers, with off-site infrastructure to be funded by Severn Trent Water;
- Waste water treatment – Severn Trent Water to fund all off-site strategic infrastructure, with on-site infrastructure to be funded by landowners / developers;
- Flood defences – committed schemes and development to facilitate site delivery to be provided by developers in liaison with the Environment Agency;
- Green infrastructure – includes open space, Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGs) and open water to be delivered by developers / landowners on-site alongside commuted site payments and planning obligations;
- Education – provision for primary and secondary school facilities through new Strategic Development Locations on-site and contributions via planning obligations from other development sites;
- Primary health care – relocation / extension to existing surgeries at Stafford and Stone;
- Telecommunications – BT Open Reach has rolled out Next Generation Broadband to Stafford exchange but no timetable for Stone and other rural exchanges. Cost to be met by BT Open Reach and no additional costs to developers.

14 Local Monitoring and Review

14.1 The purpose of monitoring and review is to assess the delivery and implementation of the new Development Plan. The Stafford Borough Annual Monitoring Report provides a robust and effective review and monitoring approach for the Local Plan.

14.2 A central element within the implementation of the Local Plan are the policies to be adopted, and assessing their effectiveness through robust monitoring mechanisms. This will allow the performance of the policies in delivering the spatial vision and strategic objectives to be assessed, and subsequently informs any change to policies or additional actions considered to be required.

14.3 This monitoring framework is set out in Appendix E, with each monitoring indicator being given a target to monitor its performance and outcomes. In addition, the key bodies responsible for the indicators' implementation are given. All of the indicators identified in the final monitoring framework will be reported in the Council's Monitoring Document on an annual basis from the 1st April to 31st March from when the Plan for Stafford Borough is adopted.

Glossary

Affordable Housing	Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. It includes social rented, shared ownership homes and key worker housing
Allocations	Sites specified on the policies map for development.
Annual Monitoring Report	A report setting out the Council's progress in the production of planning policy documents against the targets set out in the Local Development Scheme. The report also contains information on the implementation and effectiveness of current planning policies.
Appropriate Assessment	An appropriate assessment is a document designed to ensure the protection of the integrity of European sites, which are of exceptional importance in respect of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species, such as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC).
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a national designation to protect areas of landscape importance.
Biodiversity	The whole variety of life encompassing all genetics, species and ecosystem variations, including plants and animals.
Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)	A framework used to achieve the conservation of biodiversity based on the targeting resources towards specific priorities.
Building Research Environment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM)	An assessment method used to determine the environmental performance of new and existing commercial buildings.
Brownfield sites	'Previously-developed land is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.
Building for Life (Bfl)	A Design Council initiative to improve the design of new housing schemes through assessing the design quality using 12 criteria.
Climate Change	Refers to the impact of human activities on the planet which is melting ice caps, raising sea levels, changing weather patterns and raising global temperatures.
Community Strategy	The plan which Local Strategic Partnerships are required to prepare for improving the economic, environmental and social well being of local areas and by which Councils are expected to co-ordinate the actions of the public, private, voluntary and community organisations that operate locally.
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	CIL is a new charge that Local authorities can levy on development to ensure that it contributes to infrastructure costs.
Conservation Area	An area of special architectural and / or historic interest that deserves preservation or enhancement of its character or appearance, designated by the Borough Council.
Department of Community and Local Government (DCLG)	The government department responsible for local and regional government, housing, planning, regeneration, social exclusion and neighbourhood renewal to enable the creation sustainable communities.
Design and Access Statements (DAS)	Design and Access Statements are documents that explain the design thinking behind a planning application. These include a written description and justification of the planning application.

15 Glossary

Designated Heritage Asset	A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.
Development Brief	This is a document which builds upon the scope of local planning policies to guide development proposals for large, complex and/or important sites.
Development Management	This is the function of the Council which determines planning applications.
Development Plan Document (DPD)	The statutory plan setting out the local planning authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land and buildings in the authority's area.
Environment Agency (EA)	Public body charged with protecting and improving the environment in England and Wales.
European Site	These are sites that are afforded the highest levels of protection in the UK through European legislation. They include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), candidate (cSAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), proposed (pSPA), European offshore Marine Sites and Ramsar.
Flood Risk	This refers to the probability that a river or watercourse will flood and the effect on any particular site or area of land.
Gypsies and Travellers	These are persons of a nomadic habitat, but also includes people who may have stopped travelling.
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA)	An assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Traveller's which establishes the pitch requirements over the lifetime of the plan period.
Green Belt	The statutory designated open land in the north of the Borough (North Staffordshire Green Belt) and the south of the Borough (West Midlands Green Belt)
Greenfield site	Land (or a defined site) usually farmland, that has not previously been developed
Green Infrastructure (GI)	A network of green spaces and natural elements that intersperse and connect our towns and villages. It is the open spaces, waterways, gardens, woodlands, green corridors, wildlife habitats, street trees, natural heritage and open countryside.
Heritage Asset	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
Highways Agency	The Government agency responsible for key trunk roads and motorways such as the M6.
Housing Trajectory	This shows the net and expected housing completions on a year and year
Independent Examination	An examination held in public by a Government appointed Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate.
Infrastructure	Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.
Key Diagram	May be used to illustrate the broad strategy for the area, including locations for change or strategic development, major transportation issues, and main patterns of movement and constraints. It provides the means to show links and relationships with other strategies and with the plans of neighbouring areas

Glossary 15

Lifetime Homes	A housing standard developed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation that enables new housing to be designed to meet the changing needs of the occupiers over time. There are 16 design features to be fulfilled to obtain lifetime homes standard.
Listed Building	A building that has statutory protection due to its special architectural or historic interest. The grades of listing are I, II* or II with I being the highest.
Local Development Scheme (LDS)	A document setting out the Council's programme for the preparation of planning policy documents.
Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	LNRs are sites of importance for wildlife, geology, education or public enjoyment.
Local Transport Plan (LTP)	The Staffordshire Local Transport Plan is the statutory long-term transport strategy for the county which is used by the Department for Transport (DfT) to allocate funds for local transport improvements.
Mitigation Measure	A measure designed to avoid, reduce or offset adverse effects of a plan or policy.
Natural England	Formed by bringing together English Nature, the Countryside Agency and the Rural Development Service. Aims to conserve and enhance the natural environment for its intrinsic value, the wellbeing and enjoyment of people and the economic prosperity that it brings.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	The Framework sets out nationally important issues and policies and leaves other matters for local councils and communities to decide themselves. The Framework is based on the policy of sustainable development. The NPPF replaces all Planning Policy Guidance and Planning Policy Statements
Planning Obligations / S106 agreements	These are contributions secured by the Council to help provide or fund infrastructure items or services that will help make development acceptable in planning terms.
Policies Map	A map, illustrating clearly on an Ordnance Survey or similar base the spatial extent of policies and proposals, must be prepared and maintained to accompany all Development Plan Documents. This may contain inset maps, where necessary.
Ramsar Site	An international designation to protect areas that act as vital habitats for birds.
Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)	Regional level planning framework document. The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy was revoked in 2013. Prior to revocation they provided a spatial framework to inform local planning policy documents.
Registered Providers (RP)	Providers of social housing that are registered with the Housing and Communities Agency (HCA). Most are housing associations but they also include trusts, co-operatives and companies.
Renewable Energy	Energy that is derived from sustainable sources such as solar or wind power, as opposed to non-renewable energy derived from fossil fuels such as gas and coal.
Rural Diversification	The expansion, enlargement or variation of the range of products or fields of operation of a rural business (branching out from traditional farming activities)
Rural Exception Site	Sites used specifically for affordable housing in rural communities that would not normally be used for housing because, for example, they are subject to policies of restraint
Secured by Design	A Police initiative supporting the principles of designing out crime through the use of effective security standards and crime prevention in new developments.

15 Glossary

Social Infrastructure	The definition of social infrastructure can include a huge range of services and facilities that meet the needs of residents, promote social interaction and enhance the overall quality of life within a community. These can include elements such as schools, health centres, leisure and recreation facilities, libraries, local shops, open spaces, transport and utility services, community halls and meeting places and religious facilities.
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are strictly protected sites designated under the EC Habitats Directive.
Spatial Portrait	A description of the area, designed to portray its individual character, key trends and the current 'drivers for change'
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Sites of Special Scientific Interest are protected by law.
Stakeholders	Individuals and organisations with an interest in a particular area or issue.
Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)	Sets out the Council's vision and strategy for the standards to be achieved in involving the community and stakeholders in the preparation of planning policy documents.
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)	This is an overview of flood risk from all sources within Stafford Borough's local area.
Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)	A component of the Local Plan evidence base which examines how many houses the Borough needs to build to resolve housing need problems
Submission Stage	When the Council formally hands in documents to the Government for their assessment and examination.
Suitable Alternative Natural Green spaces (SANGS)	Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs) are areas of open space that will be identified as alternative areas for the general public to use for outdoor recreation, to help mitigation recreational impact on the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation as new households can use the SANG instead of the protected heathland. SANGS can either be completely new areas or improved existing areas which are designed and managed to the quality standard set out in relevant guidance.
Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)	Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems. Measures to increase permeable surfaces in an area therefore allowing a slow release of water rather than fast run-off.
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	These cover a wide range of issues on which the plan making authority wishes to provide policies or guidance to supplement the policies and proposals in development plan documents. They do not form part of the development plan and they are not subject to independent examination.
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	A tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives (i.e. social, environmental and economic factors).
Travelling Showpeople	These are members of a community who travel the country holding fairs and circuses but may include people who may have stopped travelling.
Water Framework Directive (WFD)	The Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy) is a European Union directive which commits European Union member states to achieve good qualitative and quantitative status of all water bodies (including marine waters up to one nautical mile from shore) by 2015.

Appendix A - Local Plan Evidence Base 16

Local Evidence Base

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

Housing

- [The Housing Monitor: Land for New Homes](#) (2012)
- [North Housing Market Area Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment](#) (2009)
- [Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment \(SHLAA\)](#) (2012)
- [Housing Market Areas Assessment](#) (2012)
- [5 Year Housing Land Supply Statement](#) (2012)
- [Stafford Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment](#) (2012)

Employment and the Economy

- [Employment Land Review](#) (2012)
- [National Land Use Database](#) (2012)

Retail / Town Centres

- [Town Centre Capacity Assessment \(Retail, Office and Leisure\)](#) and [appendices](#) (2011)
- [Stafford and Stone Town Centre Capacity – Update Final Report](#) (2013)

Community

- [Revised Settlement Assessment of Services and Facilities](#) (2012)
- [Key Stakeholder Discussions: Parish Meetings](#)
- [Parish Plans and Village Design Statements](#)

Transport

- [Draft Stafford Borough Transport Strategy](#) (2011)
- [Staffordshire Local Transport Plan](#) (2011)
- [Transport Evidence to Support a Western Direction of Growth – StaffordWestern Access Improvement Scheme](#) (2011)
- [Preferred Option Testing for M6 Junction 13 and 14 Transport Evidence Base - Final Report](#) (2012)
- [Stafford Eastern Distributor Road Indicative Economic Assessment - Staffordshire County Council](#) (2013)
- [Transport Evidence to Support a Northern Direction of Growth – Staffordshire County Council](#) (2013)

Climate Change

- [The Strategic flood-risk assessment \(SFRA\) Prepared jointly alongside Lichfield District Council, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and Tamworth Borough Council](#) (2008)
- [Water Cycle Study and Surface Water Management Plan](#) (2010)
- [Renewable Energy Study](#) (2010)

Tourism, leisure & recreation

- [Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 \(PPG17\) 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation' Assessment](#) (2009)
- [Green Infrastructure, Green Space, Sport and Recreation Provision Strategy](#) (2013)
- [Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment Update](#) (2013)

Environment & landscape

- [Green Infrastructure Strategy](#) (2009)
- [Landscape and Countryside Character Assessment](#) (2001)
- [Habitats Regulations Assessment \(Appropriate Assessment\)](#) (2009)
- [Stafford Borough Local Development Framework Ecological Desk Study](#) (2008)
- [Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan](#) (2009)
- [Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan](#) (2011)

16 Appendix A - Local Plan Evidence Base

Historic Environment

- [Historic Environment Character Assessment for Stafford Town](#) (2009)
- [Historic Environment Character Assessment for Stone](#) (2009)
- [Historic Environment Character Assessment for Haywoods](#) (2009)
- [Historic Environment Character Assessment for Eccleshall](#) (2009)
- [Historic Environment Character Assessment for Gnosall](#) (2009)
- [Stafford Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal](#) (2011)
- [Stone Conservation Area Appraisal](#) (2008)
- [Bradley Conservation Area Appraisal](#) (2012)

Infrastructure

- [Stafford Borough Infrastructure Strategy: Stage 1 Final Report](#) (2009)
- [Stafford Borough Infrastructure Strategy: Stage 2 Final Report](#) (2012)
- [Key Stakeholder Discussions: Statutory Agencies & Utilities](#)
- [Water Cycle Study and Surface Water Management Plan](#) (2010)
- [Whole Plan Viability Report](#) (2013)
- [Spatial Plan for Education Report](#) (2013)
- [Report on Deliverability of Northern and Western Strategic Development Locations, Stafford](#) (2013)

Sustainability Appraisal Reports

- [Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report](#) (2007)
- [Sustainability Appraisal Commentary Volume 1](#) (2008)
- [Sustainability Appraisal Commentary Volume 2](#) (2009)
- [Sustainability Appraisal Report](#) (2011)
- [Strategic Policy Choices: Sustainability Appraisal](#) (2012)
- [Revised Sustainability Appraisal Report](#) (2012)

Local Plan Consultation Documents

- [The Plan for Stafford Borough- Borough Wide Development Strategy](#) (2008)
- [Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough- Issues and Options](#) (2009)
- [Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough- Draft Core Policies](#) (2010)
- [Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough- Local Choices](#) (2010)
- [Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough- Draft Publication](#) (2011)
- [Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough- Strategic Policy Choices](#) (2012)
- [Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough- Publication](#) (2012)

Other

- [Annual Monitoring Report](#) (2012)
- [Census Information](#) (2001 & 2011)
- [Statement of Community Involvement](#) (2006)
- [Local Development Scheme](#) (2012)

Appendix B - Car Parking Standards 17

Stafford Borough Car Parking Standards

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

The types of development are laid out below:

Commercial Development**Class C1 - Hotels and Hostels**

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

Class C2 - Residential Institutions

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

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

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

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

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

Car/ Other Vehicle Showrooms and Related Services

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

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

(iii) Car washing facilities - 5 queuing spaces.

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

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

17 Appendix B - Car Parking Standards

Retail Development

Class A1 - Shops

(i) In town centres where public car parking is normally available and is sufficient to meet current and expected demand from the proposed development, there will be no requirement for additional provision subject to no loss of existing facilities. On edge of centres or elsewhere, 1 space per 20 m² gross floor area up to 1000m² and 1 space per 14m² thereafter.

(ii) Food Retail Units - 1 space per 14m² of gross floor area.

(iii) Retail Warehousing - 1 space per 20m² of gross floor area, plus 1 per 100m² for staff parking. Where retail warehouses include garden centres / DIY, a higher standard of 1 space per 15m² of gross floor area will be required for customer parking.

Class A2 - Financial and professional services

(i) Banks, building societies, estate agents and other agencies, betting shops - 1 car space per 30 sqm

Class A3 - Restaurants and Cafes

In town centres where public car parking is normally available and is sufficient to meet current and expected demand from the proposed development there will be no requirement for additional provision subject to no loss of existing facilities. 1 garage or parking space will be required for each resident staff in any location. Otherwise the following standards will apply; 1 space for 2 staff employed at peak operating times, plus 1 space per 5m² or 4 seats in dining/bar areas.

Hot Food Takeaway

2 spaces, plus 1 space per 5m² of public floor space for customers. These standards may be relaxed or waived where public parking is readily available nearby.

Transport Cafes

1 space per 3 staff employed at peak working times, plus 1 lorry space per 3m² of public floor space.

Business and Industry

Class B1 - Offices

1 space per 25m² gross floor area up to 250m², then 1 space per 30 square metres thereafter.

Class B1 - Research and Development and Light Industry

1 space per 35m² up to 235m² gross floor space; 1 space per 60m² thereafter.

Class B2 - Industry

1 space per 25 m² gross floor space up to 250m² then 1 space per 50 m² thereafter. In cases where ancillary office space does not exceed 100m², no additional provision is necessary, thereafter 1 space per 25m² will be required.

Class B8 - Storage and Distribution

1 space per 80m² of gross floor area in the case of large scale storage and distribution facilities.

Residential

The number of car parking spaces required for each residential type is set out below. It is also important to locate spaces as near as possible to dwellings, and to avoid large and unattractive areas of open parking to screen car parking with landscape or structures as far as possible.

Class C3 Residential Dwellings

1. Detached or semi-detached

Appendix B - Car Parking Standards 17

- (a) up to 3 bedrooms - 2 spaces (2.4 x 4.8m) for residents and visitors within curtilage of dwelling;
- (b) 4 or more bedrooms - 3 spaces (2.4 x 4.8m) for residents and visitors within the curtilage of the dwelling. An extension of a smaller dwelling to 4 or more bedrooms would normally be expected to meet this standard.

2. Forms other than Detached / Semi-Detached

- (a) up to 2 bedrooms - 1 space per dwelling plus 1 space per 4 dwellings for visitors. Spaces should be provided within curtilage of dwelling if possible, otherwise communally within curtilage of the development, and wherever possible within sight of dwelling and / or within 45 metres thereof;
- (b) 3 or more bedrooms - 2 spaces per dwelling plus 1 per 4 for visitors. Spaces should be provided within the curtilage of the dwelling if possible, otherwise communally within the curtilage of the development, and wherever possible within sight of the dwelling and/or within 45 metres thereof.

3. Sheltered Housing / Elderly Persons Housing - 1 space per 4 dwellings, plus 2 spaces per resident staff plus 1 space per non-resident staff present at peak working times. If development comprises owner-occupied dwellings, 1 space per dwelling should be provided communally, preferably adjacent to, but no more than 45 metres from, the dwelling, to allow for resident and visitor parking.

4. Residential Conversions, including Flats - 1 space per dwelling, plus 1 per 4 dwellings for visitors, where possible within the curtilage of the original dwelling. Where conversions provide for more than 2 bedrooms per unit, parking requirements will be based on merits of the proposed development. These standards may be relaxed if the dwellings are provided by a Housing Association or on a shared equity basis.

5. Houses in Multiple Occupation - 1 space per 2 bedsits or bedrooms, wherever possible within curtilage of original dwelling.

Leisure Facilities

Class D2 - Assembly and Leisure

- (i) Cinemas, Bingo and Concert Halls - 1 space per senior member of staff plus 1 space per 10 seats in town centres or 1 space per 4 seats for out of centre developments.
- (ii) Halls, Community Centres, Clubs, Dance Halls, Discotheque - 1 per senior/resident staff, plus 1 per 3 other staff normally present at peak working times, plus 1 per 5 square metres of public floor area for customers.
- (iii) Sports and Leisure Centres- 1 space per 2 members of staff present at peak work times; 1 space per 20 square meters indoor playing area for participating customers; 3 spaces per squash court; 1 space per 2 players / officials capable of using outdoor playing space at any one time; 1 space per 10 square metres of swimming pool surface area, plus 1 space per 4 seats for spectators; 3 spaces per bowling alley lane; 1 space per snooker or pool table.
- (iv) Tennis, Golf, Bowling Facility - 1 space per 3 square metres of indoor public floor area; 2 spaces per green/court; 1 space per lane of any driving range.
- (v) Cricket, Football, Rugby - 1 space per 3 square metres of public floor area of buildings; 3 spaces for each team capable of using the facility at any one time.

If areas within the facility are convertible to another use having a higher parking standard requirement, the higher standard will be applied. If bars, restaurants, shops and other ancillary facilities are provided, additional provision should be made at half the appropriate standard for those uses.

In town centres where public car parking is normally available there will be no requirement for additional non-operational parking provision, subject to no loss of existing parking facilities and consideration by the Council of potential additional vehicle attraction to the town centre as result of the development.

17 Appendix B - Car Parking Standards

Other Categories

Class D1 - Non-residential Institutions

- (i) Health Centres - 1 space per medical practitioner, plus 1 space per staff member present at peak working times, plus 3 spaces per consulting room / cubicle.
- (ii) Dentists, Doctors or Veterinary Surgeries - 3 spaces per consulting room/cubicle.
- (ii) Creches, Nurseries and Day Centres - 1 space per 2 staff normally present at peak working times, plus 1 space per 5 child placements and / or adequate pick up/set down points within the curtilage of the facility. Where possible, emergency vehicle access should also be provided which cannot be obstructed by any of the above parking provision.
- (iii) Schools for Pupils up to 18 years - 1 space per full-time staff member, plus 1 space per 30 pupils for parents/visitors.
- (iv) Colleges for Students over 16 years - 1 space per full-time staff member, plus 2 spaces per 5 students plus 1 space per 4 academic/administrative staff for visitors.
- (v) Art Galleries, Museums, Libraries, Public Reading Rooms and Exhibition Halls - 1 space per full-time staff member, plus 1 space per 30 square metres public floor area for visitors. In town centres where public parking is available, the need for visitor parking may be relaxed.
- (vi) Places of Worship - 1 space per resident member of clergy or staff, plus 1 per 2 other clergy / staff, plus 1 per 10 seats. If the facility comprises another community use, an assessment will have to be made with reference to the standard for community centres and halls.

Theatres

- (i) 1 parking space per 5 fixed seats, and adequate turning and loading facilities, incorporating space for one coach or a 16.5m lorry.

Appendix C - Nature Designations List 18

The Borough is seen as having an attractive environment. 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), 3 National Nature Reserves (NNRs) and 8 Local Nature Reserves. 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 and Natural Areas.

Sites of Biological Importance (SBI)

Sites of Biological Importance (or **SBI**) are a non-statutory designation used for sites of local importance and contain most of the best remaining areas of semi-natural habitat in the County.

These are sites selected as the result of a series of county biological and habitat surveys. These were designed to identify and evaluate the best remaining areas of semi-natural vegetation within the Borough, together with as much information as possible about their associated fauna. Selection was carried out on similar criteria to those employed by Natural England for the selection of SSSIs.

This exercise has resulted in the recognition of a series of County SBIs, ranked into two categories of value, namely Grade 1 and Grade 2.

Grade 1 SBIs

Site Ref:	SBI Location	Grid Ref:
71/78/27	Park Wood	SJ772187
71/88/70	Outwoods Bank	SJ787180
71/99/91	Polesworth	SJ799191
81/06/77	Walton Wood	SJ807167
81/09/36	Broadhill Common	SJ803196
81/38/04	Chamberlain's Covert	SJ829184
81/45/65	Bagnall Ditch	SJ846155
81/49/00	Reulemill Covert	SJ840190
81/66/68	Sheridicote Wood	SJ866168
91/69/58	Brocton Hall Golf Course	SJ965198
72/38/95	Knighton Reservoir	SJ738285
72/61/01	Aqualate Drains	SJ760211
72/68/11	Adbaston Pools	SJ761281
72/74/60	Deansbridge Covert	SJ776240
72/77/25	Tunstall Lanes	SJ772275
72/81/51	Hatchwalls Covert	SJ785211
72/85/42	Canal Spoil Banks	SJ784252
72/90/04	Pollymoor Wood	SJ794208
72/91/45	Badgers Covert	SJ794215
72/92/01	Oulton Coppice	SJ790221
72/92/53	Moat Covert	SJ795223

18 Appendix C - Nature Designations List

Site Ref:	SBI Location	Grid Ref:
72/92/66	Mill Haft	SJ796226
72/92/81	Shelmore Wood	SJ798221
72/93/75	Little Champions	SJ797235
72/94/84	Ball's Rough and Gorsey Covert	SJ798244
72/99/07	Walk Mill Pool	SJ790297
72/99/37	Walk Mill Meadow	SJ793297
82/02/93	Hell Hole	SJ809223
82/03/62	Wood Brook Bank	SJ806232
82/09/58	Pershall Pool	SJ806299
82/09/73	Drumble and Platt Meadows	SJ807291
82/10/56	Coton (N of)	SJ815206
82/11/27	Rough Pits	SJ812217
82/12/91	Hollies Common	SJ819221
82/18/55	Dairy House Farm	SJ815285
82/35/42	Walton's Rough	SJ834252
82/37/28	Wootton (NE of)	SJ832278
82/73/60	Butterbank Brook	SJ876230
82/79/30	Yelds Rough	SJ873290
92/23/54	North Walls Marsh	SJ925234
92/25/07	Stafford Common	SJ920257
92/25/63	Astonfields	SJ926248
92/32/33	Hough Drain	SJ932222
92/38/87	Maggies Fields	SJ938287
92/39/93	Flute Meadows	SJ939293
92/59/25	Church Lane	SJ952295
92/82/36	Tixall Broad	SJ985226
92/86/00	Shirleywich Fields & Canal	SJ980260
02/28/37	Stafford to Uttoxeter Railway	SJ023287
73/51/46	Bishops Wood	SJ754316
73/53/02	Little Bishops Wood	SJ750332
73/61/70	Blorepipe Meadows	SJ767310
73/65/62	Rudge Cottages	SJ766352

Appendix C - Nature Designations List 18

Site Ref:	SBI Location	Grid Ref:
73/70/92	Bishops Offley Mill	SJ779302
73/71/75	Croxton Lanes	SJ779315
73/72/11	Greatwood Lodge	SJ771325
73/72/84	Pennyquart	SJ778324
73/74/89	Bromley Pool	SJ778349
73/75/18	Greenlane Coppice	SJ771358
73/75/84	Podmore Pool	SJ778354
73/76/72	Middle Coppice	SJ777362
73/76/96	Akesworth Coppice	SJ779366
73/80/56	Nr Redgreet	SJ785306
73/82/35	Blackwaters	SJ783325
73/84/01	The Alders	SJ780341
73/90/92	Copmere (NW of)	SJ790302
83/04/81	Chatcull Wood	SJ808341
83/12/80	Brocton Farm (NW of)	SJ818320
83/25/44	Osier Beds	SJ824354
83/28/82	Hatton Common	SJ828382
83/32/54	Hedges and nearby Marl Pits S of	SJ835324
83/39/09	Swynnerton Old Park	SJ830399
83/42/05	Meece Brook	SJ840325
83/53/99	Pistones Wood	SJ859339
83/60/55	Meece Brook	SJ865305
83/62/22	Yarnfield (SW of)	SJ862322
83/63/33	Yarnfield Meadows	SJ863333
83/67/04	Winghouse (NW of)	SJ860374
83/78/00	Pool House, Pool and Green Drive	SJ870380
83/75/03	The Drumble	SJ880353
83/85/20	Darlaston Wood	SJ882350
83/87/32	Lakeside Golf Course	SJ883372
83/88/77	Barlaston (North of)	SJ887387
83/93/25	Stone (W of)	SJ892335
83/96/33	Meaford Sludge Beds	SJ893363

18 Appendix C - Nature Designations List

Site Ref:	SBI Location	Grid Ref:
93/04/98	Radford Wood & Coppice Wood	SJ909348
93/16/85	Mill Cottage (S of)	SJ918365
93/17/83	Knenhall Farms (W of)	SJ918373
93/33/28	Holly Wood	SJ932338
93/37/32	Moddershall Oaks	SJ933372
93/47/47	Stallington Heath	SJ944377
93/60/50	Kendricks Wood	SJ965300
93/63/45	Oulton House (N of)	SJ964335
93/63/58	Garshall House (NW of)	SJ965338
96/64/76	Road Verges N of Garshall Green	SJ967346
93/67/26	Mount Pleasant (W of)	SJ962376
93/72/55	Milwich (E of)	SJ975325
93/73/11	Milwich to Garshall Green Road	SJ971331
93/74/24	Wheatlow Brooks	SJ972344
93/84/30	Brick Kiln Pits	SJ983340
93/91/19	Rookery Drumble	SJ991319
93/91/30	Rough Moor	SJ993310
93/92/44	Spon Drumble	SJ994325
93/93/44	Hollybank Ditches	SJ996332
94/10/56	Cocknage Wood	SJ915406
73/52/86	Moss Farm	SJ758326
93/15/72	Cotwalton Drumble	SJ917352
72/89/77	Jacksons Marsh & Coppice	SJ787297
92/43/44	Kinston Pool Covert	SJ944234
92/04/55	Stafford Castle	SJ905245
83/56/54	Closepit Plantation	SJ855364
83/66/50	Lodge Covert	SJ865360
83/74/04	Highlow Meadow	SJ870344
83/83/23	Poolhouse Wood	SJ882333
92/06/36	New Plantation & Little Gorse	SJ903266
83/58/44	Beechcliffe Wood	SJ854384
02/11/34	Colwich Brickworks	SK013214

Appendix C - Nature Designations List 18

Site Ref:	SBI Location	Grid Ref:
82/17/48	Lake Covert	SJ814278
73/55/97	Jugbank	SJ759357
92/55/29	Hopton Pools	SJ952259
82/19/05	Hough Meadows	SJ810295
82/27/49	Large Covert	SJ824279
82/51/33	Brick Hollow	SJ853213
82/68/48	Drumble Wood	SJ864288
93/01/72	Pirehill (N of)	SJ907312
83/86/18	Tittensor Common	SJ881368
83/27/32	Hatton Mill	SJ823372
83/37/62	Clifford Wood	SJ836372
83/94/16	Trent Wood	SJ891346
82/93/00	Derrington Millennium Green	SJ890239

Grade 2 SBIs

Site Ref:	SBI Location	Grid Ref:
71/87/14	Moreton Gorse	SJ781174
71/88/65	Timwood Bank, Outswood	SJ786185
71/96/64	Chapmans Wood	SJ796164
81/16/62	High Onn wood	SJ816162
81/28/80	Russels Rough	SJ828180
81/35/43	Gorse Covert	SJ834153
81/44/55	The Rookery	SJ845145
81/59/02	Wheatcroft Covert	SJ850192
81/65/44	Upper Woollaston Covert	SJ864154
81/66/18	Barton Osier Bed	SJ861168
81/76/69	Field Ponds south of Shredicote	SJ876169
81/86/67	Down House Pools	SJ886167
72/37/85	Knighton Wood	SJ738275
72/44/26	Flashbrook Wood	SJ742246
72/74/76	The Street	SJ777246
72/84/61	A519 Road Verges	SJ786241

18 Appendix C - Nature Designations List

Site Ref:	SBI Location	Grid Ref:
72/90/33	Weavers Hill	SJ793203
82/00/63	Swanpit Farm (E of)	SJ806203
82/03/78	Yeld Bank	SJ807238
82/11/01	Shropshire Union Canal: N W of G	SJ810211
82/15/72	Gorse Covert	SJ817252
82/17/22	Wincote Plantation	SJ812272
82/19/64	South Petershall Meadows	SJ816294
82/20/05	Shropshire Union Canal at Gnosall	SJ820205
82/20/65	Gnosall Heath (N of)	SJ826205
82/22/44	Nr Hollies Common	SJ823225
82/25/55	Bonds Covert	SJ825255
82/26/80	Taylor's Covert	SJ828260
82/28/21	The Dingle	SJ822291
82/28/47	Bank House (NE of)	SJ824287
82/28/61	Johnson Hall	SJ826281
82/42/95	Reule Covert	SJ849205
82/55/55	Five Lanes End	SJ855255
82/68/22	Chebsy Hollow	SJ862282
82/74/00	Clanford Brook	SJ874240
82/74/63	Oldford Covert	SJ876243
82/76/26	Gamesley Brook	SJ873264
82/83/19	Wassage Covert	SJ881239
82/83/52	Presford Bridge (N of)	SJ885232
82/89/48	Shallowford Gorse	SJ884299
82/99/41	Whitgreave Wood	SJ894291
92/03/83	Burleyfields	SJ908233
92/09/64	New Plantation	SJ906294
92/21/75	Rowley Grove	SJ937215
92/42/01	Wildwood Rough	SJ940221
92/43/29	Kingston Poll Covert – North	SJ942239
92/58/08	Maggies Ditch	SJ950288

Appendix C - Nature Designations List 18

Site Ref:	SBI Location	Grid Ref:
92/62/30	Milford (NW of)	SJ963220
92/73/27	Tixall Park Pool	SJ972237
02/10/84	Wolseley Bridge	SK018204
02/17/38	Higher Coley Farm	SK011225
02/17/64	Norman's Wood	SK016274
02/21/14	Bishton (N of)	SK021214
02/24/74	Moreton Brook	SK027244
73/63/84	Reynold's Orchard	SJ768334
73/80/05	Nr Offleybrook	SJ780305
73/83/90	Nut and Croft Pits	SJ789330
73/84/39	Podmore Green	SJ783349
73/84/87	East of Bromley Road	SJ788347
73/92/88	Newhouse Farm	SJ798328
73/97/60	Clayalders Wood	SJ796370
83/02/64	Highlanes Farm (West of)	SJ806324
83/03/83	Midley Pits	SJ808333
83/36/27	Lower Hatton	SJ832367
83/63/98	Beaty Hall	SJ869338
83/64/33	Highlow Bank	SJ863343
83/87/82	Trent and Mersy Canal (Meaford)	SJ888372
83/89/92	Cresswell Wood and Pools	SJ889392
83/95/90	Common Plot	SJ899353
93/12/60	Trent and Mersey Canal	SJ916318
93/17/08	Middle Cullamoor (S of)	SJ910378
93/38/69	Blacklake Plantation	SJ936389
93/51/37	Smallrice (NE of)	SJ953317
93/68/83	Nr New Inn	SJ968383
72/66/47	Offley Marsh	SJ764267
92/51/49	Baswich Fields	SJ954219
82/42/47	Butt Lane	SJ844227
83/26/91	Gorse Covert	SJ829361

18 Appendix C - Nature Designations List

Site Ref:	SBI Location	Grid Ref:
82/86/43	Drakelow Covert	SJ884263

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) give legal protection to the best sites for wildlife and geology in England. They are designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The designation of SSSIs includes a two stage process; notification and confirmation. There are 17 SSSIs within Stafford Borough.

Location	Parish	Date Notified	Area (ha)
Allimore Green Common	Haughton	1986	2.56
Aqualate Mere	Forton	1956	241.33
Baswich Meadows	Stafford	1991	13.36
Burnt Wood*	Eccleshall	1986	41.39 *
Cannock Chase*	Colwich	1987	1,281.11*
Chartley Moss	Stowe	1987	106.93
Cop Mere	Eccleshall	1986	37.42
Doley Common	Gnosall	1986	17.39
Doxey and Tillington Marshes	Stafford	1989	129.42
Kings & Hargreaves Wood	Swynnerton	1987	57.67
Loynton Moss	Norbury	1986	13.58
Milford Quarry	Brocton	1993	6.30
Motley Meadows*	Church Eaton	1989	43.69
Newport Canal	Forton	1986	5.55
Pasturefields Salt Marsh	Stowe	1986	7.80
Rawbones Meadow	Tixall	1989	21.31
Stafford Brook	Colwich	1987	6.9

*This is the total area of the SSSI and includes an area outside the Borough Council boundary

Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)

Local Nature reserves are non statutory sites that have wildlife features that are of special local importance. They have been designated to enhance and conserve the best natural areas owned by Council. There are 8 LNRs within Stafford Borough.

Location	Date Notified	Area (ha)
Barlaston and Rough Close Common	2000	20.61
Brocton	1971	40.92
Kingsmead Marsh	2003	6

Appendix C - Nature Designations List 18

Location	Date Notified	Area (ha)
Astonfields Balancing Lakes	2004	4.2
Stone Meadows and Crown Meadows	2004	16.72
Kingston Pool Covert South	2006	4.15
Ferndown Drive South	2008	6.7

RAMSAR sites

Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention. The convention on wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. It was adopted in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971 and came into force in 1975, with the first UK Ramsar site being designated in 1976. There are 3 Ramsar Sites within Stafford Borough.

Location	Area (ha)
Chartley Moss	106.93
Aqualate Mere	241.33
Cop Mere	37.42

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

Special Areas of conservation (SACs) is defined under the European Union's Habitats Directive (2/43/EEC of 21 May 1992). They provide increased protection to habitats and a diverse array of animals and plant species set out in appendix I and II of the directive. These sites are part of a range of measures aimed at conserving important or threatened habitats and species.

Location	Area (ha)
Pasturefields Saltmarsh	7.7
Mottey Meadows*	43.69
Cannock Chase*	1,236.93
Chartley Moss	106.93

*This is the total area of the SAC and includes an area outside the Borough Council boundary

National Nature Reserves (NNRs)

National Nature Reserves are areas of land set aside for nature, where the main purpose of management is the conservation of habitats and species of national and international significance. There are 3 National Nature Reserves in Stafford Borough.

Location	Area (ha)
Aqualate Mere	217.38
Chartley Moss	44.15

18 Appendix C - Nature Designations List

Location	Area (ha)
Mottey Meadows	43.4

*This is the total area of the NNR and includes an area outside the Borough Council boundary

Appendix D - Infrastructure 19

Stafford Town North Infrastructure Requirements

Infrastructure Category	Requirements	Phasing	Capital Cost	Funding
Transport (CRITICAL)	<p>Highway capacity improvements, either through or around the perimeter of the site, or along Beaconside, will be required North of Stafford. Enhanced bus services and improved bus reliability, through bus priority, will be required along the A34 between the site and the town centre as well as real time bus passenger information, increased frequency of existing and new bus services</p> <p>Cycle and walking links to connect to the existing and proposed Borough wide, and national, cycle and walking routes to the town centre and other key destinations.</p>	2016+ 2016+	TBC	<p>Developer contributions (s106 / CIL). £2.5m committed.</p> <p>Developer contributions</p>
Nature Conservation and Biodiversity(CRITICAL)	Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS) to be provide through (a) on-site open space provision, (b) management of Cannock Chase, or (c) contributions towards 'Suitable Alternative Natural Green space' elsewhere.	2011-2031	TBC	Developer contributions and / or in-kind provision.
Electricity (CRITICAL)	<p>Planned reinforcement works to Stafford Firm Capacity scheduled for completion during 2012, will provide sufficient capacity to accommodate all planned development.</p> <p>Connection to grid</p>	2011-2015	Unknown £9m	Developers will be required to pay for connections.
Gas	None	N/A	N/A	N/A
Potable Water	None	N/A		Severn Trent (AMP5) will fund off site reinforcement works in full. Developers to fund on-site water mains.
Sewage	Notional modelling indicates sewerage capacity improvements will be required to accommodate additional foul flows from sites at North Stafford.	Lead time of 3 years	£5.2m identified for all SDLs at Stafford and Stone. Investment allocated	Not in current Asset Management Plan (AMP)

19 Appendix D - Infrastructure

Infrastructure Category	Requirements	Phasing	Capital Cost	Funding
			when new development is delivered.	
Flood Alleviation (CRITICAL)	Development will be expected to achieve significantly less than greenfield surface water run-off rates into Sandyford Brook and Marston Brook and contribute towards a comprehensive flood management scheme. Likely to require an open water storage solution with implications for site layout / developable area. This should maximise opportunities for the multi-functional use of land including for SANGs, other public open space and the provision of sports pitches. May have implications for boundary of SDL, which may need to include land between the two sites identified in the plan. To be tested through development of a Master Plan.	2011-2031 (Drainage infrastructure must be in place prior to construction of each phase of development).	N/A	Developer funded
Education	<p>Initial phase of development accommodated through extension to existing schools.</p> <p>To accommodate scale of development proposed a new Primary School provision (equivalent to 3-4 FE) should be included in Master Plan.</p> <p>Extension of one or possibly two existing secondary schools, subject to acquisition of additional land.</p>	<p>2011-2015</p> <p>2016+</p> <p>2016+</p>	<p>Up to £13m</p> <p>£10m</p>	<p>Developer contributions</p> <p>DfE Capital Programme and developer contributions (including land in-kind)</p> <p>DfE Capital Programme (under review) / developer contributions.</p>
Primary Healthcare	Replacement of Browning Street Surgery between Stone Rd and Co-operative Street will provide much increased capacity and be able to accommodate demand associated with demand arising from Northern SDL.	2011-2016	£5m	Primary Care Trust GP Consortium Staffordshire County Council (SCC)
Telecommunications	Stafford exchange is enabled with Superfast Fibre Access Broadband. No cost implication for developer over standard telecommunications infrastructure.		N/A	Developer contributions

Appendix D - Infrastructure 19

Infrastructure Category	Requirements	Phasing	Capital Cost	Funding
Open Space	<p>Will need to be planned in association with requirements for SANGs.</p> <p>Children's play areas and multi-use games areas in accordance with local standards of provision.</p>	2011+	Unknown	Developer contributions.

Stafford Town West Infrastructure Requirements

Infrastructure Category	Requirements	Phasing	Capital Cost	Funding
Transport (CRITICAL)	<p>Link from Martin Drive spine road to Doxey Road with potential upgrade to railway bridge required for the development west of Stafford as part of the Stafford Western Access Improvements, together with new or enhanced bus routes as well as cycling & walking links to existing routes to the town centre and other key destinations.</p> <p>The Stafford Western Access Route is required to deliver the full development requirements for Stafford town, to be completed in three sections:</p> <p>Section A: Foregate Street to Timberfields Road / Doxey Road</p> <p>Section B: Along Doxey Road from Timberfields Road including a potential upgrade of the West Coast Main Line rail bridge</p> <p>Section C: Doxey Road (west of rail bridge) to Martin Drive</p> <p>400 homes (significantly higher than 5 year allocation) can be developed prior to completion of section C from Doxey Road to Martin Drive.</p> <p>Network Rail has identified 2017 as a window of opportunity for upgrade to railway bridge as it would correspond to planned works on West Coast Mainline.</p> <p>A number of key parties are responsible for delivering the whole length of the Western Access Route as part of the Western Access Improvements, which will benefit the wider Stafford Town area.</p>	<p>Section A: 2016+</p> <p>Section B: 2017 - 2018</p> <p>Section C: 2016+</p>	<p>The 2013 initial estimate for highway improvements to each section is set out below:</p> <p>Section A: £26m</p> <p>Section B: TBC</p> <p>Section C: £5m</p>	<p>Section A: SCC / pooled Developer contributions</p> <p>Section B: SCC / pooled Developer Contributions</p> <p>Section C: SDL Developer</p>

19 Appendix D - Infrastructure

Infrastructure Category	Requirements	Phasing	Capital Cost	Funding
Nature Conservation and Biodiversity (CRITICAL)	Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace to be provide through (a) on-site open space provision, (b) management of Cannock Chase, or (c) contributions towards 'Suitable Alternative Natural Green space' (SANGS) elsewhere.	2011-2016	TBC	Developer contributions and / or in-kind provision.
Gas	None	N/A	N/A	N/A
Potable Water (CRITICAL)	Reallocation of supply to Peasley Bank Service reservoir, from Butterhill Service reservoir, for areas of the town will facilitate the growth within Stafford Town from a water supply perspective.	2016-2021	£150k	Severn Trent (AMP5) will fund off site reinforcement works in full. Developers to fund on-site water mains.
Sewage (CRITICAL)	Notional modelling indicates sewerage capacity improvements will be required to accommodate additional foul flows from sites at West Stafford.	Lead time of 3 years	£5.2m identified for all SDLs at Stafford and Stone. Investment allocated when new development is delivered.	Severn Trent (AMP6)
Flood Alleviation	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Education	Initial phase of development accommodated through extension to existing schools. New Primary School (2-3 FE) to be included in Master Plan Expansion of existing secondary school subject to availability of Authority owned land.	2011-2015 2016+ 2016+	Up to £8m £7m	Developer contributions DfE Capital Programme and Developer contributions (including land in-kind) DfE Capital Programme (under review) / Developer contributions.
Primary Healthcare	Type of provision to be determined through master planning process. None envisaged during first 5 years of plan.	2016+	£8m	GP consortia. Possible provision of land / accommodation in Master Plan.
Telecommunications	Stafford exchange is enabled with Superfast Fibre Access Broadband. No cost implication for developer over standard telecommunications infrastructure.		N/A	Developer

Appendix D - Infrastructure 19

Infrastructure Category	Requirements	Phasing	Capital Cost	Funding
Open Space	Creation of a new destination park – will need to be planned in association with requirements for SANGs. Children’s play areas and multi-use games areas in accordance with local standards of provision.	2011+	Unknown	Developer contributions.

Stafford Town East Infrastructure Requirements

Infrastructure Category	Requirements	Phasing	Capital Cost	Funding
Transport	<p>The Eastern Access Improvements is a package of complementary sustainable transport measures and highway infrastructure to be funded through a combination of public funds and developer contributions. Developers in the East of Stafford will be required to provide the Eastern Access Route between Beaconside and St. Thomas' Lane, sustainable transport access, potential highway capacity improvements and traffic management measures along Beaconside and Weston Road. Public funds will contribute towards further sustainable transport measures including the Baswich Walking and Cycling Route between Baswich Lane and Weston Road, and bus service enhancements, including real time bus passenger information.</p> <p>Highway infrastructure improvements included within the Eastern Access Improvements are set out below:</p> <p>1: Construction of the Eastern Access Route from Beaconside to St Thomas' Lane and the Tixall Road / Blackheath Lane signal junction upgrade</p> <p>2: Potential highway capacity improvements between St Thomas' Lane and the junction with Baswich Lane and Cornwall Drive</p> <p>3: Construction of a new roundabout at Blackheath Lane and Weston Road as a junction improvement</p>	<p>1. 2016 - 2021</p> <p>2. 2016+</p> <p>3. 2013 - 2014</p>	<p>The 2013 initial estimate for each highway improvement is set out below:</p> <p>1: Up to £7.5m</p> <p>2: TBC</p> <p>3: £2.5m</p>	<p>Committed from sources including:</p> <p>Staffordshire County Council</p> <p>Developer contributions</p> <p>Local Sustainable Transport Fund</p>
Nature Conservation and Biodiversity (CRITICAL)	Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace to be provide through (a) on-site open space provision, (b) management of Cannock Chase, or (c) contributions towards 'Suitable Alternative Natural Green space' (SANGS) elsewhere.	2011-2031	TBC	Developer contributions and / or direct provision.

19 Appendix D - Infrastructure

Infrastructure Category	Requirements	Phasing	Capital Cost	Funding
Electricity (CRITICAL)	Connection to grid	2011-2015	£4m	Developers will be required to pay for connections.
Gas	Reinforcement for employment sites	N/A	£150-250k (TBC)	TBC
Potable Water (CRITICAL)	New Water Pumping Station required in the rural area to the East of Stafford Town at Stowe	2021-2025	£150k	Severn Trent (AMP5) Developer funds on site mains
Sewage (CRITICAL)	<p>Notional modelling indicates sewerage capacity improvements will be required to accommodate additional foul flows from sites at East Stafford</p> <p>Topography of the site suggests it will drain to a terminal sewage pumping station known as 'Beaconside' which pumps directly to Brancote sewage treatment works. There are known flooding problems in the vicinity of this pumping station and so capacity improvements may be required at this sewage pumping station to accommodate additional flows from the proposed 600 additional dwellings in this location.</p>	Lead time of 3 years	£5.2m identified for all SDLs at Stafford and Stone. Investment allocated when new development is delivered	Not in current Asset Management Plan
Education	<p>Extension to one or two existing secondary school to accommodate 0.5-1 FE.</p> <p>New Primary School provision to be included in Master Plan</p> <p>Extension of existing secondary school required to accommodate projected growth in pupils. School to be expanded yet to be determined.</p>	<p>2016+</p> <p>2016+</p>	<p>£4m</p> <p>£2m</p>	<p>Developer contributions</p> <p>DfE Capital Programme and developer contributions (excludes cost of land assumed to be provided in-kind) DfE Capital Programme (under review) / developer contributions.</p>
Primary Healthcare	Project in development which could serve new development on the East of Stafford	2016+	£5m (TBC)	GP consortium.
Telecommunications	Stafford exchange is enabled with Superfast Fibre Access Broadband. No cost implication for developer over standard telecommunications infrastructure.	N/A	N/A	

Appendix D - Infrastructure 19

Infrastructure Category	Requirements	Phasing	Capital Cost	Funding
Open Space	Will need to be planned in association with requirements for SANGs and local standards of provision.	2011+	Unknown	Developer contributions.

Stone Town West and South Infrastructure Requirements

Infrastructure Category	Requirements	Phasing	Capital Cost	Funding
Transport	An access, transport and travel plan strategy for the Strategic Development Location that maximises travel and accessibility by non-car transport modes via safe, attractive and conveniently designed street, pedestrian and cycling connections within the development and to Stone town centre, nearby existing and new employment areas. The strategy shall identify access points to the site and between the site and the existing settlement. It shall also identify construction access arrangements that do not disrupt existing residents and improvements to transport capacity along the B5026 Eccleshall Road, and at the A34 roundabouts	2011-2031	TBC	None committed, but potential sources include: Developer contributions
Nature Conservation and Biodiversity (CRITICAL)	Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace to be provide through (a) on-site open space provision, (b) management of Cannock Chase, or (c) contributions towards 'Suitable Alternative Natural Green space' (SANGS) elsewhere.	2011-2031	TBC	Developer contributions and / or direct provision.
Electricity (CRITICAL)	Connection to grid. Provision of a local electricity sub-station.	2011-2031	£4m	Developers will be required to pay for connections.
Gas	Reinforcement for housing sites	N/A	£150-250k (TBC)	TBC
Potable Water (CRITICAL)	Reinforcement of the water supply required. 1.2km of 450mm pipe in A34 Stone required to protect water levels of service in Stone	2011-2031	£1.7m	Severn Trent (AMP5). Developers funds on site mains
Sewage	Notional modelling indicate additional flows from housing is not expected to have significant impact on sewer capacity with foul flows draining to an existing sewage pumping station at Westbridge Park. Capacity issues are	Lead time of 3 years	£5.2m identified for all SDLs at Stafford and Stone. Investment allocated when	Not in current Asset Management Plan

19 Appendix D - Infrastructure

Infrastructure Category	Requirements	Phasing	Capital Cost	Funding
	not envisaged with the new employment area due to the proximity of the sewage treatment works		new development is delivered	
Education	Extension of existing secondary school required to accommodate projected growth in pupils. School to be expanded yet to be determined. New Primary School provision to be included in Master Plan	2016+ 2016+	£2m (TBC)	DfE Capital Programme (under review) / Developer contributions. Developer contributions
Primary Healthcare	Project in development which could serve new development on the West of Stone	2016+	£5m (TBC)	GP consortium.
Telecommunications	Stone exchange is enabled with Superfast Fibre Access Broadband. No cost implication for developer over standard telecommunications infrastructure.	N/A	TBC	
Open Space	Will need to be planned in association with requirements for SANGs and local standards of provision.	2016+	Unknown	Developer contributions.

Raleigh Hall and Ladfordfields

Infrastructure Category	Requirements	Phasing	Capital Cost	Funding
Transport	Local highway improvements and enhancements of the A519 roundabout at Raleigh Hall. Local highway improvements and enhancements of the B5025 / A5013 at Ladfordfields.	2016-2021	N/A	Developer contributions and/or direct provision.
Electricity (CRITICAL)	Connection to grid. Provision of a local electricity sub-station.	2016-2021	TBC	Developers will be required to pay for connections.
Gas	Reinforcement for sites required	N/A	TBC	Developers will be required to pay for connections.
Potable Water (CRITICAL)	Further investigation may be required into the feasibility of development at Ladfordfields in light of the presence of a main water pipe running through the site	2016-2021	TBC	Severn Trent (AMP6) Developer funds on site mains
Sewage (CRITICAL)	Waste water infrastructure investment.	Lead time of 3 years	TBC	Not in current AMP

Appendix E - Performance Indicators and Targets 20

Development Strategy			
Spatial Principle / Policy	Indicator	Target	Implementation
SP1 - Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development	Number of dwellings completed on Previously Developed Land (PDL)	Maximise	Development Management Process Local Plan policies Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section
	Percentage of completions at each level of the sustainable settlement hierarchy as set out in SP3		
SP2 - Stafford Borough Housing and Employment Requirements	Net Number of new houses delivered	Maintain a 5 year land supply 500 dwellings per year	Development Management Process Local Plan policies Stafford Borough Council Housing section Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section
	Number of net additional Gypsy and Traveller residential and transit pitches permitted and delivered	Maintain a 5 year supply of Gypsy and Traveller pitches. 8 hectares per year	
	Employment land available by type		
	Amount of additional employment floorspace by type		
			Contingency
			Work with partners to alleviate constraints on PDL sites Where appropriate restrict new development in areas where indicative housing proportions have been exceed Consider a review of the policy
			Identify the problems and barriers to development via discussions and/or assessment Where appropriate restrict new development in areas where indicative housing proportions have been exceed Consider a review of the policy

20 Appendix E - Performance Indicators and Targets

SP3 - Stafford Borough Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy	Stafford Percentage of additional dwellings provided in Stafford, Stone and Key Service Villages	Stafford Town 70% Stone Town 10% Key Service Villages 12% Rest of Borough Area 8%	Development Management Process Local Plan policies and Spatial Principles Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section	Identify the problems and barriers to development via discussions and/or assessment Where appropriate restrict new development in areas where indicative housing proportions have been exceeded Consider a review of the policy
SP4 - Stafford Borough Housing Growth Distribution	Number of new Houses built (net completions)	500 per year	Development Management Process Local Plan policies and Spatial Principles Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section	Identify the problems and barriers to development via discussions and/or assessment Where appropriate restrict new development in areas where indicative housing proportions have been exceeded Where appropriate consider phasing affordable housing requirement or reassess percentage requirement Consider a review of the policy
SP5 - Stafford Borough Employment Growth Distribution	Employment land Available by type delivered in Stafford Borough Amount of floorspace developed in Stafford Borough	8 hectares per year	Development Management Process Local Plan policies and Spatial Principles Stafford Borough Council Economic Regeneration section Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section	Identify the problems and barriers to development via discussions and/or assessment Work with key partners to encourage development through assisting with access to funding and resources Consider a review of the policy
SP6 - Achieving Rural Sustainability	Amount of land and floorspace developed outside key service villages	Increase the level of appropriate employment schemes and other rural diversification schemes Increase the number of rural affordable houses in rural areas commensurate with local need	Development Management Process Local Plan policies Stafford Borough Housing section Stafford Borough Council Economic Regeneration section	Identify the problems and barriers to development via discussions and/or assessment Work with key partners to encourage development through assisting with access to funding and resources

Appendix E - Performance Indicators and Targets 20

<p>Number of completed conversions of traditional rural buildings</p> <p>Number of Rural Exceptions Housing Completed</p>	<p>Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section</p>	<p>Consider a review of the policy</p>
<p>SP7 - Supporting the Location of New Development</p>		
<p>Percentage of dwellings completed at each level of the SP3</p>	<p>Stafford Town 70%</p> <p>Stone Town 10%</p> <p>Key Service Villages 12%</p> <p>Rest of Borough Area 8%</p>	
<p>Area Based Policies</p>	<p>Development Management Process</p> <p>Local Plan policies</p> <p>Stafford Borough Council Housing section</p> <p>Stafford Borough Council Economic Regeneration section</p> <p>Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section</p>	<p>Identify the problems and barriers to development via discussions and/or assessment</p> <p>Where appropriate consider phasing affordable housing requirement or reassess percentage requirement</p> <p>Consider a review of the policy</p>
<p>Spatial Principle / Policy</p>	<p>Target</p>	<p>Contingency</p>
<p>Policy Stafford 1 - Stafford Town</p>	<p>Total Number of Net Additional Dwellings delivered in Stafford Town over the Plan period</p> <p>Employment land Available by type delivered on Strategic sites in Stafford Town</p> <p>Amount of additional employment floorspace by type in Stafford Town</p> <p>Monitor implementation and delivery of infrastructure projects necessary on strategic sites to bring the project forward</p>	<p>7,000 houses to be delivered in Stafford Town over the Plan period</p> <p>To achieve 30% affordable housing.</p> <p>To achieve an affordable housing mix of 80% social rented housing and 20% intermediate tenure housing</p> <p>Up to 400 dwellings to be delivered for Military personnel returning</p>

20 Appendix E - Performance Indicators and Targets

<p>Policy Stafford 2 - North of Stafford</p>	<p>Loss of employment land to non employment uses</p>	<p>Provision of new employment sites to the north and East of Stafford</p> <p>14,000 sqm (net) of non-food retailing and 3,400 sqm (net) of food retail to be delivered in Stafford Town Centre</p> <p>Deliver Western and Eastern Access Improvements</p> <p>No loss of employment land to non employment uses</p>	<p>Consider a review of the policy</p>
<p>Net Number of Additional Dwellings</p> <p>Gross affordable housing completions</p> <p>Mixture of tenure and types of new dwellings</p> <p>Employment land Available by type delivered on Strategic sites housing</p> <p>Amount of additional employment floorspace by type</p> <p>Planning permission and completions of local community based infrastructure and educational facilities</p> <p>Monitor implementation and delivery of infrastructure projects necessary to bring the project forward</p>	<p>3,100 houses to be delivered in Stafford Town over the plan period</p> <p>To achieve 30%affordable housing</p> <p>To achieve an affordable housing mix of 80% social rented housing and 20% intermediate tenure housing</p> <p>A proportion of the properties to be two or three bedroomed properties</p> <p>36ha of employment to be delivered on the SDL</p> <p>Provision of new employment site to the north</p> <p>Deliver infrastructure as set out in Appendix D</p>	<p>Through Stafford Borough Council Economic Regeneration and Forward Planning sections in conjunction with the development management decision making process</p> <p>Identify problems and barriers/ causes to implementing development through discussions with landowners and developers</p> <p>Work with developers and landowners to bring sites forward faster(e.g through development phasing, affordable housing phasing)</p> <p>Work with key partners to better access funding resources to deliver major infrastructure projects</p> <p>Where appropriate restrict new development in areas where indicative housing proportions have been exceed</p> <p>Consider a review of the policy</p>	<p>Consider a review of the policy</p>

Appendix E - Performance Indicators and Targets 20

<p>Policy Stafford 3 - West of Stafford</p>	<p>Net Number of Additional Dwellings Gross affordable housing completions Mixture of tenure of new dwellings Employment land Available by type delivered on Strategic sites Amount of additional employment floorspace by type delivered on the SDL Planning permission and completions of local community based infrastructure Monitor implementation and delivery of infrastructure projects necessary to bring the project forward</p>	<p>2,200 houses to be delivered in Stafford Town over the plan period To achieve 30% affordable housing To achieve an affordable housing mix of 80% social rented housing and 20% intermediate tenure housing 5ha of employment to be delivered on the SDL A proportion of the properties to be two or three bedroomed properties Deliver infrastructure as set out in Appendix D</p>	<p>Through Stafford Borough Council Economic Regeneration and Forward Planning sections in conjunction with the development management decision making process</p>	<p>Identify problems and barriers/ causes to implementing development through discussions with landowners and developers Work with developers and landowners to bring sites forward faster (e.g through development phasing, affordable housing phasing) Work with key partners to better access funding resources to deliver major infrastructure projects Where appropriate restrict new development in areas where indicative housing proportions have been exceeded Consider a review of the policy</p>
<p>Policy Stafford 4 - East of Stafford</p>	<p>Net Number of Additional Dwellings Gross affordable housing completions Mixture of tenure of new dwellings Employment land Available by type delivered on Strategic sites Amount of additional employment floorspace by type delivered at Beacon Hill Planning permission and completions of local community based infrastructure</p>	<p>600 houses to be delivered in Stafford Town over the plan period To achieve 30% affordable housing To achieve an affordable housing mix of 80% social rented housing and 20% intermediate tenure housing 20ha of employment land to be delivered at Beacon Hill A proportion of the properties to be two or three bedroomed properties</p>	<p>Through Stafford Borough Council Economic Regeneration and Forward Planning sections in conjunction with the development management decision making process</p>	<p>Identify problems and barriers/ causes to implementing development through discussions with landowners and developers Work with developers and landowners to bring sites forward faster (e.g through development phasing, affordable housing phasing) Work with key partners to better access funding resources to deliver major infrastructure projects Where appropriate restrict new development in areas where indicative housing proportions have been exceeded Consider a review of the policy</p>

20 Appendix E - Performance Indicators and Targets

<p>Monitor implementation and delivery of infrastructure projects necessary to bring the project forward</p> <p>Loss of employment land to non employment uses</p>	<p>Deliver infrastructure as set out in Appendix D</p> <p>No loss of employment land to non employment uses</p>	<p>Identify problems and barriers/ causes to implementing development through discussions with landowners and developers</p> <p>Work with developers and landowners to bring sites forward faster (e.g through development phasing, affordable housing phasing)</p> <p>Work with key partners to better access funding resources to deliver major infrastructure projects</p> <p>Where appropriate restrict new development in areas where indicative housing proportions have been exceeded</p> <p>Consider a review of the policy</p>
<p>Policy Stone 1 - Stone Town</p> <p>Total Number of Net Additional Dwellings delivered in Stone Town over the Plan period</p> <p>Gross affordable housing completions</p> <p>Mixture of tenure of new dwellings</p> <p>Employment land Available by type delivered on Strategic sites</p> <p>Amount of additional employment floorspace by type</p> <p>Planning permission and completions of local community based infrastructure</p> <p>Monitor implementation and delivery of infrastructure projects necessary to bring the project forward</p> <p>Loss of employment land to non employment uses</p>	<p>1,000 houses to be delivered in Stone Town over the Plan period</p> <p>To achieve 40% affordable housing</p> <p>To achieve an affordable housing mix of 80% social rented housing and 20% intermediate tenure housing</p> <p>1,700 sqm (net) of food retailing and 400 sqm (net) of non food retailing to be delivered at Stone Town</p> <p>A proportion of the properties to be two or three bedroomed properties</p> <p>Deliver infrastructure as set out in Appendix D</p> <p>No loss of employment land to non employment uses</p>	<p>Through Stafford Borough Council Economic Regeneration sections in conjunction with the development management decision making process</p>
<p>Policy Stone 2 - West and South of Stone</p> <p>Net Number of Additional Dwellings</p> <p>Gross affordable housing completions</p>	<p>500 dwellings to be delivered in Stone Town over the plan period</p> <p>To achieve 40% affordable housing</p>	<p>Identify problems and barriers/ causes to implementing development through discussions with landowners and developers</p> <p>Work with developers and landowners to bring sites forward faster (e.g through development phasing, affordable housing phasing)</p> <p>Work with key partners to better access funding resources to deliver major infrastructure projects</p> <p>Where appropriate restrict new development in areas where indicative housing proportions have been exceeded</p> <p>Consider a review of the policy</p>

Appendix E - Performance Indicators and Targets 20

	<p>Mixture of tenure of new dwellings</p> <p>Employment land Available by type</p> <p>Planning permission and completions of local community based infrastructure</p> <p>Monitor implementation and delivery of infrastructure projects necessary to bring the project forward</p> <p>Loss of employment land to non employment uses</p>	<p>To achieve an affordable housing mix of 80% social rented housing and 20% intermediate tenure housing</p> <p>A proportion of the properties to be two or three bedroomed properties</p> <p>20 ha of employment land to be delivered south of Stone Business Park</p> <p>Deliver infrastructure as set out in Appendix D</p> <p>No loss of employment land to non employment uses</p>	<p>Work with developers and landowners to bring sites forward faster (e.g through development phasing, affordable housing phasing)</p> <p>Work with key partners to better access funding resources to deliver major infrastructure projects</p> <p>Where appropriate restrict new development in areas where indicative housing proportions have been exceed</p> <p>Consider a review of the policy</p>
<p>Economy</p>			
<p>Spatial Principle / Policy</p>	<p>Indicator</p>	<p>Target</p>	<p>Implementation</p>
<p>Policy E1 - Local Economy</p>	<p>Amount and % of employment floorspace developed on PDL</p> <p>Amount and Type of land Available</p> <p>Amount of employment land lost to other uses</p>	<p>Maintain a ready supply of employment land to meet future needs.</p> <p>Minimise the loss of employment land to other uses</p>	<p>Through Stafford Borough Council Economic Regeneration and Forward Planning sections in conjunction with the development management decision making process</p> <p>Work in partnership with landowners to identify the reasons why employment land is not coming forward and where necessary undertake a review of employment supply to identify alternative site</p> <p>Consider a policy review</p>
<p>Policy E2 - Sustainable Rural Development</p>	<p>Amount of employment based planning permissions granted within rural areas</p> <p>Completions of Rural Exception Housing</p>	<p>Maximise the provision of employment land within rural areas.</p> <p>Increase the number of rural affordable houses in rural areas commensurate with local need</p>	<p>Through Stafford Borough Council Economic Regeneration and Forward Planning sections in conjunction with the development management decision making process</p> <p>Review employment sites and identify alternative sites and seek to explain why sites are not coming forward.</p> <p>Where necessary review the policy.</p>

20 Appendix E - Performance Indicators and Targets

Policy E3 - Development within Recognised Industrial Estates	Amount of new employment floorspace granted planning permission within Recognised Industrial Estates	Maximise the provision of employment land within Recognised Industrial Estates.	Through Stafford Borough Council Economic Regeneration and Forward Planning sections in conjunction with the development management decision making process	Identify the reasons why employment land is not coming forward within RIEs, where necessary undertake a review of employment supply to identify alternative sites
Policy E4 - Raleigh Hall and Ladfordfields Recognised Industrial Estates	Amount of new Employment land granted planning permission on Ladfordfields and Raleigh Hall RIE's	Deliver 4 ha of new employment land at Raleigh Hall and 6 ha at Ladfordfields	Through Stafford Borough Council Economic Regeneration and Forward Planning sections in conjunction with the development management decision making process	Work in partnership with landowners to identify the reasons why employment land is not coming forward and, where necessary undertake a review of employment supply to identify alternative sites
Policy E5 - Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt	Amount of new employment land developed on Major Developed Sites Amount and % of employment floorspace developed on PDL	Maximise	Through Stafford Borough Council Economic Regeneration and Forward Planning sections in conjunction with the development management decision making process	Work in partnership with landowners to identify the reasons why employment land is not coming forward and, where necessary undertake a review of employment supply to identify alternative sites Identify funding to bring forward major sites.
Policy E6 - Tourism	Number of Hotel spaces granted planning permission	Encourage	Through Stafford Borough Council Economic Regeneration and Forward Planning sections in conjunction with the development management decision making process	If number of tourist visitors are diminishing over a five year period then assess sections opportunities to promote tourism
Policy E7 - Canal Facilities and New Marinas	Number of new canal facilities or marinas developments granted planning permission	No Set Target	Through Stafford Borough Council Economic Regeneration and Forward Planning sections in conjunction with the development management decision making process	N/A
Policy E8 - Town, Local and Other Centres	Amount of Floorspace for retail, leisure, office within Town Centres	Focus retail and office and leisure developments on Stafford and Stone Town centres. Protect existing facilities within existing town and key service village centres	Through Stafford Borough Council Economic Regeneration and Forward Planning sections in conjunction with the development management decision making process	Identify reasons why town centre floorspace is being reduced and prepare alternative delivery strategy. Review Town centre boundaries where necessary.

Appendix E - Performance Indicators and Targets 20

				development management decision making process	Initiate dialogue with commercial agents over rents and the availability of suitable properties with centres Review policy if necessary.
Transport					
					Contingency
Spatial Principle / Policy	Indicator	Target	Implementation		
Policy T1 - Transport	Number of planning permissions granted for major developments with secured Travel plans	Secure travel Plans on all major developments	Through Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section in conjunction with the development management decision making process and Staffordshire County Council Transport		Identify reasons why travels plans are not being submitted and encourage large schemes to submit travel plans through discussions with Development management and SCC
Policy T2 - Parking and Manoeuvring	For developments to meet the parking Standards set out in Appendix B	All developments to be in accordance with the Car Parking standards in Appendix B of the Local Plan.	Through Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section in conjunction with the development management decision making process and Staffordshire County Council Transport		Standards and policy to be reviewed if necessary
Communities					
					Contingency
Spatial Principle / Policy	Indicator	Target	Implementation		
Policy C1 - Dwelling Types and Sizes	Monitor the mix of housing type (i.e flats/houses and bedroom number).	Housing types and sizes to meet the identified needs as set out in the SHMA	Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section Development Management Process		Identify reasons why the appropriate mix is not being delivered and reassess the most appropriate mix through an updated SHMA. Policy to be reviewed if necessary
Policy C2 - Affordable Housing	Annual number of affordable housing completions (Gross) Number of net completions of rural exception houses	Affordable housing to be at least 30% and 40% on qualifying sites On rural exception sites 100% dwellings affordable in perpetuity for lifetime of development.	Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section Development Management Process		Consider negotiating a phased delivery of affordable housing Consider reassessing percentage requirement

20 Appendix E - Performance Indicators and Targets

					Work with Housing Dept and key partners to assess funding, resources to increase delivery Consider granting an element of market housing on exceptions sites to increase viability.
Policy C3 - Specialist Housing	Number of new Extra Care units completed on an annual basis	No net loss of Specialist accommodation Deliver at least one extra care facility in each of the District's localities Deliver 954 net additional units over the plan period	Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section Development Management Process	Identify the problems / barriers to development via discussions or assessments. Where necessary identify sites with a specific requirement for an element of specialist housing.	
Policy C4 - Housing Conversions and Subdivisions	N/A	No target	Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section Development Management Process	N/A	
Policy C5 - Residential Proposals outside the Settlement Hierarchy	Number of net completions of rural exception houses Number of inappropriate developments granted in the Green Belt	On rural exception sites 100% dwellings affordable in perpetuity for lifetime of development. No inappropriate developments to be permitted in the Green Belt	Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section Development Management Process	Identify the problems / barriers to development via discussions or assessments. Where appropriate review of availability of sites within development boundaries or outside Green Belt through SHLAA Increase dwelling densities on identified sites within the settlement hierarchy. Consider allowing an element of market housing within rural exceptions housing	
Policy C6 - Provision for Gypsies, Travellers & Travelling and Show-people	Number of net additional Gypsy and Traveller residential and transit pitches permitted and delivered	Maintain a 5 year supply of Gypsy and Traveller Pitches	Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section	Identify sites specifically for Gypsies and Traveller pitches	

Appendix E - Performance Indicators and Targets 20

				Development Management Process Stafford Borough Council Housing section	Work with key partner organisations such as the HCA, Gypsy and traveller Liaison groups to bring forward those sites Consider a policy review
Policy C7 - Open Space, Sport and Recreation	Number of planning permissions determined where a loss of sole result in a loss of community facilities is proposed. Recreational facilities provided in new developments	No applications permitted that result in a loss of facilities where a need is proven New development that generates a local need provides commensurate level and quality of facilities		Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section Development Management Process Stafford Borough Leisure Dept.	Work with Development Management to ensure that loss of facilities are mitigated or new, upgraded or contributions are sought where appropriate. Identify funding to bring forward more facilities for open space, sport and recreation Review policy if necessary
Environment					
Spatial Principle / Policy	Indicator	Target	Implementation		
Policy N1 - Design	Number and % of housing sites (10+ dwellings) with the number of greens, ambers and reds	All sites of 10+ dwellings to maximise the number of greens in a building for life assessment.	Through Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section in conjunction with the development management decision making process Liaise with management to examine availability of officer time to undertake Bfl assessments Work with developers at per-application stage to encourage better compliance with Bfl standards		
Policy N2 - Climate Change	Percentage of new developments with SUDS Percentage of new residential developments built to zero carbon standard	All new developments to incorporate SUDS All new residential development to achieve zero carbon standard in line with Government guidance	Through Stafford Borough Council Housing and Forward Planning section in conjunction with the development management decision making process and local partnership organisations Identify the causes/ barriers to development via discussions and/ or assessments. Work with development control to improve pro active discussions between development control and applicants		

20 Appendix E - Performance Indicators and Targets

	<p>Percentage of new non-residential developments meeting relevant BREEAM level</p> <p>Percentage of household waste that is recycled or composted</p>	<p>All new non-residential developments up to 1,000square metres to meet BREEAM 'Very Good' standard and all developments over 1,000 square metres will to meet 'Excellent' standard.</p> <p>Maximise the percentage of household waste that is recycled or composted</p>		
<p>Policy N3 - Low Carbon Sources & Renewable Energy</p>	<p>Amount of renewable energy installed by capacity and type</p>	<p>Maximise the amount of renewable energy generated in line with national targets</p>	<p>Through Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section in conjunction with the development management decision making process and local partnership organisations</p>	<p>Identify the causes/ barriers to development via discussions and/ or assessments.</p> <p>Work with development control to improve pro active discussions between development control and applicants</p> <p>Promote funding available under the available grants and subsidies</p> <p>Work with developers to increase understanding of practicalities of implementing renewable energy schemes and the added value they convey on developments</p>
<p>Policy N4 - The Natural Environment & Green Infrastructure</p>	<p>Amount of new green infrastructure provided</p> <p>Change in areas of biodiversity importance</p>	<p>Secure improvements to Green Infrastructure</p> <p>Reduce the loss of areas of biodiversity importance</p>	<p>Through Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section in conjunction with the development management decision making process and local partnership organisations</p>	<p>Identify the causes/ barriers to development via discussions and/ or assessments.</p> <p>Investigate funding opportunities from a variety of sources (e.g. Lottery, CIL, S106)</p> <p>Prioritise key routes for GI investment</p>

Appendix E - Performance Indicators and Targets 20

<p>Policy N5 - Sites of European, National & Local Nature Conservation Importance</p>	<p>Change in areas of biodiversity importance</p>	<p>Reduce the loss of areas of biodiversity importance No planning permission should have an adverse impact on designated sites</p>	<p>Through Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section in conjunction with the development management decision making process and local partnership organisations</p>	<p>Assess reasons for failure and improve training and understanding of Development Management officers</p>
<p>Policy N6 - Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC)</p>	<p>Through the Development management process</p>	<p>No planning applications to be granted that would adversely impact on the SAC Deliver effective mitigation to overcome impacts of development</p>	<p>Through Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section in conjunction with the development management decision making process and local partnership organisations</p>	<p>if adverse effects are occurring review the implementation and mitigation strategy</p>
<p>Policy N7 - Cannock Chase AONB</p>	<p>Number of new applications granted planning permission contrary to AONB Partnership advice</p>	<p>No new applications granted planning permission contrary to AONB Partnership advice</p>	<p>Through Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section in conjunction with the development management decision making process and local partnership organisations</p>	<p>Assess reasons for failure and improve training and understanding of Development Management officers</p>
<p>Policy N8 - Landscape Character</p>	<p>Number of planning applications refused on landscape character would have a negative impact on Landscape Character grounds.</p>	<p>No applications permitted that would have a negative impact on Landscape Character</p>	<p>Through Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section in conjunction with the development management decision making process and local partnership organisations</p>	<p>Identify the causes/ reasons for failure and improve training and understanding for officers. Work with Development Management to encourage greater awareness of Landscape character issues through pre-application discussions. Develop supplementary planning guidance on landscape character</p>
<p>Policy N9 - Historic Environment</p>	<p>Number of Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Conservation Areas and Historic Parks and Gardens on the English Heritage 'At Risk' register Number of Listed Buildings Lost</p>	<p>No increase to the English Heritage 'at Risk register'. No net Loss of Listed Buildings</p>	<p>Stafford Borough Council Forward Planning section Development Management Conservation Officer.</p>	<p>Identify the causes/ impacts on historic environment via discussions and/ or assessments. Liaise with Stafford Borough Conservation Officer and English Heritage.</p>

20 Appendix E - Performance Indicators and Targets

Infrastructure				
Spatial Principle / Policy	Indicator	Target	Implementation	Contingencies
Policy I1 - Infrastructure Delivery	New Infrastructure provided	Monitor contributions and infrastructure delivery against targets set in the IDP.	Staffordshire Local Transport Plan Stafford Borough Council Infrastructure providers	Identify the problems/barriers to infrastructure delivery Explore alternative funding mechanisms to deliver the necessary infrastructure Discuss with partners (e.g. SCC, Developers, SBC) on how to best overcome infrastructure delivery problems Explore the use of phasing infrastructure over a longer period or renegotiation of tariffs to facilitate infrastructure delivery

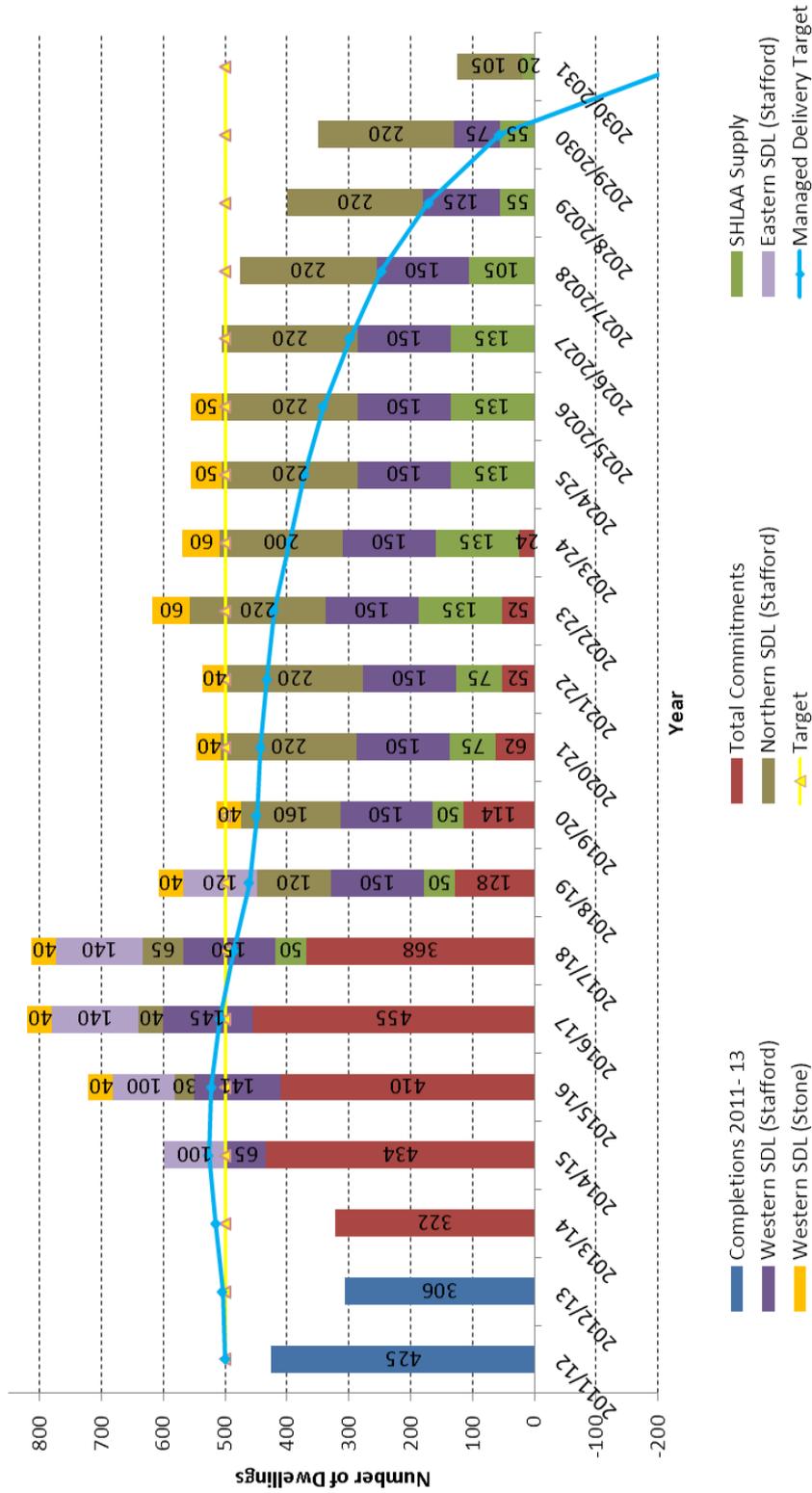
Appendix F - Housing Trajectories 21

Stafford Borough Trajectory

Data to Graph 20 year trajectory	Total target over 20 years																			
	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6	Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11	Yr12	Yr13	Yr14	Yr15	Yr16	Yr17	Yr18	Yr19	Yr20
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/2031
Completions 2011-13	425	306																		
Total Commitments			322	434	410	455	368	128	114	62	52	52	24							
SHLAA Supply							50	50	50	75	75	135	135	135	135	135	105	55	55	20
Western SDL (Stafford)				65	141	145	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	125	75	
Northern SDL (Stafford)					30	40	65	120	160	220	220	220	200	220	220	220	220	220	220	105
Eastern SDL (Stafford)				100	100	140	140	120												
Western SDL (Stone)					40	40	40	40	40	40	40	60	60	50	50					
Dwellings Completed	425	306																		
Identified for completion			322	599	721	820	813	608	514	547	537	617	569	555	555	505	475	400	350	125
Cumulative Completions	425	731	1,053	1,652	2,373	3,193	4,006	4,614	5,128	5,675	6,212	6,829	7,398	7,953	8,508	9,013	9,488	9,888	10,238	10,363
Target	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
Cumulative Target	500	1,000	1,500	2,000	2,500	3,000	3,500	4,000	4,500	5,000	5,500	6,000	6,500	7,000	7,500	8,000	8,500	9,000	9,500	10,000
Managed Delivery Target	500	504	515	526	522	508	486	461	449	443	433	421	396	372	341	298	247	171	56	-238
Number of years left in Plan(s)	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

21 Appendix F - Housing Trajectories

Housing Trajectory



Appendix F - Housing Trajectories 21

Delivery Over Time: The Housing Trajectory

The Housing Trajectory demonstrates the potential delivery of housing in Stafford Borough over the Plan period between 2011 and 2031, and provides a broad estimate of timescales. These have been informed by discussions with agents and landowners of key sites and analysis of historical delivery rates and potential future trends. The following data sources have been used to calculate the supply of housing likely to come forward in Stafford Borough between 2011 and 2031, based on the strategy set out in the new Local Plan:

- Completions
- Outstanding Commitments
- SHLAA Sites

Completions: the housing trajectory includes dwellings already completed between 2011/12 and 2012/13 (2 financial years, i.e. from 1st April 2011 to 31st March 2013). This data has been taken from the Housing Monitor: Land for New Homes 2013.

Total Commitments: this source relates to sites with outstanding planning permission. These sites are divided into two subsets: commitments on smaller sites up to 9 dwellings with the vast majority being below 5 dwellings, and larger sites capable of accommodating 10+ dwellings or more. Delivery rates are those estimated by developers and owners, or estimated by the Council where this information has not been provided to inform the housing trajectory. Development of smaller sites are not subject to significant infrastructure constraints, and thus are assumed to be completed within the first five years of the plan period. Development of larger sites are expected to provide a smaller proportion of new housing in the first 5 years of the Plan period, but housing provision will increase on these sites in years 6 to 15.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) Supply: sites in the SHLAA include those promoted to the authority by land owners, developers and agents and sites which have been identified by the Council. Each site has been assessed in terms of its suitability, availability and achievability for residential development. The SHLAA contains a large reservoir of sites, including previous Local Plan allocations and the proposed SDLs. The delivery and phasing rates for these sites will be informed by the production of site-specific master plans, but the currently expected rates are identified in the table. These have been primarily based on information provided by developers / agents. Where this is absent, phasing rates have been estimated by the Council.

The housing trajectory itself is a tool that draws together various strands of information on the Borough's position on the supply of new housing, both in terms of previous performance and projected performance against the new Local Plan target. The trajectory, shown for the Borough provides the basis for analysing housing performance and allows the application of a plan, monitor and manage approach. The Trajectory has a number of principal components:

Identified For Completion: (identified by the columns within the Trajectory and generated by the identified for completion row of the table)

The projected completions over the first five year period (2013/14 – 2017/18) start from a low base and gradually increase over the period. The principal component of the first five years is made up of the existing committed supply. This comprises sites that are under construction or sites not started. Large quantities of sites with permission are due for completion either within the first five years or shortly after. In addition, within the first five years the existing commitments will diminish as the primary source of new housing and build rates from the Northern, Western and Eastern Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) around Stafford town will provide significant contributions to the delivery of new housing. Delivery timescales for the Western and Eastern SDLs at Stafford have primarily been based on information provided through detailed discussions with the developers, whilst build rates for the Northern SDL at Stafford and the Western SDL at Stone have been estimated by the Council.

The 6 - 15 year element of the plan period extends from 2018/19 – 2030/31. Within this period the pool of committed sites will provide a diminishing source of new housing. SHLAA sites that are considered developable (reflecting the assessment undertaken by the SHLAA Partnership) will provide a source of new housing from 2018/19 onwards. The quantum of housing to be delivered on SHLAA sites reflects the potential for new provision, taking account of the overall historic delivery rates and expected future trends. The delivery of housing from SHLAA sites has been approximately averaged across the period as it is not possible to accurately predict when certain sites will come forward. Also, within this period the Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) will deliver the majority of the housing requirements. Delivery timescales for the Western and Eastern SDLs at Stafford have primarily been based on information provided through detailed discussions with the developers, whilst build rates for the Northern SDL at Stafford and the Western SDL at Stone have been estimated by the Council.

21 Appendix F - Housing Trajectories

Target: (identified by the yellow target line generated by the target row of the table). The Housing target is the annualised dwelling requirement over the plan period. The Plan for Stafford Borough sets an annual dwelling requirement of 500 dwellings per annum.

Managed Delivery Target: the blue manage line (generated by the identified for completion row of the table) is used to monitor under supply or over supply of housing at any one point. It thus enables assessment of whether past shortfalls or surpluses need to be addressed. It is calculated using a residual method and is derived from the total new Local Plan requirement less the cumulative rate of completions divided by the number of years a plan strategy has left to run.

Appendix G - Local Space Standards 22

These standards are taken from the Green Infrastructure, Greenspace and Sport and Recreation Provision Strategy (2013).

Provision & Type	Standard (sq m per person)	Ratio to People	Notes
Allotments			
Urban areas	3.5		
Rural areas	1.6		
Artificial Turf Pitches (ATPs)			
Borough-wide	0.55		At least six additional full size ATPs and one 60 X 40 m training area
Athletics Tracks			
Borough-wide	None required		
Bowling Greens			
Borough-wide	0.16		Ideal green size of 37m X 37m, minimum size 25m X 25m
Equipped Play Provision			
Borough-wide	0.45	Destination or strategic site to 8,000 residents	
Golf courses			
		1 hole to 1,100 people	
Grass Pitches			
Total	14.5		
Cricket (Borough-wide)	4.3		
Mini Soccer (Borough-wide)	1.0		
Youth Football (Borough-wide)	2.6		
Adult Football (Borough-wide)	3.8		
Football sub-total	7.4		
Mini rugby (Borough-wide)	0.4		
Midi rugby (Borough-wide)	1.0		
Adult rugby (Borough-wide)	1.4		
Rugby sub-total	2.8		

22 Appendix G - Local Space Standards

Provision & Type	Standard (sq m per person)	Ratio to People	Notes
Multi-functional Greenspace			
Amenity greenspace, natural greenspace, parks and gardens. Urban areas	15		
Amenity greenspace, natural greenspace, parks and gardens. Rural areas	10		
Tennis and multi-courts			
Borough-wide	0.45		
Teenage Facilities			
Urban	0.3		Minimum site size 1,000 sqm
Rural	0.2		Minimum site size 1,000 sqm
Indoor Sports			
Sports Hall	0.09		
Swimming Pools	0.04		
Tennis courts	0.04		