MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

of the

CANNOCK CHASE SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

between

The Partner Authorities
Cannock Chase District Council
East Staffordshire Borough Council
Lichfield District Council
South Staffordshire District Council
Stafford Borough Council
Wolverhampton City Council
Staffordshire County Council

Advisors
Natural England
Cannock Chase AONB Partnership
Forestry Commission

Relating to:
The impact of residential development on the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Definition of Terms</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>In this Agreement the following words and expressions shall have the following meanings unless the context requires otherwise:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advisors</strong></td>
<td>means advisors to the Partnership with no voting rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AONB Visitor Management Strategy (VMS)</strong></td>
<td>aims to deliver a sustainable quality visitor experience to the Cannock Chase AONB. The Cannock Chase SAC mitigation proposals (SAMM) sit within the VMS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appropriate Assessment (AA)</strong></td>
<td>is the second stage in a Habitats Regulations Assessment process where consideration is given to the potential impacts on the integrity of a European site (eg SAC), either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, with regard to the site’s conservation objectives and to its structure and function.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)</strong></td>
<td>means Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which the Cannock Chase SAC sits within. The Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a legal designation confirmed under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Competent Authority</strong></td>
<td>An organisation becomes a competent authority under the Habitats Regulations when the exercise of its functions will, or may affect European Sites (for example classified SPA’s and designated SACs).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conservation Objectives</strong></td>
<td>Objectives defined by Natural England to secure the favourable conservation status of the qualifying features’ Each SAC has a formal description of the reasons why the site has been designated which is contained in the SAC citation and which when combined with the Conservation Objectives provide a framework which should inform any ‘Habitats Regulations Assessments’ that a competent authority may be required to undertake. The Conservation Objectives also inform any measures necessary to conserve or restore the SAC and/or to prevent the deterioration or significant disturbance of its qualifying features.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Habitats Regulations</strong></td>
<td>The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)</strong></td>
<td>a formal assessment of the implications of new plans or projects which are capable of affecting the designated interest features of a European Site (eg SAC) before deciding whether to undertake, permit or authorise such a plan or project. This assessment comprises several distinct</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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stages which are conveniently and collectively described as a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' (or HRA).

**Partnership**
means the organisations listed as the Partner Authorities

**Relevant period**
The residential development forecast within the Zone of Influence within each of the Partnership Authorities’ Local Plan periods.

**Special Area of Conservation (SAC)**
is a strictly protected site designated under the EC Habitats Directive, described by the UK Government as ‘Our best examples of habitats that are either threatened or valuable within the EU’. The overall objective of the Habitats Directive is defined in Article 2 which specifies in particular that: *Measures taken pursuant to this Directive shall be designed to maintain and restore, at a favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of Community interest.*

SAC designation requires Member States to establish conservation measures which correspond to the ecological requirements of Annex I habitats and Annex II species present on the site (Article 6.1), and to take appropriate steps to avoid deterioration of the natural habitats and habitats of species, as well as significant disturbance of species, for which the site is designated (Article 6.2) The Habitats Directive is primarily transposed in England under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

**Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Measures (SAMMM)**
a plan of actions to mitigate for the likely increase in the number of visits as a result of new housing development within 15km of the Cannock Chase SAC. SAMMM attached at Appendix 2.

**Windfall Housing**
Windfall housing sites are those that have come forward unexpectedly and not identified for housing through the Local Plan preparation process.

**Zones of Influence**
Research has shown that 75% of all visitors to the Cannock Chase SAC are from within a 15km radius of the SAC. The planned level of residential growth within a 15 kilometre radius from the edge of Cannock Chase SAC is likely to have a significant effect on the SAC in the absence of mitigation. For the purpose of this MOU the 0-15km radius is defined as the Zone of Influence

The greater part of this effect would arise from development within a 0-8km zone as it has been determined through research that this zone would contribute the most visitors to the SAC. For the purpose of this MOU the 0-8km radius is defined as the Zone of Payment.
1.0 Purpose

The Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation Partnership provides a framework for coordination between statutory bodies having land use planning responsibilities in relation to Cannock Chase SAC.

The key objective of the Partnership is to use statutory planning processes and specific site and visitor management measures to secure appropriate mitigation for the impacts on the Cannock Chase SAC of Development Plan policies and proposals contained in individual planning applications and projects, thereby ensuring that the integrity of the Cannock Chase SAC is maintained and the requirements of the Habitats Regulations are met.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets out how the Cannock Chase SAC Partnership will take responsibility for a programme of measures to mitigate for the impact residential development has upon the Cannock Chase SAC and how the Partnership will work together to review, prepare and implement common plans and policies to protect the Cannock Chase SAC, and promote its understanding and appreciation to help to deliver sustainable development.

This Partnership approach is to provide simplicity for planners and developers providing a consistent approach to the protection of the SAC from the significant effects of residential development through the delivery of a programme of mitigation. It must however be recognised that other forms of development1 within the 0-15km zone which may give rise to additional visits to Cannock Chase SAC may need to carry out a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). Participation in the developer contributions scheme is optional and if applicants do not wish to participate they will need to provide appropriate information to the Local Planning Authority to allow a bespoke Habitats Regulations Assessment.

2.0 Background

Sitting within the wider Cannock Chase AONB, the Cannock Chase SAC was designated in 2005 under the provisions of the European Habitats Directive, the majority of the site having previously been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in 1987. Cannock Chase represents the largest area of heathland habitat surviving in the English Midlands and though much diminished in area from its original extent, as with all lowland heathland zones, the habitat and dependent species are of very high nature conservation importance.

The Annex I habitat, European Dry Heath is the primary reason for designation of the SAC. The character of this vegetation is intermediate between the upland or northern heaths of England and Wales and those of southern counties. Dry heathland communities belong to NVC types H8 Calluna vulgaris – Ulex gallii and H9 Calluna vulgaris – Deschampsia flexuosa heaths. Within the heathland, species of northern latitudes occur, such as cowberry Vaccinium vitis-idaea and crowberry Empetrum nigrum. Cannock Chase has the main British population of the hybrid bilberry Vaccinium intermedium, a plant of restricted occurrence.

1 Other development include but are not limited to Bed and Breakfast establishments, self catering holiday lets, hotels and gypsy sites.
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There are important populations of butterflies and beetles, as well as European nightjar and five species of bats. The Annex I habitat that is present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site is Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix. Wet heath usually occurs on acidic, nutrient-poor substrates, such as shallow peats or sandy soils with impeded drainage. The vegetation is typically dominated by mixtures of cross-leaved heath Erica tetralix, heather Calluna vulgaris, grasses, sedges and Sphagnum bog-mosses.

The evidence base\(^2\) shows a range of impacts consistent with high visitor numbers. An increase in visitor numbers on the scale expected is likely to have a significant effect on the Cannock Chase SAC unless measures are taken to prevent harm. The main impacts are the fragmentation of habitat from a multiplicity of paths and tracks, track and path widening with erosion, trampling and compaction, and eutrophication from dog fouling.

In October 2005, the judgment the European Court of Justice in the case of Flood Management Plans and the implications of Case C-6/04 Commission Vs United Kingdom, required the UK to extend the requirements of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive to include the assessment of the potential effects of spatial and land use plans on European sites. Evidence commissioned by the SAC Partnership suggests that the planned level of growth within a 15 kilometre radius of the SAC (as set out in Map 1) is likely to have a significant effect on the designated site. The greater part of this effect would arise from development within a 0-8km zone (as set out in Map 1) as it has been determined through research that this zone would contribute the most visitors to the SAC\(^3\). The effect of increased visitor numbers consists of additional damage from site use and vehicle emissions\(^4\). In granting planning permissions the Local Planning Authorities must comply with their duty under the Habitats Regulations as Competent Authorities to ensure appropriate mitigation is delivered prior to developments being built and new visits generated.

3.0 Conservation Objectives

European Site Conservation Objectives for Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation

Site Code: 0030107

With regard to the SAC and the natural habitats and/or species for which the site has been designated (the ‘Qualifying Features’ listed below), and subject to natural change;

\(^{2}\) ‘Cannock Chase SAC Visitor Survey’ Footprint Ecology/Durwyn Liley, February 2013

\(^{3}\) Further Analysis of Cannock Visitor Survey Data to Consider Apportioning Costs between Zones – Durwyn Liley, 30\(^{th}\) September 2013.

\(^{4}\) NE advice letter to the partnership dated 10/04/2013 – Vehicle emission issues are dealt with outside the SAMMM and through the Local Plan or development process.
Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintain or restoring:

- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and,
- The supporting processes on which the qualifying natural habitats rely

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Supplementary Advice document, which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of Objectives set out above.

**Qualifying Features:**

H4010. Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*; Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath

H4030. European dry heaths

**4.0 Objectives of the Partnership**

The Partnership’s overall objective is to facilitate sustainable residential development whilst ensuring compliance with the Habitats Regulations through securing appropriate developer contributions towards a programme of mitigation. Participation in the developer contribution scheme (as detailed at Appendix 1) is optional. Applicants will need to supply information to the Local Planning Authority to allow a bespoke Habitats Regulations Assessment to be undertaken if they do not wish to participate.

The objectives of the Cannock Chase SAC Partnership are to secure measures to mitigate for the effects of development\(^5\) by:

- Ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained, that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features and enabling the sustainable development of the area
- Conserving the Cannock Chase SAC by ensuring that new development does not undermine the delivery of its Conservation Objectives.
- Raising awareness and understanding of the biodiversity of the Cannock Chase SAC
- Achieving ‘joined up’ management with neighbouring protected landscapes and habitats.\(^6\)

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\(^5\) Housing and other development such as tourist accommodation which requires HRA and would have an impact on the SAC.

\(^6\) The SAC mitigation proposals (SAMMM) sit within the wider AONB Visitor Management Strategy.
5.0 Key Commitments

The Partnership:

a) Will work together to develop and implement consistent planning policies in respect of Development Plan documentation and development processes which provide a framework to mitigate for the impact of residential development on Cannock Chase SAC.

b) Will collectively and individually ensure that all plans, projects and management activities meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations

c) Agree an evidenced planning obligations and CIL charging process on the basis that from the date of this MOU, contributions will only be sought from residential developments within the 0-8km zone as shown in Map 1.

d) Agree that from the date of this MOU, appropriate assessment of housing proposals within the 0-15km zone set out in Map 1 will not be required unless these fall beyond the scope of established local housing targets as set out in Appendix 1 or within the 0-8km zone where the applicant does not agree contributions.

e) Will develop, agree and monitor a 15 year programme of mitigation for Cannock Chase SAC as set out in the SAMMM and based on the delivery of 8,495 houses. The effectiveness of the SAMMM mitigation proposals will be reviewed on a 5 year basis as part of the MOU review.

f) Will on an annual basis monitor housing delivery numbers on which the current mitigation actions in the SAMMM are based. (30,134\(^7\) in the 0-15km zone and 8,495\(^8\) in the 0-8km zone). A review of the MOU and SAMMM will be triggered if the annual review indicates that either of these figures are being approached.

g) Will work closely with other complementary designations and initiatives such as the AONB and the Connecting Cannock Chase Partnership and take account of other statutory designations.

h) Agree that the area within which the mitigation will be undertaken is the statutorily designated areas of the Cannock Chase SAC, but on occasions will also extend to the wider adjoining areas in relation to specific issues, for example visitor and access network management, where a wider working area may be required to maintain favourable condition of a qualifying feature within the SAC.

i) Agree on the identity of the host Partner Authority which will hold the developer contributions and will act as the financially accountable body. The developer contributions will be spent collectively based on the SAMMM. The details of these arrangements will be set out in a legally binding financial agreement between the contributing Partner Authorities and the host Partner Authority. The level of contributions from each Partner Authority towards the SAMMM whilst this MOU is in force is considered in Appendix 1 and will be monitored annually by agreement of the Partnership.

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\(^7\) Cannock Chase SAC Visitor Impacts Mitigation Report – Footprint Ecology, February 2013

\(^8\) The remaining number to come forward in the 0-8km Zone of Payment.
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The finance agreement shall contain provisions to deal with the following matters:

- The scope of the duties, rights and obligations of the host Partner Authority to the other Partner Authorities and third parties;
- Responsibility for the recruitment and employment of the SAC Project Officer and Visitor Engagement Officer;
- An indemnity from the other Partner Authorities in favour of the employing Partner Authority in relation to the costs of employing the SAC Project Officer and Visitor Engagement Officer, including on-costs and redundancy payments and
- Obligations on the host Partner Authority to report regularly and comply with audit and other public sector requirements

j) Will agree a protocol for decision making on spending the developer contributions based on the mitigation plan (SAMMM).

6.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Although only Competent Authorities have statutory responsibilities, it is necessary that other advisory bodies and landowners participate in the management of the site.

The governance of the project will be determined through the Terms of Reference (Appendix 3).

7.0 Governance

The following governance arrangements and protocols will be maintained to ensure that the requirements of the programme of mitigation and therefore the Habitats Regulations are satisfied. It is proposed that the following governance arrangements are established, with the partnership management structure to be reviewed on a 12 month basis:

- Cannock Chase SAC Joint Strategic Board to meet, or receive reports a minimum of quarterly, with an annual rotating chair from each local authority (as listed in the table at Appendix 1), and supported by the Cannock Chase SAC Project Officer once in post. It will consist of senior representatives from each of the organisations listed in this MoU. Advisory members may be co-opted to represent a specific area of interest or issue of consideration. Terms of Reference have been agreed and are at Appendix 3\(^9\).

- Cannock Chase SAC Project Group will meet quarterly or as required, to coordinate and quality assure project delivery, i.e. what is being delivered, where, when and by whom to avoid duplication of effort. This Group will be and supported by the Cannock Chase SAC Project Officer once in post, and consist of officers from each of the organisations listed in this MoU along with

\(^{9}\) Terms of Reference including membership and voting powers agreed through supporting documents at Appendix 3.
representatives from appropriate organisations in advisory roles. Terms of Reference have been agreed and are at Appendix 3.  

8.0 Commencement and Termination

This MoU will take effect when it has been signed by all Parties. It is anticipated that this MoU will operate for a period of five years when it will be reviewed. It may be amended by agreement in writing between all Parties. A Partnership member may withdraw from the Partnership at any time by giving 12 months notice in writing to all Parties.

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10 Terms of Reference including membership and voting powers agreed through supporting documents at Appendix 3.
The Level of Contributions

The total cost of the programme of measures required to mitigate for the impact on Cannock Chase SAC of residential development within 15km of the Cannock Chase SAC proposed in current Local Plans over their Relevant Period is £1.97 million. The details of this programme are provided in the SAMMM at Appendix 2.

To provide certainty for the Development Plan process and for developers within the Zone of Influence and to ensure transparency and accountability a formulae approach has been adopted that sets out a mechanism for the calculation of developer contributions.

The total cost of the SAMMM has been divided between the Partner Authorities in proportion to the number of homes proposed within 0-8km of Cannock Chase SAC during the relevant period (as shown in Map 1). The table below sets out the housing numbers, percentage split and proportion of funding each Partner Authority within the 0-8km Zone of Payment is required to contribute.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Authority in 0-8km Zone of Cannock Chase SAC</th>
<th>Housing numbers proposed in 0-8km zone</th>
<th>Percentage (%) of total housing delivery</th>
<th>Proportion of SAMMM cost requirement per authority (over housing related plan period)</th>
<th>Monies already collected or committed</th>
<th>Monies left to collect for SAMM delivery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Staffordshire Council</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>£34,785</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td>£34,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannock Chase District Council</td>
<td>1700</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>£394,232</td>
<td>£20,000</td>
<td>£374,232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lichfield District Council</td>
<td>1715</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>£397,710</td>
<td>£96,500</td>
<td>£301,210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stafford Borough Council</td>
<td>4900</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>£1,136,315</td>
<td>£487,315</td>
<td>£649,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Staffordshire Borough Council</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>£6,957</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td>£6,957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td>£0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>8495</td>
<td></td>
<td>£1,970,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(April 2015)

These contributions will be index linked and subject to an annual review in line the ‘All Items Group’ (Item reference CHAW) of the Retail Prices Index.

It is at the discretion of individual Partner Authorities within the 0-8km Zone of Payment how to collect their total contribution. These details are included in each individual authority’s ‘Guidance to Mitigate the Impact of New Residential Development’. This document and the calculations it contains may be subject to review. Other types of development and windfall housing sites not included in the
calculations within the aforementioned Guidance have the potential to impact upon the SAC and these will need to be assessed and mitigation provided on an individual basis through discussions with Natural England and/or the relevant local authority. The estimated costings in the SAMMM will be monitored and may be reviewed and rates recalculated when the MOU is reviewed.

The option remains for developers to undertake a Habitats Regulations screening assessment and where necessary a full appropriate assessment to demonstrate that a proposal will not either alone or in combination adversely affect the integrity of the Cannock Chase SAC.

In order for the Developer Contributions Scheme to mitigate the negative effects of development, it is important that the mitigation measures are implemented in a timely manner which reflects the rate at which development comes forward. Each local planning authority will agree the timescale for the collection of developer contributions which are required to ensure that mitigation is in place prior to occupation to prevent additional harm arising to the Cannock Chase SAC.

The current mitigation programme relates to the delivery of 30,134 homes within the 0-15km Zone of Influence and 8,495 homes within the 0-8km Zone of Payment with a start date of 1st April 2011. Monitoring of housing delivery numbers will be undertaken on an annual basis. Where monitoring shows that delivery of either of these housing targets is being approached, a review of this MOU will be triggered and new housing targets and new mitigation measures will be considered.
Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Measures

The following table of mitigation measures and estimated costings has been prepared by Natural England in collaboration with the Cannock Chase SAC Partnership to set out proposed Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Measures (SAMMM) relating to Cannock Chase SAC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAMMM Measure</th>
<th>Cost £000</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Explanatory comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project initiation: business plan; agreement of partner responsibilities</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Year 0</td>
<td>A simple assumption that there is a cost in employing the Lichfield DC project team for project initiation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Memorandum); recruitment of project staff.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff: one full-time project manager and one full-time visitor engagement</td>
<td>1400</td>
<td>Years 1 to 10</td>
<td>Project manager £40k salary plus overheads = £80K. Engagement officer salary £30K, plus overheads = £60K. Costs dependent on managing body. These staff set up and manage all consultancy and other contracts, and undertake all engagement work above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>officer.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement of three of four key sectors: walkers and dog walkers; cyclists;</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Years 1 to 10</td>
<td>Cost here only includes the promotional and interpretation material, which would consist largely of web-based material. The other cost of sector engagement is staff time and is adequately built into the figures below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horse riders. Development of volunteering and education programmes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotional and interpretation material</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies: an overarching strategy for visitors and nested strategies for</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>Years 2 &amp; 3</td>
<td>Consultancy costs. Overarching strategy including monitoring £50K, car parking £40K, each of three visitor sectors £15K.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>car parking, track and footpath management and each visitor sector, plus a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monitoring strategy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical management: improvement of paths and tracks; implementation of</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>Years 1 to 15</td>
<td>Contract costs. Paths and tracks: quoted cost £10 per m; 1km a year for 10 years; followed by 100m a year for 5 years. Assume implementation of a parking plan will be cost neutral (funded by car park charges) for car park closures. Allow approx. £100k for car park construction or modification (see note below). Panels and way marking £50K.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parking plan; way marking and on-site interpretation panels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Years 4 to 15</td>
<td>Consultancy costs. Two repeats of the aerial survey of paths and tracks, £10K each to include ground truthing and targeted biological monitoring as necessary. Two visitor surveys 40K each.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAMMM Total</td>
<td>1,970</td>
<td>Years 1-15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Terms of Reference
Terms of Reference
Cannock Chase SAC Joint Strategic Board

1.0 Introduction
The Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Partnership provides a framework for coordination between statutory bodies having land use planning responsibilities in Cannock Chase SAC. These Terms of Reference set out how the Cannock Chase SAC Joint Strategic Board (JSB) will work together to coordinate the delivery of a programme of mitigation, prepare and implement common plans and policies to protect the SAC, promote its understanding and appreciation to help to deliver sustainable development.

The objective of the Partnership is to use statutory planning processes and specific site and visitor management measures to secure appropriate mitigation for the impacts on the Cannock Chase SAC of Development Plan policies and proposals contained in individual planning applications and projects, thereby ensuring that the integrity of the Cannock Chase SAC is maintained.

The Cannock Chase SAC Partnership as a whole will provide a vehicle for the agreement of mitigation measures, collection and use of planning obligation monies and monitoring of work carried out.

2.0 Status

| Competent Authorities | include any statutory body or public office exercising legislative powers, whether on land or sea. |

Each Competent Authority is individually responsible for meeting its duties under the Habitats Regulations. However by jointly preparing, implementing and reviewing the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Measures (SAMMM), it is anticipated that the Competent Authorities will be able to more effectively achieve the aims of the Habitats Regulations in relation to the Cannock Chase SAC, than if they acted alone. This will also relieve individual applicants from the burden of preparation of evidence for Habitats Regulations Assessment and will streamline this aspect of the development management process. To this end the Competent Authorities for the Cannock Chase SAC have formed this legal partnership overseen by this JSB with the Project Group coordinating the delivery, the accumulation of funds and undertaking additional works as directed. The JSB has no additional powers but serves to ensure that all Competent Authorities contribute to the implementation of the mitigation measures.

3.0 Composition
The membership of the JSB will comprise representatives of all of the Competent Authorities, as defined in the Habitats Regulations, for the Cannock Chase SAC and who have signed the Memorandum of Understanding.
- The JSB will comprise one senior officer or their officer representative from each of the Competent Authorities. Additional representatives may attend at the discretion of the Chairman.

4.0 Board Structure and Procedures
- No Competent Authority will have authority over any of the other JSB members.
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- The JSB will meet, or receive reports produced by an officer in a project management role, a minimum of quarterly;
- Meetings of the Board will be chaired by each Competent Authority in turn.
- Officer support and secretariat services will be provided by the Cannock Chase SAC Project Officer (as defined in the SAMMM) once in post. The current administrative situation will continue until the Project Officer is in post.
- Agendas, reports and minutes of meetings will be circulated to relevant stakeholders.
- The Project Group will be represented at meetings of JSB.
- Wherever possible, decisions made at the JSB will be by means of consensus. A quorum of 50% attendance plus one member will be required for decisions to be ratified. Where a decision is needed urgently, the incoming Chair has delegated authority to make the decision. This must then be reported to the next meeting for retrospective agreement.
- Where a member of the Partnership has proposed a project outside the agreed measures (SAMMM) that body is not entitled to vote on that item.
- Voting rights are limited to the full members of Cannock Chase SAC Partnership, one vote per full member authority.
- The Cannock Chase SAC Project Officer (when in post) will not be entitled to vote.
- With the agreement of members of the JSB members, advisory members may be co-opted to represent a specific area of interest or issue of consideration

5.0 Remit

The JSB:
- Will exercise its function to secure compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Regulations.
- Will provide a forum for discussion of issues and coordination of activity.
- Will oversee the development, implementation and monitoring of the SAMM, and agree an annual work programme and milestones based upon future projections in order to work towards achieving the Conservation Objectives for the SAC.
- Receive and review an annual report on the collection, management and spending of the planning obligations funding.
- Expects that representatives will commit to the actions for delivery within their respective organisations;
- Will review performance and delivery of actions within the plan and make decisions to ensure timely corrective action can be taken where necessary.
- Will advise/steer the Project Group on changing priorities based on evidence and commit to new actions where there is a shortfall in a timely manner.
- Will approve a working budget for the Cannock Chase SAC Project Officer once in post or the officer undertaking this role in the interim.
- Will assess projects outside the SAMMM over £10,000 for evidence that they are cost effective and provide greater additional mitigation than those within the SAMMM.
- Will rely on input from the Project Group to help inform their decisions and will direct the Project Group where additional/different actions are required.
- Will agree the frequency of the Project Group meetings.
- Will act on behalf of the Partnership organisations in commissioning studies, surveys and reports or other work on relevant matters, including making bids for joint funding and grants relating to the objectives of the body.
Memorandum of Understanding

- Represent the Cannock Chase SAC and its objectives at public meetings, events, workshops and conferences as and when necessary and, promote and champion the work of the Partnership.
- Will review its Terms of Reference as may be appropriate.
Cannock Chase SAC Project Group
Terms of Reference

1.0 Introduction
The Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Partnership provides a framework for coordination between statutory bodies having land use planning responsibilities in Cannock Chase SAC. These Terms of Reference set out how the Cannock Chase SAC Project Group will work together to coordinate the delivery of a programme of mitigation, prepare and implement common plans and policies to protect the SAC, promote its understanding and appreciation to help to deliver sustainable development.

The objective of the Partnership is to use statutory planning processes and specific site and visitor management measures to secure appropriate mitigation for the impacts on the Cannock Chase SAC of Development Plan policies and proposals contained in individual planning applications and projects, thereby ensuring that the integrity of the Cannock Chase SAC is maintained.

The Cannock Chase SAC Partnership as a whole will provide a vehicle for the agreement of mitigation measures, collection and use of planning obligation monies and monitoring of work carried out.

2.0 Status

Competent Authorities include any statutory body or public office exercising legislative powers, whether on land or sea.

Each Competent Authority is individually responsible for meeting its duties under the Habitats Regulations. However by jointly preparing, implementing and reviewing the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Measures (SAMMM), it is anticipated that the Competent Authorities will be able to more effectively achieve the aims of the Habitats Regulations in relation to the Cannock Chase SAC, than if they acted alone. This will also relieve individual applicants form the burden of preparation of evidence for Habitats Regulations Assessment and will streamline this aspect of the development management process. To this end the Competent Authorities for the Cannock Chase SAC have formed this legal partnership overseen by the Joint Strategic Board (JSB) with the Project Group coordinating the delivery, the accumulation of funds and undertaking additional works as directed. The JSB has no additional powers but serves to ensure that all Competent Authorities contribute to the implementation of the mitigation measures.

3.0 Composition
The membership of the Project Group will comprise all of the Competent Authorities, as defined in the Habitats Regulations, for the Cannock Chase SAC and who have signed the Memorandum of Understanding.

- The Project Group will comprise appropriate officers of the Competent Authorities
- Officers or technical / professional representatives of stakeholder organisations, by invitation.
4.0 Structure and Procedures

- The Project Group will meet a minimum of quarterly.
- Meetings of the Project Group will be chaired by each Competent Authority in turn.
- Officer support and secretariat services will be provided by Cannock Chase SAC Project Officer (as defined in the SAMM) once in post. The current administrative situation will continue until the Project Officer is in post.
- A minimum of 1 member of the Project Group will represent the group at the JSB meetings.
- A quorum of 50% attendance plus one member will be required for decisions to be ratified. Where a decision is needed urgently, the incoming Chair has delegated authority to make the decision. This must then be reported to the next meeting for retrospective agreement.
- Where a member of the Partnership has proposed a project outside the agreed SAMM that body is not entitled to vote on that item.
- Voting rights are limited to the Relevant Authorities, one vote per full member authority.
- The Cannock Chase SAC Project Officer (when in post) will not be entitled to vote.
- With the agreement of members of the Project Group, advisory members may be co-opted to represent a specific area of interest or issue of consideration.

5.0 Remit

The Project Group will be responsible, with external support where agreed, for undertaking the following:

- Advise the JSB as necessary on issues relating to and impacting upon the SAC
- Will coordinate the implementation of the SAMM
- Provide technical support to the JSB, prepare reports for the JSB’s consideration and carry out such actions as may be instructed by the JSB.
- Undertake work identified in the annual work programme or as otherwise prioritised.
- Agree an annual monitoring report for the year ending 31st March prepared by the Cannock Chase SAC Project Officer (once in post), together with regular updates on progress for the Board.
- Prepare, agree and maintain a five year rolling project plan, based upon the objectives of the Partnership.
- The Project Group may establish small project or working groups, resourced as necessary, to progress issues related to delivering the agreed annual work programme.
- Use of delegated authority to consider project substitution up to a value of £10K where projects outside of the SAMM can be proved to provide greater or additional mitigation to those within the SAMM.
- Identification of alternative mitigation projects
- Represent the Cannock Chase SAC and its objectives at public meetings, events, workshops and conferences as and when necessary and, promote and champion the work of the Partnership.
- Annually review the collection, management and spending of the planning obligations funding and prepare an annual report for the JSB.
- Provide information to allow the levels of residential development, spend and outcomes of project work to be monitored.
- Will review its Terms of Reference as may be appropriate.
Signatories:

For Cannock Chase District Council
Name: Judith Aupers
Position: Head of Governance / Authorised Officer

For East Staffordshire Borough Council
Name: Sam Khan
Position: Head of Service

Name: Julie Jeeves
Position: Councillor / Cabinet Member Planning & Neighbourhoods

For Lichfield District Council
Name: Richard King
Position: Strategic Director

Name: [Signature]
Position: Councillor

For South Staffordshire District Council
Name: Robert McCordle
Position: Councillor - Cabinet Member Strategic Services

Name: Andy Johnson
Position: Director (Cabinet Member Strategic Services)

For Stafford Borough Council
Name: [Signature]
Position: Councillor / Cabinet Member Planning & Regeneration
Memorandum of Understanding

For Wolverhampton City Council
Name: O. P. Hardwood
Position: Service Director

For Staffordshire County Council
Name: Ian Lyles
Position: Commissioner for the Rural County

Date on final signatory: 12th May 2016