

South Staffordshire Council

**Local Development Framework - Core
Strategy (Consultation Document)**

Appropriate Assessment Review

February 2009

South Staffordshire Local Development Framework

Core Strategy Development Plan Document: Preferred Spatial Strategy - Consultation Document (January 2009)

Appropriate Assessment Review

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1. Introduction and Background

1.1 Background

Atkins Limited (Atkins) has been commissioned by South Staffordshire Council to undertake a *Appropriate Assessment* review of the South Staffordshire Local Development Framework *Core Strategy Development Plan Document: Preferred Spatial Strategy Consultation Document* (January 2009).

The Core Strategy

The *Core Strategy Development Plan Document: Preferred Spatial Strategy Consultation Document* (hereafter referred to as the Core Strategy) contains broad policies for steering and shaping development within the district as well as defining areas where development should be limited. It is a high level strategic document that sets out the long-term spatial planning framework for the development of South Staffordshire between 2008 and 2026. The Core Strategy that has been reviewed is not the final version and it does not set out detailed wording of policies. Rather it is a consultation document that sets out the proposed contents of the Core Strategy and the focus of its policies. This consultation version of the Core Strategy is likely to alter following feedback from the consultation process being carried out from February 2009 onwards.

The Core Strategy currently contains the outline of 57 policies including 22 Core Policies and 35 Development Policies (policies which support the Core Policies).

1.2 Background to Appropriate Assessment

Appropriate Assessment (AA) is required by Regulation 48 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) (the Habitat Regulations) for all plans and projects which may have adverse effects on European sites. European sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA). AA is also required, as a matter of UK Government policy for potential SPAs (pSPA), candidate SACs (cSAC) and listed Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites) for the purposes of considering plans and projects, which may affect them¹. Hereafter all of the above designated nature conservation sites are referred to as 'European sites'.

Local development plans which include general policies often do not relate to specific development proposals but provide an overall strategy for development which is desirable within the boundary of the Plan (such as the district boundary). If the policies do not relate to specific development proposals then it can be difficult to assess the effects on a European site from the policies. For instance a policy may state that wind farms within the Plan boundary will be considered in order to meet national and regional renewable energy targets but may not include specific development proposals. It is not possible to conclude whether a wind farm will have a likely significant effect on a European site without knowledge of design and location of the wind farm. Unless the policy itself includes some details of location, size and design of the wind farm(s) it cannot be concluded that the policy will or will not have a likely significant effect on an international site.

However, the local development plan can be written in such a way that European sites are considered. For instance, the Plan can state that any proposed developments under the Plan

¹ Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation, ODPM (August 2005)

must have regard to and consider any adverse effects upon international sites. When a local authority considers a development proposal they must have regard to the whole plan including the introductory text and supporting text to the policies. Therefore the Plan may include text which states that consideration of international sites must be given in the development control process. This should ensure that developments are not permitted which could have significant adverse impacts on international sites.

1.3 AA Review

The purpose of this report is to carry out an initial review of the Core Strategy as part of the initial stages of AA. The review will highlight whether the broad outline of the policies are likely to lead to potential effects on the European sites within and adjacent to the district and what these likely impacts are. The review also makes recommendations, where relevant, on how impacts could be avoided. Recommendations are also made for any additional information that should be included in the Plan and how policies could be worded to help prevent likely significant effects on European sites occurring when the final draft of the Core Strategy is produced.

The review will help to satisfy Natural England (and any other statutory bodies) that the AA process has been considered and is being followed appropriately and that due consideration has been paid to the Habitat Regulations throughout the development of the Plan.

Natural England was contacted in January 2009 for their opinion on the methodology for this AA review (Graham Walker, West Midlands Government and Planning Team).

1.4 Outline of this Review Report

Following this introduction:

- Section 2 of this report sets out the methodology used for this AA review;
- Section 3 outlines the results of the AA review: including whether the outline policies have likely significant effects on the European sites and a justification for the conclusion reached and, in some cases, recommendations on how policies could be worded in the final draft of the Core Strategy;
- Section 4 details additional recommendations for changes to the Core Strategy to be made as part of the Final Draft of the plan; and
- Section 5 provides the conclusions of the AA review.

2. Methodology

2.1 Identification of Relevant European Sites - Sieving

A sieving exercise was undertaken at the outset of the AA review to determine which European sites were likely to be affected by the policies laid out in the Core Strategy. This involved identifying all European sites within 20 km² of the South Staffordshire boundary and determining which of these sites were likely to be impacted by the policies in the plan.

There is one European site within South Staffordshire, the Motte Meadows SAC. This site is designated for its lowland hay meadows.

There are also an additional six European sites present within 20 km of the South Staffordshire district boundary:

- Cannock Chase SAC: Located directly adjacent to the north-eastern boundary of the district;
- Cannock Extension Canal SAC: Located approximately 750 m east of the district, near Wyrley Common, Cannock Chase;
- Fens Pools SAC: Located approximately 2.5 km east of the district, in Pensnett, Dudley;
- Midland Meres and Mosses Ramsar Site (Phase 2 site): Located approximately 4.2 km north of the district, near Newport, Stafford;
- Pasturefields Saltmarsh SAC: Located approximately 6.1 km north-east of the district, near Hixon, Stafford; and
- West Midland Mosses SAC: Located approximately 10 km north-east of the district, near Stowe-by-Chartley, Stafford.

There are no cSACs, pSPAs or pRamsar sites present within South Staffordshire or within 20 km of the district boundary.

The policies within the Core Strategy are mainly of a localised nature and focus on regeneration of local services in the South Staffordshire with an increase in housing, tourism and employment in the district. Adverse effects from the Plan are considered very unlikely to extend far beyond the Plan boundary. There are unlikely to be significant emissions to air or water which could be generated through developments such as large scale power stations, and quarry operations as these types of development are not included in the Plan.

It is recognised that indirect effects such as recreational pressures may lead to effects outside of the Plan boundary and there are some international sites which may have features that are sensitive to disturbance. The following sites have been eliminated from the AA review process: Midland Meres & Mosses Ramsar Site, the Pasturefields Saltmarsh SAC and the West Midland Mosses SAC. This is because the nature of the policies and the nature of the designated features are such that it is extremely unlikely that there will be any adverse effects on the integrity of these sites given the distance from the Plan boundary. Midlands Meres and Mosses Ramsar site has

² Environment Agency guidance states that European sites within 15 km of any centrally dispatched coal or oil fired power station may be affected by emissions to air (Source: *Work Instruction: (Appendix 7) – Stage 1 and 2 of new Integrated Pollution Control (IPC), Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) permissions under the Habitat Regulations*). The initial search area for European sites is based on this figure and as a precautionary measure has been extended to 20 km to ensure that all possible impacts on internationally important sites are captured.

been designated for its diverse series of lowland open water and peatland sites, Pasturefields Saltmarsh SAC has been designated for its inland salt meadows and West Midland Mosses SAC has been designated for its transition mires, quaking bogs, bog woodland and natural dystrophic lakes and ponds. None of these international sites are considered to be particularly vulnerable to recreational or disturbance pressures from policies within the Plan.

Therefore this review focuses on possible likely significant effects of the Core Strategy on the following European sites: Motte Meadows SAC, Cannock Chase SAC, Cannock Extension Canal SAC and Fens Pools SAC. Further information on the reasons for designation for each of these sites are included in Appendix A.

2.2 Review of the Core Strategy

The Core Strategy was reviewed to identify if any of the policies in the Plan (or its supporting text) are likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of the European sites. The assessment of the plan and its policies has taken account of Natural England guidance³.

Where possible adverse impacts were noted, recommendations on how to avoid these impacts have been made. Furthermore, recommendations to further strengthen the Core Strategy in relation to its consideration of European sites and AA have also been made.

The assessment of the Core Strategy and the associated policies for the purpose of this AA review is summarised in Table 3.1 (see Section 3 below) which contains the following information:

- Policy number;
- Policy name;
- Assessment of whether or not each policy in the Core Strategy will have a likely significant effect on the European sites and a justification for this finding; and
- Recommendations for policy wording in the final Core Strategy.

Core Policies are shown in dark grey in Table 3.1, while the supporting Development Policies are shown in pale grey.

2.3 Consultation

Natural England was contacted in January 2009 for their opinion on the methodology for this AA review (Graham Walker, West Midlands Government and Planning Team). Natural England confirmed that they were happy with the approach being taken for this review.

This AA review will be sent to Natural England for their comments and approval.

³ *The Habitats Regulations Assessment of Regional Spatial Strategies and Sub-Regional Strategies – Draft Guidance*, David Tyldesley and Associates For Natural England (March 2007)

3. Findings of AA Review

3.1 Provisions for Environmental Protection in the Core Strategy

The review of the Core Strategy determined that it has a good grounding in environmental principles and it is clear that a fundamental aim of the document is to conserve, protect and enhance the natural environment within South Staffordshire.

Provisions within the Plan that seek to protect the environment include the following:

- Consideration of the requirements of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, particularly in achieving sustainable development (page 21);
- A recognition of the need to include the environmental priorities listed in the *Sustainable Community Strategy for South Staffordshire – A Community of Communities 2008-2020* (page 16);
- A recognition of the need to include the environmental objectives in the *Corporate Strategy (Serving Our Communities Safeguarding Our Environment) 2008-2012* (page 18);
- Highlighting environmental quality in the 'Issues and Challenges facing South Staffordshire' in Chapter 4 of the Plan including: protecting and improving the environment and protecting and enhancing South Staffordshire's biodiversity (page 21);
- Noting the need to maintain the local distinctiveness of the natural environment in the 'Vision for South Staffordshire' (Chapter 5, page 27);
- Strategic Objective 3: Which aims to protect and enhance South Staffordshire's environmental assets (page 33);
- Strategic Objective 4: Which aims to protect, conserve and enhance to the countryside, character and quality of the landscape and diversity of wildlife and habitats;
- Policy CP2: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment;
- Policy DP3: Protecting and Enhancing Natural Assets;
- Policy CP4: Sustainable Development Principles;
- Policy CP6: Other Environmental Matters;
- Policy DP20: Tourism;
- Policy DP21: Canals and Canalside Development;
- Policy DP34: Green Space Network; and
- Policy DP35: Safeguarding Open Land within Village Boundaries.

3.2 Summary of Review Findings

The initial review of all the policies within the Core Strategy shows that they are unlikely to lead to likely significant effects on the European sites (see Table 3.1 below). There are a number of development related policies within the document: CP7, CP8, CP12, CP13, CP16, DP26, DP27, DP30 and DP31 and these policies are likely to lead to some form of development taking place in the future. However, due to the strategic nature of the Core Strategy, the exact location of future developments is not known and it is not, therefore, possible to assess likely significant effects on the European sites at this stage. Furthermore, the Core Strategy is strongly geared towards

environmental protection and there are a large number of provisions in place to help protect important habitats such as European sites already existing within the Plan (see above).

Therefore any proposed development should adhere to all policies within the Core Strategy, including Policy CP2: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment and Policy DP3: Protecting and Enhancing Natural Assets. With these provisions in place it is unlikely that there will be adverse impacts on any of the European sites.

To further strengthen the Core Strategy, a number of recommendations for the wording of policies in the final draft of the Plan have been made (see final column of Table 3.1). In addition, it is recommended that a number of additional changes (summarised in Section 4 below) are made to the Core Strategy prior to it going out to Consultation in February 2009.

Table 3.1: AA review of proposed policies

Policy No	Policy Title	Any likely significant effects on European sites anticipated as a result of the policy?	Recommendations for final policy wording
CP1	The Spatial Strategy	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (e.g. it is not a land use planning policy).</p>	<p>Policy outline includes the protection of the Green Belt and Open Countryside. This should be extended to include nationally and internationally important habitats of importance for nature conservation present within the district.</p>
DP1	Major Developed Sites in the Greenbelt	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will only list sites that are considered suitable for re-development). The policy also seeks to enhance the natural environment (as it will list sites that are considered suitable for environmental improvement).</p>	<p>No recommendations for this policy.</p>
DP2	Development Boundaries	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will state criteria that will define the type of development that will be permitted within development boundaries).</p>	<p>No recommendations for this policy.</p>
CP2	Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment	<p>No: The policy intends to protect the natural environment, including biodiversity.</p>	<p>Policy should make specific reference to the locally, nationally and internationally important habitats of importance for nature conservation present within the district.</p>
DP3	Protecting and Enhancing Natural Assets	<p>No: The policy intends to protect the natural environment, including biodiversity. The policy also seeks to enhance existing sites important for nature conservation and to create new habitats of nature</p>	<p>Policy should make specific reference to Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) in addition to the Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves and Sites of Biological Importance that are</p>

Policy No	Policy Title	Any likely significant effects on European sites anticipated as a result of the policy?	Recommendations for final policy wording
		conservation value.	currently noted.
DP4	Protecting and Enhancing Heritage Assets	No: The policy intends to conserve the historic environment.	No recommendations for this policy.
DP5	Protecting the Character and Appearance of the Landscape	No: The policy intends to protect and enhance the District's landscape.	No recommendations for this policy.
CP3	Promoting High Quality Design	No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will relate solely to the design of development).	No recommendations for this policy.
DP6	Design Considerations	No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will relate solely to the design of development).	No recommendations for this policy.
DP7	Landscaping	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will relate solely to the design of development).</p> <p>Furthermore this policy may help to protect any European sites located in close proximity to a new development. This is because this policy will seek to ensure that landscaping is integrated into the overall design of new developments. This will ensure that new areas of open space will be provided for the public, potentially helping to reduce the risk of increased recreational pressure on any internationally important habitats nearby.</p>	No recommendations for this policy.
CP4	Sustainable Development Principles	No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will relate solely to the design of development and ensuring that the sustainable development principles	No recommendations for this policy.

Policy No	Policy Title	Any likely significant effects on European sites anticipated as a result of the policy?	Recommendations for final policy wording
		<p>are used).</p> <p>The policy also seeks to protect the natural environment.</p>	
DP8	Protecting Public Amenity	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (e.g. it is not a land use planning policy).</p>	No recommendations for this policy.
DP9	Developer Contributions	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (e.g. it will relate solely to how the developer should contribute towards the provision of additional infrastructure and community facilities).</p>	Policy should also include for developer provisions towards management of existing sites designated for their nature conservation value and/or creation of new nature conservation sites.
DP10	Utilities and Infrastructure	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (e.g. it is not a land use planning policy but rather will ensure the provision of utilities and infrastructure for new developments).</p> <p>The policy also seeks to protect the environment (i.e. systems to be provided are to be sustainable and must not have a harmful impact on the environment).</p>	No recommendations for this policy.
CP5	Use of Natural Resources	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (e.g. it is not a land use planning policy but rather will seek to minimise the impact of development on natural resources).</p>	No recommendations for this policy.
DP11	Sustainable Resources and Energy Efficiency	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will state standards for resource and energy efficiency to be met by new developments).</p>	No recommendations for this policy.

Policy No	Policy Title	Any likely significant effects on European sites anticipated as a result of the policy?	Recommendations for final policy wording
DP12	Waste	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will seek to promote reduction and re-use of waste and ensure provisions for recycling facilities are made in new developments).</p>	No recommendations for this policy.
CP6	Other Environmental Matters	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will seek to protect communities and the environment from forces such as noise and pollution).</p>	No recommendations for this policy.
DP13	Hazardous and Environmentally Sensitive Development Operations	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will seek to protect the public, land uses and the environment from activities likely to be detrimental to public health or amenity).</p>	No recommendations for this policy.
DP14	Impact of Noise	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development.</p> <p>The policy will also seek to protect noise sensitive locations by ensuring that development likely to generate harmful noise levels is directed to appropriate locations away from noise sensitive areas.</p>	<p>The Cannock Chase SSSI is designated in part for the nightjar population it supports. This bird is a notable species and is sensitive to disturbance (including disturbance from noise).</p> <p>The SSSI is located directly adjacent to the district boundary in Locality Area 1. This policy or its supporting text should make specific reference to the SSSI being a noise sensitive location.</p>
CP7	Scale and Distribution of New Housing Development	<p>No: This policy will lead to development (stating how many houses will be built in South Staffordshire and the proposed housing distribution within the district).</p> <p>However, the policy will not state the exact locations of development (to be covered in the future Site</p>	To further strengthen the Core Strategy and its aim to protect and enhance the natural environment additional text relating to European sites and Appropriate Assessment should be added to the beginning of the Core Strategy. This text should state that <i>“Any development that cannot</i>

Policy No	Policy Title	Any likely significant effects on European sites anticipated as a result of the policy?	Recommendations for final policy wording
		<p>Allocations DPD). This means it is not possible at this stage to assess the likely significant effects of a particular development.</p> <p>The proposed number of houses to be provided within the district will total between 3,500 and 4,375 dwellings between 2006 and 2026. Chapter 7 of the Core Strategy provides a breakdown of where these dwellings are to be provided (i.e. the village but not the exact location). A review of the proposed locations of new housing suggests there are no likely significant effects on any European sites. The closest European site to a proposed area of housing provision is the Motte Meadows SAC. The SAC is located approximately 750 m from the village of Wheaton Aston where 30 to 45 dwellings are proposed to be built. Although the Core Strategy and policy CP7 outline the number of dwellings and their distribution between specific villages (including the housing proposals for Wheaton Aston), they do not and will not state the exact locations of development. This will be covered in the future Site Allocations DPD. This means it is not possible at this stage to assess the likely significant effects of a particular development.</p> <p>Furthermore, any development that arises from this policy must take account of all other policies within the Core Strategy. This includes Strategic Objective 4 and Policies CP2, DP3, CP4 and CP6 which seek to protect and enhance the natural environment. It should also be noted that the close proximity of the</p>	<p><i>demonstrate that it would not have a significant adverse effect upon the integrity of a site of European or international importance for nature conservation will be refused</i>'. As such, due consideration must be paid to internationally important sites during the planning process.</p> <p>The full text that should be included in the Core Strategy is given in Inset 1 (see Section 4 below).</p>

Policy No	Policy Title	Any likely significant effects on European sites anticipated as a result of the policy?	Recommendations for final policy wording
		<p>Mottey Meadows SAC to Wheaton Aston has been noted in the Core Strategy and as such due consideration is being paid to this internationally important site.</p>	
CP8	New Housing Development – Development Principles	<p>No: This policy will lead to development. However, any development that arises from this policy must take account of all other policies within the Core Strategy. This includes Strategic Objective 4 and Policies CP2, DP3, CP4 and CP6 which seek to protect and enhance the natural environment.</p>	<p>Recommendation as outlined for Policy CP7 above and Inset 1 in Section 4 below.</p>
CP9	Managing the Release of Housing Land	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will relate to qualitative criteria such as housing density).</p>	<p>No recommendations for this policy.</p>
CP10	Type, Size and Tenure of Housing	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will relate to qualitative criteria such as size, type and tenure of dwellings).</p>	<p>No recommendations for this policy.</p>
DP15	Archiving and Maintaining the Right Mix of Housing	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will relate to qualitative criteria such as size, type and tenure of dwellings).</p>	<p>No recommendations for this policy.</p>
DP16	Gypsy and Traveller Sites	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will state criteria and considerations to be taken into account when determining applications for Gypsy and Traveller sites).</p>	<p>No recommendations for this policy.</p>
CP11	Affordable Housing	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it</p>	<p>No recommendations for this policy.</p>

Policy No	Policy Title	Any likely significant effects on European sites anticipated as a result of the policy?	Recommendations for final policy wording
		will relate to qualitative criteria such as targets for affordable housing and proposed site thresholds).	
CP12	Rural Exception Sites	<p>No: This policy may lead to development in the Green Belt or Open Countryside. However, any development that arises from this policy must take account of all other policies within the Core Strategy. This includes Strategic Objective 4 and Policies CP2, DP3, CP4 and CP6 which seek to protect and enhance the natural environment.</p>	Recommendation as outlined for Policy CP7 above and Inset 1 in Section 4 below.
DP17	Delivering Affordable Housing	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will relate to qualitative criteria such as the key principles that will underpin the delivery of affordable housing).</p>	No recommendations for this policy.
CP13	Scale and Distribution of New Employment Development	<p>No: This policy will lead to development (stating the proposed distribution of new employment development within the district).</p> <p>However, the policy will not state the exact locations of development (to be covered in the future Site Allocations DPD). This means it is not possible at this stage to assess the likely significant effects of a particular development.</p> <p>Furthermore, any development that arises from this policy must take account of all other policies within the Core Strategy. This includes Strategic Objective 4 and Policies CP2, DP3, CP4 and CP6 which seek to protect and enhance the natural environment.</p>	Recommendation as outlined for Policy CP7 above and Inset 1 in Section 4 below.

Policy No	Policy Title	Any likely significant effects on European sites anticipated as a result of the policy?	Recommendations for final policy wording
CP14	Supporting the Local Economy	No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will relate to qualitative criteria such as the development of key economic sectors).	No recommendations for this policy.
DP18	Measures to Support the Local Economy	No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will relate to qualitative criteria such as priorities to sustain and develop the local economy).	No recommendations for this policy.
DP19	Retention of Existing Employment Sites	No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will seek to protect sites and buildings already used for employment).	No recommendations for this policy.
DP20	Tourism	No: The policy will not lead to development (it will support the establishment and expansion of tourism). The policy will also seek to protect the natural environment by ensuring that tourism will not compromise the quality of the natural environment in the district.	No recommendations for this policy.
DP21	Canals and Canalside Development	No: The policy intends to protect the natural environment (proposals for new canalside facilities only to be granted if wildlife values of canals are conserved and enhanced).	No recommendations for this policy.
DP22	South Staffordshire College (Rodbaston)	No: This policy may lead to development within the College. The closest European site to the College is the Motte Meadows SAC located approximately 7.5 km north-west. It is unlikely that impacts from development within the college site would extend	No recommendations for this policy.

Policy No	Policy Title	Any likely significant effects on European sites anticipated as a result of the policy?	Recommendations for final policy wording
		<p>this distance to the SAC.</p> <p>Furthermore, any development that arises from this policy must take account of all other policies within the Plan. This includes Strategic Objective 4 and Policies CP2, DP3, CP4 and CP6 which seek to protect and enhance the natural environment.</p>	
CP15	Village Centres and Shopping	<p>No: The policy will not lead to development (it will support the vitality and viability of village centres, for example, by encouraging appropriate uses).</p>	No recommendations for this policy.
DP23	Shopping Outside the Village Centres	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will relate to criteria and considerations to be taken into account in determining proposals for shopping development in locations outside of village centres).</p>	No recommendations for this policy.
DP24	Other Retail Development	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will state proposals for other types of retail development outside of village centres).</p>	No recommendations for this policy.
CP16	Rural Diversification	<p>No: This policy may lead to development (including expansion of businesses, tourism related business and recreational uses in the countryside).</p> <p>However, the policy will not state the exact locations of development. This means it is not possible at this stage to assess the likely significant effects of a particular development.</p> <p>Furthermore, any development that arises from this policy must take account of all other policies within</p>	Recommendation as outlined for Policy CP7 above and Inset 1 in Section 4 below.

Policy No	Policy Title	Any likely significant effects on European sites anticipated as a result of the policy?	Recommendations for final policy wording
		the Core Strategy. This includes Strategic Objective 4 and Policies CP2, DP3, CP4 and CP6 which seek to protect and enhance the natural environment.	
DP25	Rural Employment	No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will state criteria to be met for small scale employment development in rural locations).	No recommendations for this policy.
DP26	Agricultural Matters	<p>No: The policy may lead to development (including farm diversification and the re-use of farm buildings). However, the policy will not state the exact locations of development. This means it is not possible at this stage to assess the likely significant effects of a particular development.</p> <p>Furthermore, any development that arises from this policy must take account of all other policies within the Core Strategy. This includes Strategic Objective 4 and Policies CP2, DP3, CP4 and CP6 which seek to protect and enhance the natural environment.</p>	Recommendation as outlined for Policy CP7 above and Inset 1 in Section 4 below.
CP17	Community Facilities and Services	No: The policy will not lead to development (it will seek to protect and enhance existing essential community facilities and services).	No recommendations for this policy.
DP27	Community Facilities	<p>No: The policy may lead to development (including the provision and enhancement of community facilities). However, the policy will not state the exact locations of development. This means it is not possible at this</p>	Recommendation as outlined for Policy CP7 above and Inset 1 in Section 4 below.

Policy No	Policy Title	Any likely significant effects on European sites anticipated as a result of the policy?	Recommendations for final policy wording
		<p>stage to assess the likely significant effects of a particular development.</p> <p>Furthermore, any development that arises from this policy must take account of all other policies within the Core Strategy. This includes Strategic Objective 4 and Policies CP2, DP3, CP4 and CP6 which seek to protect and enhance the natural environment.</p>	
CP18	Development and Sustainable Transport	No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will relate to the provision of sustainable transport within any new developments to be built).	No recommendations for this policy.
DP28	Site Accessibility	No: The will not itself lead to development (it will state requirements that new developments must adhere to ensure adequate accessibility).	No recommendations for this policy.
DP29	Access for All	No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will relate to promoting high standards of access within any new developments to be built).	No recommendations for this policy.
CP19	Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport	No: The policy seeks to protect the natural environment (it will state that there will be a resistance against physical expansion of the airport due to the detrimental impact this would have on the environment and nearby residents).	No recommendations for this policy.
DP30	Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport – Approach to New Development	<p>No: The policy may lead to development (including the new high quality sustainable development related to the general aviation role of the airport).</p> <p>However, the policy will not state the exact locations</p>	Recommendation as outlined for Policy CP7 above and Inset 1 in Section 4 below.

Policy No	Policy Title	Any likely significant effects on European sites anticipated as a result of the policy?	Recommendations for final policy wording
		<p>of development. This means it is not possible at this stage to assess the likely significant effects of a particular development.</p> <p>Furthermore, any development that arises from this policy must take account of all other policies within the Core Strategy. This includes Strategic Objective 4 and Policies CP2, DP3, CP4 and CP6 which seek to protect and enhance the natural environment.</p>	
DP31	Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport – Existing and Future Uses	<p>No: The policy may lead to development (including existing businesses and encouraging appropriate aviation related development on the site).</p> <p>However, the policy will not state the exact locations of development. This means it is not possible at this stage to assess the likely significant effects of a particular development.</p> <p>Furthermore, any development that arises from this policy must take account of all other policies within the Core Strategy. This includes Strategic Objective 4 and Policies CP2, DP3, CP4 and CP6 which seek to protect and enhance the natural environment.</p>	Recommendation as outlined for Policy CP7 above and Inset 1 in Section 4 below.
CP20	Design and Reduction of Crime	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will relate to qualitative criteria to ensure that buildings and spaces are designed to reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour).</p>	No recommendations for this policy.
DP32	Designing Out Crime	<p>No: The policy will not itself lead to development (it will relate to qualitative criteria to ensure crime and</p>	No recommendations for this policy.

Policy No	Policy Title	Any likely significant effects on European sites anticipated as a result of the policy?	Recommendations for final policy wording
		anti-social behaviour will be designed out in any new development).	
CP21	Open Space, Leisure, Recreation and Culture	No: The policy intends to protect, conserve and enhance existing areas of open space and will encourage initiatives to improve the biodiversity value of existing open spaces.	No recommendations for this policy.
DP33	Open Space, Sport and Recreation	No: The policy intends to protect and enhance existing areas of open space and will ensure the provision of public open space in new development. Furthermore this policy may help to protect any European sites located in close proximity to a new development. This is because this policy will seek to ensure that open space is integrated into the overall design of new developments. This will ensure that new areas of open space will be provided for the public, potentially helping to reduce the risk of increased recreational pressure on any internationally important habitats nearby.	No recommendations for this policy.
DP34	Green Space Network	No: The policy seeks to enhance the natural environment through the establishment and management of a green network of open spaces and corridors.	No recommendations for this policy.
DP35	Safeguarding Open Land Within Village Boundaries	No: The policy seeks to protect the natural environment (by supporting proposals and activities that protect and enhance the biodiversity value of open land within village boundaries).	No recommendations for this policy.

Policy No	Policy Title	Any likely significant effects on European sites anticipated as a result of the policy?	Recommendations for final policy wording
CP22	Service Facilities for Children and Young People	No: The policy will not lead itself lead to development (it will seek to support proposals and initiatives to improve access to services and enhance facilities for children and young people).	No recommendations for this policy.

4. Recommendations for the Core Strategy

There are a number of recommendations made in Table 3.1 in relation to the wording of policies in the final Core Strategy. In addition to these recommendations, the review noted that the Plan could be strengthened further in relation to its protection of European sites and the role of AA in the planning process. Three main sets of recommendations have been made (see below).

Recommendations - Set 1

It is **strongly recommended** that the following changes are made to the Core Strategy:

- Chapter 2, paragraph number 2.9, the third sentence states that "*There are areas of national and local nature conservation importance including a national nature reserve, local nature reserves, sites of biological importance and also Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)...*".

It is recommended that this sentence is extended so that it includes internationally important habitats: "*There are areas of **international**, national and local nature conservation importance including a **Special Area of Conservation (SAC)**, a national nature reserve, local nature reserves, sites of biological importance and also Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)...*".

- Chapter 4 under the "Protecting and Enhancing South Staffordshire's Biodiversity" bullet point it states that "...existing wildlife sites need to be protected managed and enhanced" (page 21).

It is recommended that this sentence is expanded so that it states "...existing wildlife sites (**including Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves and Sites of Biological Importance**) need to be protected managed and enhanced".

- Chapter 6 under sub-heading 3 "To Protect and Improve South Staffordshire's Environmental Assets" the third sentence states "Ensuring that these and other important environmental assets are protected and improved..." (page 33).

It is recommended that this sentence is expanded so that it states "Ensuring that these and other important environmental assets (**including Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves and Sites of Biological Importance**) are protected and improved...".

- Chapter 7 in Table 1 under the Locality Area 2 North Western Area Section there is a section on Wheaton Aston. This currently states that "*Limited growth proposed in recognition of: Proximity of village to Motte Meadows site of European Nature Conservation Importance (SAC)*" (page 52).

Following discussion with Natural England, it is recommended that this point is expanded so that it states: "*Limited growth proposed in recognition of: Proximity of village to Motte Meadows site of European Nature Conservation Importance (SAC). **It is recognised that adverse impacts may occur to this internationally important site if inappropriate drainage of foul water from new development(s) occurs***".

Recommendations - Set 2

In the broader context of the Core Strategy, Table 3.1 notes that additional text relating to European sites and AA should be included in the Core Strategy (e.g. for Policy CP7). It is

strongly recommended that that text in Inset 1 is included in the Consultation Document of the Core Strategy (i.e. the text is inserted in to the Plan prior to the Consultation period begins). This text could be included in Chapter 7 of the report (near to the SA/SEA text on page 40) or in Chapter 8 (under the Environmental Quality heading on page 70). The inclusion of this text will help to strengthen the Core Strategy, particularly in relation to development related policies (including Policies CP7, CP8, CP12, CP13, CP16, DP26, DP27, DP30 and DP31).

Inset 1: Additional text recommended for inclusion in the Core Strategy

Under Regulation 48 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 1994 (the Habitats Regulations) an appropriate assessment is being undertaken of the Core Strategy in order to see whether its proposals could have the potential to result in adverse effects upon a 'European Site'. These are sites that have been designated for their international nature conservation interests and include:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated under European Council Directive 92/43/EEC(a) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (the Habitats Directive);
- Special Protection Areas (SPA) designated under the European Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (the Birds Directive); and,
- The UK Government (in the accompanying circular to Planning Policy Statement 9) as a matter of policy has chosen to apply the appropriate assessment procedures in respect of Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites), candidate SACs (cSACs) and potential SPAs (pSPAs) even though these are not European sites as a matter of law.

Within South Staffordshire there is one European Site: Motte Meadows SAC. There are also three European sites within close proximity to the Core Strategy boundary: Cannock Chase SAC, Cannock Extension Canal SAC and Fens Pools SAC.

If a proposed development could have a likely significant effect on a European site, further consideration and assessment will need to be made for these proposals at the development control stage (or as part of lower tier development plan documents, for example, the South Staffordshire Council Site Allocations DPD). This will require developers to provide the Competent Authority (in this case South Staffordshire Council) with a thorough ecological assessment of the likely effects upon the relevant European site or sites so as to allow the Competent Authority the ability to carry out an Appropriate Assessment. Any development that cannot demonstrate that it would not have a significant adverse effect upon the integrity of a European site, or that impacts can be adequately mitigated, will be refused. This is in accordance with the precautionary principle enshrined within the Habitats Regulations. Where there are imperative reasons of over-riding public interest and the authority is unable to conclude no adverse effect on the integrity of a site, the authority will notify the Secretary of State and allow them to call in the application for determination. In these situations compensatory measures to protect the European site must be put in place.

Recommendations - Set 3

Furthermore, it is **recommended** that the supporting text of each of the development related policies (or the policies themselves) within the Core Strategy are cross referenced to this text. This would include cross referencing being put in place for the following policies: CP7, CP8, CP12, CP13, CP16, DP26, DP27, DP30 and DP31. This cross referencing would ensure that the need for AA is recognised throughout the Core Strategy and is implicit to its readers.

5. Conclusions

Atkins has completed a review of the South Staffordshire Local Development Framework *Core Strategy Development Plan Document: Preferred Spatial Strategy Consultation Document* (January 2009).

This review of the Core Strategy has been undertaken as part of the initial stages of Appropriate Assessment (AA). AA is required by Regulation 48 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) (the Habitat Regulations) for all plans and projects which may have adverse effects on European sites. This review highlighted whether the outline policies are likely to lead to potential effects on the European sites within and adjacent to the district and what these likely impacts are. The European sites considered in this review are the Motte Meadows SAC, the Cannock Chase SAC, the Cannock Extension Canal SAC and the Fens Pools SAC.

Following the review of the Core Strategy, it is considered that none of the policies or the supporting text in the Plan as it currently stands will lead to likely significant effects on the integrity of these four European sites.

There are a number of development related policies within the document (Policies CP7, CP8, CP12, CP13, CP16, DP26, DP27, DP30 and DP31) and these are likely to lead to some form of development taking place in the future. However, due to the strategic nature of the Core Strategy the exact location of future developments is not known (meaning it is not possible to assess likely significant effects on the European sites at this stage). Furthermore, the Core Strategy is strongly geared towards environmental protection and there are a large number of provisions in place to help protect important habitats such as European sites already existing within the Plan. Therefore any proposed development should adhere to all policies within the Core Strategy (including Policy CP2: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment and Policy DP3: Protecting and Enhancing Natural Assets). As such with these provisions in place it is unlikely that there will be adverse impacts on any of the European sites.

A number of recommendations have been made to strengthen the Core Strategy further (including recommendations for the wording of policies in the final draft of the Plan in Table 3.1 (Section 3 above) and the inclusion of additional text relating to European sites and AA in Inset 1 (Section 4 above)).

In conclusion, it is considered that the Core Strategy Consultation Document and its outline policies have no likely significant effect on the Motte Meadows SAC, Cannock Chase SAC, Cannock Extension Canal SAC and Fens Pools SAC sites.

Appendix A

Additional Information on European Sites

Natura 2000 Data Forms for:

- Mottey Meadows SAC;
- Cannock Chase SAC;
- Cannock Extension Canal SAC; and
- Fens Pools SAC.

NATURA 2000

STANDARD DATA FORM

FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:

1.1 Type 1.2 Site code

1.3 Compilation date 1.4 Update

1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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1.6 Respondent(s)

1.7 Site name

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates

date site proposed as eligible as SCI	199806
date confirmed as SCI	200412
date site classified as SPA	
date site designated as SAC	200504

2. Site location:

2.1 Site centre location

longitude	latitude
02 14 13 W	52 43 03 N

2.2 Site area (ha) 2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

NUTS code	Region name	% cover
UK722	Staffordshire	100.00%

2.6 Biogeographic region

Alpine
 Atlantic
 Boreal
 Continental
 Macaronesia
 Mediterranean

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats

Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

Annex I habitat	% cover	Representativity	Relative surface	Conservation status	Global assessment
Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> , <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>)	74.99	A	B	A	A

3.2 Annex II species

Species name	Population			Site assessment			
	Resident	Migratory		Population	Conservation	Isolation	Global
		Breed	Winter				

4. Site description

4.1 General site character

Habitat classes	% cover
Marine areas. Sea inlets	
Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins)	
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes	
Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair	
Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets	
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)	
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	
Dry grassland. Steppes	
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	97.0
Alpine and sub-alpine grassland	
Improved grassland	
Other arable land	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland	
Coniferous woodland	
Evergreen woodland	
Mixed woodland	
Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas)	3.0
Inland rocks. Screes. Sands. Permanent snow and ice	
Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)	
Total habitat cover	100%

4.1 Other site characteristics

<p>Soil & geology: Alluvium, Neutral</p> <p>Geomorphology & landscape: Floodplain, Lowland</p>
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4.2 Quality and importance

<p>Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.
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4.3 Vulnerability

<p>The meadows are dependent upon traditional agricultural management - hay-cutting and aftermath grazing with no use of agrochemicals. The site is vulnerable to nutrient run-off from adjacent agricultural land. The site is owned and managed by English Nature with all the above issues addressed through the site's management plan. The site is also vulnerable to a lowering of both ground and surface water levels, because the floristic composition is dependent on a high water table in autumn and winter. This will be addressed through consultation with the Environment Agency, and any problems arising from licensed abstractions will be dealt with through the review process under the Habitats Regulations.</p>
--

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

Code	% cover
UK01 (NNR)	88.6
UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)	100.0

NATURA 2000

STANDARD DATA FORM

FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:

1.1 Type 1.2 Site code

1.3 Compilation date 1.4 Update

1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites

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1.6 Respondent(s)

1.7 Site name

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates

date site proposed as eligible as SCI	200103
date confirmed as SCI	200412
date site classified as SPA	
date site designated as SAC	200504

2. Site location:

2.1 Site centre location

longitude	latitude
02 01 36 W	52 45 59 N

2.2 Site area (ha) 2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

NUTS code	Region name	% cover
UK722	Staffordshire	100.00%

2.6 Biogeographic region

Alpine
 Atlantic
 Boreal
 Continental
 Macaronesia
 Mediterranean

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats

Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

Annex I habitat	% cover	Representativity	Relative surface	Conservation status	Global assessment
Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>	1.3	C	C	B	C
European dry heaths	75	B	C	B	B

3.2 Annex II species

Species name	Population				Site assessment			
	Resident	Migratory			Population	Conservation	Isolation	Global
		Breed	Winter	Stage				
<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>	Present	-	-	-	D			
<i>Triturus cristatus</i>	11-50	-	-	-	D			

4. Site description

4.1 General site character

Habitat classes	% cover
Marine areas. Sea inlets	
Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins)	
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes	
Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair	
Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets	
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)	0.5
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	76.3
Dry grassland. Steppes	
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	
Alpine and sub-alpine grassland	
Improved grassland	
Other arable land	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland	
Coniferous woodland	12.0
Evergreen woodland	
Mixed woodland	
Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas)	10.5
Inland rocks. Scree. Sands. Permanent snow and ice	
Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)	0.7
Total habitat cover	100%

4.1 Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:

Acidic, Nutrient-poor, Peat, Sandstone

Geomorphology & landscape:

Lowland

4.2 Quality and importance

Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*

- for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.

European dry heaths

- for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.

4.3 Vulnerability

Much of Cannock Chase falls within a popular and well-used Country Park. Visitor pressures include dog walking, horse riding, mountain biking and off-track activities such as orienteering, all of which cause disturbance and result in erosion, new track creation and vegetation damage.

Bracken invasion is significant, but is being controlled. Birch and pine scrub, much of the latter from surrounding commercial plantations, is continually invading the site and has to be controlled. High visitor usage and the fact that a significant proportion of the site is Common Land, requiring Secretary of State approval before fencing can take place, means that the reintroduction of sustainable management in the form of livestock grazing has many problems.

Cannock Chase overlies coal measures which have been deep-mined. Mining fissures continue to appear across the site even though mining has ceased and this is thought to detrimentally affect site hydrology. Furthermore the underlying Sherwood Sandstone is a major aquifer with water abstracted for public and industrial uses and the effects of this on the wetland features of the Chase are not fully understood.

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

Code	% cover
UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)	100.0

NATURA 2000

STANDARD DATA FORM

FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:

1.1 Type 1.2 Site code

1.3 Compilation date 1.4 Update

1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites

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1.6 Respondent(s)

1.7 Site name

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates

date site proposed as eligible as SCI	199506
date confirmed as SCI	200412
date site classified as SPA	
date site designated as SAC	200504

2. Site location:

2.1 Site centre location

longitude	latitude
01 58 14 W	52 38 59 N

2.2 Site area (ha) 2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

NUTS code	Region name	% cover
UK722	Staffordshire	87.02%
UK73	West Midlands (County)	12.98%

2.6 Biogeographic region

Alpine
 Atlantic
 Boreal
 Continental
 Macaronesia
 Mediterranean

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats

Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

Annex I habitat	% cover	Representativity	Relative surface	Conservation status	Global assessment

3.2 Annex II species

Species name	Population				Site assessment			
	Resident	Migratory			Population	Conservation	Isolation	Global
		Breed	Winter	Stage				
<i>Luronium natans</i>	Common	-	-	-	C	B	B	B

4. Site description

4.1 General site character

Habitat classes	% cover
Marine areas. Sea inlets	
Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins)	
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes	
Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair	
Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets	
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)	75.0
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	
Dry grassland. Steppes	
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	10.0
Alpine and sub-alpine grassland	
Improved grassland	
Other arable land	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland	4.9
Coniferous woodland	
Evergreen woodland	
Mixed woodland	
Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas)	
Inland rocks. Scree. Sands. Permanent snow and ice	
Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)	10.1
Total habitat cover	100%

4.1 Other site characteristics

<p>Soil & geology:</p>
<p>Geomorphology & landscape:</p> <p>Lowland</p>

4.2 Quality and importance

<p><i>Luronium natans</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.

4.3 Vulnerability

<p>The population of <i>Luronium natans</i> in this cul-de-sac canal is dependent upon a balanced level of boat traffic. If the canal is not used, the abundant growth of other aquatic macrophytes may shade-out the <i>Luronium natans</i> unless routinely controlled by cutting. An increase in recreational activity would be to the detriment of <i>Luronium natans</i>. Existing discharges of surface water run-off, principally from roads, cause some reduction in water quality.</p>

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

Code	% cover
UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)	100.0

NATURA 2000

STANDARD DATA FORM

FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:

1.1 Type 1.2 Site code

1.3 Compilation date 1.4 Update

1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites

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1.6 Respondent(s)

1.7 Site name

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates

date site proposed as eligible as SCI	200101
date confirmed as SCI	200412
date site classified as SPA	
date site designated as SAC	200504

2. Site location:

2.1 Site centre location

longitude	latitude
02 07 04 W	52 29 48 N

2.2 Site area (ha) 2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

NUTS code	Region name	% cover
UK73	West Midlands (County)	100.00%

2.6 Biogeographic region

Alpine
 Atlantic
 Boreal
 Continental
 Macaronesia
 Mediterranean

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats

Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

Annex I habitat	% cover	Representativity	Relative surface	Conservation status	Global assessment

3.2 Annex II species

Species name	Population			Site assessment				
	Resident	Migratory			Population	Conservation	Isolation	Global
		Breed	Winter	Stage				
<i>Triturus cristatus</i>	101-250	-	-	-	C	B	B	B

4. Site description

4.1 General site character

Habitat classes	% cover
Marine areas. Sea inlets	
Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins)	
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes	
Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair	
Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets	
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)	2.0
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	5.0
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	20.0
Dry grassland. Steppes	66.0
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	
Alpine and sub-alpine grassland	
Improved grassland	
Other arable land	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland	
Coniferous woodland	
Evergreen woodland	
Mixed woodland	
Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas)	
Inland rocks. Screes. Sands. Permanent snow and ice	
Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)	7.0
Total habitat cover	100%

4.1 Other site characteristics

<p>Soil & geology: Acidic, Nutrient-poor</p> <p>Geomorphology & landscape: Lowland, Valley</p>
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4.2 Quality and importance

<p><i>Triturus cristatus</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.
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4.3 Vulnerability

The *Triturus cristatus* population at this site is dependent on the control of fish, maintenance of adequate water quality given an urban catchment, and the protection of surrounding terrestrial habitat from major ground disturbance. The vulnerability of the breeding ponds is being reduced through factors such as desiccation, human disturbance, fish introductions and pollution by expanding the number of ponds in the current cluster. This action will also help mitigate the population's relative isolation resulting from its urban setting.

The post-industrial origins of much of the site's surface material means that land contamination could be a possible future issue.

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

Code	% cover
UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)	100.0

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