

## The Planning Inspectorate

### QUESTIONNAIRE (s174) ENFORCEMENT NOTICE (Online Version)

You must ensure that a copy of the completed questionnaire, together with any enclosures, is sent to the appellant/agent. Any documents which you have indicated as 'To follow' should also be sent to the case officer by the date given in the start letter.

If notification or consultation under an Act, Order or Departmental Circular would have been necessary before granting permission and has not yet taken place, please inform the appropriate bodies of the appeal now and ask for any comments to be sent direct to us within 6 weeks of the 'starting date'.

Appeal Reference

APP/C3430/C/22/3312914

Appeal By

MR PATRICK DUNNE

Site Address

Land adjacent to Brinsford Bridge  
Stafford Road, Coven Heath  
South Staffordshire  
WV10 7HE

#### PART 1

1.a. Do you agree to the written representation procedure? Yes ☒ No ☐

*Note: If the written procedure is agreed, the Inspector will visit the site **unaccompanied** by either party unless the relevant part of the site cannot be seen from a road or other public land, or it is essential for the Inspector to enter the site to check measurements or other relevant facts.*

2.a. If the written procedure is agreed, can the relevant part of the appeal site be seen from a road or other public land? Yes ☐ No ☒

2.b. Is it essential for the Inspector to enter the site to check measurements or other relevant facts? Yes ☒ No ☐

Both buildings cannot be seen external of the site

2.c. Are there any known health and safety issues that would affect the conduct of the site inspection? Yes ☒ No ☐

Please describe:

There are dogs on the site

2.d. Would the Inspector have to go onto any privately owned adjoining land as well as the appeal site itself? Yes ☐ No ☒

#### PART 2

3. Are there any related appeals currently before the Secretary of State, e.g. under s.78, 174 or 195 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, s20 or 39 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 or orders under s102 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990? If yes please provide reference number(s) Yes ☐ No ☒

4.a. Has the local planning authority received the correct fee payable for the deemed planning application/ground (a) to be considered? Yes ☒ No ☐

5.a. Is the appeal site within a conservation area?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.b. Is the appeal site adjacent to a conservation area?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please give the name of the conservation area, provide a plan and indicate when the conservation area was designated.

Conservation area:

Designated:

Please select from the options below:

☒ [see 'Questionnaire Documents' section](#)

### PART 3

6.a. Does the notice relate to building, engineering, mining or other operations?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, please state the area of the site shown in the notice plan, in hectares.		<input style="width: 150px;" type="text" value="1.09 hectare(s)"/>	
6.b. Is the area of the alleged breach different from the above?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6.c. Does the alleged breach create any floor space?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, please state the amount of gross floor space created, in square metres.		<input style="width: 150px;" type="text" value="180 sq metre(s)"/>	

Does the enforcement notice relate to a change of use of land to use for:

7.a. the disposal of refuse or waste materials?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.b. the deposit of materials remaining after mineral extraction?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.c. the storage of minerals in the open?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8. If the enforcement notice relates to the erection of a building or buildings, is it accepted that their use is for purposes of agriculture on land used for agricultural purposes (not necessarily an agricultural unit as defined in the Agriculture Act (1947))?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9. Does the enforcement notice relate to the erection/change of use of a building which is a single private dwellinghouse, as defined in Regulation 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) Regulations 2012?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### PART 4

10. Has the local planning authority made a Local Development Order under sections 61A to 61C of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by section 40 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) in relation to the application site?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11. Has any planning permission been granted previously in respect of the development?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12. Has the appellant applied for planning permission and paid the appropriate fee for the same development as in the enforcement notice?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13. Has a planning contravention notice been served?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

14.a. the appeal site is within 67 METRES OF A TRUNK ROAD?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, please state which one.			
A449			
14.b. the appeal site is CROWN LAND (as defined in s293 of the Act)?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14.c. a STOP NOTICE has been served in addition to the enforcement notice?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14.d. the appeal site is in or adjacent to or likely to affect a SSSI?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14.e. any protected species are likely to be affected by the alleged development?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14.f. the appeal site is in a Green Belt or AONB?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, please state which one (name).			
West Midlands Green Belt			
14.g. any part of the site is subject to a Tree Preservation Order?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14.h. the appeal site is within 400m of an area of underground or surface mineral interest?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14.i. the appeal site is within 250m of a waste landfill site?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14.j. does the development affect the setting of a listed building or ancient monument?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14.k. has importation of waste materials been involved in the development?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14.l. does the appeal involve persons claiming gypsy/traveller status, whether or not this is accepted by the planning authority?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>PART 5</b>			
16.a. Is the appeal site subject to an ARTICLE 4 Direction?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
17. Have any development rights been restricted by means of a planning condition?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
18. Does the development relate to operational development for a disabled person, as defined by s29 of the National Assistance Act 1948?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
19. Will any consultation be carried out on the possibility of planning permission being granted if the appeal is confirmed as valid?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Environmental Impact Assessment - Schedule 1</b>			
20.a. Is the alleged development within Schedule 1 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Environmental Impact Assessment - Schedule 2</b>			
20.b.i. Is the development Schedule 2 development as described in Column 1, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Environmental Impact Assessment - Environmental Statement (ES)</b>			
20.e. Has the appellant supplied an environmental statement?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## PART 6

21.a. a copy of the letter with which you notified people about the appeal.



☒ [see 'Questionnaire Documents' section](#)

21.b. a list of the people you notified and the deadline you gave for their comments to be sent to us.



☒ [see 'Questionnaire Documents' section](#)

the deadline you gave for their comments to be sent to us.

24/02/2023

21.c. the planning officer's report to committee or delegated report and any other relevant document/minutes.



☒ [see 'Questionnaire Documents' section](#)

21.d. where ground (a) (s174) has been pleaded and any fee required has been paid, a comprehensive list of conditions which you consider should be imposed if planning permission is granted. You need not attach this now, but it should reach us within 6 weeks of the starting date. The list must be submitted separately from your appeal statement.



### Policies/Planning Guidance

22.a. extracts from any relevant statutory development plan policies (even if you intend to rely more heavily on the emerging plan). You must include the front page, the title and date of approval/adoption, and the status of the plan. Copies of the policies should include the relevant supporting text.



List of policies

Core policies 1,2,6,11,GB1, EQ1,3,4,9,11, H1,6, EV12, Appendix 5 and 6

☒ [see 'Questionnaire Documents' section](#)

22.b. extracts of any relevant policies which have been 'saved' by way of a Direction.



22.c. extracts from any supplementary planning guidance, that you consider necessary, together with its status, whether it was the subject of public consultation and consequent modification, whether it was formally adopted, and if so when.



22.d. extracts from any supplementary planning document that you consider necessary, together with the date of its adoption. In the case of emerging documents, please state what stage they have reached.



List of supplementary planning documents

Green Belt and Open Countryside SPD and Design Guide SPD 2018

☒ [see 'Questionnaire Documents' section](#)

22.e. if any Development Plan Document (DPD) or Neighbourhood Plan relevant to this appeal has been examined and found sound/met the basic conditions and passed a referendum, the date the DPD or Neighbourhood Plan is likely to be adopted and, if you consider this date will be before the Inspector's decision on this appeal is issued, an explanation of the Council's policy position in respect of this appeal upon its adoption. You should also include an explanation of the status of existing policies and plans, as they relate to this appeal, upon adoption and which (if any) will be superseded;



22.f. if any DPD or Neighbourhood Plan relevant to this appeal has been submitted for examination, or in the case of a Neighbourhood Plan has been examined and is awaiting a referendum, an explanation of any substantive changes in the progress of the emerging plan, and their relevance to this appeal if it is considered that the plan will not be adopted before the Inspector's decision on this appeal is issued;



22.g. your Authority's CIL charging schedule is being/has been examined;





- 22.h. your Authority's CIL charging schedule has been/is likely to be adopted. ☐
- 22.i. any other relevant information or correspondence you consider we should know about. ☐

## PART 7

23. A true copy of the Enforcement Notice

☒ see 'Questionnaire Documents' section

24. The Enforcement Notice Plan (if applicable)

☒ see 'Questionnaire Documents' section

25. A list of those served with the Notice

☒ see 'Questionnaire Documents' section

26. Do you wish to attach your statement of case?

Yes

☐ No



## LPA Details

I certify that a copy of this appeal questionnaire and any enclosures will be sent to the appellant or agent today. ☒

LPA's reference

21/00375/BOC

Completed by

Mark Bray

On behalf of

South Staffordshire District Council

Please provide the details of the officer we can contact for this appeal, if different from the Planning Inspectorate's usual contact for this type of appeal.

Name

Salindra Shakespeare

Phone no (including dialling code)

01902696274

Email

Appeals@sstaffs.gov.uk

**Please advise the case officer of any changes in circumstances occurring after the return of the questionnaire.**

## QUESTIONNAIRE DOCUMENTS

Appeal Reference APP/C3430/C/22/3312914

Appeal By MR PATRICK DUNNE

Site Address  
Land adjacent to Brinsford Bridge  
Stafford Road, Coven Heath  
South Staffordshire  
WV10 7HE

### The documents listed below were uploaded with this form:

**Relates to Section:** PART 2

**Document Description:** 4.a. Plan of the Conservation Area.

**File name:** 8 Brewood Conservation Area Map.pdf

**Relates to Section:** PART 6

**Document Description:** 21.a. A copy of the letter with which you notified people about the appeal.

**File name:** 8 Appeal notification.pdf

**Relates to Section:** PART 6

**Document Description:** 21.b. A list of the people you notified and the deadline you gave for their comments to be sent to us.

**File name:** 7 LOIP - Brewood and Coven.pdf

**Relates to Section:** PART 6

**Document Description:** 21.c. the planning officer's report to committee or delegated report and any other relevant document/minutes.

**File name:** 2 Officer report.pdf

**Relates to Section:** PART 6

**Document Description:** 22.a. Extracts from any statutory development plan policy including the front page, title and date of approval/adoption and status.

**File name:** 6 Core strategy front page.pdf

**File name:** 6a Policies.pdf

**Relates to Section:** PART 6

**Document Description:** 22.d. Extracts from any supplementary planning document that you consider necessary, together with the date of its adoption. In the case of emerging documents, please state what stage they have reached.

**File name:** 6b Design Guide SPD 2018.pdf

**File name:** 6c Green Belt and Open Countryside SPD.pdf

**Relates to Section:** PART 7

**Document Description:** 23. A true copy of the Enforcement Notice.

**File name:** 3 Enforcement notice.pdf

**Relates to Section:** PART 7

**Document Description:** 24. The Enforcement Notice Plan.

**File name:** 4 Enforcement notice plan.pdf

**Relates to Section:** PART 7

**Document Description:** 25. A list of those served with the Notice.

**File name:** 5 List of persons served with notice.pdf

**Completed by**

Not Set

**Date**

27/01/2023 11:38:49

**LPA**

South Staffordshire District Council

**AUTHORISATION FOR PLANNING ENFORCEMENT ACTION IN RESPECT OF LAND ADJACENT TO BRINSFORD BRIDGE, STAFFORD ROAD, COVEN HEATH, SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE WV10 7HE**

**Enforcement Reference 21/00375/BOC**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To seek authorisation to take Enforcement Action in respect of a breach of condition on Land, ("the Land") adjacent to Brinsford Bridge, Stafford Road, Coven Heath, South Staffordshire WV10 7HE, outlined in red for identification purposes on the site plan ("the Plan") attached to this report.

**2. BREACH OF PLANNING CONTROL**

- 2.1 Breach of Condition 1 of planning permission reference 21/00624/VAR; granted by way of decision notice dated 24<sup>th</sup> August 2021, in that the development has not been carried out in accordance with the approved drawings as follows:

**Condition 1**

*The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings - Amended Amenity Building Floor Plans & Elevations, received on 23/07/2021, Location Plan received 01/06/2021*

*Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the area in accordance with policy EQ11 of the adopted Core Strategy*

The approved drawing for the Amended Amenity Building Floor Plans & Elevations, received on 23/07/2021 is shown at Appendix 1 to this notice.

- 2.2 There has been a failure to comply with condition 1 as follows:

- i) Increased total ridge height on both buildings of a minimum of 30cms.
- ii) Increased ridge height of dormer windows on both buildings.
- iii) Increased height to the eaves on both buildings of over 0.60m.

- iv) Redesigned central front entrance/porch with an increased height to the eaves on both buildings of a minimum of 1.90m.
- v) Redesigned central front entrance/porch with an increased depth on both buildings of a minimum of 1.00m.
- vi) Redesigned entrance on both buildings to central front entrance/porch with double door entrance.
- vii) Redesigned fenestration with an increase in the number of panes from two paned windows to three paned windows.
- viii) Insertion of additional windows and Velux roof lights or reduction in number of windows or doors throughout both buildings.

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

That in respect of the breach of planning control described above, the Delegated Officer authorises the issue of an Enforcement Notice pursuant to section 172 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), requiring the steps to be taken within the specified time period and for the reasons which are set out below:

#### **3.1 Steps to be Taken**

- i) Reduce the total ridge height on both buildings to the approved drawing height, (Appendix 1 of this notice).
- ii) Reduce the height of the dormer windows on both buildings to the approved drawing height, (Appendix 1 of this notice).
- iii) Reduce the height of the eaves on both buildings to the approved drawing height, (Appendix 1 of this notice).
- iv) In respect of the redesigned central front entrance/porch on both buildings, reduce the height of the eaves to the approved drawings height and reduce the depth to the approved drawing depth shown on the approved drawing at 1.00m, (Appendix 1 of this notice).
- v) In respect of the redesigned entrance to the central front entrance/porch on both buildings, remove the double door and replace with a single door and two double paned windows to reflect the design shown on the approved drawing, (Appendix 1 of this notice).

In respect of Building 1 Shaded Blue on the Plan at Appendix 2 attached to this notice

- vi) In the front elevation, replace the three paned windows with two paned windows on the ground floor and remove the side windows to the central front entrance/porch.
- vii) In the left elevation, (from the front), insert the door shown on the approved drawing and replace the three paned window with a two paned window on the first floor.
- viii) In the rear elevation, replace the three paned windows with two paned windows as shown on the approved plan and remove the three paned window on the left-hand side and Velux roof lights in the rear roof elevation.
- ix) In the right elevation, (from the front) replace the three paned window with a two paned window on the first floor.

In respect of Building 2 – Shaded Green on the Plan at Appendix 2 attached to this notice

- x) In the front elevation, replace the three paned windows with two paned windows on the ground floor and remove the side windows to the central front entrance/porch.
- xi) In the left elevation, (from the front), remove the two windows to the ground floor, and large window to the first floor and replace with a single door and window show on the approved drawing and in the positions shown on the approved drawing.
- xii) In the rear elevation, Velux roof lights in the rear roof elevation
- xiii) In the right elevation, (from the front), replace the three paned windows to the left-hand side and first floor with two paned windows.

### 3.2 Time for Compliance

Six months from the date this notice takes effect.

## 4. INFORMATION

### **Site Description and Reasons for Issuing this Notice**

- 4.1 The site is an existing traveller site that is occupied by one extended family. The site is in the Green Belt, approximately 1.2km south of Coven village, with access via the western side of the A449 Stafford Road.
- 4.2 The site is bordered by the A449 to the east, the Staffordshire and Worcester Canal to the north and west, and by an open field to the south.
- 4.3 The site is bound on all sides by mature hedgerows and trees that provide effective screening. The character of the area is semi-rural with sporadic residential development along Shaw Hall Lane to the west beyond the application site boundary with the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area. Brinsford Farm Boat yard and repair workshop are located on the opposite side of the A449 to the east. There is a row of houses fronting the western side of the A449 approximately 70m south of the application site.
- 4.4 The application site is an allocated Gypsy site 'GT08 - Brinsford Bridge, Coven Heath'.
- 4.5 The site has permission for 2 permanent pitches and a further transit pitch. A modest amenity block and utility building for transit pitches already exist on the site.
- 4.6 The breach of condition took place less than ten years ago, and the buildings were erected less than four years and they are therefore not immune from enforcement action.
- 4.7 On 18<sup>th</sup> September 2020, the Council granted planning permission for the erection of 2 amenity buildings under permission reference 19/00863/FUL.
- 4.8 The approved buildings were of a single storey design with a modest apex roofed porch and single door entrance. The total height of the buildings was set at 6.50m.
- 4.9 On 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021, Council Officers conducted a site visit and found that the buildings were not being built in accordance with the approved plans and had erected dormer windows to the roof.
- 4.10 On 24<sup>th</sup> August 2021, the Council granted planning permission for a variation of permission reference 19/00863/FUL, for two amenity blocks with amended floor plans and elevations to allow for the provision of storage in the roof spaces under permission reference 21/00624/VAR. The amended permission retained the modest apex roofed porch, single door entrance and retained the height of 6.50m.
- 4.11 On 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021, Council Officers conducted a site visit and found that the utility buildings were larger than the approved plans. The roof height had been given a modest increase, however this had allowed for a significant

height increase to the eaves of over 0.6 metres. This is turn allowed for a significant height increase to the front porch of at least 1.90m to both buildings including an increase in the depth of the porch by over 1.00m.

- 4.12 In addition a large glass window had been inserted into the front first floor elevation of both buildings. The front door has also been altered to a larger one which is more suburban in character. In addition, the majority of the windows had increased in size from two pane to three pane casements and additional windows had been added along with Velux roof lights to the rear elevations.
- 4.13 On 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022, a further planning application was received, (application reference 22/00641/VAR), to vary Condition 1 to change the floor plan and elevations to reflect what has been built, with the exception of the front elevation first floor glass window that had been removed. On 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2022, the application was refused as disproportionate and bulky additions to the host building and thus representing inappropriate development, harmful to the Green Belt by definition.
- 4.14 Paragraph 137 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.
- 4.15 Paragraph 149 of the NPPF confirms that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate development in the Green Belt unless they fall under certain listed exceptions. Included in this list, and not to therefore be regarded as inappropriate development is 'the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.' Policy GB1 of the adopted Core Strategy seeks to protect the Green Belt against inappropriate development and is broadly consistent with the Framework.
- 4.16 Policy GB1 of the of the South Staffordshire Core Strategy Development Plan adopted 2012 states that development acceptable within the terms of national planning policy set out in the NPPF will normally be permitted where the proposed development is for either a new or extended building, provided it is for:
- d) limited infilling and limited extension(s), alteration or replacement of an existing building where the extension(s) or alterations are not disproportionate to the size of the original building, and in the case of a replacement building the new building is not materially larger than the building it replaces. Guidance in these matters will be contained in the Green Belt and Open Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).



- 4.17 The original approved application, (permission reference 19/00863/FUL) had a modest design and was single storey with amenity accommodation found at ground floor only. The building was constructed with floor area contained within the roof area, and two pitched roof dormers along with an extended forward-facing gable. Whilst the 2021 variation application noted an increase of around 66%. The LPA calculates this to be 70%, a 4% difference is not material. The case officer at the time considered that this increase in floor area, although above the recommended 20-40% would not be considered as inappropriate as the increase in floor area was predominantly down to the installation of a first floor within the existing roof space.
- 4.18 The amendments now result in an increase in floor area of around 82% above the original approved building. Whilst the majority of floor area increase is due to the installation of the floor area within the existing roof, there has been a further increase of around 12% from the 2021 amended scheme, (permission reference 21/00624/VAR).
- 4.19 The applicants have mainly made unauthorised modifications to the forward-facing glazed gable to accommodate the floor area at first floor. This has seen the eaves heights as built increase from around 2.60m to over 1.90m, along with the depth of structure increasing from 1.00m to 2.00m. A later site visit has noted that the glazing in the gable has since been removed and replaced with herringbone brickwork. The increases in the gable have resulted in a more bulky addition to the building and this is considered to be disproportionate to the host building.
- 4.20 One of the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness. As set out in R. (on the application of Samuel Smith Old Brewery) v North Yorkshire CC [2020] UKSC 3 when assessing impact on openness it is possible to take into account both the spatial and visual impact of a development.
- 4.21 Whilst the site is bound on all sides by mature hedgerows and trees, building one with its pronounced porch now standing at double the depth and eaves height than that which was approved in 2021, can clearly be seen over the walled gated entrance to the site as well as over the boundary hedgerows and trees from the A449 Stafford Road. The enlarged forward facing gable and porch structure do not preserve the openness of the Green Belt.
- 4.22 In light of the above, it is considered that the development as built is inappropriate development in the Green Belt, harmful by definition. Paragraph 147 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition harmful to the Green Belt, and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

- 4.23 Case for very special circumstances
- 4.24 Paragraph 148 of the NPPF states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 4.25 The agent for the most recent amended application, (application reference 22/00641/VAR), considers that the principle of need has been established at the site in that the occupiers of the site need an amenity building and that the changes made are 'relatively minor'. The need for the buildings is not in dispute. However, the amendments made to the approved building, and then further changes to both buildings built on site are considered to be disproportionate the host buildings, adding a bulky addition that can be viewed from outside the site, harmful to both the visual and spatial elements of the Green Belt. There are therefore no considerations that amount to the very special circumstances needed to clearly outweigh the harm.
- 4.26 Impact on the character of the area
- 4.27 Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:
- development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or
  - outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.
- 4.28 The National Design Guide [2021] states:  
"Context is the location of the development and the attributes of its immediate, local and regional surroundings...Well-designed places are integrated into their surroundings so they relate well to them; and influenced by and influence their context positively." (paragraphs 39 & 40). The Guide further states in paragraph 43 that "Well-designed new development is integrated into its wider surroundings, physically, socially and visually. It is carefully sited and designed, and is demonstrably based on an understanding of the existing situation, including the architecture prevalent in the area,

including the local vernacular and other precedents that contribute to local character, to inform the form, scale appearance, details and materials of new development."

- 4.29 The National Design Guide also notes that "Well-designed new development...includes considering the composition of street scenes, individual buildings and their elements; the scale and proportions of buildings; façade design, such as the degree of symmetry, variety, the pattern and proportion of windows and doors, and their details." (paragraph 53). Further, "Well-designed places contribute to local distinctiveness. This may include: adopting typical building forms, composition, articulation, proportions, features, materials, details, patterns and colours of an area; drawing upon the architectural precedents that are prevalent in the local area, including the proportion of buildings and their openings." (paragraph 56)
- 4.30 Policy EQ4 of the Core Strategy seeks for development to respect the intrinsic rural character and local distinctiveness of the South Staffordshire landscape and should be maintained and where possible enhanced.
- 4.31 Policy EQ11 of the Core Strategy requires that new development "respect local character and distinctiveness, including that of the surrounding development and landscape in accordance with Policy EQ4, by enhancing the positive attributes whilst mitigating the negative aspects", and that "in terms of scale, volume, massing and materials, development should contribute positively to the street scene and surrounding buildings, whilst respecting the scale of spaces and buildings in the local area."
- 4.32 The adopted Design Guide goes on to say; Generally, extensions should be subservient to the main building. The extension should respect the scale and form of the main building and its relationship to adjacent buildings, including the gaps in between them. Developers should consider the overall effect of the extension on the appearance of the building as a whole, and extensions should not detract from the original building or nearby buildings by overshadowing. It is generally not appropriate for extensions (other than small porches or canopies) to project forward of the existing front facade of a building.
- 4.33 The modifications have turned the modest apex roofed porch, with its single door entrance and modest fenestration, of what was intended to be a utility building into a modern looking detached urban residence that fail to contribute to local distinctiveness or to the surrounding rural area and are therefore contrary to Policies EQ4 and EQ11 of the South Staffordshire Core Strategy Development Plan adopted 2012, as well as the National Design Guide [2021].
- 4.34 In conclusion, the alterations to the buildings consisting of the increased ridge height, increased height to the eaves and significantly increased height and depth of the porches to the previously approved amenity building have

resulted in a bulky addition to the host dwelling that would be considered as disproportionate to the host building and thus represents inappropriate development, harmful to the Green Belt by definition. No very special circumstances have been presented that clearly outweigh this harm.

4.35 In addition, the design of the porch extension along with the materials used are contrary to the aims of both national and local planning policy that seeks to secure good design.

4.36 The Council consider that planning permission should not be given, and planning permission to retain the unauthorised amendments has recently been refused because it did not overcome these objections to the unauthorised development.

#### **4.37 National Planning Policy Framework**

5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes  
12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places  
13 – Protecting the Green Belt  
14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change  
15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

#### **4.38 Adopted Core Strategy**

Core Policy 1 – The Spatial Strategy for South Staffordshire  
GB1 – Development in the Green Belt

Core Policy 2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment

EQ1 Protecting, Enhancing and Expanding Natural Assets  
EQ3: Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets  
EQ4 – Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape  
EQ9 Protecting Residential Amenity  
EQ11 – Wider Design Considerations

Core Policy 6 – Housing Delivery  
Policy H1: Achieving a Balanced Housing Market  
H6 - Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show people  
EV12 Parking Provision

Core Policy 11: Sustainable Transport  
Appendix 5 Car parking standards  
Appendix 6 Space About Dwellings

#### Other Policy Considerations

- Green Belt and Open Countryside Supplementary Planning Guidance (GBOC SPD)
- Design Guide
- South Staffordshire Site Allocations Document (SAD) in respect of proposed Gypsy and Traveller Sites - 2018.
- Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2015
- South Staffordshire and Northern Warwickshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAA)

### **5. PLANNING HISTORY**

- 2002, Change of use of land for the siting of mobile home and temporary siting of static caravan, Refused (02/01223/COU).
- 2003, Change of use to private gypsy caravan site for one family. Refused (03/00989/COU).
- 2006, Private gypsy caravan site, Refused (06/00140/FUL).
- 2006, Private gypsy caravan site, Refused (06/00783/FUL). Allowed at appeal on 22/11/2007 (APP/C3430/A/06/203210/NWF).
- 2009, Removal of condition 4 of 06/00783/FUL to allow stationing of static caravans, Approved (09/00099/VAR).
- 2009, Construction of day room building ancillary to gypsy site and amendments to site layout, Approved (09/00633/FUL).
- 2010, Use of land for the stationing of caravans for 4 residential gypsy pitches with ancillary hardstanding, fences and dayrooms, in addition to the existing planning permissions for 3 caravans and utility/dayroom, Refused (10/00392/FUL).
- 2011, Use of land for the stationing of caravans with revised site layout for 2 residential Irish traveller pitches and 1 transit pitch with ancillary utility building, Approved (11/00125/FUL).
- 2013, Erection of single loose box stable for stabling 1 horse, Approved (13/00838/FUL).
- 2015, Use of land for the stationing of caravans for residential purposes for additional 3 gypsy pitches, together with the formation of ancillary hardstanding and utility/dayrooms, Refused (15/00452/FUL).
- 2016, Use of land for the stationing of caravans forming 3 gypsy pitches, together with the formation of ancillary hardstanding and utility/dayrooms, Refused (16/00562/FUL).
- 2017 - The use of land for the stationing of caravans for residential purposes for additional 3no. gypsy pitches and 3no. transit pitches, together with the formation of hardstanding and utility/dayrooms ancillary to that use and conversion of the existing stable ref: 13/00838/FUL to the toilet block for the use of the transit pitches. - refused (17/00834/FUL).
- 2019- 19/00863/FUL - Erection of 2 amenity buildings - Approved
- 2021- 21/00624/VAR - Substitute amended floor plans and elevations to allow for the provision of storage in the roof spaces. Application approved.

- 2021- 21/00699/FUL - Erection of 2 garage buildings- Refused.
- 2022 - 22/00641/VAR - Vary Condition 1: Change the floor plan and elevations to reflect what has been built. Change the plan reference numbers approved under the planning permission – Refused.

## **6. CASE SUMMARY**

- 6.1 On 18th September 2020, the Council granted planning permission for the erection of 2 amenity buildings under permission reference 19/00863/FUL.
- 6.2 The approved buildings were of a single storey design with a modest apex roofed porch and single door entrance. The total height of the buildings was set at 6.50m.
- 6.3 On 26<sup>th</sup> February 2021, the Council received a complaint that the buildings were being erected in the absence of planning permission.
- 6.4 On 26th April 2021, Council Officers conducted a site visit and found that the buildings were not being built in accordance with the approved plans and had erected dormer windows to the roof.
- 6.5 On 24th August 2021, the Council granted planning permission for a variation of permission reference 19/00863/FUL, for two amenity blocks with amended floor plans and elevations to allow for the provision of storage in the roof spaces under permission reference 21/00624/VAR. The amended permission retained the modest apex roofed porch, single door entrance and retained the height of 6.50m.
- 6.6 On 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021. The Council received a further complaint that the two amenity buildings were not being built in accordance with the varied approved plans.
- 6.7 On 8th December 2021, Council Officers conducted a site visit and found that the utility buildings were significantly larger than the approved plans. The roof height had been given a modest increase, however this had allowed for a significantly larger height to increase the height to the eaves of over 0.60m. This is turn allowed for a significant increase in the height of the front porch of at least 1.90m to both buildings including an increase in the depth of the porch by over one metre.
- 6.8 The single front entrance door had been replaced with a large modern double door entrance and the increased height of the porch had allowed for large window to be inserted into the first floor and further window to the upper roof area close up to the ridge.

- 6.9 In addition, the majority of the windows had increased in size from two pane to three pane casements and additional windows had been added along with Velux roof lights to the rear elevations.
- 6.10 On 31st March 2022, a survey of the buildings confirmed the increase in their size.
- 6.11 On 10<sup>th</sup> June 2022, a Council Officer conducted a further site visit where a representative of the site owner was present. He accepted the utility buildings as built were a significant diversion from the approved plans but that they had made arrangements to close up the large window at the front and would happily the reduce the windows where there should be two frames and not three.
- 6.12 The extended porch and first floor height to the eaves were pointed out as a completely different and larger design. He stated it would be too much work to rectify. He was advised that the Council would have no alternative but to serve an Enforcement Notice as the utility buildings were too large and now presented themselves as new residential dwelling houses within the Green Belt rather than the modest utility buildings as approved.
- 6.13 On 10<sup>th</sup> July 2022, Council Officers again visit the site and noted that the large windows to the front elevations of both buildings had been removed and replaced with brick. However no work further work had been carried out to comply with the approved plans and the increase in height remained together with the significant increase in the height of the buildings to the eaves and the front porches.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 A breach in planning control has taken place involving a significant diversion from the approved modest utility buildings under permission reference 21/00624/VAR.
- 7.2 The applicant has now submitted a further planning application, (application reference 22/00641/VAR) that fails to address the overall as built height and the eaves height of a minimum of 30cms metres and over 1.90m to the front porch.
- 7.2 The alterations to the previously approved amenity building have resulted in a bulky addition to the host dwelling that would be considered as disproportionate to the host building and thus represent inappropriate development, harmful to the Green Belt by definition. No very special circumstances have been presented that clearly outweigh this harm.

- 7.4 The design of the extension and increased heights along with the materials used are contrary to the aims of both national and local planning policy that seeks to secure good design.

**8. EXPEDIENCY OF ENFORCEMENT ACTION**

- 8.1 Planning Enforcement action is a discretionary power which may be exercised where there has been a breach of planning control which affects public amenity or otherwise affects land or buildings meriting protection in the public interest.
- 8.2 Both the planning agent and landowners have been spoken and have been prepared to make modest changes to the as built development and have submitted an application to vary the approved plans under application reference 22/00641/VAR. However, this application fails to address the as built changes in respect of the overall height and height to the eaves and as such fails to remedy the harm as a result of the diversion from the approved plans.
- 8.3 The Council consider that planning permission should not be given because planning conditions could not overcome these objections to the development. The development is contrary to both National and Local Planning Policy and the Council now considers it both expedient and within the public interest to proceed with formal enforcement action to remedy the harm caused by this development.

**NOTICES TO BE SERVED UPON**

- i) AMANDA SHENADA DUNNE  
13 New Buildings,  
Stafford Road,  
Coven Heath,  
Wolverhampton  
WV10 7HF
- ii) PATRICK DUNNE  
Land adjacent to Brinsford Bridge,  
Stafford Road,  
Coven Heath,  
South Staffordshire  
WV10 7HE



**REPORTING OFFICER**

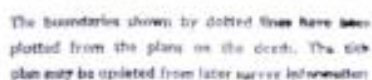
Report prepared by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bray', written in a cursive style.

**Mark Bray**  
**Senior Planning Enforcement Officer**

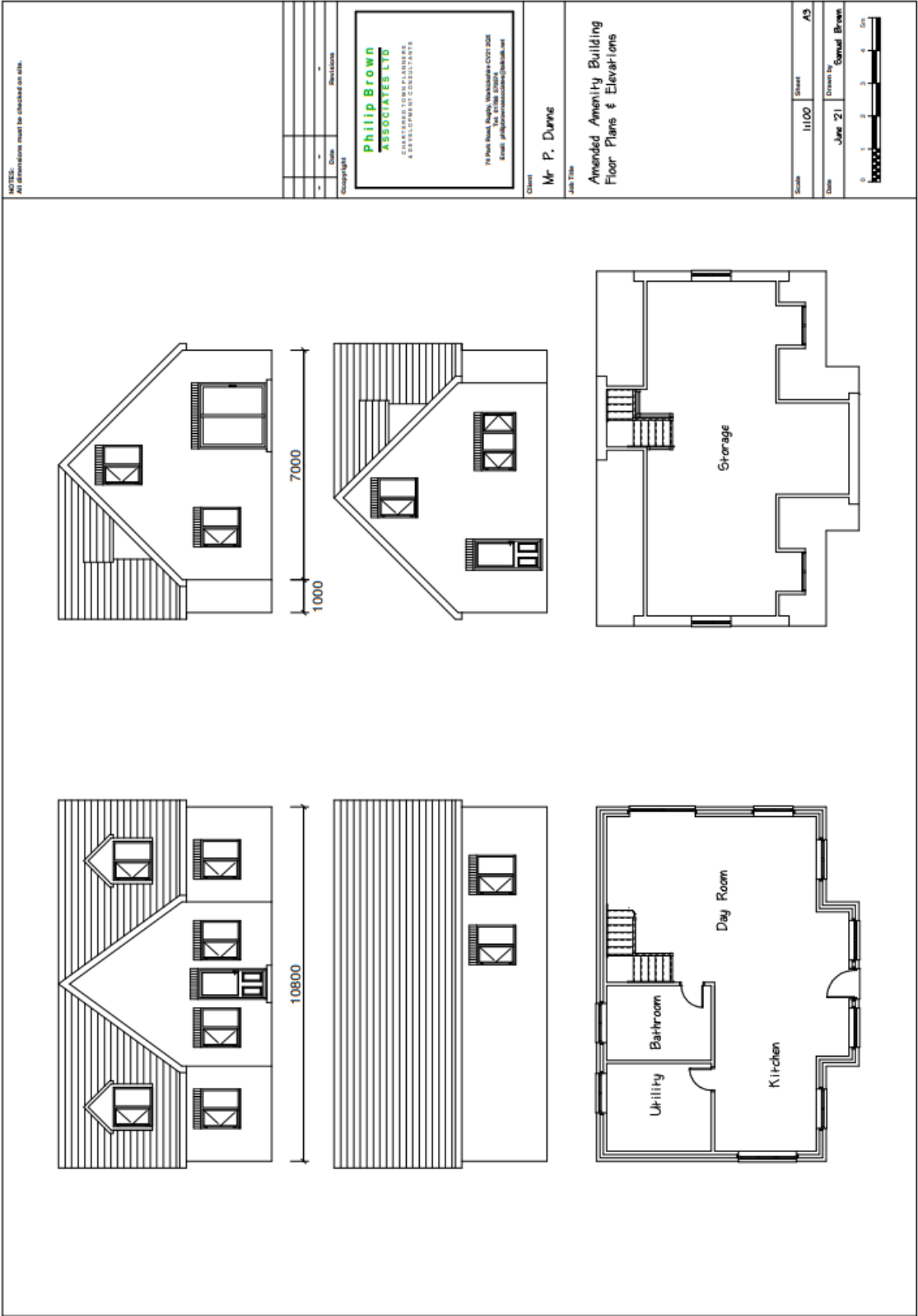
**Date: 25<sup>th</sup> August 2022**

Land adjacent to Brinsford Bridge, Stafford Road, Coven Heath,  
South Staffordshire WV10 7HE



APPENDIX 1

Approved Drawing - Amended Amenity Building Floor Plans & Elevations, received on 23/07/2021



## Appendix 2



# **IMPORTANT – THIS COMMUNICATION AFFECTS YOUR PROPERTY**

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED**

**BY THE PLANNING AND COMPENSATION ACT 1991)**

**ENFORCEMENT NOTICE**

**ISSUED BY: SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**(1) THIS IS A FORMAL NOTICE** which is issued by the Council because it appears to them that there has been a breach of planning control, under Section 171A(1)(b) of the above Act, at the Land described below. It considers that it is expedient to issue this Notice, having regard to the provisions of the development plan and to other material planning considerations. The Annex at the end of the notice and the enclosures to which it refers contain important information.

**(2) THE LAND AFFECTED**

Land, (“the Land”) adjacent to Brinsford Bridge, Stafford Road, Coven Heath, South Staffordshire WV10 7HE, outlined in red for identification purposes on the site plan attached to this notice.

**(3) THE MATTERS WHICH APPEAR TO CONSTITUTE THE BREACH OF PLANNING CONTROL**

Breach of Condition 1 of planning permission reference 21/00624/VAR (“the Planning Permission” for the erection of 2 Amenity Buildings) (“the Development”); was granted on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2021, in that it appears to the Council that the Development has not been carried out in accordance with the approved drawings as follows:

*Condition 1*

*The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings - Amended Amenity Building Floor Plans & Elevations, received on 23/07/2021, Location Plan received 01/06/2021*

*Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the area in accordance with policy EQ11 of the adopted Core Strategy*

The approved drawing, (“the Approved Drawing”) for the Amended Amenity Building Floor Plans & Elevations, received on 23/07/2021 is shown at Appendix 1 to this notice.

There has been a failure to comply with condition 1 as follows:

- i) Increased total ridge height on both buildings of a minimum of 30cms.
- ii) Increased ridge height of dormer windows on both buildings.

- iii) Increased height to the eaves on both buildings of over 0.60 metres.
- iv) Redesigned central front entrance/porch with an increased height to the eaves on both buildings of a minimum of 1.90 metres.
- v) Redesigned central front entrance/porch with an increased depth on both buildings of a minimum of 1.00 metre.
- vi) Redesigned entrance on both buildings to central front entrance/porch with double door entrance.
- vii) Redesigned fenestration with an increase in the number of panes from two paned windows to three paned windows.
- viii) Insertion of additional windows and Velux roof lights or reduction in number of windows or doors throughout both buildings.

#### **(4) REASONS FOR ISSUING THIS NOTICE**

It appears to the Council that the Breach of Planning Control took Place within the last 10 years.

The site is an existing traveller site that is occupied by one extended family. The site is in the Green Belt, approximately 1.2km south of Coven village, with access via the western side of the A449 Stafford Road.

The site is bordered by the A449 to the east, the Staffordshire and Worcester Canal to the north and west, and by an open field to the south.

The site is bound on all sides by mature hedgerows and trees that provide effective screening. The character of the area is semi-rural with sporadic residential development along Shaw Hall Lane to the west beyond the application site boundary with the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area. Brinsford Farm Boat yard and repair workshop are located on the opposite side of the A449 to the east. There is a row of houses fronting the western side of the A449 approximately 70m south of the application site.

The application site is an allocated Gypsy site 'GT08 - Brinsford Bridge, Coven Heath'.

The site has permission for 2 permanent pitches and a further transit pitch. A modest amenity block and utility building for transit pitches already exist on the site.

On 18th September 2020, the Council granted planning permission for the erection of 2 amenity buildings under permission reference 19/00863/FUL.

On 8th December 2021, Council Officers conducted a site visit and found that the utility buildings were larger than the approved plans. The roof height had been given a modest increase, however this had allowed for a significant height increase to the eaves of over 0.6 metres. This in turn allowed for a significant height increase to the front porch of at least 1.90m to both buildings including an increase in the depth of the porch by over 1.00m.

In addition a large glass window had been inserted into the front first floor elevation. The front door has also been altered to a larger one which is more suburban in character. In addition, the majority of the windows had increased in size from two pane to three pane casements and additional windows had been added along with Velux roof lights to the rear elevations.

On 28th June 2022, a further planning application was received, (application reference 22/00641/VAR), to vary Condition 1 to change the floor plan and elevations to reflect what has been built, with the exception of the front elevation first floor glass window that had been removed. The application was refused.

Paragraph 137 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

Paragraph 149 of the NPPF confirms that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate development in the Green Belt unless they fall under certain listed exceptions. Included in this list, and not to therefore be regarded as inappropriate development is 'the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.' Policy GB1 of the adopted Core Strategy seeks to protect the Green Belt against inappropriate development and is broadly consistent with the Framework.

Policy GB1 of the of the South Staffordshire Core Strategy Development Plan adopted 2012 states that development acceptable within the terms of national planning policy set out in the NPPF will normally be permitted where the proposed development is for either a new or extended building, provided it is for:

- d) limited infilling and limited extension(s), alteration or replacement of an existing building where the extension(s) or alterations are not disproportionate to the size of the original building, and in the case of a replacement building the new building is not materially larger than the building it replaces. Guidance in these matters will be contained in the Green Belt and Open Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

The original approved application, (permission reference 19/00863/FUL) had a modest design and was single storey with amenity accommodation found at ground floor only. The building was constructed with floor area contained within the roof area, and two pitched roof dormers along with a extended forward facing gable. Whilst the 2021 variation application noted an increase of around 66%. The LPA calculates this to be 70%, a 4% difference is not material. The case officer at the time considered that this increase

in floor area, although above the recommended 20-40% would not be considered as inappropriate as the increase in floor area was predominantly down to the installation of a first floor within the existing roof space.

The amendments now result in an increase in floor area of around 82% above the original building. Whilst the majority of floor area increase is due to the installation of the floor area within the existing roof, there has been a further increase of around 12% from the 2021 amended scheme, (permission reference 21/00624/VAR).

#### Case for very special circumstances

Paragraph 148 of the NPPF states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

#### Impact on the character of the area

Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:

- development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or
- outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

Policy EQ4 of the Core Strategy seeks for development to respect the intrinsic rural character and local distinctiveness of the South Staffordshire landscape and should be maintained and where possible enhanced.

Policy EQ11 of the Core Strategy requires that new development "respect local character and distinctiveness, including that of the surrounding development and landscape in accordance with Policy EQ4, by enhancing the positive attributes whilst mitigating the negative aspects", and that "in terms of scale, volume, massing and materials, development should contribute positively to the street scene and surrounding buildings, whilst respecting the scale of spaces and buildings in the local area."

The modifications have turned the modest apex roofed porch, with its single door entrance and modest fenestration, of what was intended to be a utility building into a modern looking detached urban residence that fail to contribute to local distinctiveness or to the surrounding rural area and are therefore contrary to Policies EQ4 and EQ11 of



the South Staffordshire Core Strategy Development Plan adopted 2012, as well as the National Design Guide [2021].

In conclusion, the alterations to the buildings consisting of the increased ridge height, increased height to the eaves and significantly increased height and depth of the porches to the previously approved amenity building have resulted in a bulky addition to the host dwelling that would be considered as disproportionate to the host building and thus represents inappropriate development, harmful to the Green Belt by definition. No very special circumstances have been presented that clearly outweigh this harm.

In addition, the design of the porch extension along with the materials used are contrary to the aims of both national and local planning policy that seeks to secure good design.

The Council consider that planning permission should not be given, and planning permission to retain the unauthorised amendments has recently been refused because it did not overcome these objections to the unauthorised development.

**(5) WHAT YOU ARE REQUIRED TO DO**

- i) Reduce the total ridge height on both buildings to the approved drawing height, (Appendix 1 of this notice).
- ii) Reduce the height of the dormer windows on both buildings to the approved drawing height, (Appendix 1 of this notice).
- iii) Reduce the height of the eaves on both buildings to the approved drawing height, (Appendix 1 of this notice).
- iv) In respect of the redesigned central front entrance/porch on both buildings, reduce the height of the eaves to the approved drawings height and reduce the depth to the approved drawing depth shown on the approved drawing at 1.00m, (Appendix 1 of this notice).
- v) In respect of the redesigned entrance to the central front entrance/porch on both buildings, remove the double door and replace with a single door and two double paned windows to reflect the design shown on the approved drawing, (Appendix 1 of this notice).

In respect of Building 1 Shaded Blue on the Plan at Appendix 2 attached to this notice

- vi) In the front elevation, replace the three paned windows with two paned windows on the ground floor and remove the side windows to the central front entrance/porch.

- vii) In the left elevation, (from the front), insert the door shown on the approved drawing and replace the three paned window with a two paned window on the first floor.
- viii) In the rear elevation, replace the three paned windows with two paned windows as shown on the approved plan and remove the three paned window on the left-hand side and Velux roof lights in the rear roof elevation.
- ix) In the right elevation, (from the front) replace the three paned window with a two paned window on the first floor.

In respect of Building 2 – Shaded Green on the Plan at Appendix 2 attached to this notice

- x) In the front elevation, replace the three paned windows with two paned windows on the ground floor and remove the side windows to the central front entrance/porch.
- xi) In the left elevation, (from the front), remove the two windows to the ground floor, and large window to the first floor and replace with a single door and window show on the approved drawing and in the positions shown on the approved drawing.
- xii) In the rear elevation, Velux roof lights in the rear roof elevation
- xiii) In the right elevation, (from the front), replace the three paned windows to the left-hand side and first floor with two paned windows.

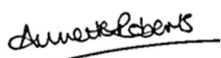
### **Time period for Compliance**

Six months from the date this notice takes effect.

### **(6) WHEN THIS NOTICE TAKES EFFECT**

This notice takes effect on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022 unless an appeal is made against it beforehand.

Dated: 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022



Signed :

**On behalf of Corporate Director Infrastructure and Business Growth**

On behalf of South Staffordshire District Council  
Council Offices  
Wolverhampton Road,  
Codsall, Staffordshire  
WV8 1PX

## **IMPORTANT – THIS COMMUNICATION AFFECTS YOUR PROPERTY**

### **Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)**

**Enforcement Notice relating to land and premises** on Land adjacent to Brinsford Bridge, Stafford Road, Coven Heath, South Staffordshire WV10 7HE.

This local planning authority, South Staffordshire Council, has issued an enforcement notice relating to the above land and I now serve on you a copy of that notice as you have an interest in the land. Copies of the notice are also being served on the other parties listed on the Notice who, it is understood, also have an interest in the land.

There is a right of appeal to the Secretary of State (at The Planning Inspectorate) against the notice. Unless an appeal is made, as described below, the notice will take effect on 12th December 2022 and you must ensure that the required steps, are taken within the period(s) specified in the notice.

**Please see the enclosed information sheet from The Planning Inspectorate which tells you how to make an appeal.**

If you decide that you want to appeal against the enforcement notice you must ensure that you send your appeal soon enough so that normally it will be delivered by post/electronic transmission to the Secretary of State (at The Planning Inspectorate) before 12th December 2022.

Under section 174 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) you may appeal on one or more of the following grounds: -

- (a) that, in respect of any breach of planning control which may be constituted by the matters stated in the notice, planning permission ought to be granted or, as the case may be, the condition or limitation concerned ought to be discharged;
- (b) that those matters have not occurred;
- (c) that those matters (if they occurred) do not constitute a breach of planning control;
- (d) that, at the date when the notice was issued, no enforcement action could be taken in respect of any breach of planning control which may be constituted by those matters;
- (e) that copies of the enforcement notice were not served as required by Section 172;
- (f) that the steps required by the notice to be taken, or the activities required by the notice to cease, exceed what is necessary to remedy any breach of planning control which may be constituted by those matters or, as the case may be, to remedy any injury to amenity which has been caused by any such breach;
- (g) that any period specified in the notice in accordance with section 173(9) falls short of what should reasonably be allowed.

Not all of these grounds may be relevant to you.

If you appeal under Ground (a) of Section 174(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 this is the equivalent of applying for planning permission for the development alleged in the notice and you will have to pay a fee of £924.00. This amount is double the usual Planning Application fee. You should pay this fee to South Staffordshire Council (made payable to South Staffordshire Council). Joint appellants need only pay one set of fees. If you do not wish to proceed under Ground (a) then no fee is payable.

If you decide to appeal, when you submit your appeal, you should state in writing the ground(s) on which you are appealing against the enforcement notice and you should state briefly the facts on which you intend to rely in support of each of those grounds. If you do not do this when you make your appeal the Secretary of State will send you a notice requiring you to do so within 14 days.

One appeal form and a copy of the Enforcement Notice together with a cheque for £924.00 made payable to South Staffordshire Council should be sent to the Council addressed to:-

Corporate Director Planning & Infrastructure  
South Staffordshire District Council  
Planning Department  
Council Offices  
Wolverhampton Road,  
Codsall,  
WV8 1PX

If you do not appeal against this enforcement notice, it will take effect on 12th December 2022 and you must then ensure that the required steps for complying with it, for which you may be held responsible, are taken within the periods specified in paragraph 5 of the notice. Failure to comply with an enforcement notice which has taken effect can result in prosecution and/or remedial action by the Council.

Planning Enforcement Contact Officer:

**Mark Bray**  
**Planning Enforcement Consultant**

**South Staffordshire District Council**  
**Planning Department**  
**Council Offices**  
**Wolverhampton Road**  
**Codsall,**  
**South Staffordshire,**  
**WV8 1PX**

**Tel: 01902 696900**

**E-mail: [m.bray@sstaffs.gov.uk](mailto:m.bray@sstaffs.gov.uk)**

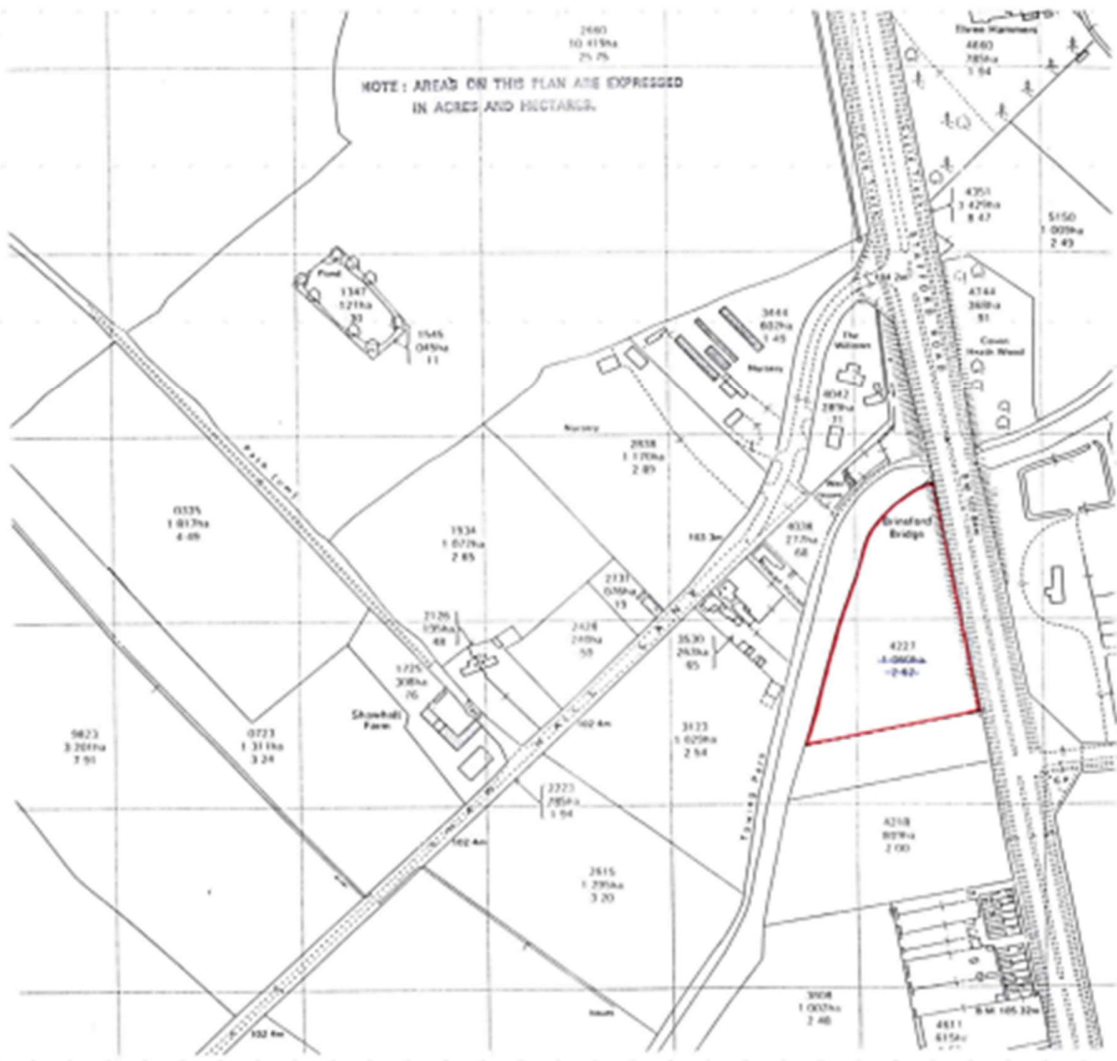
**PERSONS SERVED WITH A COPY OF THIS ENFORCEMENT NOTICE**

- i) AMANDA SHENADA DUNNE  
13 New Buildings,  
Stafford Road,  
Coven Heath,  
Wolverhampton  
WV10 7HF
  
- ii) PATRICK DUNNE  
Land adjacent to Brinsford Bridge,  
Stafford Road,  
Coven Heath,  
South Staffordshire  
WV10 7HE

STOURBRIDGE LODGE, WOLVERHAMPTON ROAD, PRESTWOOD, STOURBRIDGE

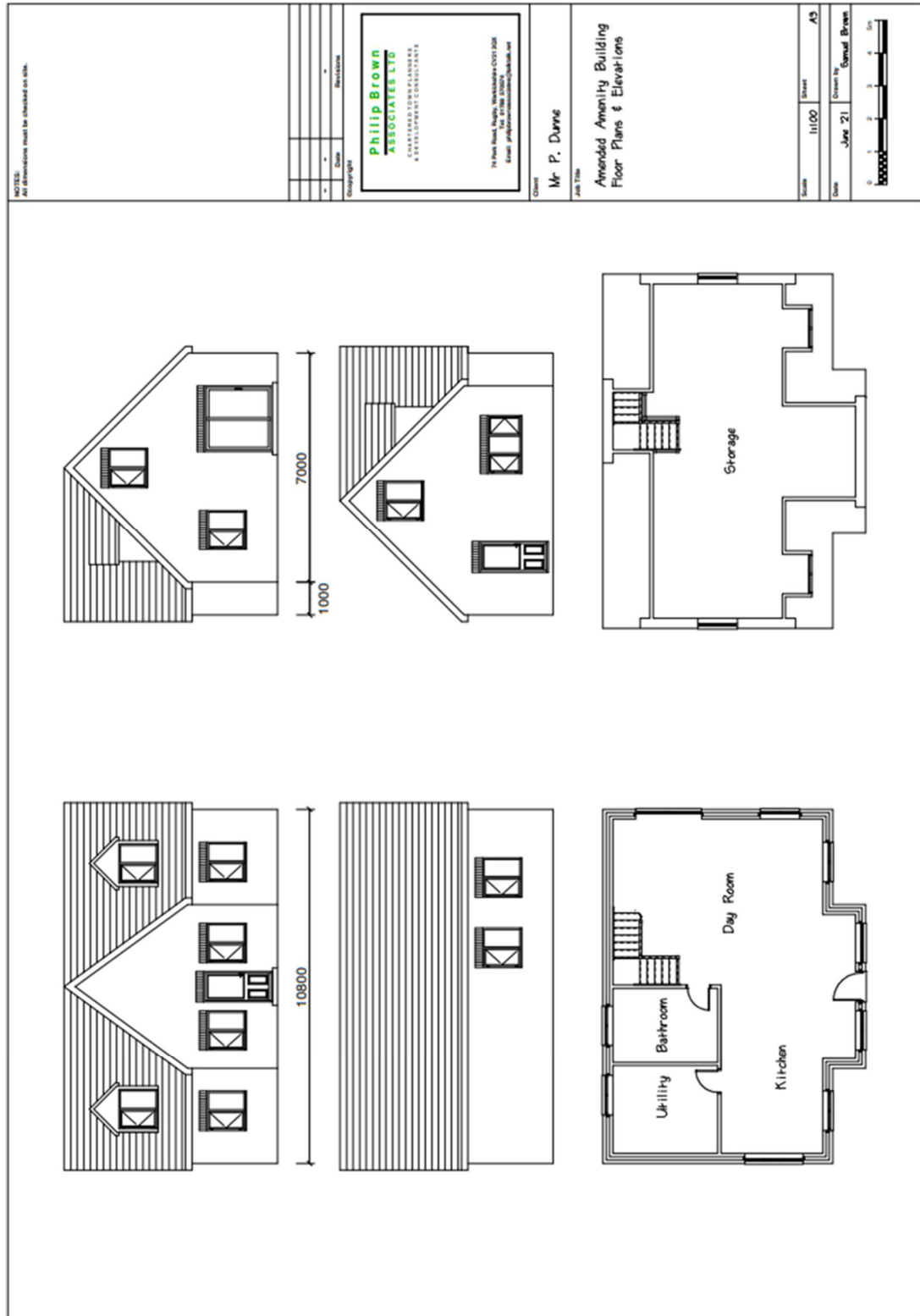
H.M. LAND REGISTRY		TITLE NUMBER		
		SF 306539		
ORDNANCE SURVEY PLAN REFERENCE	SJ9105	SECTION	Scale 1/ 2500	
COUNTY STAFFORDSHIRE	DISTRICT SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE	© Crown copyright		

The boundaries shown by dotted lines have been plotted from the plans on the deeds. The site plan may be updated from later survey information.



## APPENDIX 1

Approved Drawing - Amended Amenity Building Floor Plans & Elevations, received on 23/07/2021





## APPENDIX 2



RED LINE PLAN TO ACCOMPANY ENFORCEMENT NOTICE  
STOURBRIDGE LODGE, WOLVERHAMPTON ROAD, PRESTWOOD, STOURBRIDGE

H.M. LAND REGISTRY		TITLE NUMBER		
		SF 306539		
ORDNANCE SURVEY PLAN REFERENCE	SJ9105	SECTION	Scale 1/ 2500	
COUNTY STAFFORDSHIRE	DISTRICT SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE	© Crown copyright		

The boundaries shown by dotted lines have been plotted from the plans on the deeds. The site plan may be updated from later survey information.



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Coven Heath,  
South Staffordshire  
WV10 7HE



**South Staffordshire Council**

# **Core Strategy**

December 2012



Further information can be found at  
**[www.sstaffs.gov.uk](http://www.sstaffs.gov.uk)**



A Local Plan for  
South Staffordshire

# **Core Strategy Development Plan Document**

**Adopted 11<sup>th</sup> December 2012**

**South Staffordshire Council**

## **Appendix 5: Parking Standards**

### **Introduction**

This Appendix sets down the current recommended car parking standards for new developments within the District. Parking standards are an important element of the Council's land use/transportation policy. Many of the numerous development applications made to the Council include proposals for parking space adjacent to the development and it is therefore essential for the Council to have a parking policy.

The NPPF seeks to encourage a reduction in car usage by promoting sustainable transport choices. This is reinforced by advice in Manual for Streets (MfS) in terms of providing adequate but maximum provision of parking for individual uses. However, NPPF seeks to remove maximum parking standards and encourage local authorities and local communities to set parking standards at a level which best reflect the needs and requirements of their area.

### **Objectives**

The objective is to ensure that sufficient space is provided for the accommodation of parked vehicles having regard to the location, layout, size, shape, access needs and design quality of the space. The parking standards are intended to ensure that parked vehicles do not become either a safety hazard or environmental nuisance. In order to achieve the objective, it is essential that a car parking policy exists in order for the negotiations to be carried out with the developer in a consistent, constructive and clearly understood manner.

The developer will normally have to provide fully for the parking demand generated on or near the site of the development, particularly when new buildings are proposed. This requirement may not however be possible or desirable where redevelopment, refurbishment or conservation are proposed or within village centres, when consideration of village centre planning and transportation policies needs to be taken and the availability of public parking facilities assessed. In these circumstances the standards should be used in a positive and, in appropriate circumstances, flexible manner as an aid to development. In central areas with good public transport links uses may require less parking provision than similar uses in rural areas without good public transport provision.

Where such development proposals do not make provision to the relevant parking standard then negotiations can be entered into to see if these could be achieved or even a suitable compromise reached where public safety will not be prejudiced. It is recognised, however, that the parking requirements are but part of the overall assessment of the planning merits of the proposal and the outcome can be a balance between all these considerations.

The practical parking requirements for any particular development are likely to reflect a combination of the criteria listed below and need to be negotiated accordingly:

1. The nature of the use/type of use (largely reflected in the car parking standards themselves)

2. Location (village centre, built-up area, rural area, green field site)
3. Development type (new development, redevelopment, refurbishment, conversion)
4. Nearness to public parking areas/availability of on-street parking
5. Accessibility (the balance between public and private transportation)
6. Number of employees
7. Assessment of use of development by local populace/work force
8. Any special operational requirements
9. Levels of car ownership
10. Multiplicity of uses proposed and degree of combined usage

As a general principle, servicing provision should be based on the maximum number of vehicles likely to serve the development at any one time being able to manoeuvre with ease and to stand for loading and unloading without inconvenience to other users of the site, so as to ensure that:

- all service vehicles are accommodated off the public highway,
- all service vehicles enter and leave the site in forward gear,
- sufficient access is provided for emergency vehicles.

The recommended standards are contained in the following schedules.

### **Car Parking Standards**

<b>Development Type</b>	<b>Requirement</b>
<b><u>RETAIL/FOOD &amp; DRINK</u></b>	
A1. Retail *	Staff: 1 space per 95 sq.m. of gross floor space. Customers: 1 space per 20 sq.m. gross floor space
A2. Offices *	Staff & Visitors: 1 space per 20 sq.m. gross floor space
A3. Restaurants/ café *	Staff: 1 space per 85 sq.m. gross floor space Diners: 1 space per 5 sq.m. of dining area
A3. Transport Café *	Staff: 1 space per 85 sq.m. gross floor space Customers: 1 lorry space (artic) per 3 sq.m. dining area
A4. Public Houses *	Staff: 1 space per 85 m <sup>2</sup> gross floor space

	Bar customers: 1 space per 2.5 sq.m. of public drinking area Food customers: 1 space per 3 sq.m. of public dining area
A5. Hot Food Takeaway	1 space per 2 staff 1 space per 3 sq.m. of waiting area
<b><u>INDUSTRIAL &amp; COMMERCIAL</u></b>	
B1. Offices *	1 space per 20 sq.m. up to 200 sq.m., then 1 space per 30 sq.m. (all gross floor space)
B2. Industry *	1 space per 25 sq.m. up to 250 sq.m., then 1 space per 50 sq.m. (all gross floor space)
B8. Warehouses *	1 space per 80 sq.m. gross floor space
<b><u>ACCOMMODATION / INSTITUTIONS</u></b>	1 space per 3 employees employed at busiest time Guests: 1 space per bedroom
C1. Hotels	
C1. Hostels	Warden 1 space Residents and Visitors: 1 space for 2 residents
C2. Hospitals *	Staff and out-patients: 1 space per 3 beds Visitors: 1 space per 2 beds
<b><u>RESIDENTIAL</u></b>	
C3. Traditional housing (local authority/ private/ housing association)	Where all parking is provided within the curtilage: 2 and 3 bed dwellings: 2 spaces per dwelling 4 and more bedrooms: 3 spaces per dwelling  Communal parking: 1 and 2 bed dwellings: 1.5 spaces per dwelling 3 and more bedrooms: 2 spaces per dwelling
C3. Sheltered housing, elderly persons homes *	Other Residents/Visitors: 1 car space per 3 dwellings/units of accommodation/bedroom Non-resident care staff: 1 space per 3 staff present at busiest time
C3. Self-contained flats/apartments *	Residents: 1 space per flat Visitors: 1 space per 4 flats.



<b>OTHER</b>	
D1. Churches	1 space per 5 seats
D1. Libraries *	Staff: 2 spaces up to 300 sq.m. gross floor area 6 spaces above 300 sq.m. gross floor area Visitors: 1 space per 50 sq.m. gross floor area
D1. Clinics/GP Practices/ Health Centres *	Staff: 1 space per GP. 1 space for each other medical member of staff employed at busiest time 1 space for each 2.5 non-medical member of staff employed at busiest time Visitors: 3 spaces per consulting room
D1. Assembly Halls	Staff: 1 space per 2.5 employees employed at busiest time 1 space per 5 sq.m. public floor space
D1. Nursery Schools *	1 space per member of teaching staff 1 drop-off space per 10 children
D1. Primary/ Secondary Schools *	1 space per member of teaching staff 1 space per 3 member of non-teaching staff A suitable part of the hard play area to be allocated and suitably constructed so it can be used by cars on school open days, etc
D1. Colleges/ adult training centres *	1 space per member of teaching staff 1 space per 10 full-time equivalent students
D2. Cinemas/ Theatres	1 space per 5 seats
D2. Sports Centres *	Staff and visitors: 1 space per 2 persons staffing and using the premises at the busiest time
D2. Tennis, Golf, Bowling (Greens)	1 space per 3 sq.m. of indoor public floor area 2 spaces per court 1 space per lane of any driving range 2 spaces per golf hole
D2. Cricket, Football, Rugby	1 space per 3 sq.m. of public floor area of buildings 12 spaces and 1 space for a coach per pitch
Vehicle Service, Tyre, exhaust Garage *	3 car spaces per each service/repair bay 1 car space for every 40 sq.m. of gross floor area

Car sales	Staff: 1 space per 25 sq.m. Customers: 1 space per 40 sq.m. of gross sales floor area plus 1 space per 10 outside display places For ancillary workshop/storage areas and parts departments: 3 car spaces per each service/repair bay 1 car space for every 40 sq.m. of gross floor area
Car wash facilities	5 queuing spaces
Day care and adult training centres, day care centres for physically handicapped *	In particular centres for physically handicapped will require accommodation for special passenger vehicles with tail lift, etc. 1 space per member of staff at busiest time Visitors: 1 space for a unit of 5 persons
Stadia	1 space per 15 seats
Caravan sites	Occupiers: 1 space per caravan Visitors: 1 space per 5 caravans
Garden centres	Staff and customers: 1 space per 50 sq.m. sales area For café apply A3 standards
Marinas	1 space per 2 mooring berths

\* Sufficient manoeuvring and standing spaces are required within the site for the maximum number and size of vehicle likely to serve the development at any one time.

If areas within the facilities are convertible to another use having a higher parking standard requirement, the higher standard will be applied.

Where the use includes an element of residential use, the standards at C3 should be applied in addition to the above standards.

### **How to Use the Standards**

The standards relate, where possible, to uses defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Order 2010. For any use not included in the standards, the number of parking spaces will be assessed and determined based on the individual merits of the scheme.

All standards are based on gross floor area by external measurements unless stated to the contrary. The term gross floorspace shall mean the total floorspace of a building, including such areas as service corridors, lifts and toilets.

Mixed uses will be assessed as a sum of the parking requirements of the individual elements of the scheme based on the standards, unless the timing of demand associated with individual uses can be shown to allow dual use of spaces. This includes ancillary uses such as office use within an industrial development or a bar open to non-residents within a hotel etc. In mixed developments where the main parking demands take place at different times eg daytime and evening, an element of dual use of parking spaces will be acceptable. Tandem spaces will only be acceptable where specifically for use by staff with similar working hours.

The standards apply to new development, extensions and changes of use. When considering an extension to an existing use, the standard will be applied only to the extension and any shortfall in parking provision for the existing building will not be required to be met. When considering a redevelopment or change of use, the level of parking provision will relate to the requirements of the development as a whole.

### **Design Standards for Car Parking**

The dimensions of a car parking space to be used in new development is 2.4m x 4.8m. An aisle between parking bays set at 90 degrees to it shall have a minimum width of 6m. Alternatively, an aisle between parking bays set at 45 degrees to the traffic flow may have a minimum width of 3m.

With regard to disabled parking, the dimensions should be 2.4m x 4.8m plus a 1.2m accessibility zone between and a 1.2m safety zone on the vehicular side of the parking bays, with a dropped kerb when there is a pedestrian route on the other side of the parking bay. The Building Regulations requirements specify that parking spaces for people with disabilities should be at least 3.6m wide and 6.0m long in order to allow occupants of vehicles to get in and out of vehicles safely and to provide access to the rear of the vehicle for wheelchair storage. Disabled parking should be provided on firm and level ground and as close as feasible to the main entrance of the buildings.

Parent and child parking should be provided for all A1 (and similar sui generis) retail over 1,000 sq.m. and for all A5 premises over 500 sq.m.

Surface parking areas are often unattractive and sterile areas. To avoid this they must be designed to fit sympathetically and appropriately within the development and appropriately landscaped both on the perimeter and within the car park area.

Safe pedestrian routes through parking areas should be clearly defined through the use of surfacing and bollards where appropriate, with the inclusion of landscaping.

### **Lorry Parking, Manoeuvring and Service Areas**

Where the provision of lorry parking spaces is involved in any development proposal, they should range between 13.5m x 3.6m to 17.5m x 4.7m depending on the type of vehicles anticipated.

All new employment uses and extensions to existing premises will be required to provide adequate on-site parking for employees, visitors and deliveries, together with manoeuvring in accordance with these standards.

### **Sustainable Urban Drainage**

Car parks generally create large expanses of impermeable paving. This results in numerous problems in terms of floor control and replenishment of ground water. The Council will require the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage systems (SUDs) within all car park areas. Whilst a full scheme may be impracticable for smaller schemes, elements of SUDs can be incorporated into any scheme. The use of porous surfaces is the key to these systems.

### **Cycle Parking**

Cycling has the potential to be a substitute for short car trips, particularly those under 5km and to form part of a longer journey by public transport. The NPPF states that opportunities to use sustainable transport modes, including cycling, should be protected and encouraged.

In most cases the provision for cycle parking should be made on site, but in some cases there may be scope for communal parking areas eg within villages centres, and contributions may be sought through a Section 106 Agreement or developer contribution. The Council will therefore seek to encourage the provision of parking facilities where possible in accordance with the following standards.

### **Expected Cycle Provision**

<b>Development Type</b>	<b>Requirement</b>
A1 Shops	1 space per 200 sq.m. gross floor area
A2 Financial & Professional Services	1 space per 200 sq.m. gross floor area
A3 Food and drink	1 space per 60 sq.m. gross floor area (excluding associated residential accommodation)
B1 Business Use	1 space per 200 sq.m. gross floor area
B2 General Industrial	1 space per 500 sq.m. gross floor area
B8 Storage & distribution	1 space per 1000 sq.m. gross floor area
C1 Hotels, boarding and guest houses	1 space per 5 staff 1 space per 10 guest rooms 1 space per 60 sq.m. for restaurant/entertainment area
C2 Residential Institutions	1 space per 5 staff
C2 Hospitals	1 space per 5 staff

	1 space per 30 bed spaces
C2 Residential schools, colleges, halls of residence or training centres	1 space per 10 students
C3 Dwelling houses	For dwellings without garages secure cycle storage facilities should be provide based on the following standards 1 space per 1 bedroom flat 2 spaces per 2 bedroom flat
D1 Consulting rooms	1 space per 3 consulting rooms
D1 Crèche/ day nursery/ day centre	1 space per 5 staff plus 1 space per 200 sq.m. for visitors
D1 Education centres	1 space per 5 staff plus 1 space per 3 students
D1 Art galleries, libraries, museums.	1 space per 15 staff plus 1 space per 60 sq.m.
D1 Public and exhibition halls, places of worship etc	1 space per 10 seats
D2 Assembly and leisure	1 space per 5 staff plus 1 space per 100 sq.m.
Public car parks	1 space per 10 car parking spaces
Camping sites	1 space per 5 staff plus 1 space per 10 pitches
Garden centres	1 space per 200 sq.m. for staff and customers
Marinas	1 space per 10 moorings

## Appendix 6: Space About Dwellings Standards

### **Introduction**

- 1.1 In designing the layout of new housing development there are many factors that need to be taken into account. The NPPF advises local authorities to promote imaginative design and layout that make more efficient use of land, without compromising the quality of the environment.
- 1.2 The design of new housing should aim to improve the overall quality of development in South Staffordshire, which will create a place that people find attractive to live and work in. New development should be designed to take account of individual buildings, their inter-relationships and the character of its surroundings, especially in conservation areas and in settlements with distinctive local character.
- 1.3 Consideration will need to be given to the layout and design of new housing development, so that a satisfactory standard of spacing around dwellings is achieved, whilst taking into account outlook, privacy, safety, crime prevention and energy conservation. To achieve Central Government objectives in creating sustainable residential environments, the advice given in this Appendix should be used as general guidance along with that contained in the Staffordshire Residential Design Guide 2000.

### **External Space**

- 1.4 To ensure that the basic requirements for space, privacy and outlook are satisfactory, particular care will need to be taken with regard to the design of the following:
  - Higher density, “starter homes”;
  - On infill sites, especially within a conservation area, where development needs to respect the form and character of the area;
  - In conversion of commercial premises to residential, where a site may be restricted ; and
  - In smaller dwellings or flats, particularly those designed for special needs (e.g. the elderly) where there will be a communal garden or paved area.
- 1.5 The provision of adequate space about dwellings standards is an important element in achieving a high standard of design and layout by providing:
  - a) adequate daylight and sunlight to rooms and rear gardens;
  - b) reasonable privacy for dwellings within the layout and protection of the privacy of existing dwellings;
  - c) a satisfactory outlook, both within the new development and in relation to the existing development;
  - d) a reasonable area of private amenity space to allow such uses as drying washing, gardening and children’s play space, together with space for garden sheds, greenhouses and an extension to the dwelling;
  - e) a reasonable area of communal open space for flats and some types of special housing.

- 1.6 The Council recognises that each site has its own individual character and that any standards should not be so inflexible that they inhibit the creation of interesting and attractive housing layouts and design, nor that they undermine the objectives set out in NPPF. The following are minimum standards and it should be noted that the level of provision should be related to the size of the dwelling, thus the larger the dwelling and the greater the number of potential occupiers, the greater the requirements will be for space around dwellings. However, the standards identified in this guidance may, in some circumstances, be relaxed if adequate privacy and outlook can be achieved.

### **Daylight and Sunlight**

- 1.7 The design and layout of both new buildings and extensions should aim to maximise sunlight to internal accommodation and private amenity areas. As far as is practicable, habitable room windows, especially lounge windows, should not face north.

### **Privacy and Outlook**

- 1.8 The privacy of the occupants of a dwelling may be achieved from within a dwelling, where the occupants are free from overlooking from a neighbouring dwelling, and from a public highway, and by providing reasonable privacy in a private rear garden. It is suggested that distances could differ where these are over public or private areas.

Distance between dwellings	Minimum distance	Conditions
Three storey dwellings: Between facing windows to habitable rooms over private space	28m	N/A
Three storey dwellings: Between facing windows to habitable rooms over public space	22m	N/A
Three storey dwellings: Between front or rear windows to habitable rooms to flank side wall over private space	20m	On corner sites where there are no facing windows, or where non-habitable room windows are obscure glazed in the flank wall.
Two storey dwellings: Between facing windows to habitable rooms over private space	21m	N/A
Two storey dwellings: Between facing windows to habitable rooms over public space	15m	N/A
Two storey dwellings: Between front or rear windows to habitable rooms	13m	Where there is no direct overlooking, i.e. there are no habitable room windows, or

to flank side wall over private space		any windows are obscure glazed or where facing windows are above eye level with a cill height of at least 1.8m.
Single storey dwellings: Between facing windows to habitable rooms	21m	
Single storey dwellings: Between front or rear windows to habitable rooms to flank side wall over private space.	10.5m	Where there is no direct overlooking, i.e. there are no habitable room windows, or any windows are obscure glazed or where facing windows are above eye level with a cill height of at least 1.8m.
Between dwellings	Site specific	Exceptions may be considered in the following instances: Where there are changes in level; where there are intervening features which provide natural screening; in conservation areas, or adjacent to listed buildings; in order to respect the character of the existing development.

Notes:

- "Habitable rooms" are all rooms excluding WCs, bathrooms, utility rooms, landings and hallways.
- Increased spatial separation will be required where there are significant variations in level between new and existing development. As a general guide, the separation distance should be increased by 2m for every 1m rise in ground level between new and existing development.
- Screen fencing or walling (generally 1.8m to 2m high) should be provided along rear boundaries to ensure privacy. Screening of an excessive height will not be permitted.
- Private space refers to enclosed private garden areas
- Public space refers to other areas over which the public may freely pass and front garden areas.
- These standards relate to the higher level of development, e.g. two storey to three storey development, the three storey criteria would apply.

Space in Front of Habitable Room Windows

- 1.9 The careful use of window sizes and their position in relation to the site boundaries of adjacent properties is important in achieving privacy. At the front of houses there is a danger of potential loss of privacy because many new developments have open plan frontages and large principal windows. Careful consideration should, therefore, be given to the positioning and size of windows and their distance from public areas to prevent intrusion, whilst still providing an element of natural surveillance.



### Garden Space

- 1.10 The provision of garden space for dwellings is important in order to provide for activities connected with outdoor residential use such as gardening or children's play space, together with some space for garden stores and for potential extensions to the dwelling.

Garden Space	Minimum Length and Area	Conditions
Dwellings with 2 bedrooms or less	10.5m and 42sq.m.	Excluding private garage or parking space. Permitted development rights may be removed.
Dwellings with 3 bedrooms	10.5m and 65sq.m.	Excluding private garage or parking space.
Dwellings with 4 bedrooms or more	10.5m and 100sq.m.	Excluding private garage or parking space.
Special needs housing eg elderly persons' schemes. (1 bed dwellings)	5m and 25sq.m.	Adequate standards of daylight, sunlight and privacy to be maintained. Permitted development rights may be removed.
Flats/apartments	10sq.m. per dwelling	Usable, communal amenity space to provide an attractive visual setting, with some sitting out space and clothes drying area.

#### Notes

- Exceptionally, where satisfactory layout, privacy and maximum garden area can be provided, the minimum length of a rear garden can be relaxed, to allow most of the amenity space to be provided at the side of the dwelling, instead of the rear for example,
- Care should be taken to ensure that access to the flats/apartments and their communal areas do not pass directly in front of main habitable room windows on the ground floor, so that overlooking and loss of privacy can be avoided.

### Space at the Side of Dwellings

- 1.11 In order to achieve satisfactory housing layouts by providing spacing between dwellings, to allow access to rear gardens and for refuse collection, there should be an access way (minimum of 1m wide) at the side of any new detached or semi-detached house. In addition, adequate rear access should be provided for terraced houses.

## Internal Space

- 1.12 'Form follows function' – that is all rooms should be designed according to their use. They should have an adequate area, width, length, shape, door arrangement, height, insulation for noise and natural lighting and ventilation. There should be adequate circulation space, in the form of a hallway or lobby, so that it is possible to enter or leave one habitable room without passing through another habitable room.
- 1.13 Wherever possible dwellings should have dual aspect orientation, subject to the constraints of the site and where appropriate to the overall form and design, in order to maximise opportunities for cross ventilation and solar gain. Natural ventilation to all rooms in the form of windows is preferred.
- 1.14 Rooms that are permanently separated are preferable.
- 1.15 Though this is common sense, the following factors will determine whether a dwelling has sufficient internal space for occupiers and visitors:
- a) space for furniture and equipment;
  - b) space to access/use furniture and equipment, doors and windows;
  - c) space to move around the home;
  - d) space to undertake normal activities such as washing, dressing, cooking, eating, playing and socialising;
  - e) space for storage of household items and recyclables;
  - f) sufficient separation of rooms to allow the required level of privacy.

### Minimum overall floor areas

- 1.16 The minimum space standards by overall floorspace are set out in the table below.

Minimum overall floor area for new build, conversions and changes of use*	Minimum floor area (sq.m.)
1 bed 2 persons	51
2 bed 3 persons	66
2 bed 4 persons	77
3 bed 5 persons	93
4 bed 6 persons or more	106
New build only 1 bed 1 person	37

\* from English Partnerships Policy Guidance: Places Homes People

NOTE: This Appendix only deals with design considerations in relation to planning applications. If planning permission is granted it may still be necessary to satisfy the requirements of Building Regulations.



## **Core Policy 1 – The Spatial Strategy for South Staffordshire**

The rural regeneration of South Staffordshire will be delivered through the implementation of the following Spatial Strategy. The principal aim will be to meet local needs, whilst recognising the constraints that impact upon the District, and support and improve infrastructure and service delivery in the District.

Throughout the District, growth will be located at the most accessible and sustainable locations in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy set out below and the Council will work with partners to deliver the infrastructure, facilities and services required to support this growth. An integral part of the Strategy will be to protect, maintain and enhance the natural and historic environment and the local distinctiveness of the District and retain and reinforce the current settlement pattern.

In relation to the District's existing communities and settlements, appropriate proposals which contribute to their improved sustainability, cohesion and community wellbeing, will be supported.

Development proposals will be expected to make efficient use of land and prioritise the use of Previously Developed Land (brownfield land) in sustainable locations, provided it is not of high environmental value, whilst safeguarding the character of existing residential areas.

### Main Service Villages

Bilbrook, Brewood, Cheslyn Hay, Codsall, Great Wyrley, Kinver, Penkridge, Perton and Wombourne are defined as **Main Service Villages** and will be the main focus for housing growth, employment development and service provision. Village centres will be the focus for new shopping and small scale office development to maintain their vitality and viability.

### Local Service Villages

Coven, Essington, Featherstone, Huntington, Pattingham, Swindon and Wheaton Aston are defined as **Local Service Villages** where limited development will be supported where it meets local needs, whilst recognising the constraints that impact upon the District. Employment development will be limited to that which meets local business and community needs and maintains the vitality and viability of these communities. Shopping and office development will be located in the village centres.

### Small Service Villages

Bednall, Bobbington, Bishops Wood, Dunston, Shareshill, and Trysull are defined as **Small Service Villages** where very limited development may be acceptable for the provision of rural affordable housing where it clearly supports a local need and contributes to the sustainability of those local communities. Employment development will be limited to rural employment and diversification which meets local business and community needs.



### Other Villages and Hamlets

The villages defined as **Other Villages and Hamlets** are not identified for growth, and development will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances for the provision of rural affordable housing to meet identified local needs. New development in these locations will therefore be limited to rural affordable housing schemes provided through rural exception sites and the conversion and re-use of redundant rural buildings to appropriate uses.

### Outside the Service Villages

Outside the service villages, the objective of the Spatial Strategy is to protect the attractive rural character of the countryside where new development will be restricted to particular types of development to meet affordable housing needs, support tourism, provide for sport and recreation and support the local rural economy and rural diversification.

As part of the strategy for employment and economic development, support will continue to be given to the four existing freestanding strategic employment sites (i54, Hilton Cross, ROF Featherstone/Brinsford and Four Ashes).

### The Green Belt and Open Countryside

The South Staffordshire portion of the West Midlands Green Belt as defined on the Policies Map, will be protected from inappropriate development and proposals will be considered in the light of other local planning policies and the policy restrictions relating to Green Belt in the NPPF, however the Council will consider favourably sustainable development which accords with this Spatial Strategy.

The general extent of the Green Belt and the area defined as Open Countryside will be protected and maintained for the Plan period but some land will need to be released from the Green Belt and Open Countryside in some locations at the Main and Local Service Villages to deliver the proposed development strategy and enable the sustainable growth of these villages. A partial review of Green Belt boundaries and a review of Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt will be carried out through the Site Allocations DPD.

### Delivering the Strategy

The Spatial Strategy will be delivered through the Core Policies and Development Policies. In all cases development should not conflict with the local planning policies, particularly the environmental policies. Development should be designed to be sustainable, seek to enhance the environment, and should provide any necessary mitigating or compensatory measures to address harmful implications.

### **Explanation**

- 6.4 South Staffordshire lies on the edge of the West Midlands Conurbation close to the Major Urban Areas of the Black Country and has its own distinctive character. A key aspect of South Staffordshire's local distinctiveness is based around its ethos and philosophy of being a 'community of communities'. The settlement pattern of South Staffordshire is that of a rural area with many villages of different sizes situated within 27 parishes. There is no single dominant settlement and many of our residents rely on the services provided within towns and cities outside the District to meet some of their 'higher order' needs including hospitals, certain types of retail needs, and certain types of leisure and employment opportunities. This is in part because they are not able to meet their needs locally. Similarly, many of the people who work in and use the facilities of the District, actually live outside it.
- 6.5 The Spatial Strategy for South Staffordshire is to spread development geographically around the District based on a Settlement Hierarchy. The principal aim of the Strategy is to meet local needs whilst recognising the constraints that impact upon the District, and support the retention of existing facilities and services in villages in a sustainable way and where possible improve them. The Settlement Hierarchy classifies villages as Main Service Villages, Local Service Villages and Small Service Villages and the very small villages in the District are classified as Other Villages and Hamlets. The Settlement Hierarchy is shown on the following map.



- 7.3 South Staffordshire is comprised of a variety of landscapes, with historic landscapes, extensive areas of forest, areas of heathland, commons, rivers and water courses. Some landscape character types have suffered losses or degradation, and the District's landscape is affected by change arising from development, mineral working and agriculture. There are a number of initiatives covering part of the District that aim to achieve enhancements to the existing landscape and create valuable new habitats that can play a part in increasing biodiversity value within the District and these include the Forest of Mercia.
- 7.4 There are currently 11 sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the District including Motte Meadows, Kinver Edge and Highgate Common. Motte Meadows is also a National Nature Reserve and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designated under the Habitats Directive. There are also many other Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) across the District of various habitat types that require on-going protection and management including important areas of lowland heathland and ancient woodland. In addition, there are 5 Local Nature Reserves (LNR) in the District including Shoal Hill Common and Wom Brook Walk. The western edge of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) lies within the District.
- 7.5 South Staffordshire has a total of 19 conservation areas, most of them based upon historic village centres, which include canal conservation areas covering the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, Shropshire Union Canal, and the Stourbridge Canal. There are over 850 listed buildings and structures in the District and a range of other buildings and structures of local importance. In addition, there are 23 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs).

### **Core Policy 2: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment**

The Council will support development or other initiatives where they protect, conserve and enhance the District's natural and heritage assets including ecological networks internationally, nationally and locally important designations. Particular support will be given to initiatives to improve the natural environment where it is poor and increase the overall biodiversity of the District including the development of green infrastructure links and to improve the historic environment where it is identified as at risk.

Development or initiatives will generally be supported which:

- a) will not have a detrimental impact upon the interests and significance of a natural or heritage asset;
- b) are not contrary to the control of development within internationally, nationally or locally designated areas including the Green Belt and Open Countryside, Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Motte Meadows Special Area of Conservation, and contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the character of the landscape and local distinctiveness;



- c) are consistent with the sustainable management of the asset including the repair and reuse of historic buildings;
- d) protect and improve water and air quality;
- e) provide mitigation or compensatory measures to address any potential harmful implications and supporting enhancement measures.

Development proposals should be consistent with the NPPF, the Supplementary Planning Documents on the Historic Environment and Biodiversity and other local planning policies.

Development proposals should have regard to and support the actions and objectives of the Severn and Humber River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) and also have regard to the River Severn and River Trent Catchment Flood Management Plans (CFMPs).

### **Explanation**

- 7.6 The Policy should be regarded as a positive policy that will support the protection and enhancement of South Staffordshire's natural and historic environment and reflects the importance attached to the assets in Strategic Objectives 3, 4 and 5. The natural and heritage assets in South Staffordshire can be identified as follows:

- The South Staffordshire portion of the West Midlands Green Belt
- The Open Countryside – its landscape character and appearance;
- The best and most versatile agricultural land;
- The character and setting of villages;
- Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);
- The Forest of Mercia;
- Statutory and local areas of wildlife and biological importance, including a National Nature Reserve, Sites of Scientific Interest;
- Motte Meadows Special Areas of Conservation (SAC);
- Protected species and their habitats;
- Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites;
- Ancient and semi-natural woodlands and veteran trees;
- Trees, woodlands and hedgerows;
- Areas of lowland heath;
- Rivers, watercourses and their floodplains, canals and ponds;
- Buildings, structures and areas of townscape, historic and architectural value and their setting – listed buildings, conservation areas, buildings of special local interest;
- Registered parks and gardens of historic interest including historic landscape areas;
- Sites or structures of archaeological importance – Scheduled Ancient Monuments, sites shown on the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR);
- Land of open space, recreational and amenity value;
- The public rights of way network.



- 7.7 Supporting, enhancing and protecting these assets will require the maintenance of strong partnerships with key partners, such as English Heritage, Natural England and the Environment Agency. The policies in the Core Strategy will contribute to the protection and management of the Cannock Chase AONB and contribute towards the aims and objectives of the Forest of Mercia. The Core Strategy will also make a major contribution towards achieving the objectives of the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan (SBAP).
- 7.8 The approach to the management and protection of the Cannock Chase AONB will be covered in a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Further Supplementary Planning Documents will be prepared in relation to biodiversity and landscape character and linked to the relevant Core Strategy policies.

### **Key Evidence**

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2020  
South Staffordshire Council Plan –2012 - 2016  
Habitats Regulation Assessment Review of the Core Strategy 2010  
Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan 2001  
Staffordshire Geodiversity Action Plan 2004  
Staffordshire Ecological Records  
Tree and Woodland Strategy 2010  
Open Space Strategy 2009  
Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans 2010  
Village Design Guide SPD 2009  
Buildings of Special Local Interest  
Historic Environment Assessment 2011  
Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan 2009 - 2014  
Evidence Base relating to Cannock Chase SAC and the Appropriate Assessment of Local Authority Core Strategies 2010  
Cannock Chase Visitor Impact Mitigation Strategy 2010  
Assessment of Physical and Environmental Constraints 2009  
Planning for Landscape Change – Staffordshire County Council SPD 1996-2011  
Humber River Basin Management Plan 2009  
Severn River Basin Management Plan 2009  
River Severn Catchment Flood Management Plan 2009  
River Trent Catchment Flood Management Plan 2010  
Air Quality Updating and Screening Assessment 2009

### **Delivery and Monitoring**

Through Development Policies EQ1, EQ2 ,EQ3 and EQ4

The monitoring arrangements are set out in the Monitoring Framework in Appendix 1.

The monitoring arrangements are set out in the Monitoring Framework in Appendix 1.

## 8. Housing

### Strategic Objectives

#### Strategic Objective 8:

To ensure the delivery of a minimum of 644 decent homes for members of the community including the provision of affordable homes which match in type, tenure and size the needs of the residents of South Staffordshire and to meet the needs of an ageing population.

### Introduction

- 8.1 The provision of more and better homes in South Staffordshire is a key strategic priority for the Council and its housing partners. This is not only to meet basic housing needs, but also because we believe that if people live in a good home it provides a solid foundation for a better quality of life and improved life chances whilst maintaining the sustainability of our settlements.
- 8.2 Housing led initiatives can contribute to improving skills, education and employment opportunities, whilst health and wellbeing can be improved and alleviated by living in homes which are adaptable and located in safe and supportive environments.
- 8.3 The affordability of homes in South Staffordshire for local people who are earning low and moderate incomes is a key challenge to be tackled through the local planning strategy. The need to provide for the future housing needs of our rapidly ageing population is also an important issue to be addressed. The provision of affordable housing to meet local needs, ensuring the long-term affordability of such housing and support for elderly people reflect the views of the residents of South Staffordshire. The availability of decent quality affordable homes and sustainable housing are a prerequisite to creating sustainable communities.

### Core Policy 6: Housing Delivery

#### Housing Land Supply and Distribution

The Council will plan, monitor and manage the delivery of at least 3850 homes in South Staffordshire between 2006 and 2028 and ensure that a sufficient supply of deliverable/developable land is available to deliver 175 new homes each year informed by the District housing trajectory. The Council will seek to maintain a 5 year housing supply of deliverable sites plus an additional buffer of 5% moved forward from later in the plan period (or 20% where there has been a persistent under delivery of



housing) and to provide 60% of housing on previously developed land (brownfield land) during the plan period.

As of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010, 2,244 new homes have been completed or are committed and the balance of new housing development (1606 homes rounded to 1610) will be distributed between the existing villages of South Staffordshire, in accordance with the principles of the settlement hierarchy defined in Core Policy 1 and shown on the Key Diagram as follows:

<b>Locality/Village</b>	<b>Minimum Housing Numbers</b>
<u>Locality Area 1 - Northern Area</u> Penkridge <b><u>Total Northern Area</u></b>	370 <b><u>370 dwellings (23%)</u></b>
<u>Locality Area 2 – North Western Area</u> Brewood Coven Wheaton Aston <b><u>Total North Western Area</u></b>	65 32 32 <b><u>129 dwellings (8%)</u></b>
<u>Locality Area 3 – North Eastern Area</u> Cheslyn Hay Great Wyrley Essington Featherstone <b><u>Total North Eastern Area</u></b>	107 56 23 40 <b><u>226 dwellings (14%)</u></b>
<u>Locality Area 4 – Central Area</u> Bilbrook Codsall Perton Pattingham <b><u>Total Central Area</u></b>	105 222 166 22 <b><u>515 dwellings (32%)</u></b>
<u>Locality Area 5 – Southern Area</u> Kinver Wombourne Swindon <b><u>Total Southern Area</u></b>	91 256 23 <b><u>370 dwellings (23%)</u></b>
<b><u>District Total</u></b>	<b><u>1610 dwellings *</u></b>

\*In addition to the proposed housing development in the above table, for both development management purposes and the Site Allocations DPD, the following development will also add to the overall housing supply and the level of growth proposed in South Staffordshire in the plan period:

- a. Affordable housing delivered on rural exception sites in accordance with Policy H2/H3;
- b. Exceptionally, housing development that contributes to the delivery of local community infrastructure, where there is a



proven need for community facilities and where such housing proposals are supported by local communities.

Should further housing development be required in the plan period to respond to changing circumstances this will be focused on the Main Service Villages and Local Service Villages that are identified in the table above and apportionment between these settlements shall have regard to the factors set out in para 8.8 of this Core Strategy DPD.

#### Housing for an Ageing Population

In delivering the level of housing proposed, the Council will encourage the provision of accommodation for the elderly including extra care and residential care homes, dementia care units and retirement villages of an appropriate scale.

#### Phasing and Site Allocations

Development will be phased to ensure that it does not occur until appropriate infrastructure is available and sites will be released to ensure a consistent delivery of housing. Allocations for new housing development will be identified in the Site Allocations DPD. Housing development at Wheaton Aston should be located away from the Motte Meadows SAC to ensure that there are no significant effects on this international site.

#### Housing Expectations

Housing development will be expected to:

- a) Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development giving priority to the re-use of previously developed land (brownfield land) in sustainable locations, provided it is not of high environmental value
- b) Be of a character and density appropriate to the surrounding area
- c) Assist in meeting the identified housing needs, including affordable housing and elderly persons accommodation within the locality/ housing market areas
- d) Be adaptable to changing life circumstances
- e) Deliver the required social, physical and green infrastructure requirements necessary to support sustainable communities.

Housing development which has a detrimental impact upon the character and environmental quality of residential areas and the character and local distinctiveness of villages will not be supported.

Development proposals should be consistent with the adopted Village Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (or subsequent revisions) and other local planning policies.

### **Explanation**



- 8.4 South Staffordshire Council will make provision for the delivery of 3850 new dwellings between 2006 and 2028. This equates to a local target of 175 dwellings per year. The target is derived from the evidence base of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS). The WMRSS Phase 2 Revision proposed a housing target of 3,500 dwellings in South Staffordshire over the plan period 2006-2026 which was supported by the Council and was tested at examination by an independent panel. The WMRSS figure of 3,500 was derived by weighing up housing market needs with the constraints in South Staffordshire, including proximity to the Black Country Major Urban Area and environmental protection.
- 8.5 In order to meet the requirements of the NPPF, the local housing target has been increased by a further 350 dwellings (two year's supply) to 3850 dwellings to ensure that there will be a continuous delivery of housing for at least 15 years from the date of adoption of the plan. The Council considers that the level of future housing growth proposed provides the right balance between local housing need and the protection of the Green Belt and the environmental quality of the District.
- 8.6 As of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010, we have delivered 1,224 net dwelling completions since the plan period began in 2006 at an average rate of 306 dwellings per year and a further 1,020 net dwellings are already accounted for with those under construction and those with permission. This leaves around 1606 dwellings left to identify sites for. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is being refreshed in line with good practice guidance with the involvement of the development industry, local property agents and other interests; and a large number of sites have been suggested for consideration. The SHLAA is not a policy document, but will identify sufficient sites to be considered further through the preparation of the Site Allocations DPD.
- 8.7 The Spatial Strategy is for the geographic spread of growth and development based on a hierarchy of settlements where the majority of the growth is focused on our most sustainable settlements and makes the best use of existing infrastructure. The strategy is considered to be the approach that most closely meets the needs of our local communities and reflects the principles of locality working and service delivery and is a result of extensive consultation.
- 8.8 The Policy sets out the level of housing growth proposed for each of the villages in the settlement hierarchy, defined in Core Policy 1, and within the Locality Areas. The underlying principle will be that the larger Main Service Villages will accommodate a greater scale of development with progressively lower levels of growth in the Local Service Villages in order to safeguard their local character and distinctiveness. In reaching a decision on the proposed level of growth in each of the villages, a number of key factors have been taken into account and these are:
- The levels of housing need in each of the localities/housing market sub areas identified in the Housing Market Assessment (HMA)
  - The level of affordable housing provided in villages
  - Past levels of development and change in villages
  - Villages sensitive to change



- Environmental capacity and sensitivity
  - The availability of development opportunities on non Green Belt land
  - Accessibility of villages
  - Proximity of villages to the Major Urban Area of the Black Country
  - Availability of previously developed land (brownfield land) in sustainable locations, provided it is not of high environmental value
  - Availability of access to sustainable employment opportunities
- 8.9 The Policy will provide some flexibility in the delivery of housing over the plan period, recognising the opportunities for rural affordable housing on exception sites and also circumstances where the provision of housing development will assist in the delivery of local community infrastructure.
- 8.10 In preparing the Core Strategy, the Council has considered the issue of housing growth to the south of Stafford town. The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) Phase 2 Revision identified Stafford as a 'Settlement of Significant Development' and it has since been selected as a New Growth Point (NGP). The WMRSS stated that, depending upon the outcome of local studies, some of the housing requirement for Stafford Borough may need to be provided within South Staffordshire adjacent to the southern boundary of Stafford to meet the needs of Stafford town.
- 8.11 Representations have been made by Stafford Borough Council and local landowners supporting development South of Stafford and suggesting that the Council should make a strategic allocation in the Core Strategy. The Council considers that this location should only be considered for housing development if local studies demonstrate that this is the most sustainable option for the future growth of Stafford town. The Council has yet to see evidence from local studies that it is the most sustainable option and therefore does not consider that it is appropriate to identify the site in the Core Strategy for South Staffordshire.
- 8.12 Managing the release of housing sites through phasing is an important factor in delivering the quality and form of housing development in South Staffordshire. The delivery of the required new infrastructure will determine how quickly certain sites can be developed and the ability of service providers to deliver necessary infrastructure will need to be taken into account.
- 8.13 Regular monitoring and review will take place to ensure that the timing, level and nature of investment in key infrastructure are consistent with that originally expected, and that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate the level of development planned. These regular reviews will ensure that development does not take place without the essential infrastructure required to support it. Monitoring will also review the rate of development on previously developed land (brownfield land).
- 8.14 It is recognised that the Site Allocations DPD is likely to take up to 2 years to achieve adoption status. In the interim, if the Council is unable to demonstrate the existence of a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land, applications for housing will be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, subject to the restrictions of policies



which indicate that development should be restricted (para 14, footnote 9 NPPF).

- 8.15 The 90/10 ratio that has been used to apportion housing growth between Main Service Villages and Local Service Villages will continue to be applied during the plan period for the identification of safeguarded land in the Site Allocations DPD.

### **Key Evidence**

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2020  
South Staffordshire Council Plan 2012 - 2016  
LSP Housing Strategy 2009 – 2012  
Older Persons Strategy 2007  
Staffordshire Flexi Care Strategy 2010 - 2015  
Housing Market Assessment Update 2010  
Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008  
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update 2011  
Settlement Study 2010  
Affordable Housing Viability Study 2011  
WMRSS Evidence Base

### **Delivery and Monitoring**

Through Development Policies H1, H2, H3, H4, and H5  
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update 2011  
LSP Housing Strategy Delivery Plan

The monitoring arrangements are set out in the Monitoring Framework in Appendix 1.

### **Development Policies**

- 8.16 The following Development Policies support Core Policy 6 and reflect the importance attached to the delivery of new homes in Strategic Objective 8.

#### **Policy H1: Achieving a Balanced Housing Market**

##### **Housing Choice**

The Council will seek to secure a wide choice of high quality new homes in South Staffordshire that meet the needs of all members of the community, widening the range of property sizes available in response to future needs and demand, to support the Council's strategic aim of delivering more affordable housing and contribute to the development of mixed and sustainable communities. Particular attention will be given to creating a more sustainable and better balanced housing market by



- 9.52 The Staffordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) sets out the transport strategy for the District which seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives including prioritising the use of public transport and improving the pedestrian and cycle network to encourage journeys by foot or cycle. The LTP also identifies priority measures to improve accessibility, create safer roads, and reduce the impact of traffic.
- 9.53 It is recognised that more investment is needed in public transport in South Staffordshire for the benefit of existing and new communities. Current investment is largely funded through private sector operators with commercial objectives, although there is some support from the County Council through Local Transport Plan (LTP) funding to ensure that rural communities have access to transport services. The support of operators both within and outside the District will be important for future public transport provision. A Rural Transport Partnership has been established which will explore ways in which the public sector can support rural transport in South Staffordshire and a number of initiatives are being developed.
- 9.54 The Council will encourage partnership working and co-operation between private and public sectors and will work with key partners to deliver sustainable transport initiatives. In relation to transport infrastructure, any deficits in provision will be highlighted in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

### **Core Policy 11: Sustainable Transport**

The Council will seek to ensure that accessibility will be improved and transport choice widened, by ensuring that new development is well served by an attractive choice of transport modes, including public transport, footpaths and cycle routes to provide alternatives to the use of the private car and promote healthier lifestyles. The strategic transport network and core public transport network for South Staffordshire are shown on the Key Diagram.

Development proposals will, either individually or collectively, have to make appropriate provisions for:

- Reducing the need to travel;
- Widening travel choices and making travel by sustainable means of transport more attractive than the private car;
- Improving road safety;
- Improving air quality and reducing the impact of travel upon the environment, in particular reducing carbon emissions that contribute to climate change.

The Council will work with its partners to improve accessibility by enhancing sustainable transport opportunities in the District and encouraging development that reduces the need to travel. The Council will also work with its partners outside the District to support and improve cross boundary public transport services. Future growth and development in South



Staffordshire will be focused on the Main Service Villages and in sustainable locations to reduce the need to travel.

The Council will support initiatives related to the improvement of accessibility within the District including proposals for:

- Improving rural transport and rural accessibility in the District particularly for vulnerable people without access to a car and develop projects through the South Staffordshire Rural Transport Partnership;
- The retention and improvement of bus services and the extension of services to serve new development;
- Infrastructure improvements to railway stations including the provision of transport information, parking provision, and secure covered cycle parking;
- Improved walking and cycling facilities within existing villages and by providing safe and secure walking and cycling connections to and from new development and to the surrounding public transport network and access into the countryside. Encouragement will also be given for developing cycle and ride and cycle carriage on public transport.

Improvements to the local road and cycle network will be delivered through the transport strategy set out in the Local Transport Plan (LTP) and these include priority measures to improve accessibility, create safer roads, and reduce the impact of traffic. Support will also be given for the national cycle network. Highway infrastructure improvements will be required in connection with the development of the i54 strategic employment site at Wobaston Road.

The following national and regional transport infrastructure schemes may be delivered in the plan period:

- M54/M6/M6 Toll Link Road
- Brinsford Strategic Park and Ride Site

Travel behaviour change towards sustainable modes will be encouraged through the development of Travel Plans. Major developments, including employers and educational institutions should develop Travel Plans to promote sustainable means of travel.

### **Explanation**

9.55 The Council's objectives in respect of transport and accessibility are set out in Strategic Objective 13. Due to the rural nature of South Staffordshire, the car will continue to be the main form of transport to access jobs, facilities and services in the District until improvements can be made to rural transport.

9.56 However, in shaping a sustainable future for South Staffordshire it will be important to ensure that development is directed to the most accessible and sustainable locations to reduce wherever possible the need to travel, improve the general level of accessibility to facilities and services, and help to reduce disadvantage and inequalities in access to services. The Council is actively

promoting walking and cycling as part of its healthy lifestyle and leisure programmes and these modes of travel should be encouraged as an alternative to the private car, particularly for shorter journeys.

- 9.57 Future transport needs are likely to mean taking a partnership approach to public transport and highway improvements between operators, developers and public sector agencies. The Council has prepared an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and the necessary transport improvements required to deliver the strategy are identified within it.

#### **Key Evidence**

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2020  
South Staffordshire Council Plan 2012 - 2016  
Staffordshire Local Transport Plan 2006 - 2011  
Rural Transport Review 2008  
Accessibility Report 2009  
Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) 2010

#### **Delivery and Monitoring**

Through the Development Management process  
Working with transport operators and other partners  
Local investment through Rural Transport Partnership  
Transport Assessments and Travel Plans  
Infrastructure Delivery Plan

The monitoring arrangements are set out in the Monitoring Framework in Appendix 1.

#### **Development Policies**

- 9.58 The following Development Policies support Core Policy 11.

#### **Policy EV11: Sustainable Travel**

All proposals for development must include provision for sustainable forms of transport to access the site, and within the development.

Measures commensurate with the development proposed must be incorporated as an integral part of the design of all development proposals, and could include where appropriate:

- a) footpaths, cycleways, safe and secure cycle parking, shelters, changing facilities and storage lockers;

## **Development Policies**

7.9 The following Development Policies support Core Policy 2.

### **Policy EQ1: Protecting, Enhancing and Expanding Natural Assets**

Permission will be granted for development (alone or in combination) which would not cause significant harm to sites and/or habitats of nature conservation, geological or geomorphological value, including ancient woodlands and hedgerows, together with species that are protected or under threat. Support will be given to proposals which enhance and increase the number of sites and habitats of nature conservation value, and to meeting the objectives of the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan (SBAP).

In line with the objectives of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), development proposals must not adversely affect the ecological status of a water body and wherever possible take measures to improve ecological value in order to help meet the required status.

#### *International Sites*

Any proposed development that could have an adverse affect on the integrity of an international wildlife, geodiversity or landscape site (e.g. Natura 2000 or Ramsar site, Special Area of Conservation) or on ground water flows to those sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the legislative provisions to protect such sites can be fully met.

#### *National Sites*

Protected wildlife, geodiversity and landscape sites designated under national legislation are shown on the Policies Map [e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs)] and will be protected under the terms of that legislation.

#### *Local Sites*

Locally important sites are also identified [e.g. Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs), Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGs), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)] and will be protected and enhanced. Outside the areas designated, the interests of nature conservation must be taken into account in accordance with national guidance.

The restoration or creation of new habitats and the expansion of habitats in South Staffordshire will be supported where these contribute to priorities in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan including priority habitats such as native woodland, hedgerows, and lowland heathland. Areas or sites for the restoration or creation of biodiversity priority habitats will be identified through Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping working in partnership with



Natural England, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and Staffordshire County Council.

Wherever possible, development proposals should build in biodiversity by incorporating ecologically sensitive design and features for biodiversity within the development scheme.

Development proposals should be consistent with the Supplementary Planning Documents on Biodiversity and Landscape Character and other local planning policies.

### **Explanation**

- 7.10 The Policy seeks to protect and enhance the natural environment including the protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows and is consistent with the NPPF.
- 7.11 Development should be supported on sites where it can be demonstrated that satisfactory mitigation measures for species and habitats can be created. The natural environment such as trees should also be integrated into the built environment for health and wellbeing, amenity and biodiversity benefits and climate change mitigation.
- 7.12 The Policy covers all aspects of biological and geological interest and provides direct support for the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan. Within South Staffordshire, areas of native woodland and lowland heathland and hedgerows are identified as priority habitats and the Council will work with its partners in the restoration and creation of these habitats.

### **Key Evidence**

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 - 2020  
Habitats Regulation Assessment Review of the Core Strategy 2010  
Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan 2001  
Staffordshire Geodiversity Action Plan 2004  
Staffordshire Ecological Records  
Tree and Woodland Strategy 2010  
Open Space Strategy 2009  
Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan 2009 - 2014  
Evidence Base relating to Cannock Chase SAC and the Appropriate Assessment of Local Authority Core Strategies 2010  
Cannock Chase Visitor Impact Mitigation Strategy 2010  
Assessment of Physical and Environmental Constraints 2009

### **Delivery and Monitoring**

Through the Development Management process in consultation with Natural England and other partners

**Policy EQ3: Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets**

The conservation and enhancement of South Staffordshire's historic environment will be achieved by a number of means:

a) The Council will establish, review and maintain records of known heritage assets including:

- Listed buildings
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Conservation Areas
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Buildings of Special Local Interest (a 'local list')
- Undesignated heritage assets
- Other historic landscapes

and will support and encourage ever greater appreciation, knowledge and enjoyment of the District's historic environment and heritage assets through:

- joint working with local communities and interest groups such as civic and historical societies;
- the continual development and refinement of the Local List; and
- interaction with the County Council's Historic Environment Record (HER).

b) The Council will support and encourage measures which secure the improved maintenance, management and sustainable reuse of heritage assets, particularly those which are identified nationally or locally as being at risk. Where necessary an assessment will be made of whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

c) The Council will ensure that development which affects a heritage asset or its setting will be informed by a proportionate assessment of the significance of the asset, including its setting, which is likely to be affected by the proposals. These will be judged by considering the extent to which an asset's archaeological, architectural, historic or artistic interest will be harmed, including its conservation, in the interest of present and future generations.

d) In the case of development in a conservation area proposals will be considered against any management plan and appraisal adopted for that area.

e) The Council will consider the significance and setting of all proposed works to heritage assets, informed by relevant guidance that is supported by English Heritage. In addition the following principles will be adhered to:

- minimising the loss and disturbance of historic materials
- using appropriate materials, and
- ensuring alterations are reversible

f) The Council will require all works proposed to heritage assets, or sites with the potential to include assets, to be informed by a level of historical, architectural and archaeological evidence proportionate to their significance. Where appropriate, the Council may also require historical research and archaeological recording to be undertaken before works to a heritage asset commence.

Heritage assets including Listed Buildings (and those on a local list) Registered Parks and Gardens (and other historic landscapes) Conservation Areas and Scheduled Ancient Monuments are identified on the Policies Map and Inset Plans.

Development proposals should be consistent with the NPPF, the adopted Village Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (or subsequent revisions) and other local planning policies.

### **Explanation**

- 7.15 South Staffordshire's historic environment is a rich and varied, finite and vulnerable resource which results from the District's evolution over thousands of years. It includes natural and man-made landscapes as well as the historic built environment. The inevitable and continuous processes of change and development create pressures on this resource and policies are needed to ensure its continued conservation.
- 7.16 Recent changes in national policy have introduced two terms to encompass this very broad spectrum. "Designated heritage assets" include Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens and Conservation Areas; whilst "Heritage assets" are essentially those identified by the Council in its decision making processes and include local listings.
- 7.17 In order to ensure that the historic environment has a sustainable future it is essential that decisions are informed by a sound evidence base. This is wide ranging and includes Staffordshire County Council's Historic Environment Records, Historic Characterisation and Landscape Characterisation mapping, Extensive Urban Surveys (for towns and villages with a market charter) and, in conjunction with English Heritage, the West Midlands Farmsteads and Landscapes Project Survey.
- 7.18 The Council commissioned appraisals of its 11 village conservation areas. These informed the production of Management Plans for each area, which will be reviewed and updated every 5 years. This will ensure an up-to-date basis for planning decisions in these conservation areas. In addition the County Council has completed a series of Historic Environment Character Assessments for 14 of the District's villages. This, together with the Council's

own survey work, will help to explain how the historic built environment has evolved and to identify buildings for the local list.

- 7.19 This comprehensive evidence base will emerge as a Supplementary Planning Document which encompasses the Historic Environment, identifying the main issues, and will also be used to inform and refresh the Village Design Guide.
- 7.20 In order to ensure that buildings at risk are saved or not degraded further, sometimes 'enabling development' is the only viable option. In this case paragraph (b) of this policy will be used in conjunction with guidance 'Enabling Development and the Conservation of Significant Places' issued by English Heritage in 2008 or subsequent guidance for enabling development.

### **Key Evidence**

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 - 2020  
Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans 2010  
Village Design Guide SPD 2009  
Buildings of Special Local Interest (on going)  
Historic Environment Character Assessment 2011  
Assessment of Physical and Environmental Constraints 2009  
West Midlands Farmsteads and Landscapes Project 2010

### **Delivery and Monitoring**

Through the Development Management process in consultation with English Heritage, the County Council and other partners  
Conservation and Design advice  
Conservation Area Management Plans  
Village Design Guide SPD (or subsequent revisions)  
Historic Environment SPD  
LSP Environmental Quality Delivery Plan

The monitoring arrangements are set out in the Monitoring Framework in Appendix 1.

### **Policy EQ4: Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape**

The intrinsic rural character and local distinctiveness of the South Staffordshire landscape should be maintained and where possible enhanced. Trees, veteran trees, woodland, ancient woodland and hedgerows should be protected from damage and retained unless it can be demonstrated that removal is necessary and appropriate mitigation can be achieved. For visual and ecological reasons, new and replacement planting should be of locally native species.

The Council will encourage and support the creation of new woodlands





own survey work, will help to explain how the historic built environment has evolved and to identify buildings for the local list.

- 7.19 This comprehensive evidence base will emerge as a Supplementary Planning Document which encompasses the Historic Environment, identifying the main issues, and will also be used to inform and refresh the Village Design Guide.
- 7.20 In order to ensure that buildings at risk are saved or not degraded further, sometimes 'enabling development' is the only viable option. In this case paragraph (b) of this policy will be used in conjunction with guidance 'Enabling Development and the Conservation of Significant Places' issued by English Heritage in 2008 or subsequent guidance for enabling development.

### **Key Evidence**

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 - 2020  
Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans 2010  
Village Design Guide SPD 2009  
Buildings of Special Local Interest (on going)  
Historic Environment Character Assessment 2011  
Assessment of Physical and Environmental Constraints 2009  
West Midlands Farmsteads and Landscapes Project 2010

### **Delivery and Monitoring**

Through the Development Management process in consultation with English Heritage, the County Council and other partners  
Conservation and Design advice  
Conservation Area Management Plans  
Village Design Guide SPD (or subsequent revisions)  
Historic Environment SPD  
LSP Environmental Quality Delivery Plan

The monitoring arrangements are set out in the Monitoring Framework in Appendix 1.

### **Policy EQ4: Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape**

The intrinsic rural character and local distinctiveness of the South Staffordshire landscape should be maintained and where possible enhanced. Trees, veteran trees, woodland, ancient woodland and hedgerows should be protected from damage and retained unless it can be demonstrated that removal is necessary and appropriate mitigation can be achieved. For visual and ecological reasons, new and replacement planting should be of locally native species.

The Council will encourage and support the creation of new woodlands

and the management of existing woodlands particularly where they contribute to community forestry. Reference should be made to the Council's Tree and Woodland Strategy.

Throughout the District, the design and location of new development should take account of the characteristics and sensitivity of the landscape and its surroundings, and not have a detrimental effect on the immediate environment and on any important medium and long distance views.

The siting, scale, and design of new development will need to take full account of the nature and distinctive qualities of the local landscape. The use of techniques, such as landscape character analysis, to establish the local importance and the key features that should be protected and enhanced, will be supported.

Proposals should retain and strengthen the components of landscape character and local distinctiveness, with particular attention to the detailing of any proposal and its relationship with existing buildings, features and vegetation. Proposals within the Historic Landscape Areas (HLA) defined on the Policies Map should have special regard to the desirability of conserving and enhancing the historic landscape character, important landscape features and the setting of the HLA. The County Council's Landscape Character Assessment and Historic Landscape Characterisation will provide an informed framework for the decision making process.

Where possible, opportunities should be taken to add character and distinctiveness through the contribution of new landscape features, particularly to landscapes which have been degraded.

Development within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and its setting as shown on the Policies Map will be subject to special scrutiny, in accordance with national policy and any additional guidance, in order to conserve and enhance the landscape, nature conservation and recreation interests of the area.

Proposals that contribute to the objectives of the Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan, the Forest of Mercia and other local initiatives that will contribute to enhancing landscape character will be supported.

Development proposals should be consistent with the adopted Village Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (or subsequent revisions), the Supplementary Planning Documents on Landscape Character and Biodiversity and other local planning policies.

### **Explanation**

- 7.21 The landscape of South Staffordshire is rich and varied and includes part of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). It is an important objective of the Core Strategy to protect the character and appearance of the landscape and conserve this heritage for the future. The

NPPF states that the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty should be given to AONBs, and the extent of the Cannock Chase AONB, to which the national policy applies, is shown on the Policies Map.

- 7.22 There are 13 historic parklands and gardens in South Staffordshire, at Chillington, Enville, Four Ashes, Hatherton, Hilton, Himley/Wodehouse, Somerford, Stretton, Teddesley, Patshull, Prestwood, Wergs and Weston. The parklands at Chillington Hall, Enville, and Weston Park are of particularly high quality and have been identified as Grade ii\* in the National Register of Historic Parks and Gardens by English Heritage. Patshull Hall and Himley Hall have been identified as Grade ii.
- 7.23 Historic parklands are valuable heritage assets and important to the distinctive rural character of South Staffordshire. They may contain avenues of trees, woodlands, individual veteran trees, areas of wood pasture, lakes and other water features, historic earthworks, moats, hedges, banks and green lanes which are all valuable habitats for wildlife. They also have potential for environmental education and tourism, as well as contributing to the attractiveness of the landscape.
- 7.24 The historic parklands and gardens in South Staffordshire, including those designated as Registered Parks and Gardens have been designated as 'Historic Landscape Areas' (HLAs) to protect them from inappropriate development and management. The principle of the HLAs was first established in the 1996 Local Plan and has been carried forward into the new local planning strategy to ensure that these areas are retained for the future.
- 7.25 The Council will encourage and support the conservation, enhancement and sustainable management of these heritage assets through the preparation of conservation management plans. The Council will work with landowners, English Heritage, the Staffordshire Gardens and Parks Trust, the Garden History Society, Natural England, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and Staffordshire County Council on matters relating to historic parklands and gardens.
- 7.26 The Policy is consistent with the NPPF. Any development which will have an impact on the landscape should address the intrinsic character of its surroundings, and seek where possible to retain and strengthen the intrinsic character of areas. Landscape character analysis will be an important technique in many circumstances, utilising detailed work already undertaken by Staffordshire County Council in the Supplementary Planning Document 'Planning for Landscape Change' and work on historic landscape characterisation. More detailed guidance on landscape character will be included in a Supplementary Planning Document.

### **Key Evidence**

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 - 2020  
Planning for Landscape Change – Staffordshire County Council SPG 1996-2011

and the provision of recycling facilities in new development. These need to be well-designed, in terms of efficiency and encouragement of use, and located in sustainable locations (particularly village centres, where use can be associated with the purpose of other trips). Reflecting other Local Plan policies, development proposals should minimise environmental and visual impact, and respect the interests of nature conservation and the historic environment.

### **Key Evidence**

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 - 2020  
South Staffordshire Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2008  
South Staffordshire Waste Strategy 2009  
Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Waste Core Strategy 2010 – 2026

### **Delivery and Monitoring**

Through the Development Management process in consultation with Environment Agency and other partners  
LSP Environmental Quality Delivery Plan  
Sustainable Development SPD

The monitoring arrangements are set out in the Monitoring Framework in Appendix 1.

### **Policy EQ9: Protecting Residential Amenity**

All development proposals should take into account the amenity of any nearby residents, particularly with regard to privacy, security, noise and disturbance, pollution (including light pollution), odours and daylight.

Noise sensitive developments such as housing development will not be permitted in the vicinity of established noise generating uses where potential for harmful noise levels is known to exist unless measures to suppress noise sources can be provided through condition or legal agreement.

Development likely to generate harmful noise levels will be directed to appropriate locations away from known noise sensitive locations and noise sensitive habitats unless measures to suppress noise can be provided for the life of the development through legal agreement.

Sensitive developments such as housing will not be permitted in the vicinity of established sources of pollution which may give rise to harm to the amenity of occupants. Proposals involving the reuse and conversion of redundant agricultural buildings to residential use should not take place where agricultural use involving the keeping of animals or associated

waste is to be retained in adjacent buildings.

Development likely to harm the amenity of neighbouring residents will be directed to appropriate locations away from known sensitive locations.

Development must not unacceptably reduce the existing level of amenity space about buildings, particularly dwellings, and not unacceptably affect the amenity of residents or occupants.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

### **Explanation**

- 7.49 The NPPF sets out the key role of the planning system to deliver sustainable development, including the role of planning in relation to the protection of amenity. The above Policy sets out the general principles relating to residential amenity particularly in respect of important issues such as privacy, noise and disturbance and pollution including the amenity of residents living adjacent to buildings in agricultural use. The policy also considers reasonable levels of private amenity space and seeks to safeguard the amenity of neighbours.

### **Key Evidence**

South Staffordshire Contaminated Land Strategy 2001  
Air Quality Updating and Screening Assessment 2009

### **Delivery and Monitoring**

Through the Development Management process in consultation with  
Environment Agency and other partners  
Air Quality Management Areas  
LSP Environmental Quality Delivery Plan  
Village Design Guide SPD (or subsequent revisions)

The monitoring arrangements are set out in the Monitoring Framework in Appendix 1.

### **Policy EQ10: Hazardous and Environmentally Sensitive Development**

The public, land uses and the natural environment will be protected from the actual or potential effects of hazardous or other activities likely to be detrimental to public health or amenity.

Village Design Guide SPD 2009  
Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans 2010  
Open Space Strategy 2009

### **Delivery and Monitoring**

Through Development Policy EQ13  
LSP Environmental Quality Delivery Plan  
Conservation Area Management Plans  
Village Design Guide SPD (or subsequent revisions)

The monitoring arrangements are set out in the Monitoring Framework in Appendix 1.

### **Development Policies**

7.58 The following Development Policies support Core Policy 4.

#### **Policy EQ11: Wider Design Considerations**

The design of all developments must be of the highest quality and the submission of design statements supporting and explaining the design components of proposals will be required. Proposals should be consistent with the design guidance set out in the adopted Village Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (or subsequent revisions) and be informed by any other local design statements.

Development proposals must seek to achieve creative and sustainable designs that take into account local character and distinctiveness, and reflect the principles set out below. The Council will encourage innovative design solutions.

##### **A. Use**

- a) mixed use developments will be encouraged where the uses are compatible with and complementary to each other and to other uses in the existing community, and where the development will help support a range of services and public transport (existing or new);
- b) proposals should where possible promote a density and mix of uses which create vitality and interest where appropriate to their setting;

##### **B. Movement**

- c) opportunities should be taken to create and preserve layouts giving a choice of easy and alternative interconnecting routes, including access to facilities and public transport and offer a safe, attractive environment for all users;

- d) provision should be made, especially within the proximity of homes, for safe and attractive walking and cycling conditions, including the provision of footpath links, cycleways and cycle parking facilities, and links to green infrastructure in accordance with Policies EV11 and HWB2;

**C. Form**

- e) proposals should respect local character and distinctiveness including that of the surrounding development and landscape, in accordance with Policy EQ4, by enhancing the positive attributes whilst mitigating the negative aspects;
- f) in terms of scale, volume, massing and materials, development should contribute positively to the streetscene and surrounding buildings, whilst respecting the scale of spaces and buildings in the local area;
- g) development should relate to and respect any historic context of the site, including plot patterns and street layout taking account of the guidance contained in Policy EQ3;
- h) development within or adjacent to a waterway corridor should take advantage of the waterside setting with an appropriate green corridor taking account of the aims and objectives of Policy HWB2;
- i) development should take every opportunity to create good design that respects and safeguards key views, visual amenity, roofscapes, landmarks, and focal points;
- j) development should take account of traditional design and forms of construction where appropriate, and avoid the use of inappropriate details;
- k) development should incorporate high quality building design and detailing, with particular attention given to appropriately designed elements;
- l) development must ensure a high standard of access for all and that safe and easy access is available to all potential users, regardless of ability, age or gender;
- m) sustainable forms of development should be designed, incorporating renewable energy use, minimising waste production and providing opportunities for recycling, and minimising pollution. Development should seek to minimise water use including the incorporation of water recycling and harvesting, and ensure the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS). Use or re-use of sustainable materials will be encouraged. Orientation and layout of development should maximise the potential for passive solar heating, taking account of the implications of solar heat gain;

#### **D. Space**

- n) proposals should create pedestrian-friendly places that allow for necessary vehicular access;
- o) places should be safe and secure, with effective natural surveillance;
- p) well designed private and semi-private open space should be incorporated for all buildings, appropriate to the character of the area;
- q) opportunities should be taken to support the development of a varied network of attractive, and usable publicly accessible spaces;
- r) provision for parking should where possible be made in discreet but planned locations within the development;
- s) design should seek to retain existing important species and habitats and maximise opportunities for habitat enhancement, creation and management in accordance with Policy EQ1.

The Council's Space About Dwelling standards are set out in Appendix 6.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

#### **Explanation**

- 7.59 The Council attaches significant importance to securing a high level of design quality in the District and this is reflected in the adopted Village Design Guide SPD (or subsequent revisions). The NPPF also refers to the importance of achieving high quality and inclusive design and the CABI publication "Making Design Policy Work" highlights a number of important issues to take into account in developing a policy approach to design.
- 7.60 The design guidance set out in the above Policy identifies the importance of local character and distinctiveness, and gives guidance on achieving sustainable development, use, movement, form and space. Achieving safe designs will be important and issues relating to community safety are addressed in Core Policy 13 and Policy CS1.

#### **Key Evidence**

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2020  
 Southern Staffordshire Surface Water Management Plan Phase 1 2010  
 Planning for Landscape Change – Staffordshire County Council SPG 1996-



#### **Policy EV12: Parking Provision**

The Council will require appropriate provision to be made for off street parking in development proposals in accordance with adopted parking standards. In considering the level of provision the Council will have regard to:

- a) the anticipated demand for parking arising from the use proposed, or other uses to which the development may be put without needing planning permission;
- b) the scope for encouraging alternative means of travel to the development that would reduce the need for on-site parking. This will be particularly relevant in areas well-served by public transport;
- c) the impact on highway safety from potential on-street parking and the scope for measures to overcome any problems; and
- d) the need to make adequate and convenient parking provision for disabled people.

The Council will require the provision of sufficient, safe, weatherproof, convenient and secure cycle parking within developments to assist in promoting cycle use.

The Council's parking standards are set out in Appendix 5.

#### **Explanation**

- 9.61 It is important that all forms of development provide an appropriate level of off street parking provision including provision for disabled people. Taking into account the Council's transport objectives, particularly encouraging alternative means of transport, provision will also need to be made for cycle parking within developments. The Policy sets out the specific requirements and the Council's parking standards are set out in detail in Appendix 5 and these are consistent with national policy.

#### **Key Evidence**

Staffordshire Local Transport Plan 2006 – 2011

#### **Delivery and Monitoring**

Core Strategy DPD  
Adopted December 2012

### **Policy GB1: Development in the Green Belt**

Within the South Staffordshire portion of the West Midlands Green Belt as defined on the Policies Map, development acceptable within the terms of national planning policy set out in the NPPF will normally be permitted where the proposed development is for either:

**A.** A new or extended building, provided it is for:

- a) purposes directly related to agriculture or forestry; or
- b) appropriate small-scale facilities for outdoor sport or recreation, nature conservation, cemeteries and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with its purposes; or
- c) affordable housing where there is a proven local need in accordance with Policy H2; or
- d) limited infilling\* and limited extension(s), alteration or replacement of an existing building where the extension(s) or alterations are not disproportionate to the size of the original building, and in the case of a replacement building the new building is not materially larger than the building it replaces. Guidance in these matters will be contained in the Green Belt and Open Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

**B.** The re-use of a building provided that:

- e) the proposed use of any building (taking into account the size of any extensions, rebuilding or required alterations), would not harm the openness of the Green Belt or the fulfilment of its purposes.

**C.** Changes of Use of Land:

- f) the carrying out of engineering or other operations, or the making of a material change of use of land, where the works or use proposed would have no material effect on the openness of the Green Belt, or the fulfilment of its purposes.

**D.** Development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

*\*Footnote: Limited infilling is defined as the filling of small gaps (1 or 2 buildings) within a built up frontage of development which would not exceed the height of the existing buildings, not lead to a major increase in the developed proportion of the site, or have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it.*

which indicate that development should be restricted (para 14, footnote 9 NPPF).

- 8.15 The 90/10 ratio that has been used to apportion housing growth between Main Service Villages and Local Service Villages will continue to be applied during the plan period for the identification of safeguarded land in the Site Allocations DPD.

### **Key Evidence**

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2020  
South Staffordshire Council Plan 2012 - 2016  
LSP Housing Strategy 2009 – 2012  
Older Persons Strategy 2007  
Staffordshire Flexi Care Strategy 2010 - 2015  
Housing Market Assessment Update 2010  
Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008  
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update 2011  
Settlement Study 2010  
Affordable Housing Viability Study 2011  
WMRSS Evidence Base

### **Delivery and Monitoring**

Through Development Policies H1, H2, H3, H4, and H5  
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update 2011  
LSP Housing Strategy Delivery Plan

The monitoring arrangements are set out in the Monitoring Framework in Appendix 1.

### **Development Policies**

- 8.16 The following Development Policies support Core Policy 6 and reflect the importance attached to the delivery of new homes in Strategic Objective 8.

#### **Policy H1: Achieving a Balanced Housing Market**

##### **Housing Choice**

The Council will seek to secure a wide choice of high quality new homes in South Staffordshire that meet the needs of all members of the community, widening the range of property sizes available in response to future needs and demand, to support the Council's strategic aim of delivering more affordable housing and contribute to the development of mixed and sustainable communities. Particular attention will be given to creating a more sustainable and better balanced housing market by

encouraging the provision of more 2 and 3 bedroom homes in all housing market areas.

#### Housing Mix

Proposals for new housing development should provide for a mix of housing sizes, types and tenures within both market and affordable sectors, particularly the needs of an ageing population, informed by the Housing Market Assessment, which meet the needs and aspirations of all sections of the local community. The Council will expect all new housing to be built to meet Lifetime Homes Standards.

#### Specialist Housing

The Council will support proposals for the provision of housing to meet specific needs for supported and adapted housing, including extra care housing, to reflect the needs of the District and the projected change in the demographic profile of the population particularly the growth in the over 65 and over 85 age groups.

#### Delivering Housing

Developers should work in partnership with the Council, and other housing partners, in determining the appropriate mix and type of dwellings on each housing site taking into account:

- a) the Council's Housing Market Assessment and the Sub-Regional Housing Market Assessment;
- b) any other local housing needs information;
- c) the characteristics of the existing housing stock in the locality, including housing age, condition, occupancy and demand;
- d) current housing market conditions;
- e) the Sustainable Community Strategy, the LSP's Housing Strategy and the Council's Affordable Housing SPD;
- f) the demographic profile of South Staffordshire;
- g) any specific guidance contained in the Site Allocations DPD.

Developers will be required to assess and demonstrate the sustainability of the proposed mix on any particular site against this information.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

#### **Explanation**

- 8.17 Providing a wide choice and mix of housing in South Staffordshire will contribute to the development of balanced and sustainable communities. The Council recognises the need for dwellings of a variety of sizes, types, tenures and costs throughout South Staffordshire to meet the current and future requirements arising from all types of household, including vulnerable groups with special requirements such as older people, single persons and those with physical disabilities and learning difficulties. Supported housing can include sheltered housing schemes designed specifically for older people and also supported housing schemes for vulnerable groups. Lifetime Homes provide accessible and adaptable accommodation for all and are designed to be flexible in use and capable of meeting different household needs over time, from younger families to older people and individuals with a temporary or permanent physical impairment.
- 8.18 Our evidence shows that over 80% of the housing stock in South Staffordshire is either detached or semi-detached and that 71% of the stock is of 3 or more bedrooms. There is a mismatch between the existing housing stock and future demand in the District and it is also evident that under occupation is an issue. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and local Housing Market Assessment (HMA) have produced similar findings which show that there are severe shortages in smaller sized units of 1 and 2 bed homes and a significant shortage of 3 bedroom houses.
- 8.19 The population of the District is projected to increase in the period up to 2028 and the most significant growth will be in the over 65s. The 65-79 age group will increase by nearly 3,300 people an increase of 34%, whilst the over 80s age group is set to increase by 3,400 people an increase of 108%. The changing demographic profile will have implications for meeting the housing and support needs of the elderly particularly older people living alone.
- 8.20 The Council will work with the private sector and Registered Social Landlords to achieve the delivery of a balanced housing market in South Staffordshire and will use the evidence in the local HMA to inform the provision of housing in terms of its size, type and tenure. The housing Policies in the Core Strategy will help to deliver objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the LSP Housing Strategy.
- 8.21 In the Site Allocations DPD each site will have an individual development brief to identify the housing mix required, which will be informed by viability assessments to ensure that the requirements are achievable. This will be evidenced through the completion of a refreshed Housing Market Assessment. Local housing market studies will also underpin the consideration of housing mix on planning applications through the Development Management process.

### **Key Evidence**

Housing Market Assessment Update 2010  
Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008  
LSP Housing Strategy 2009 - 2012



Extra Care bed spaces. The Council will continue to work closely with the County Council for the provision of Extra Care facilities in the District to ensure that we are directing our efforts and resources to where they are most needed. Deficits in provision will be identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

- 8.31 In the Site Allocations DPD each site will have an individual development brief to identify the housing mix required, which will be informed by viability assessments to ensure that the requirements are achievable. This will be evidenced through the completion of a refreshed Housing Market Assessment. Local housing market studies will also underpin the consideration of housing mix on planning applications through the Development Management process.

### **Key Evidence**

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 - 2020  
LSP Housing Strategy 2009 - 2012  
Older Persons Strategy 2007  
Staffordshire Flexi Care Strategy 2010 - 2015

### **Delivery and Monitoring**

Through the Development Management process  
LSP Housing Strategy Delivery Plan  
Working with the County Council and other partners  
Infrastructure Delivery Plan

The monitoring arrangements are set out in the Monitoring Framework in Appendix 1.

### **Policy H6: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**

The Council will meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers & Travelling Showpeople as set out in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2008 GTAA and seek to maintain a 5 year supply of specific deliverable sites identified on an annual basis: -

Accommodation	2007-2012	2012-2016	2016-2021	2021-2026	2026-2028
Residential Pitches	32	15	17	15	6
Transit Pitches	5	NA	NA	NA	NA
Travelling Showpeople plots	13	1	2	2	1
Total	50	16	19	17	7

The Council will grant planning permission in suitable locations for additional pitches and allocate suitable sites in the Site Allocations DPD in accordance with the National Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, the NPPF and the following criteria:

1. The intended occupants must meet the definition of Gypsies & Travellers or Travelling Showpeople as set out in Annex 1 of National Planning Policy for Traveller Sites; and
2. Essential services such as power, water sewerage, drainage and waste disposal are either available or can be provided to service the site; and
3. The site will be well designed and landscaped to give privacy between pitches; for the occupiers of the site and between the site and adjacent users to protect the amenities of the occupiers of the site and the amenities of neighbouring residential properties, including 'boaters'; and
4. Transit sites should have good access to the strategic highway network; and
5. Sites for Travelling Showpeople will be large enough to accommodate ancillary yards for business uses and be located in areas where there is no unacceptable impact on neighbouring residential properties, including 'boaters', by reason of air pollution, noise or risk to the health and safety of local residents arising from the storage of large items of mobile equipment; and
6. The site can adequately and safely be accessed by vehicles towing caravans, is well related to the established local highway network and adequate space within the site to accommodate vehicle parking, turning space and to accommodate the occupants of the site having regard to the provision of adequate amenity space and play space for children; and
7. The proposal, either in itself or cumulatively having regard to existing neighbouring sites, must be of an appropriate size so as to not put unacceptable strain on infrastructure or dominate the nearest settled communities to avoid problems of community safety arising from poor social cohesion with existing families; and
8. Proposals shall be sited and landscaped to ensure that any impact on the character and landscape of the locality is minimised, including impacts on biodiversity and nature conservation. In areas of nationally, sub-nationally or locally recognised designations planning permission will only be granted where the objectives of designation would not be compromised by the development – examples will include:
  - a) The Green Belt - where demonstrably harmful impact on the 'openness' of the Green Belt will be resisted;
  - b) Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) – where proposals that will harm the setting, function and integrity of



Cannock Chase will be resisted;

- c) Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), including Kinver Edge, Conservation Areas, Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), including Motte Meadows near Wheaton Aston, Local Nature Reserves (LNR), including Shoal Hill Common, or any other protected sites - where proposals that will harm the setting, function and integrity of these areas will be resisted;
- d) Recognised tourism and heritage assets of South Staffordshire, including historic parks and gardens and the environs of the canal network within the District - where proposals that could undermine the economic vibrancy of South Staffordshire, by harming the aims, objectives and planned actions within the Council's Tourism Strategy, will be resisted; and

9. Proposals must not be located in areas at high risk of flooding including functional floodplains (flood zones 3a and 3b).

The Council will monitor and manage the provision of additional pitches within South Staffordshire against the phased provision set out above. Where there is no shortfall against the phased provision within each phased time-frame, in determining planning applications for additional pitches the Council will firmly resist any proposals within the Green Belt or the open countryside within South Staffordshire or proposals in locations that could introduce problems of social cohesion with the settled community or with the occupants of authorised sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

The Council will not tolerate the occupation by Gypsies and Travellers of unlawful sites and will seek the assistance of the Courts to remove them from such sites and recover the costs of such removal and the cost of restoring the site to its original state.

The Council anticipates that the requirements to meet the needs of Gypsies, Travellers & Travelling Showpeople in South Staffordshire will be met through the provision of private sites. However, the Council will monitor the situation locally and liaise with the local Gypsy & Traveller Communities (including Travelling Showpeople), and seek to secure the provision of a suitably located public site(s) if there is a proven need for such provision having regard to the health, welfare and educational needs of the local travelling communities.

The Council will engage with the occupiers and owners of existing Gypsy & Traveller sites and sites of Travelling Showpeople in order to consider the capacity within existing sites and, where justified and subject to the criteria set out above, will consider the appropriate extension of existing sites.

### **Explanation**

- 8.32 The housing needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities, including Travelling Showpeople is an important issue to be addressed. South Staffordshire Council, in partnership with Cannock Chase District Council, Lichfield District Council, Tamworth Borough Council, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, Rugby Borough Council and North Warwickshire Borough Council commissioned a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) in 2007 and which was completed in February 2008.
- 8.33 The GTAA identified a need for additional permanent residential pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and plots for Travelling Showpeople within the District to 2026. In order to meet the requirements of NPPF, the GTAA pitch requirements have been increased by a further two years' supply to ensure that there will be a continuous delivery of pitches for at least 15 years from the date of the adoption of the Core Strategy DPD.
- 8.34 The Policy sets out the criteria for the delivery of additional residential pitches and transit pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and plots for Travelling Showpeople based on the evidence in the GTAA. It is intended that sites will be identified through the Site Allocations DPD.
- 8.35 Applications for new sites and the refurbishment of existing sites will normally be expected to meet the design guidelines detailed in National Guidance (Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites, Good Practice Guide).

**Key Evidence**

LSP Housing Strategy 2009 - 2012  
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2008  
Gypsy and Traveller Site Data  
WMRSS Evidence Base  
WMRSS Interim Policy Statement 2010

**Delivery and Monitoring**

Through the Development Management process  
Working with Gypsy and Traveller communities  
Site Allocations DPD

The monitoring arrangements are set out in the Monitoring Framework in Appendix 1.



**South Staffordshire Council**

# **South Staffordshire Design Guide**

2018



Further information can be found at  
**[www.sstaffs.gov.uk](http://www.sstaffs.gov.uk)**



# Preface

*This design guide was produced for South Staffordshire Council by LUC. Illustrations and architectural input by Tate Harmer Architects.*



Environmental Planning  
Design & Management

[www.landuse.co.uk](http://www.landuse.co.uk)

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*Himley Hall Registered Park and Garden was once owned by the National Coal Board before being sold to Dudley Council in 1966 following the decline of the coal mining industry in the area. The Hall's landscaped parkland reflects the character of the surrounding South Staffordshire countryside and fieldscapes.*



# 1. Introduction



*Littleton Green Community School, Huntington shows how modern design can enhance the local area.*

## Purpose of the guide

**This District Design Guide has been produced to help you understand the Council's requirements for the design of new development in South Staffordshire.**

The Council will only approve applications for new developments that give due consideration to good design. The core principles of good design that are most important to the Council are set out in this guide. The guide has been produced to amplify and illustrate the policies set out in the Council's Local Plan<sup>1</sup>. It does not repeat all the policies relevant to every type of development; therefore, the relevant policy documents appropriate to your specific development should be consulted in addition to this guide to ensure that you have met all the requirements. Particular documents relevant to each of the principles set out in this guide are signposted at the end of each chapter and are listed in Chapter [7. References \(p. 65\)](#).

The guide is for everyone involved in planning and designing new developments in South Staffordshire. It is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and therefore a material consideration in determining planning applications.

More detail on how the document sits within the framework of local and national planning policy is set out on the following pages.

## Good Design

*"Achieving good design is about creating places, buildings or spaces that work well for everyone, look good, last well, and will adapt to the needs of future generations" <sup>2</sup>.*

Well-designed new developments enhance our places, making them sustainable, safe and inclusive. Good design does not necessarily cost more. It is about:

- *understanding the site context, maximising opportunities for conservation and enhancement;*
- *carefully considering each element of the proposal in terms of how it will appear, how it will be used and how it will sit in its surroundings;*
- *having a clear vision and aspiring to create a design that will positively improve our environment.*

Well designed places:

- *are attractive places to live, work and visit;*
- *function well; supporting mixed uses, well-used public spaces and encourage ease of movement;*
- *help to establish a strong sense of place, valued by people;*
- *are safe, inclusive environments;*
- *are sustainable, adaptable and resilient.*

<sup>1</sup> South Staffordshire Local Plan - including the Adopted Core Strategy, 2012

<sup>2</sup> National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance: Design, 2014

### ***Contemporary design***

**Contemporary design and innovation will be encouraged in new developments.**

South Staffordshire is a rural district and its identity is tied to its history, historic buildings, its landscape and settlements. Nevertheless, contemporary design and innovation are equally valued and can sit alongside the historic and rural characteristics of the district.

The key aspiration for all design, whether inspired by modern design or historic design, is that it is *good design*. New buildings can be sympathetic with their surroundings without needing to copy older buildings.

Some local examples of good design are illustrated opposite.

### ***Avoid standard pattern-book designs***

**Standardised pattern-book style designs are rarely acceptable in South Staffordshire.** Standard style houses and streets create 'anywhere' places, which are difficult to find your way around and do little to inspire or enrich the environment. The villages in South Staffordshire have grown up within the landscape, gradually, over time. Elements of history are still visible when we look around, making places interesting, meaningful and creating links between the built environment and the landscape.



*College Farm Dovecote in Four Ashes uses a modern design with glass to create a new space between the refurbished original buildings.*

### ***Creating places with new character***

**There may be some areas which do not have noticeable or distinctive character. Such areas should not be viewed as an excuse for poor design, but an opportunity to create new character through good design.**

Developers should take opportunities to create positive environments. The Council will encourage this approach; the creation of attractive, usable and connected places are important aspirations for new development.

**Good design is not only for Conservation Areas or more sensitive sites.** All applications for new development are expected to show consideration for good design.



*The simple style and low height of the Highgate Common Visitor's Centre sits well in its surrounding landscape. An interesting roof style allows windows to be added into the stepped elevation without compromising the simplicity of form.*



*This barn conversion has retained old elements whilst adopting a contemporary style. Retaining the old walls provides character and is a reminder of its past farming history. The historic natural stone sits comfortably alongside more modern materials.*



## Local examples of good design



*The form of these retirement flats in Kinver reflects almshouses, creating an historic link with the previous Victorian chapel on the site. The development maintains the scale of the traditional buildings in High Street, with the roof span a key element of this.*



*This college building responds to its context by adopting a similar overall height and eaves height to the existing building. This provides a sense of harmony and unity that ties the two buildings together.*



*This modern terrace is constructed from a local red brick and incorporates traditional construction details seen throughout South Staffordshire, including brick detailing and traditional timber window frames.*



*This sensitive conservatory has been designed to sit comfortably alongside the traditional stone construction house by incorporating traditional stone masonry and simple glazing and framing.*



*These dwellings in the grounds of Patshull Hall show sensitive attention to detail. The architectural style is traditional but not directly copied from the Hall. The brick elevations incorporate stone cills and cornices from Hollington Tearne Quarry. The scale of the new buildings is clearly subservient to the Hall itself.*



*This housing development in Burnhill Green uses local materials and expertise and modern green-energy technology. The development filled a gap in the hamlet and is sympathetic to the rural surroundings, with a similar character to the nearby buildings of the 19th century cottages on the Patshull estate. A village green is re-instated to promote a sense of community.*

# Planning policies

**When determining planning applications the Council will consider national and local policies as well as other relevant supplementary documents, evidence base documents and guidance, including this design guide.**

The key national and local policies and supporting guidance, and information relevant to the design of new development, are summarised on the following pages.

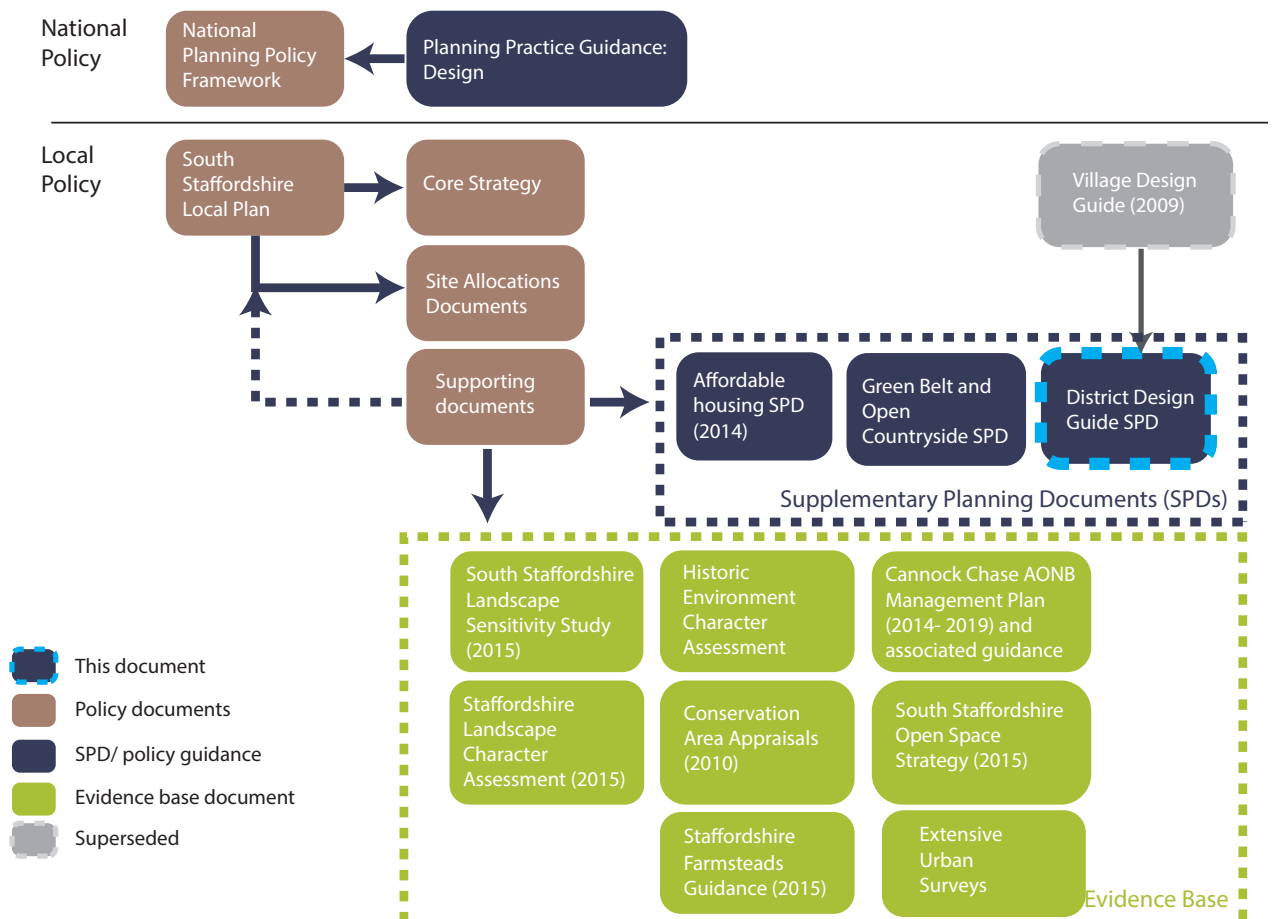
Some relevant documents are shown in the diagram below. Many of these documents contain useful guidance for siting and designing new development. For example, the Green Belt and Open Countryside SPD is relevant for developments in these areas (this is as defined on the Local Plan Policies Map, but includes most of the landscape outside villages). The SPD provides further details and illustration of the principles contained in the Local Plan including the use, size and positioning of new buildings or extensions. The Affordable Housing

and Housing Mix SPD provides guidance on the detailed policy requirements for the delivery of affordable housing and housing mix; it also includes reference to Lifetime Homes standards.

The Evidence Base documents were produced to inform the Local Plan and contain useful information on South Staffordshire's landscape and built environment, as well as guidance on how new developments may best be integrated. The Staffordshire Farmsteads Guidance contains guidance for proposed barn conversions based on the existing character of South Staffordshire's farmsteads. The Historic Environment Character Assessment provides detail on the historic character and heritage features around the settlements of South Staffordshire. The South Staffordshire Landscape Character Assessment and Sensitivity Study describe and evaluate the character and sensitivities of the South Staffordshire landscape.

References to all documents can be found in Chapter [7. References \(p. 65\)](#).

## Relevant policy documents & how the District Design Guide sits within these





## National Policy

### **Promoting high quality design in the National Planning Policy Framework**

The Government has emphasised the role of good design of the built environment in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012) as well as within the supporting national planning guidance:

*“in determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area” (NPPF, para. 63)*

*“Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions” (NPPF, para. 64).*



### **Summary box: the NPPF Planning Practice Guidance on Design, 2014**

The NPPF Planning Practice Guidance on design identifies some key points to take into account:

- **Promoting local character and landscape setting:** *this means successfully integrating all forms of new development with the surrounding context, and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, local man-made and natural heritage and culture.*
- **Promoting safe connected and efficient streets:** *streets need to support the character and use of an area, be functional and accessible for all, to be safe and attractive public spaces and encourage a locally appropriate mix of movement (of vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians).*
- **Promoting a network of green spaces (including parks) and public places:** *These should be designed with a purpose in mind, and wherever possible deliver a range of social and environmental goals.*
- **Promote cohesive and vibrant neighbourhoods:** *The vitality of neighbourhoods is enhanced by creating variety, choice and a mix of uses to attract people to live, work and play in the same area.*
- **Address crime prevention:** *Designing out crime and designing in community safety should be central to the planning and delivery of new development.*
- **Promote efficient use of natural resources:** *The structure, layout and design of places can reduce energy and water use and mitigate against flooding, pollution and over heating as well as help to sustain natural ecosystems*
- **Promote access and inclusion:** *Places should be designed so that they can be accessed and used by everyone, recognising and accommodating differences in the way people use the built environment.*

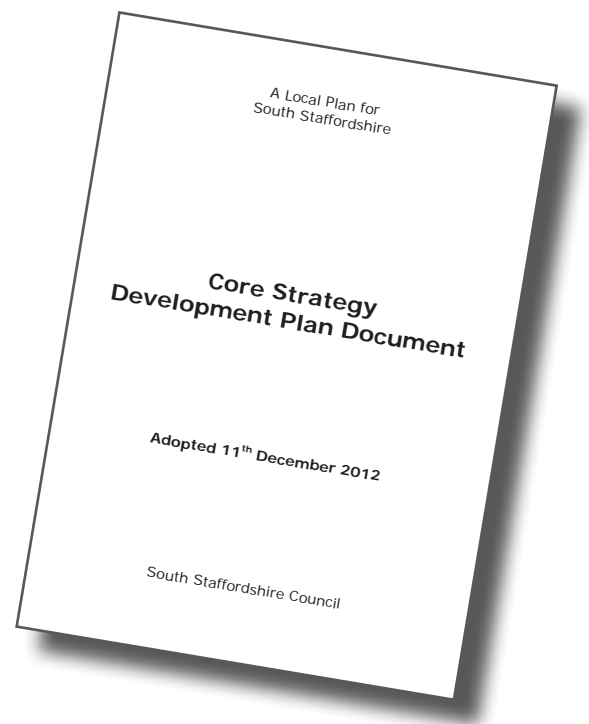
## ***Promoting high quality design in South Staffordshire's Local Plan***

The South Staffordshire Local Plan places great importance on promoting high quality design - refer in particular to Core Policy 4: Promoting High Quality Design and Policy EQ 11: Wider Design Considerations.

Policy EQ11 covers the themes of use (incorporating a mix of uses), movement (creating connections and safe, inclusive access), form (respecting local character and distinctiveness and creating a positive street scene) and space (creating pedestrian-friendly streets with a range of green and open spaces). These principles are also covered in this design guide.

*"Development proposals must seek to achieve creative and sustainable designs that take into account local character and distinctiveness" (Policy EQ11)*

*"Good design in the creation of buildings, streets and spaces is an important component of enriching and improving the quality of life for the community" (para 7.53)*



### **Summary box: some of the most relevant policies in the South Staffordshire Local Plan**

- Core Policy 2: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment
- Core Policy 3: Sustainable Development and Climate Change
- Core Policy 4: Promoting High Quality Design
- Policy EQ1: Protecting, Enhancing and Expanding Natural Assets
- Policy EQ3: Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets.
- Policy EQ4: Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape
- Policy EQ5: Sustainable Resources and Energy Efficiency
- Policy EQ9: Protecting Residential Amenity
- Policy EQ12: Landscaping
- Core Policy 7: Employment and Economic Development
- Core Policy 8: Hierarchies of Centres
- Policy EV3: Canals and Canalside Development
- Policy EV6: Re-use of Redundant Rural Buildings
- Policy EV11: Sustainable Travel
- Policy EV12: Parking Provision
- Core Policy 13: Community Safety
- Policy CS1: Designing Out Crime
- Core Policy 14: Open Space, Sport and Recreation
- Policy HWB2: Green Infrastructure



*The modern addition on the front of this college building respects the proportions of the original building whilst using glass to distinguish between old and new. The entrance is given a modern lighter feel while the original building retains its prominence.*



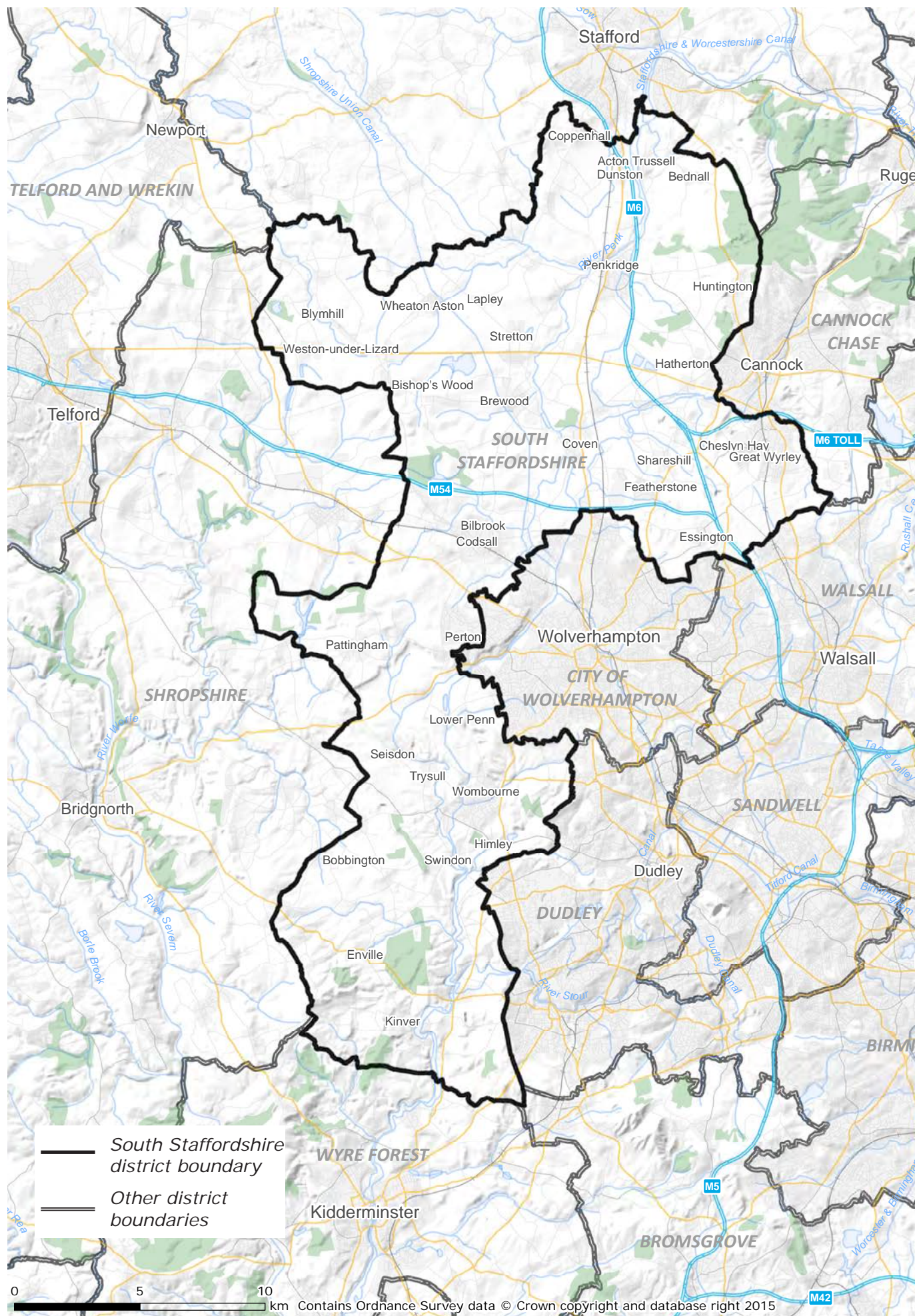
#### **References for good design and planning policies**

- + *Urban Design Compendium 1 & 2*
- + *By Design*
- + *Building for Life 12*
- + *NPPF Planning Practice Guidance: Design*
- + *South Staffordshire Local Plan, Core Strategy*
- + *Manual for Streets*
- + *Planning for Places (CABE)*
- + <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/>

(See [Chapter 7. References](#) for full details of these publications.)



## Map of South Staffordshire district in context





## 2. South Staffordshire's Character



Part of Enville village, seen from St Mary's Church

### South Staffordshire is unique and special

*South Staffordshire is unique and special. It is a predominantly rural district, there are no towns - rather, a collection of villages scattered across the landscape. The traditional South Staffordshire villages have expanded gradually over time, beginning as small farming communities and growing up around a church or market place.*

**The rural landscape has been, and remains, integral to the character of the district; and the settlements are closely tied to it.**

Despite the changes within settlements and the landscape in the 20th century, the historic landscape remains prominent. Many of the settlements retain a medieval layout, populated with historic timber framed buildings whilst outside of the villages medieval field patterns and winding lanes enclosed by high hedgerows survive.

Evidence of Prehistoric and Roman land use is spread across the district<sup>3</sup>. This includes potential Iron and Bronze Age sites identified near Teddesley, Penkridge, Pattingham and near Dunston. The Iron Age hillfort at Kinver includes large earthen ramparts and is a Scheduled Monument.

<sup>3</sup> Further details can be found in South Staffordshire's Historic Environment Assessment

The legacy of two Roman forts and associated settlements at Pennocrucium and at Greensforge and associated roman roads is still legible within the landscape.

Watermill sites, some of which have Early Medieval origins, point to early industry in the district which used the power of the rivers to mill corn. The iron-working industry in the Stour and Smestow valleys also developed using water power, from the late 16th century.

Much of South Staffordshire's development was influenced by the interlocking large landed estates that historically formed around half of its area. These often originated as sites of medieval manor houses and grew into country estates with nearby workers' cottages in the 18th and 19th centuries. A number of landscape parks date from this period (such as Weston Park, Enville, Teddesley Park and Patshull Park). The areas around Kinver, Swindon, Brewood and Wombourne all lay within the cores of the medieval Royal Forests that covered much of the district into the early 14th century.

The woodlands were used for hunting and as a source of timber and minerals from the middle ages, although from the 11th century were subject to forest laws by the Crown. Below-ground mining of coal, clay and iron is known to have existed from the 13th century. Coal mining and quarrying in the 18th and 19th centuries

was concentrated in the north east of the district, and led to the expansion of industrial villages such as Featherstone, Great Wyrley and Huntington; the industry of the area was also closely associated with the development of the communications network of canals, tramways and later the railways.

The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal opened in 1772, completed by the legendary engineer James Brindley and the Shropshire Union Canal also opened in 1835, engineered by Thomas Telford. The canals include numerous locks and bridges and impart local character and distinctiveness.

Despite the urbanisation and sprawl of many surrounding areas (particularly the West Midlands conurbations of Wolverhampton,

Dudley and Birmingham to the east and north east), South Staffordshire has retained its rural identity.

The settlements consist of scattered farms, small hamlets and larger villages set in attractive countryside. Many of the settlements retain links to the surrounding countryside and to their history, with the historic village centres and historic buildings still present.



*Canals add character and distinctiveness to the landscape of South Staffordshire*



*The historic character of the district is very important to retain. Many timber framed buildings dating from the medieval period are still present in and close to the historic cores of the district's villages, such as this house in Penkridge.*



## Traditional settlement patterns

The pattern of settlement in South Staffordshire is predominantly dispersed, with individual scattered farmsteads, small clusters of properties, historic houses, hamlets and larger villages linked with winding lanes. Summaries of many of the villages are provided in [Appendix 1](#).

Many farmsteads are associated with the 18th and 19th century estate landscapes, which grew from the medieval pattern of fields, routeways and woodlands.

The village summaries show that the villages which are particularly distinctive and attractive tend to have recurring elements and features that bring a sense of unity and consistency - for instance, buildings of the same or similar materials, scales or forms.

### The traditional pattern of villages

Traditional villages of South Staffordshire often began as a cluster of individual farms which expanded gradually over time, often around

a community use such as a parish church or market place. Over time, the villages grew outwards, with smaller buildings such as farm workers' cottages lining smaller, winding streets. A number of villages (Penkridge, Brewood and Kinver) retain in the layout of regular building plots evidence for an initial phase of deliberate planning.

**Today, the centre of traditional villages is often identifiable by the church or market place surrounded by larger, historic buildings.** Further out from the centre, smaller scale winding streets lead you out of the village. This pattern is known as an informal hierarchy: there is a main focal point (such as a church spire) surrounded by a subtle mixture of scales, forms and rhythms of buildings, streets and spaces. This variety creates richness and texture in the environment.

**New development should aim to reflect this subtle diversity and avoid a standardised approach.**



*Traditional villages such as Brewood grew around an historic core, often with a church. Brewood developed around an ancient market place. Surviving buildings date from the 17th Century.*

*A compact, nucleated village with a historic core*



An illustration of the pattern of the village of Wheaton Aston, showing the approximate location of the historic village core (in red). Wheaton Aston is an example of a traditional rural compact village. It has medieval origins, having developed slowly from the 13th Century as the focus for a small farming community. The cluster of farmhouses and cottages around the parish church represents the historic core of the village surrounded by tight winding lanes, few buildings dating from the medieval period survive. In the 19th and 20th centuries it expanded to meet the canal to the north.



This building in Brewood village centre adopts similar materials, form and style to its neighbours, with particular attention to detail in elements such as windows and the door portico, adding richness and variety to the street scene.

*A dispersed village with loose clusters of buildings*



Dunston is an example of a traditional dispersed village. Scattered groups of buildings form evenly spaced loose clusters, many arranged in a courtyard form and connected by narrow lanes. Typical buildings are brick and modest in scale.



Typical red brick modest scale houses in Dunston, with landscaped planting used to define driveway entrances and street corners.



### ***The traditional pattern of settlement in the countryside***

**The settlement outside of the villages tends to be scattered individual farmsteads and small clusters of properties.**

Traditional farmsteads are usually either large isolated farmsteads, courtyard farmsteads - where the working buildings are arranged around one or more yards - or small and medium-scale farmsteads, which tend to be loosely clustered in and around the small villages and hamlets across the district.<sup>4</sup>

New development in the countryside could take inspiration from these traditional building groups when considering the scale of buildings and arrangement and orientation of elements on the site (such as service areas). Arranging new development in this way can help to reduce the perception of bulky units.

<sup>4</sup> See the Staffordshire Historic Farmsteads Guidance - Farmsteads Character Statement



*Horsebrook shows a typical arrangement of scattered individual dwellings, some of which are historic barns. Barns and farmhouses have a close connection to the surrounding landscape.*



*This successful barn conversion retains the original brick detailing whilst simple roof lights have been used to bring light into the building without compromising the traditional form.*



*This development on Himley Lane, Swindon, uses the traditional farmstead layout - common in South Staffordshire - whilst creating contemporary homes with high energy performance and modern materials.*

## Special character in South Staffordshire

*The **character** of a place is created by special or distinctive features which recur across a particular area, giving it a sense of local identity.*

It means that when you visit a certain area, you take away a memory of what that place was like. Character is important because it adds richness, variety and rhythm to our environments.

**It means that places are distinctive, have a sense of identity and are not all the same.**

**The features, elements or patterns that are important to the character of one area may not be the same for another.** One area may have a strong sense of identity as a result of its rolling landform and wide open views. There may be a particular type of brick used in the village which makes the buildings have a sense of unity or style. Timber-framed buildings, small, winding rural lanes, small scale river valleys and wide open fields, can all contribute to a sense of character.

### Areas of different character

**Character varies as you travel through South Staffordshire.** The character of the landscape changes as a result of the changes in geology and landform - which cause differences in vegetation and the types of materials available to be used in the construction of buildings.

Broadly, the district is divided into three areas of different character. These areas are listed below and shown on the map overleaf: **'National Character Areas in South Staffordshire'**. They are described individually in more detail in the next section.

- *Staffordshire Plain*
- *Cannock Chase and Cank Wood*
- *Mid-Severn Sandstone Plateau*

## National Character Areas

National Character Areas are areas of different character across the whole of England. They have been drawn and described by Natural England, to inform our understanding of what makes places special.

The three areas listed above are parts of three of these National Character Areas.

- Staffordshire Plain is part of National Character Area **61**
- Cannock Chase and Cank Wood is part of National Character Area **67** (Cannock Chase and Cankwood)
- Mid-Severn Sandstone Plateau is part of National Character Area **66**.

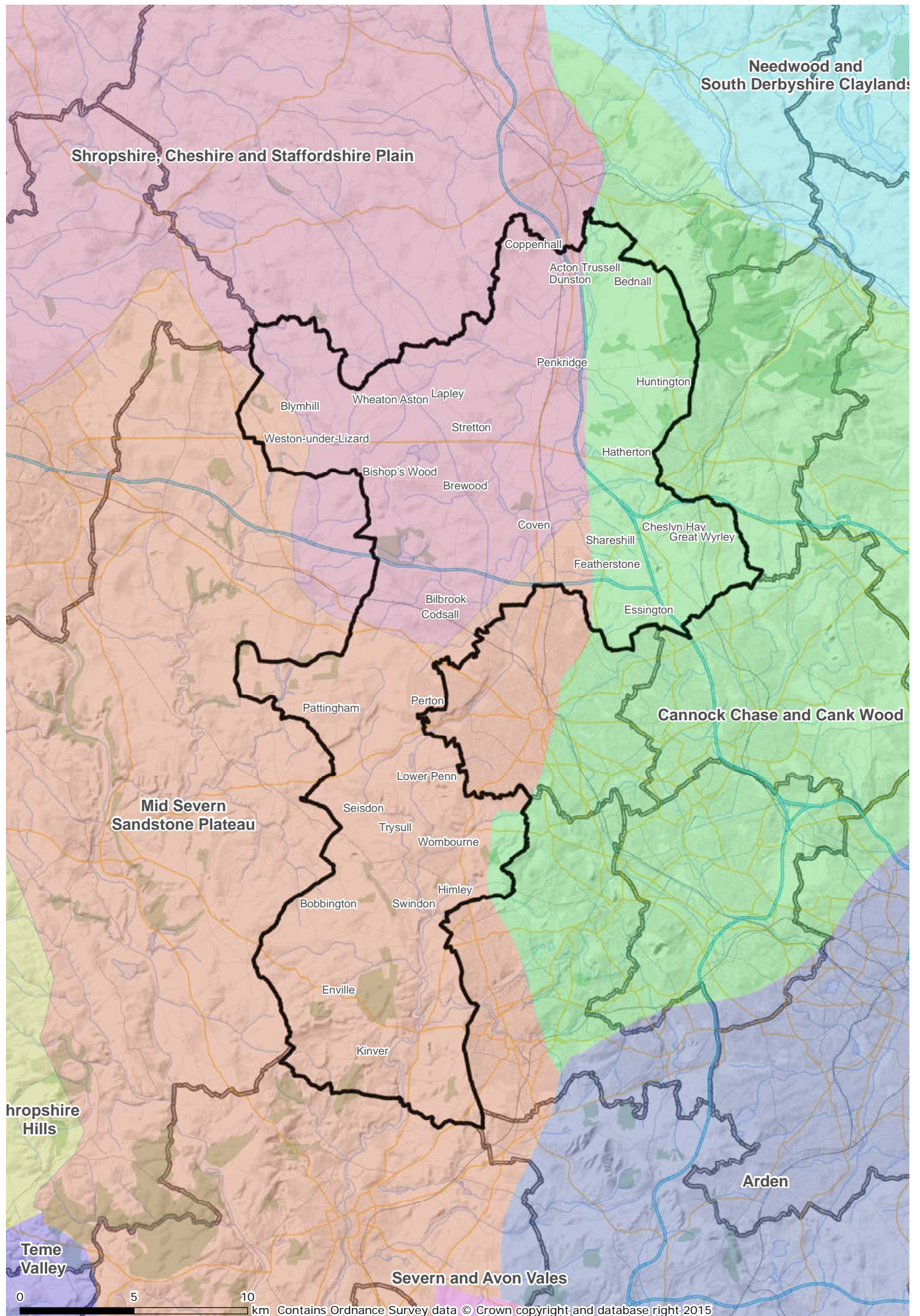
### Local Character Areas

At a more local level, there are of course many variations in character as you travel around. For example, the former coalfields area in the east of the district around Cheslyn Hay, Featherstone, Great Wyrley etc. is characterised by small scale villages with 19th century terraced cottages.

These local variations are represented as smaller 'local character areas', which have been drawn and described by South Staffordshire Council. More information on these local character areas can be found in the South Staffordshire Landscape Character Assessment.



## National Character Areas in South Staffordshire





## Character areas in more detail



A farmstead in the South Staffordshire Plain, a typical sight when travelling through the district. Typical barns sit low in the landscape and farmsteads are formed of clusters of brick buildings.

### Character of the Staffordshire Plain

#### Countryside

**The countryside of the Staffordshire Plain is characterised by a broad, open, gently rolling agricultural landscape.** On the whole, the limited woodland cover leads to wide-ranging views. Landscape features which contribute to the character include:

- Extensive gently undulating plain
- Historic parkland and agricultural estates e.g. at Weston and Chillington.
- Strong field patterns and generally well-maintained boundaries
- Diverse wetland habitats including meres, wet woodland and ponds are scattered across the landscape - the result of glacial deposits.

#### Settlement

**Settlement and the built environment in the Staffordshire Plain is characterised by scattered large farmsteads and dispersed hamlets which are seen as part of the landscape.** They are defined and enclosed by woodland groups. Villages are quite often sited on higher ground, and tall features such as churches are visible landmarks in the low lying landscape.

Features of the built environment important to the character of the area include:

- Dense, tightly formed villages with traditional village centres arranged around a church or market place
- Scattered large farmsteads, consisting of buildings orientated towards each other, forming tight clusters
- Historic farmhouses and villages of mellow red brick and tiled roofs.

Some specific guidance for new development in the area is included below. **This should be read alongside the design principles listed in Chapter 3. Design Principles (p. 21)** and further information on many of the individual villages is provided in the Village Summaries in [Appendix 1](#).

#### Design guidelines for new development in the Staffordshire Plain

- **For new development in the countryside, consider how it will be seen in views across the landscape:** pay attention to the scale of the development, its form and colour of materials so that it is harmonious with other features in views.
- **For new larger developments in the countryside lower lying structures are likely to be less intrusive in views.** Use planting around larger buildings to blend them into the landscape.
- **Plant hedge boundaries**, especially where there is an opportunity to extend existing hedges.

- **Where new development abuts the countryside, pay particular attention to the design of the development boundaries.** Planting such as tree groups, grass margins or hedges is likely to be appropriate.
- **Avoid sprawling villages:** pay particular attention to sites on the edges of villages to make sure development does not disrupt the containment and pattern of the village.
- **Where development is within a village, pay attention to the scale of nearby buildings and spaces so that the natural pattern of the village is still recognisable.** This is particularly the case where villages are characterised by a hierarchy of scale, with larger buildings in the centre and smaller buildings at the edges.



*A low lying farmstead bordered by tall trees, reducing its overall visual impact in the landscape*

*Villages within the Staffordshire Plain*

<b>Bilbrook</b>	<b>Lapley</b>
<b>Bishops Wood</b>	<b>Penkridge</b>
<b>Brewood</b>	<b>Stretton</b>
<b>Codsall</b>	<b>Wheaton Aston</b>
<b>Coven</b>	
<b>Coppenhall</b>	
<b>Dunston</b>	

Refer to **Village Summaries - Appendix 1** for further information about these villages

## **Character of Cannock Chase and Cank Wood**

### **Countryside**

The countryside of Cannock Chase and Cank Wood is characterised by rolling plateaux with scattered woodlands and a peaceful, strongly rural character in the northern part of the area. In the far east of the area, previous coal and clay extraction has shaped the landscape and villages.

Landscape features particularly important to countryside character include:

- *Significant tracts of heathland exhibiting an unspoilt, almost wilderness character*
- *Extensive coniferous plantations, woodlands and historic parklands.*
- *Former industrial areas associated with colliery working characterise the eastern areas adjacent to Wolverhampton and Cannock.*
- *Historic parklands are present in pockets across the landscape. These are more formal areas with special character.*



*Typical heathland of Sherbrook Valley within the Cannock Chase AONB*

## Settlement

Settlement and the built environment in Cannock Chase and Cank Wood is characterised by, in the northern part of the area, little development, mainly of groups of farmsteads and cottages connected by winding ancient lanes. The southern and eastern parts of the area have a more industrial character and saw substantial growth in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Features of the built environment important to the character of the area include:

- *Winding ancient lanes in the northern part of the area.*
- *Terraced housing and estates.*
- *Historic farmsteads.*

Some specific guidance for new development in the area is included below. **This should be read alongside the design principles listed in Chapter 3. [Design Principles](#) and further information on many of the individual villages is provided in the village summaries in [Appendix 1](#).**

### **Design guidelines for new development in Cannock Chase and Cank Wood**

- ***For larger developments in the former-industrial areas of the countryside take opportunities for further landscape restoration such as tree and hedgerow replanting.***
- ***For new development in villages which have ex-industrial character,***

***take opportunities to regenerate and enhance character, taking inspiration from industrial elements in new design, such as local building materials, retaining historic arrangements of farmsteads.***

- ***For larger industrial and commercial developments in the countryside, arrange units in logical groupings such as along transport corridors.***
- ***Ensure new development respects the character of the AONB and its setting.***
- ***For larger industrial and commercial developments in the countryside, blend development into the surrounding environment with planting, materials which blend in harmoniously and with signage which is sympathetic to the surrounding environment.***
- ***Avoid sprawling villages: pay particular attention to sites on the edges of villages to make sure they do not disrupt the containment and pattern of the village.***

*Villages within Cannock Chase and Cank Wood*

Acton Trussell	Hatherton
Bednall	Hilton
Cheslyn Hay	Huntington
Essington	Shareshill
Featherstone	Teddesley Hay
Great Wyrley	

Refer to [Village Summaries - Appendix 1](#) for further information about these villages



*View across the South Staffordshire landscape from a winding ancient lane.*





*The Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau*

## **Character of Mid-Severn Sandstone Plateau**

### **Countryside**

The countryside of the Mid-Severn Sandstone Plateau is characterised by broad, open, rolling landform allowing wide views. The south west part of the area is deeply rural and is particularly influenced by parkland estates. A wooded character is created by prominent woodlands on higher ground. There is a long history of occupation with evidence of activity in prehistoric and Roman times. Landscape features particularly important to countryside character include:

- *Undulating landscape with tree-lined ridges.*
- *Kinver Edge, the pronounced ridge with distant views from the ridge across the flat landscape to the west.*
- *Woodlands on higher ground are important in giving a well-wooded impression of the landscape.*
- *The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, and the Stourbridge Canal.*
- *Parklands and estates e.g. Enville, Weston Park - with 18th century landscape gardens.*
- *Sunken rural lanes known as 'holloways'*
- *Small wooded stream-side dells, known locally as dingles, for example along the valley of Smestow Brook. Trees include lines of alder, willow and poplar and the occasional native black poplar.*

### **Settlement**

Settlement and the built environment in the Mid-Severn Sandstone Plateau is characterised by a mixed pattern but generally there are scattered hamlets, farmsteads and medieval agricultural villages linked by frequent roads. Larger villages include Kinver and Wombourne. Estate villages including Shareshill and Enville impart a cohesive character and distinctive style to the area whilst Victorian villas within village cores (e.g. Trysull and Seisdon) add diversity to the built fabric.

Features of the built environment important to the character of the area include:

- *Soft mid-red brick.*
- *Kinver Forest influenced the buildings nearby - especially Kinver - there is a resulting variety of timber-framed buildings.*
- *Estate villages and country estates including the 18th century Patshull Hall and Park.*

Some specific guidance for new development in the area is included below. **This should be read alongside the design principles listed in Chapter 3. *Design Principles*** and further information on many of the individual villages is provided in the village summaries in **Appendix 1**.

#### **Design guidelines for new development in Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau**

- **Consider the design of roofs and the form of buildings** where developments are located in the open agricultural landscape, particularly where they may be seen from high vantage points. Avoid sprawling developments and contain new development within existing boundaries where possible.
- **Integrate larger units into the landscape.** For example, by designing the shapes of buildings so that they fit within the environment, using materials which blend in and softening boundaries with planting.
- **Respect and enhance historical features** in the landscape and villages.



Enville Manor is typical example of historic building in South Staffordshire, with red brick, clay roof tiles and timber framed windows. New development should respect and respond to these historic design features.

Villages within the Mid-Severn Sandstone Plateau

<b>Bobbington</b>	<b>Pattingham</b>
<b>Enville</b>	<b>Perton</b>
<b>Hilton</b>	<b>Seisdon</b>
<b>Himley</b>	<b>Swindon</b>
<b>Kinver</b>	<b>Trysull</b>
<b>Lower Penn</b>	<b>Weston-under-</b>
<b>Patshull</b>	<b>Lizard</b>
	<b>Wombourne</b>

Refer to **Village Summaries - Appendix 1** for further information about these villages

#### **References for Character**

- + Village Summaries - **Appendix 1**
- + South Staffordshire District Council website: <<<http://www.sstaffs.gov.uk/>>>
- + Staffordshire Landscape Character Assessment (2015)
- + South Staffordshire Conservation Area Appraisals
- + South Staffordshire Local Plan  
see Policies EQ11: Wider Design Considerations; EQ1: Protecting, Enhancing and Expanding Natural Assets

(See **Chapter 7. References** for full details of the publications).



# 3. Design Principles

## Design principles

This section sets out the principles for the design of new development in South Staffordshire. The Council wishes to see evidence that applications for new development have considered these principles.

Further guidance on the information to include in planning applications is provided in **Chapter 6. Process (p. 57)**. In addition to these design principles, also refer to the area-specific guidance on **Character areas in more detail (p. 16)** and the **Village Summaries in Appendix 1; Chapters 4. Major developments (p. 47)** and **5. Minor developments (p. 53)**.

Good design is not only about how a development looks, but how it works for the people who live, visit and work there.

### **Urban design principles**

For larger developments where a number of buildings and streets are proposed, refer to the **urban design principles of place-making**. Urban design principles apply to rural contexts as well as urban areas.

**It is recommended that a suitably qualified professional (such as a landscape architect, urban designer or architect) is engaged** at the early stages of developing a proposal. All schemes for masterplans or larger sites should start with a clear vision for the future of the place.

The principles of good urban design are explained in detail within a broad catalogue of references, some of which are listed on **p. 7**. They are not repeated in this design guide, however, some key terms are listed below:

- **legibility** (*making it easy for people to find their way around and understand a place*);
- **permeability** (*making it easy for people to enter and move through a place and into other places*);
- **landmarks, views and focal points** (*which help create legible places and give a sense of identity*);
- **gateways** (*creating strong entrances and sense of arrival*);
- **hierarchy of connected streets and spaces** (*varying the width of buildings and streets in proportion to each other and in relation to the function of the street*);
- **inclusive access** *with emphasis on pedestrians (considering ease of access for elderly, young and disabled people).*

# ***Design Principles***

## ***A Landscape & Open Space***

### ***B The Site & its Context***

### ***C Layout & Connectivity***

### ***D Building Scale & Form***

### ***E Materials & Details***

The design principles listed here have been divided into sections for ease of use, however they do overlap with each other and some elements are relevant to more than one principle. They are presented here roughly in the order they might apply during the design process.



## Landscape & Open Space

Landscape and open space (the natural landscape as well as streets or public squares) should be the starting point for new development. This should be the framework within which the design evolves. New development should sit well in relation to its surrounding landscape and major developments should incorporate a number of different types of open spaces.

### ***Landscape and open space as an integral part of the development***

Landscape and open space should be an integral part of the scheme's design, complementing and enhancing the development and the wider area. **For larger developments landscape and open space should be considered first, and will form a framework within which the design evolves.** This helps to settle the development into its surroundings and should encourage links outside the development to the surrounding countryside or public realm, even where new development is located within a village.

Good quality landscape not only creates richer and more attractive environments, it is also highly **cost effective**.

### ***Engaging professionals***

It is important that a suitably qualified professional such as a landscape architect is engaged early on in the process of designing larger schemes.

### ***Creating attractive, safe and lively spaces***

Well-designed spaces are those which are carefully considered in terms of who will use them, how they are accessed, whether the boundaries create suitable enclosure whilst maintaining physical and visual links to the surroundings and whether they look attractive, with features such as trees and planting that thrive and attract wildlife.

Providing attractive, high quality landscapes requires careful consideration of the size and shape of spaces including entrances and boundaries, planting, types of materials, colours, textures and shapes which could reflect or contrast with the patterns of surrounding features, trees, buildings and other structures.

Natural surveillance of open spaces is created by designing building frontages to look out onto them, helping to build safe environments.



SOURCE: LUC

*Designing buildings around a strong landscape framework helps to articulate the design, providing a sense of character and place. Tree-lined avenues, formal gardens and woodlands provide strong settings & links to the surroundings.*



SOURCE: LUC

*A mixture of trees, hard and soft landscape create a strong setting for the contemporary architectural buildings at Oxford Brookes University, and visual links along footpaths to the green surroundings. Carefully chosen materials create texture and unity and complement the architecture of the development.*



## A. Landscape & Open Space

Public art, street furniture and lighting can enliven the public realm - also see [Street design & inclusive access \(p. 35\)](#) for further guidance on designing the public realm.

### ***New planting***

**New planting should be used to create an attractive environment and enhance biodiversity.** It can also be used to frame views and screen elements such as services or parking. Specifying appropriate plant species includes plants which will enhance biodiversity, provide seasonal change and will be able to be managed and maintained properly.

Trees proposed in streets or public spaces are more likely to be delivered and maintained (by the Council or a management company) than those proposed in private front or back gardens - this should be a consideration when reviewing larger schemes with large areas of planting proposed on private land.

Native trees and plants provide good opportunities for biodiversity. Ornamental planting provides seasonal/colour benefits and can enhance local character. Looking at good examples of plant combinations near the site may help - including which species are present, how they are grouped and how they relate to site conditions such as soil types and drainage.

Consult the Council's Landscape Character Assessment and Chapter [2. South Staffordshire's Character \(p. 9\)](#) to see what may be appropriate for the area in question.



*Riverside Court in Kinver has been planned around a central courtyard, setting the building back from the road and creating a community space with natural surveillance from overlooking windows.*

### ***Retain existing natural features and habitats***

**For all types of development, whether large or small,** conserving and enhancing the existing natural features on site will help to blend the development in with its surrounding environment. It will provide immediate impact, where new planting may otherwise take years to establish and is also beneficial for biodiversity, retaining important established habitats. Opportunities should be taken to protect and enhance key natural features where possible.



*The planted courtyard creates an attractive view from the cafeteria of this new building. Retaining the mature tree softens the view of other buildings behind. Benches and lighting create a comfortable and functional space.*



*Informal planting of meadow flowers and trees attracts wildlife and allows views to the landscape beyond.*

### **Different types of landscape and open space**

There are many different types of **landscape and open space, both natural and man made**, from the rural open countryside to natural green spaces such as Kinver Edge, Shoal Hill Common, Baggeridge Country Park, Highgate Common and Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - as well as urban parks and market squares.

**It is vital that a variety of publicly accessible spaces** is included within larger developments, and that they link with each other and link the development to its surrounding environment. Links can be made with features such as footpaths, street trees, planters, permeable verges and green roofs.

*Examples of different types of landscape and open space*

<b>Sports pitches</b>	<b>Market squares</b>
<b>Back gardens</b>	<b>Swales</b> (areas of planting for flood storage and drainage)
<b>Street trees</b>	<b>Playgrounds</b>
<b>Green roofs</b>	<b>Roadside verges</b>
<b>Nature reserves</b>	<b>Canals and rivers</b>
<b>Allotments</b>	<b>Native woodlands</b>
<b>Village greens</b>	

**For larger developments, hierarchies can be a useful way of arranging different types of spaces linked together.** Larger more formal spaces around areas of community use might form a focal point, incorporating new features such as trees, sculptures and planting, whilst smaller areas of planting line minor streets.

*The Triangle in Swindon, Wiltshire, is a development of 42 homes around a central shared garden. Landscaped green space is integral to the design.*

### **Green infrastructure**

Where different types of landscape and open spaces are linked together, it is also known as **green infrastructure**. This is particularly effective where links are created between residential areas, recreational sites and open countryside. Designing in green infrastructure to a scheme from the beginning can also replace some of the need for conventional 'grey' infrastructure by acting as flood storage and natural drainage.

**Landscape and open spaces can have many different uses.** Not only can they make developments look attractive but soft landscaping can provide drainage, mitigate effects of climate change and provide habitats for wildlife; new public spaces provide room to play, socialise and enliven places which contribute positive health benefits..

### **Sustainable solutions & biodiversity**

#### **Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)**

Development proposals should respond to potential climate change, considering aspects such as shade (tree planting or canopies) and flooding.

SuDS mimic nature by managing rainwater close to where it falls. They include features such as swales, rain gardens, retaining ponds, permeable paving and green roofs to reduce surface water runoff rates, allow rainwater to infiltrate and reduce reliance on sewer systems. Incorporating features such as these forms cost efficient and attractive solutions.



*Swales and other sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) can be incorporated to reduce the potential impact of new and existing developments with respect to surface water drainage discharge.*



## A. Landscape & Open Space

### ***Contributing to the surrounding character***

**Creating links between natural areas (green infrastructure such as hedgerows, trees and planting)**, can connect habitats, enable water to drain across a larger area and improve the quality of our environment. New development should work with the surrounding landscape structure where possible, fitting with existing patterns such as field boundaries and hedgerows and responding to the character of the surrounding area (also see Section **B. Context & Local Distinctiveness** (p. 28)).

Take opportunities to create connections between new development and treasured open spaces, footpaths, canals or rivers, and the wider landscape, and to add character through new landscape features, particularly to landscapes which have been degraded.

**Creating views to natural elements outside the development** enhances experiences of nature and can help to fit development into its surrounding environment. A particular view to a 'landscape landmark' can provide focal points within a development and can be used to aid orientation. For example, views of a village green, canal, hill, farmstead or group of mature trees could be used as landmarks.

#### ***Settlement boundaries and interfaces***

**The rural landscape setting is the context for almost all development in South Staffordshire.** This means that development at village edges can be widely visible and can affect how we see the character of both the villages and the countryside. Consideration of village edges and interfaces with the rural surroundings is therefore vitally important.



*Particular views to 'landscape landmarks' should be retained and provide focal points around which to plan a development.*

**Pay close attention to the treatment of the boundaries of a new development where it adjoins the countryside.** Where there is the opportunity for a developer to blend the development into its surrounding environment, these opportunities should be taken. For example, areas of woodland planting adjacent to the development edge, or integrating an existing village green can help to 'soften' the edges and make a smooth transition between the development and the wider countryside. Also see [p. 50](#) for examples of good boundary treatment, and an example of riverside setting on [p. 47](#).

**Development within or adjacent to a waterway corridor should take advantage of the waterside setting.** This should include a green corridor of native plants appropriate to the context, and other **green infrastructure** links such as signed walkways or cycleways that connect to other recreational areas or facilities.

#### ***Impacts on landscape and views***

Can the wider landscape be used to mitigate certain aspects of the new development? For example, siting the development on the lower valley slopes may have less of a visual impact in longer views.



*This building at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park is set into the hillside and below the tree canopy of the surrounding woodland. The green roof of the building in combination with carefully placed hedge and grassed areas blends the building seamlessly into the surrounding landscape from elevated viewpoints.*



*This artificial swale and channel has been designed to manage surface water run-off and provides an attractive and functional addition to the street.*

### Summary

- Create a landscape framework early in the design process, responding to existing features within and surrounding the site.
- Good quality landscape not only creates richer and more attractive environments, it is also highly cost effective. Attractive settings encourage investment.
- Take opportunities to retain and enhance existing landscape features and biodiversity elements such as retaining existing mature trees.
- For larger developments, include a variety of different types of green and open spaces.
- Where possible, create connections (via footpaths, views or natural features) with canals, rivers, trees and green spaces.
- Respond to potential climate change by considering issues of shade and flooding.
- Incorporate features to attract wildlife, create biodiversity and create links to existing habitats.
- Pay close attention to the village edge and interface with the rural countryside.
- Consider how the new development can contribute or work within the wider environment.

### References for Landscape & Open Space

- + *South Staffordshire Landscape Character Assessment and Supplementary documents on Landscape Character and Biodiversity*
- + *Chapter 2. South Staffordshire's Character (p. 9)*
- + *'Why Invest in Landscape' and 'Profitable Places: Why housebuilders invest in landscape' - Landscape Institute*
- + *South Staffordshire Local Plan* > see Policies EQ12 Landscaping; EV3 Canals and Canalside Development; HWB2 Green Infrastructure; EQ11 Wider Design Considerations; Core Policy 14 Open Space, Sport and Recreation
- + *For Space About Dwellings Standards: Appendix 6 of the Local Plan*
- + *South Staffordshire Open Space Strategy*
- + *Local Green Infrastructure Initiatives* (e.g. Forest of Mercia, Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan, Staffordshire BAP, West Midlands GI Prospectus)
- + *Green Belt and Open Countryside Planning Document (SPD)*
- + *For further guidance on SUDs, see the Landscape Institute website and CIRIA Susdrain network*

(See [Chapter 7. References](#) for full details of the publications).



## B. Context & Local Distinctiveness

### The site and its context

*All developments should be designed for their specific sites: developers should consider the characteristics of a site and its context (the surrounding environment) when deciding where to locate the landscape and open spaces and buildings within plots, considering views to and from the surrounding environment. New development should achieve a harmonious relationship with the surrounding village or landscape context.*

#### **Understand the character and key features of the place**

What a particular site, place or area is like, and how it feels, is described as its 'character' (see Chapter 2. [South Staffordshire's Character \(p. 9\)](#)). Character is the result of certain distinctive features, elements or patterns which combine and re-occur across an area. Character is important because it adds richness, variety and rhythm to our environments. It means that places are distinctive, have a sense of identity and are not all the same.

**Establish what the character is through an appraisal of the site and its surrounding landscape or village - see Chapter 6. [Process \(p. 57\)](#).** This includes identifying important features or characteristics within the site and in the surrounding area. The characteristics of a site or area may include particular materials, building styles, colours, natural features, landform and street patterns, etc.

#### **Respect and reinforce local character and distinctiveness**

**Good design will take inspiration from existing features or characteristics.** This includes retaining key features on site such as a mature tree or a view to the surrounding countryside or taking inspiration from certain architectural details or roof shapes. Whatever the characteristics are, new development does not need to replicate features from the surrounding environment, but can take inspiration from it. **The most appropriate design solutions are as often to be found in contemporary design as traditional design.**

#### **Safeguard and enhance the setting of valued features**

Where there are valued features that are particularly important for local distinctiveness, opportunities should be taken to retain and enhance these within the design of new development. This may include taking advantage of a waterside setting by creating footpaths with signage and natural planting (see [p. 47](#) for an example); safeguarding key views to a church spire; respecting the shapes and forms of nearby roofscapes of distinctive buildings and creating new views to landscape features.

#### **Protect and enhance landscape/village character**

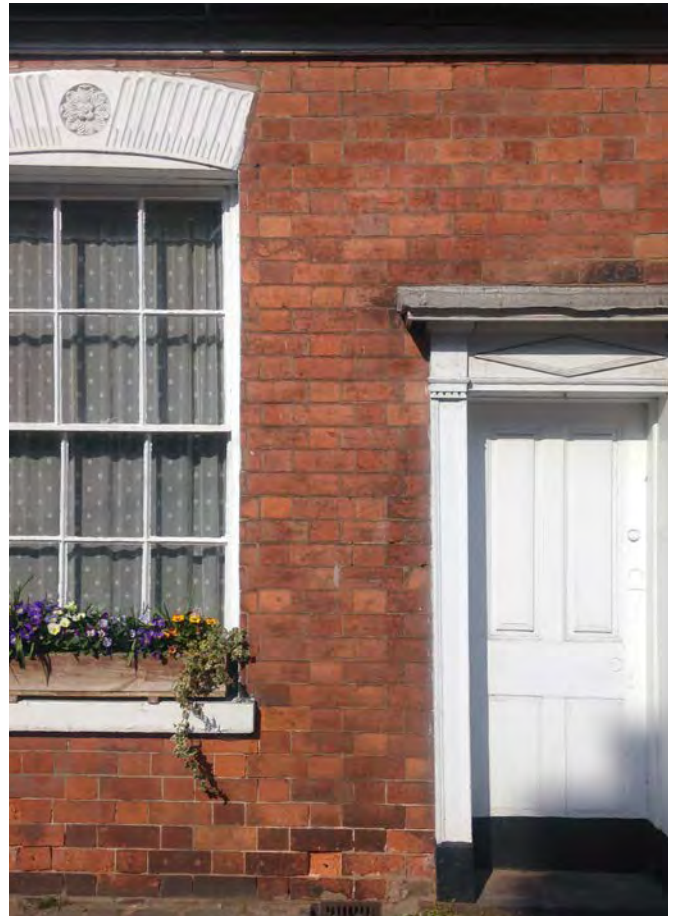
The siting and location of new development should take account of the characteristics and sensitivity of the landscape and its surroundings. Where development may have an impact on landscape character or views, an appropriate assessment should be undertaken with reference to the Landscape Character Assessment.

The siting, scale and design of development is particularly important, giving consideration to how the development will appear in distant views and how it relates to features such as woodlands, field boundaries, hilltops or canals as well as other buildings. Developments should be sensitively designed for their location, aiming to achieve a sense of harmony and balance.



Wooded slopes provide an important landscape setting to Kinver

## B. Context & Local Distinctiveness



*Traditional details can be incorporated into contemporary designs: the above left image shows the success of making reference to historical design details (above right) without directly copying the historic architectural style.*



*Contemporary design should respond to the context by responding to existing structures and using complimentary materials whilst avoiding standardisation. The image above shows a timber shingle clad extension to a listed former inn.*



*Modern refurbishment can benefit from responding to the agricultural context of South Staffordshire. This example takes on the traditional structure of an agricultural barn, with traditional window sizes and clay tiles.*



## B. Context & Local Distinctiveness

### *Richness in historic features*

Evidence of human occupation dating back to prehistoric times has been found in South Staffordshire. Whether in the villages or countryside, this presence of history within the environment adds richness and meaning to our experiences. Historic villages have grown organically over time, with new development following on from what was there before creating strong local identities.

**It is important that new development is conceived in harmony with the past, and that opportunities for drawing on the contribution made by the historic environment including the Historic Landscape Character are taken into account.** The historic context of the site, including plot patterns or street layout should be respected.

There are many ways in which references to the history of a place might be incorporated within new development. For example, the line of a historic route might be used as the main thoroughfare within a new development, a view to a landmark feature could be framed, or different materials could be used to mark out where historic features once stood.



*At Himley Lane, Swindon, the architects and developer worked closely with Council Officers to reflect the local context by taking inspiration from local buildings such as the pub. References to the village vernacular include traditional brickwork, timber windows, maximising open countryside views, small front gardens with sensitively designed boundaries and patterns of roof lines.*

### *Creating character and identity*

**Some places may have no distinctive character, or features may have been removed as part of more recent development.** Here is an opportunity to **create** character through new development! Developers should use opportunities to create character, where this is possible, thereby adding to the sense of local identity and creating pleasant environments. New development can bring cohesion to the wider area.

Usually where new character is being created, it will be appropriate to draw inspiration for design from the surrounding context, whether the local area or from further afield.

### *No place for standardisation*

**Developments consisting of standardised pattern-book building and layout designs are not appropriate in South Staffordshire.**

They bear no, or little, relationship with the character of the places in the district. In fact, they can disrupt the harmonious balance, variety and rhythm that makes these environments so pleasant to live in.

Look at patterns of development when siting developments and consider how it fits in within existing patterns of settlement or the character of the landscape (refer to Chapter [2. South Staffordshire's Character](#) (p. 9)).



*This scheme pays less attention to the local context. Buff coloured materials are not common in the district, and this development therefore looks out of place. The large scale of the buildings have little variety in height or roof line and the overall identity of the development could place it anywhere .*

## B. Context & Local Distinctiveness



The parish church (top), historic mill buildings and the river (above) in Penkridge provide a distinctive landscape setting to the village. The hedge alongside the road (top image) provides a strong boundary to the settlement



Burnhill Green is a high quality development in a rural context. Red bricks, traditional lime mortar and reclaimed roof tiles tie the development to its local context. Consideration of the appearance of the design and consultation with the local community result in a development which maintains the character of the local area.

### Summary

- A site appraisal will establish the key features and character of the site.
- Retain and use existing features on the site to keep a sense of character and local identity.
- Take opportunities to reinforce local character and distinctiveness, for example by creating new views to key features.
- Protect and enhance local landscape or village character by ensuring the development is sited and located in harmony with the surroundings - fit in and relate to the surrounding buildings, features and context.
- Take into account historic features and character - new design can be conceived in harmony with the past.
- Create character where none exists, taking opportunities to give new developments a strong sense of place.

### References for Context & Local Distinctiveness

+ Village summaries - [Appendix 1](#)

+ [Chapter 2. South Staffordshire's Character \(p. 9\)](#)

+ [South Staffordshire Landscape Character Assessment](#)

+ [South Staffordshire Conservation Area Appraisals](#)

+ [By Design](#)

+ [Urban Design Compendium](#)

+ [South Staffordshire Local Plan](#) > see Core Policy 4 Promoting High Quality Design; Policies EQ4 Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape; EQ1 Protecting, Enhancing and Expanding Natural Assets; EQ11 Wider Design Considerations; EQ3 Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Historic Assets

(See [Chapter 7. References](#) for full details of the publications).



### Layout and connectivity

*Developers should carefully plan the layout (the arrangement and position of buildings, streets and open spaces) and connectivity (links between streets, footpaths and spaces). The layout of a new development should fit within the existing landscape or street scene, so that the new development relates to its environment and streets are connected.*

*This is of greatest importance to **major developments** when planning the location of buildings, streets and spaces within a site. It is also relevant for **minor developments** to ensure that connections are made to the surroundings and to inform where a building is positioned within its plot.*

#### Urban design principles

For larger developments where a number of buildings and streets are proposed, it is always necessary to follow good urban design principles of place-making when planning the layout of buildings, streets and spaces.

Urban design principles apply to both urban and rural contexts. Further information is available in published guidance - see [References for Layout & Connectivity \(p. 37\)](#). Also refer to [Chapter 4. Major developments \(p. 47\)](#) for further design guidance on larger developments.

It is recommended that an appropriate design professional (such as a landscape architect, urban designer or architect) is engaged early on in the process who can develop masterplans for schemes that are cost efficient, functional and will enhance existing places.

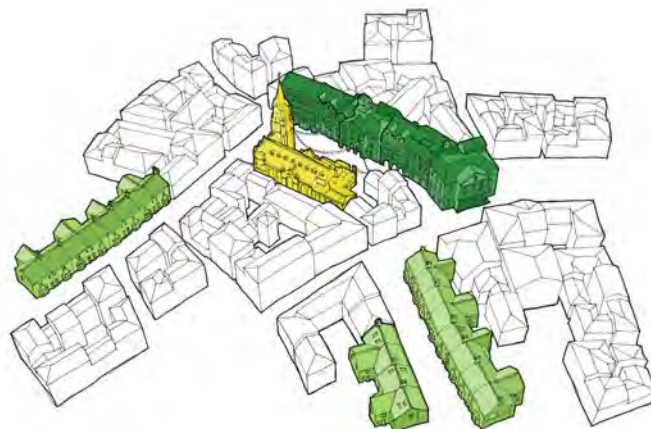
#### Density & mixed uses

Density describes the amount of development in a space. Good design will establish densities which are appropriate for each particular location taking into account existing character and heritage assets. Traditional villages in South Staffordshire have higher densities in the centre and become less dense towards the edges. Higher densities are more appropriate within local and village centres.

Non-traditional villages may have different patterns of density. To establish the appropriate density for new developments, look at surrounding buildings and consider the different types of housing.

Vary densities within larger sites (over half a hectare). This can follow a hierarchical pattern, based on arranging a higher density of development along principal routes, around crossroads or community centres or public spaces and lower densities along tertiary or minor routes (see the diagram below for an example).

Mixed use developments will be encouraged. The mixture of uses should be appropriate for the area and the existing uses in the community, helping to enhance the vitality of village centres. Developments should help support a range of services and public transport where appropriate.



■ Primary focal building

■ Higher density, larger scale buildings

■ Lower density, smaller scale village edge buildings

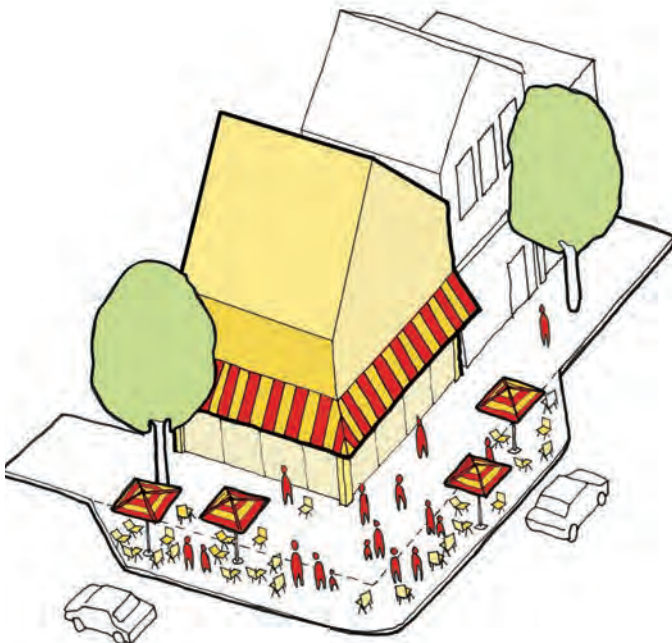
*Example of a hierarchy layout - see [p. 48](#) for further details*

### Safe, secure & navigable layouts

#### Arrangement of buildings

The positioning of buildings helps to define the edges of streets. Developers should ensure that buildings face the street to create an 'active frontage', avoiding blank elevations to the street and public spaces. Private spaces and gardens are usually more secure when located facing inwards. One type of arrangement that may be appropriate is 'perimeter blocks' - see [p. 47](#) where buildings form the edge and space is in the middle.

**Where buildings overlook streets and spaces this encourages natural surveillance, increasing safety and encouraging people to look after their local areas.**



*The positioning of buildings can help to define the edges of streets. Developers should ensure that buildings face the street to create an 'active frontage', avoiding blank elevations to the street and public spaces.*

The arrangement of new buildings should take account of the position and orientation of existing and new buildings. There should be careful consideration of how existing views within the area might be affected, or where new interesting views can be created. It will usually be appropriate to follow the pattern of existing building lines.

Within larger schemes opportunities for achieving enclosure through the arrangement, placement and treatment of buildings should be incorporated. This may include inclusion of buildings to terminate views, limit street width or create views and visual links to other spaces.



*Larger structures and landmark buildings can be used to reduce the perceived length of village streets and to aid orientation, acting as local landmarks and retaining the intimate environment of shorter, clustered streets.*



*Varying the alignment of streets to incorporate corners, and additional features such as trees, planting, street furniture, pedestrian crossings or parallel parking can be an effective means of controlling traffic speeds and can help to create vibrant and active streets.*



## C. Layout & Connectivity

### Open spaces

Existing or new open spaces should be integrated into the layout of new development, and can create links between focal points as well as habitats and other functions (see Chapter [A. Landscape & Open Space \(p. 23\)](#)). Open spaces should be overlooked by building frontages and be located at prominent locations within the street network. Provision of open spaces also provides opportunities for incorporating sustainable solutions such as Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) - see [p. 25](#).

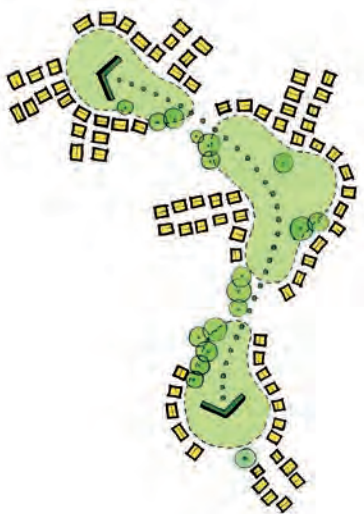
### Landmarks and views

Developments should consider and respect key views and landmarks. Local landmarks such as churches, spires and bridges add interest, a sense of history and local identity. Creating new views to landmarks or framing existing views of them can help people navigate new areas as well as creating a focal point.

There may be **opportunities for creating new local landmarks or focal points at village entrances or corner sites**. Landmarks can be used to aid orientation in places.

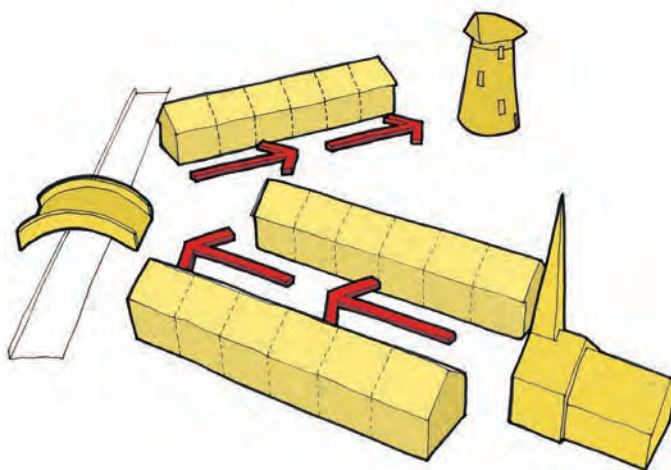
### Accommodating parking and servicing

Parking should be integrated into the design discreetly and used as an opportunity to accommodate landscaping and planting. Servicing and other functions should likewise be integrated into the design so that they do not compromise the design quality of elements such as building elevations.



*New developments should respond to and link existing landscaped areas and green spaces. Landscape architects can help to integrate landscape frameworks into development proposals.*

On-street parallel parking can be an effective method of controlling traffic speeds. There may be a range of different types of parking in a new development. For example, parking spaces integrated at the side of properties, encouraging natural surveillance and active use of streets. Rear parking courts can create unsupervised areas vulnerable to car crime and reduce social interactions on streets, as people tend to access their homes via the back doors. Parking in front gardens should also be avoided if possible, as it reduces permeable surfaces.



*Views to local landmarks should be retained, acting as visual links to aid orientation and retain area characteristics.*



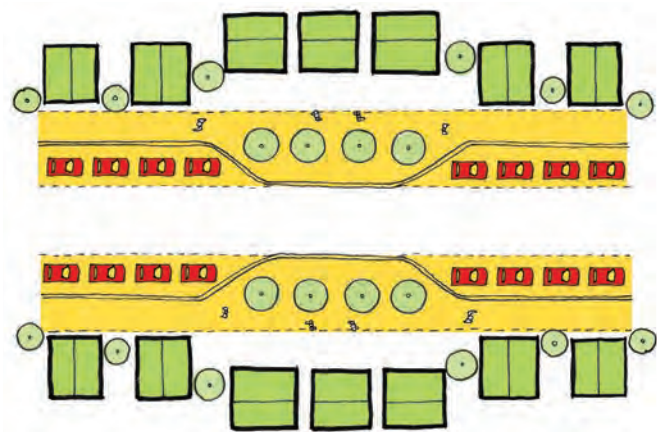
*This development effectively incorporates the entrance to its parking area within the line of building frontage. Breaks and features such as this help to add interest and variety to the street.*



*Bespoke street furniture in Kinver High Street helps to create a vibrant and active street scene.*



*This parking in Kinver has been sensitively designed around mature trees with permeable surfacing to minimise damage to the existing retained trees.*



*On-street parking can be designed to provide safe places for pedestrians to walk and cross, whilst the layout may be used to reduce vehicle speeds to create 'Home Zones' incorporating green landscape design. See [p. 49](#) for more guidance on Home Zones.*

### Connections & network of routes

**Both new and existing streets should be well connected.** This may involve creating new links and logical through routes between existing streets or to an existing footpath or open space, taking account of existing desire lines. Routes should be provided to connect key destinations such as bus stops, shops and open spaces, and provide for safe use by pedestrians and cyclists as well as vehicles. Appropriate facilities such as cycle parking should be provided at key destinations. New development should be encouraged to enhance the network of routes in line with the County Council 'Rights of Way Improvement Plan.'

Pedestrian links, such as from the new development to the village centre or nearby footpaths and to long distance trails such as the Staffordshire Way, Monarch's Way and Sustrans cycle network will be important elements of a well-connected scheme. These should form safe and attractive links, especially where they are near houses, and make links to green infrastructure corridors such as signposted footpaths/cycle paths alongside canals.

Characteristic street patterns should be retained or created where possible, in order to create legible places that make it easy for people to find their way around. Hierarchies of streets, routes and spaces can help to achieve a logical pattern to the layout of new developments.

### Street design & inclusive access

How streets and public corridors will work for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists and disabled people should be a key consideration during their design. Access for all, from streets to houses to public buildings, should be incorporated.

A street or space is formed by the buildings that surround it. Buildings which have front doors and windows facing streets and spaces create lively and well-supervised streets. Avoid large gaps between buildings, blank walls and garden fences facing the street.

Varying the alignment of streets, from straight to curved and incorporating additional features such as trees, planting, street furniture, pedestrian crossings or parallel parking can be an effective means of controlling traffic speeds and can help to create vibrant and active streets.



## C. Layout & Connectivity

### ***New development in the countryside***

Within the countryside, the arrangement of buildings should relate well to the landform. It may be appropriate to take inspiration from traditional patterns of settlement in the countryside (see ***Traditional settlement patterns (p. 11)***) in the layout of built elements. Particularly the typical farmstead groupings, where building clusters are oriented towards each other and form well-defined groups.



*A typical South Staffordshire farmstead. Using typical farmstead arrangements as a reference for the layout of new development can be an effective way of responding to the rural context of the area.*



*This new development in Himley Lane, Swindon, references typical barn forms within the scheme by including long, narrow buildings with pitched roofs. These building types are at the edges of the development, creating a sensitive edge with the adjacent landscape and a recognisable pattern in building heights which become lower towards the edges.*

### Summary

- *Larger developments should follow good urban design principles including legibility, permeability, landmarks, views, gateways, hierarchies and inclusive access.*
- *Development density should be appropriate to the location of the development - higher densities will be more appropriate within local and village centres.*
- *Layout should fit within the existing landscape or street scene - consider the grain and density of immediately surrounding areas.*
- *Safe, secure and navigable layouts, incorporating natural surveillance and active frontages of buildings.*
- *Incorporating well connected open spaces, parking and servicing as well as sustainable solutions into the scheme layout.*
- *Creating and enhancing views to new or existing focal points can aid navigation and create a sense of place.*
- *Create connections between new and existing routes.*
- *Create accessible streets that work for all types of users including cycling, pedestrians and parking.*
- *Development in the countryside could respond to typical farmstead arrangements to organise buildings together.*



*Create green links between settlements and waterways, taking opportunities to provide footpaths, cycle paths and visual links to key features such as bridges*

### References for Layout & Connectivity

+ [Chapter 2. South Staffordshire's Character \(p. 9\) and p. 11](#) On traditional settlement pattern

+ [Building for Life](#)

+ [Urban Design Compendium](#)

+ [By Design](#)

+ [Manual for Streets](#)

+ [Building Regulations Part M](#)

+ [Secured by Design](#)

+ [South Staffordshire Local Plan](#)  
> see Policies EQ11 Wider Design Considerations; CS1 Designing Out Crime

+ For parking standards: [Appendix 5 of the Local Plan](#)

(See [Chapter 7. References](#) for full details of the publications).



## D. Building Scale and Form

### Building scale and form

*Developers should consider the scale (the height and size relative to surrounding features) and form (shape) of proposed buildings. The aim should be for buildings that fit harmoniously into their surrounding environment; preserving, enhancing or creating the rhythms and patterns of the buildings, street scene or landscape in the surrounding area.*

*This is important for **minor developments** (and individual buildings) as well as **major developments**.*

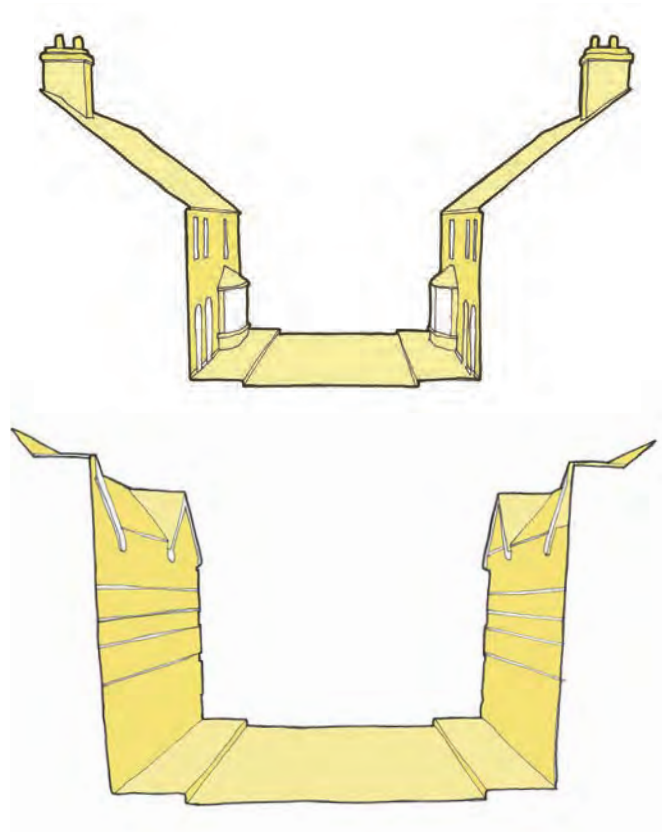
#### Scale and proportion

The scale, volume and massing of development should contribute positively to the street scene and surrounding buildings, respecting the scale of spaces and buildings in the local area.

**Buildings, streets and spaces should be in proportion and balance with each other.** Where a new building or buildings are too large and bulky in comparison to the open spaces and streets around them, places feel cramped and oppressive. Extensions to existing buildings should usually be in proportion to the original building to ensure that additions do not look disjointed or out of place. The scale of buildings should be attractive when viewed from neighbouring areas.

#### Overshadowing and overlooking

New buildings should consider their potential effects on neighbouring buildings and avoid overshadowing and overlooking.



*Keeping building height and massing in proportion with the existing street: lower building heights are more appropriate in narrower streets (top) whilst wider streets can accommodate larger buildings*



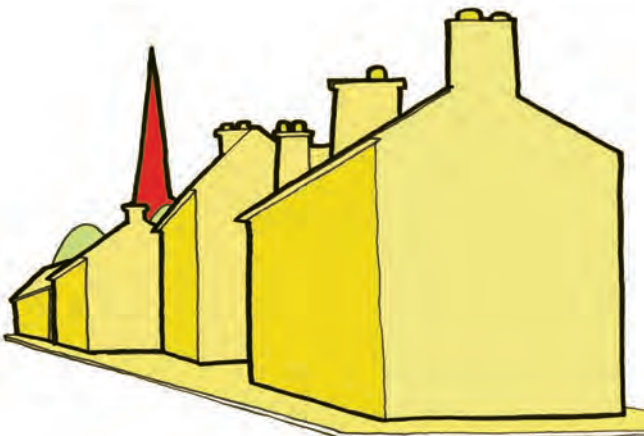
*This barn conversion incorporates both modern and original features, with careful attention to maintaining a rhythm in the window openings, and retaining the hierarchy of scale between the original house and the later extensions.*



*This photo shows typical variation of scale, form and mass in a South Staffordshire village, giving the built environment a human scale.*



*The modest scale of the buildings in Enville means that the landscape and wooded skyline remains prominent beyond, emphasising the rural character of the settlement.*



*New developments should respect the existing shape and rhythm of skylines and designers should make sure that new buildings do not obstruct views to local landmarks.*

### ***Form, rhythm and variety***

Buildings should take account of the scale and form of neighbouring buildings and key features, ensuring that they respond positively to the street scene.

New buildings should take opportunities to preserve and enhance existing rhythms in the street scene for example by incorporating subtle changes in height, size and form between buildings. Within larger developments, subtle variety in building form and scale can add interest and vitality. However, new buildings should avoid stark or sudden changes in scale.

### ***Skylines***

**The pattern that buildings make en-mass when viewed from further away, should be considered.** This means respecting the shape of skylines, so that new buildings do not disrupt the existing pattern of development, and especially in cases where skylines are particularly distinctive.

The design of roofs should be considered carefully, so that they fit within the wider context.



*An example of an historic church steeple in Brewwood remains clearly visible in the village street scene.*

## D. Building Scale and form

### ***Landmarks and views***

Developers should make sure that new buildings do not detract from local landmarks or views.

New buildings can act as focal points and landmarks where they are located in a prominent location such as a corner site or next to a public open space. In these cases, increasing the height of buildings can enforce their importance as focal points.

The shape of buildings might also consider the way in which they interact with neighbouring buildings, the pattern of sunlight and whether they overlook spaces or streets, such as looking out onto green spaces and continuing the established building line. Consider how buildings are accessed and how it works with the internal layout and orientation to achieve maximum daylight.

### ***High quality design and sustainable development***

**High architectural design quality adds richness, individuality and diversity to our environments.**

Developers should take care to ensure that the form of buildings fit well into their surrounding environment. The shape of buildings could take inspiration from surrounding buildings or features, or the landscape, and this can improve the appearance of places. Incorporating traditional designs and construction techniques alongside modern developments can help to tie buildings to their local place.

### ***Sustainable developments***

Building designs should look to incorporate sustainable solutions such as energy efficient layouts and orientation to maximise solar gain for passive solar heating, sustainable drainage (see [p. 25](#)), renewable energy, minimising waste production and providing opportunities for recycling and minimising pollution. Developments should seek to minimise water use and incorporate water recycling and rainwater harvesting.

### ***Buildings in villages***

Within historic village cores, properties face the street. The buildings often have vertical emphasis with steep, narrow roof pitches, commonly set in narrow plan plots ('burgage' plots) - e.g. [p. 46](#) shows typical narrow plots in the village of Kinver.

### ***Buildings in the countryside***

The broad scale of much of South Staffordshire's landscape means that development is often visible from quite long distances. New buildings should fit in well with the surrounding landscape. For example, buildings might be low and wide, with the shape of the building mimicking the slope of the land.

Large farmsteads and farm houses are typical of the types of building forms traditionally found in the South Staffordshire landscape.



*Barns are typical of South Staffordshire landscapes. Their long narrow dimensions and simple forms mean that they sit comfortably in large, flat fields.*



### Summary

- *Make sure the scale, proportion and mass of new development is harmonious with surrounding buildings, spaces and streets.*
- *Variety in scale, form and mass creates richness in the streetscape. For larger developments, diversity rather than a standardised approach is imperative.*
- *Modern and innovative solutions in building form are encouraged. Designs could take inspiration from existing patterns.*
- *A high quality design. Development should take every opportunity to create good design which seeks to be creative and sustainable. The Council will encourage innovative design solutions.*



*The award winning Foster Centre at South Staffordshire College responds to the existing college buildings through its similarity of scale and proportions. Both the overall height and eaves heights are matched- this successfully ties the building to its surrounding context.*



*A successful example of how larger buildings can be used as local landmarks, useful for people orientating themselves, and help to limit long streets in villages, creating more intimate streets and passageways.*

### References for Building Scale and Form

- + Village summaries in [Appendix 1](#)
- + [Conservation Area Appraisals in South Staffordshire](#) to establish whether there is a special characteristic vernacular form in the village.
- + [Urban Design Compendium](#)
- + [By Design](#)
- + [Building Regulations Part M](#)
- + [South Staffordshire Local Plan](#) - see Policies EQ11 Wider Design Considerations

(See [Chapter 7. References](#) for full details of the publications).



### Materials & Details

*Materials and details used in a new development are very important, in terms of fitting into the surroundings and enhancing the sense of local distinctiveness through locally sourced materials and craftsmanship.*

#### Existing materials and details

Take note of what materials and details are in the surrounding area - early methods of building construction drew on a ready supply of good local materials and local craftsmanship, and this has resulted in buildings having a sense of unity and distinctive character.

Materials and details in settlements are not all the same - for example, there are subtle differences in the types or arrangements of bricks used, which adds texture and variety.

The village summaries in [Appendix 1](#) point out notable elements and details that occur in particular areas - for instance the well-detailed chimneys and fish scale banding of roof tiles in Penkridge, gable-end details in Wheaton Aston or the terracotta string-course details in Cheslyn Hay, reflecting the local brick and tile making industries. See [Traditional settlement patterns \(p. 11\)](#) for more examples of local vernacular.

#### Conservation Areas

The Council has produced Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans to guide the preservation and enhancement of these areas. New developments proposed in these areas may be subject to stricter requirements for materials or appearance. Developers should contact the Council in the pre-application stage to discuss this.

However, attention to details and sensitive consideration of materials is not just for Conservation Areas and sensitive sites; this applies to all areas.



*Interesting gable end detail on a building in Kinver adds distinctiveness and character to the street scene*



*Both of these modern developments show a sensitivity towards historical architectural design in and around South Staffordshire. The developments incorporate traditional details in a contemporary way without directly copying the existing buildings.*

### Materials

#### Texture and colour

The palette of colours found across the district is based on mellow, earthy reds and reddish-brown colours. Where historic villages survive, the overriding quality is soft, earthy coloured buildings that blend into the landscape.

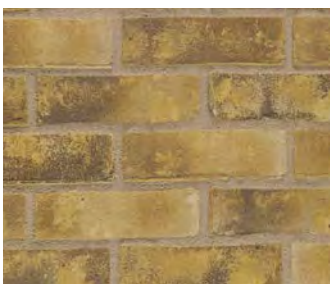
**New development does not have to copy existing materials and details, but development should reflect and respond to the surrounding context enough to create a sense of harmony and balance with the surroundings.**

Innovative and new materials can add character to a new development, especially in areas with fewer existing features of local identity.

#### Sustainability

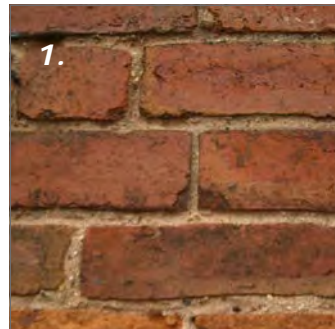
Consideration of where materials will be sourced from, their longevity, and whether they are fit for purpose, is also very important. Reclaimed materials from the local area can be a sustainable option as well as adding character to a new development.

Consider how the quality of materials used for streets and public spaces will be maintained - will they be easy to maintain, provide durability and be of a high standard and quality in the long term.



*The use of yellow stock and sandstone is not common in the District, in contrast to other parts of the county, and is largely confined to the construction of key civic or church buildings.*

**X**



*1. The locally occurring Keuper Marl Clay was historically accessible and is widely used in many of the estates and larger villages. The distinctive local brick is red-brown in colour, soft in construction and weathers to produce a rough texture.*



*2. The most common roofing material is the red-brown clay tiles made from local Keuper Marl Clay. The clay tiles - called plain tiles - are of small scale, typically 265mm x 165mm, with a fine sand texture.*



*3. Rendered surfaces on the District's historic buildings were painted in a limewash, limited to a range of colours including cream, near white or stone. Brighter and pastel colours are not widely found.*



*4. Blue-grey Welsh slate is also common across the district. Slate is lighter, more durable and weatherproof than clay. The colour can vary subtly from dark blue/grey to purple/grey.*



## E. Materials & Details



*Successful new developments consider the local historical context in terms of roof pitches, construction, materials and detail. The character of South Staffordshire is defined by these features and their incorporation into contemporary design helps to visually connect new developments with the area.*



*This modern extension uses timber shingle cladding to visually connect the two buildings through colour. By matching the existing roof pitch the original building is respected in terms of ridge height and overall scale. A visual break between the two has been used to define the division between the old and new.*



*This barn conversion retains existing details such as the ventilation holes and the building and roof is left intact and uncluttered without being broken up with features such as roof lights /dormers.*

### Details

*Much of the beauty and character of the villages in South Staffordshire lies in the details of buildings - features such as the roof tiles, roof pitch angle, simple brick cornice or string course, create the rhythm and texture that makes attractive environments.*

### Responding to local characteristics

New development will be most successful where it takes inspirations from the surrounding environment. Use details to enhance local distinctiveness and identity through reflecting existing patterns from the surrounding area, or incorporating local craftsmanship.

Details in a new development should give particular attention to:

- *how patterns, styles and finishes of windows and doors reflect or respond to those occurring locally;*
- *how walls are constructed, such as the style of brickwork used;*
- *whether features such as chimney stacks and porches are appropriate;*
- *which roof type, structure and pitch is most appropriate to the local context - for example in most settlements complex roof structures are best avoided and eaves and verges are best kept simple;*
- *how storage structures and security measures can be inbuilt and designed to reduce clutter.*
- *lighting designs and light sources, ensuring they are in keeping with the character of the area.*

Avoid the use of inappropriate details: aim for simplicity, remembering the agricultural origins of the majority of places in the district - the use of a large palette of materials for buildings or streets and complicated or fussy designs should be avoided.

Elements that relate to a property's previous function create interest, character and can educate people in the history of the area.

### Larger developments

Using consistent details in a larger development helps to create an individual identity and sense of unity. This may be achieved through features such as repeating the use of a darker red brick detail above doors or windows.

### Well-designed boundaries to development

Well-designed boundaries to development can achieve visual coherence and clearly distinguish between public and private spaces. Long sections of blank facades should be avoided, particularly adjacent to public spaces.

The method of enclosure, particularly for minor developments should be an opportunity to unify the street frontage - for example, continuing the adjacent walling detail in the choice of the brickwork, bonding or coping.

### Shop frontages

Shop frontages should be carefully considered: see South Staffordshire's Shop Front Design Guide. Shop signage should not create stark contrasts or be over-dominant.



*This modern development on a corner plot in Brewood shows consideration of details of the surrounding context. It reflects the pattern of surrounding buildings in its similarity of scale, roof pitch and form. The simple detailing of the windows has shown consideration to local styles such as those on opposite buildings. The brick boundary wall continues the line of the existing wall to the right.*

### Summary

- *Select materials which reflect the location and context of the development - how the space or building will be used, where it lies in relation to existing buildings, settlements, and rural landscapes as well as what the practical requirements are.*
- *Use materials and details to enhance local distinctiveness and identity through reflecting existing patterns or local craftsmanship.*
- *Innovation in the type of materials used and the design and finish of buildings and spaces is encouraged, but should reference the existing context.*
- *Avoid the use of inappropriate details: aim for simplicity.*
- *Retain and re-use elements that relate to a property's previous function.*
- *Ensure that lighting designs and light sources are in keeping with the character of the area.*

### References for Materials & Details

- + [South Staffordshire Local Plan](#) - see Policy EQ11 Wider Design Considerations
- + [South Staffordshire Shop Front Design Guide](#)
- + [Staffordshire Farmsteads Guidance](#)
- + [Conservation Area Appraisals](#)
- + [Village summaries](#) - [Appendix 1](#)
- + [Chapter 2. South Staffordshire's Character \(p. 9\) and p. 11](#) onwards for examples of local vernacular.

(See [Chapter 7. References](#) for full details of the publications).





*Aerial view of Kinver village*



# 4. Major developments

This section brings together some of the design principles that are most relevant to major developments. Also refer to the design principles in Chapter 3. [Design Principles \(p. 21\)](#) for further information.

## Major residential developments

### *Developments which work with their context*

Major developments where a number of units and streets are planned, can transform street scenes and create new character in places.

**The design process for these types of developments should follow good urban design principles of place-making (see [Urban design principles \(p. 21\)](#)).**

It is recommended that an appropriate design professional (such as a landscape architect, urban designer or architect) is engaged early on in the process to develop a masterplan for the scheme.

Developments should sit easily within their surrounding environment, taking account of the surrounding character, whether rural or urban, and building the proposal's layout around existing features (such as waterside locations, trees, landmarks, views or historic elements).

### Good example



*Perimeter blocks:* In this example, the development responds to its context of the adjacent village junction on one side and river on the other. At the junction, the development creates a continuous frontage, where terraced houses face onto both streets. This provides continuity with the existing pattern of built form.

On the river side of the development, detached villas face the river. They overlook the footpath alongside the river, creating natural surveillance.

A variety of scales and building forms are used to create richness across the site and in response to surrounding character. Private space including gardens and parking areas are arranged in the middle of the block so that the outer parts of the development are active and outward-facing.

### Poor example



*This is an example of a poor design response to context. It is a standardised response, which is inward-looking, where buildings are arranged around a cul-de-sac and rear gardens oriented to the street. The development turns its back on the surrounding streets, and the streets and spaces are not well enclosed. The surroundings are ignored and become detached.*

## Creating logical patterns in the layout

Within the site itself, the pattern and arrangement of spaces, buildings and streets should work well and look good, so that places are easy for people to find their way around.

### **Hierarchies of spaces, buildings and streets**

Hierarchies are one way of creating a logical pattern in a new place. This is the traditional pattern of South Staffordshire villages - see [The traditional pattern of villages \(p. 11\)](#) where larger or more formal elements are grouped together around focal points. The scale of buildings, streets and spaces tends to increase in size towards the centre of the village. At the top of the hierarchy is often a parish church or market place with larger houses, farmhouses and barns, and smaller vernacular buildings grouped around a variety of street widths.

Towards the edges of the settlement, a lower density of development can help make for a smoother transition between built up areas and the natural landscape.

### **Richness and variety**

Hierarchies are also one way in which to create **subtle variation** in scales and forms as well as a logical sense of rhythm and pattern. As buildings and spaces gradually become larger towards the centre and around focal points, it provides interest, emphasis and richness within the street scene. Large or abrupt differences in scale are rarely appropriate, but small or gradual step changes can add character to a development.

Masterplans for housing schemes should incorporate an appropriate mix of uses, including a mix of housing types, affordable housing, employment and community uses.

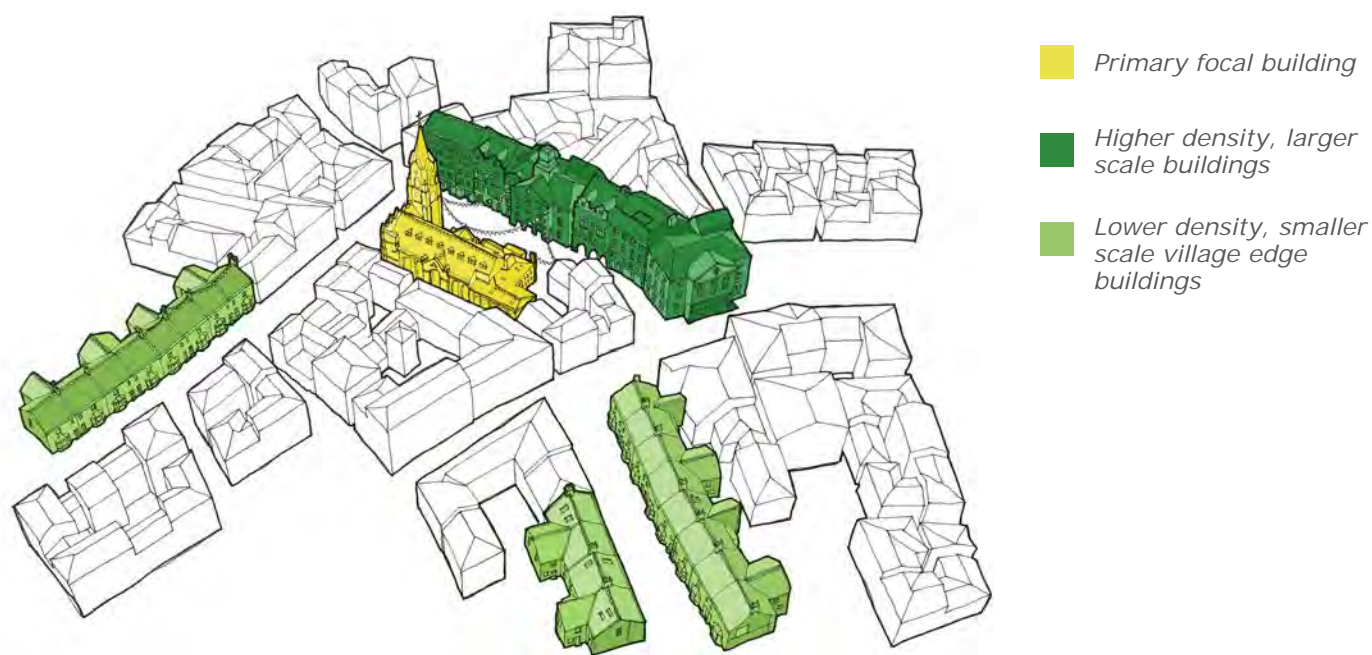


Diagram showing the hierarchy of the building in a settlement related to their proximity to the centre of the settlement.

### ***Making new places easy to find your way around***

Making places easy for people to find their way around can be achieved with design features such as incorporation of:

- *Links*
- *Landmarks and focal points*
- *Gateways*

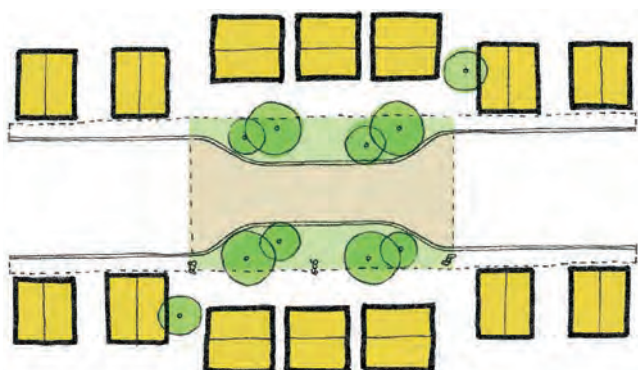
See [Safe, secure & navigable layouts \(p. 33\)](#) for more explanation of these.

### ***Streets as places***

Well-designed developments will have links between streets and spaces from within and outside the development so that it is easy for people to access the buildings and spaces within and around it.

Well-designed streets are multi-functional spaces - not just for cars to move through or park on. Depending on the location and role of the street, it can also be for socialising, shopping or informal play.

The needs of pedestrians are as important as those of other road users. For the majority of minor streets it will be appropriate to ensure that pedestrians are given priority and in some areas **“home zones”** could be used to reduce traffic speed and create a sense of place.



*‘Home Zones’ and ‘Living Streets’ can be introduced to meet the needs of pedestrians and cyclists, reducing the dominance of cars and lowering speeds whilst providing opportunities for green space*

There are many excellent examples of how street design has influenced responsive driver behaviour and has increased social interaction. Lessons learned from successful case studies should be applied. In particular, thought should be given to whether shared spaces would be appropriate in residential streets, and how streets can creatively accommodate trees, vegetation and public space.

The use of quality paving materials such as block paving rather than tarmac can improve the kerb appeal of a scheme and can be cheaper due to reduced costs of drainage systems.

### ***Parking***

There are many different approaches to providing parking, but it should be considered from the outset and integrated with landscaping and other potential uses. Shared surface treatments could be an effective way of approaching on-street parking. Refer to [Accommodating parking and servicing \(p. 34\)](#) for further guidance on parking.



*A successful ‘Home Zone’ achieved with an implied gateway established with local brickwork and a change in surface treatment to identify the shared surface zone.*



# Commercial developments

## Siting

For larger buildings, carefully consider where the development is located in relation to surrounding hills and slopes, screening vegetation and views. Can the wider landscape be used to mitigate certain aspects of the new development? For example, siting the development at the lower valley slopes may have less of a visual impact in longer views (also see [p. 26](#), [p. 28](#) (setting of valued features) and [p. 36](#)). A group of trees might be used to screen the development from certain views.

## Building layout

Group buildings together to form a logical arrangement in the landscape for example, relating buildings to each other could adopt the form of typical farmstead-style arrangements which are traditional to South Staffordshire. Consider the views towards the development and how the buildings will appear on the skyline.

Integrate the design of parking, landscaping and signage to create a cohesive layout.

## Landscape and boundaries

Attention to the landscape and boundaries will be particularly important to ensure large commercial developments are not over-dominant in the landscape - also see [Settlement boundaries and interfaces \(p. 26\)](#) and [Well-designed boundaries to development \(p. 45\)](#).

## Colours and materials

Refer to [E. Materials & Details \(p. 42\)](#).

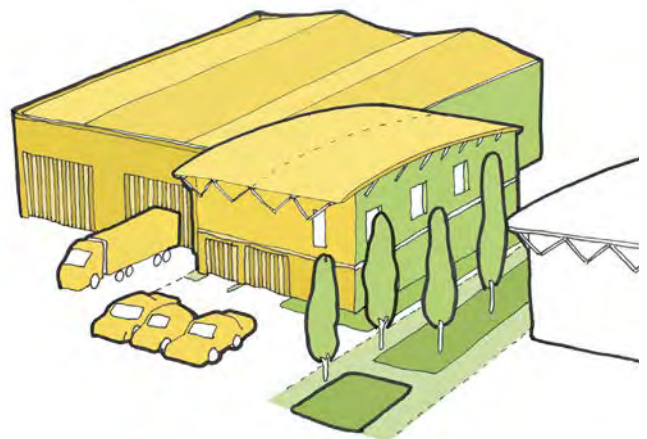
Colours and materials on larger buildings should be sensitively considered so that buildings relate well to their surroundings. The visual impact of buildings in the wider landscape and in key views should be considered. Darker colours of materials usually help these types of buildings to blend into the surrounding landscape when viewed against a wooded backdrop but other colours may be appropriate depending on the specific context. Planting can help to soften interfaces.

## Frontages

Public frontages should be considered and contribute positively to the public realm.



*Building layout may take inspiration from agricultural-style arrangements such as this conversion of a former agricultural complex at Dunston Business Park.*



*Reduce “clutter” or screen bulky developments from views by carefully considering layouts. Integrating the landscaping, signage and car parking into overall layout helps to create a logical and visually acceptable arrangement.*



*Modern commercial developments should respond to the context both materially and in terms of an integrated, design led landscape scheme*



*Here, neat hedgerows and grass verges provide natural landscape boundaries to developments, retaining visual connections to the wider countryside.*

## Summary

- Where appropriate, use existing landscape features to inform the overarching structure and layout of the development.
- Hierarchies can create logical patterns in new developments, where gradients of building scale and form are grouped around focal points.
- Well-designed developments will have links between streets and spaces from within and outside the development.
- Integrate the design of parking, landscaping and signage to create a cohesive layout.
- Take account of the surrounding landscape and context when siting larger developments.
- Attention to materials and details and boundaries is very important to ensure larger developments fit well into their surroundings.

## References for Major Developments

+ **Also refer to** the design principles in Section 3 of this Design Guide

+ **Chapter 2. South Staffordshire's Character (p. 9)**

+ **By Design**

+ **Urban Design Compendium**

+ **Manual for Streets**

+ **Urban Design Lessons - Housing Layout and Neighbourhood Quality**

+ **Affordable Housing SPD**

+ *Design professionals should be employed to advise on these types of schemes.*

(See **Chapter 7. References** for full details of the publications).





*Landscape view towards Shareshill*

# 5. Minor developments

## Minor developments

*This section brings together some of the design principles that are most relevant to minor developments.*

### **Respecting the surrounding village scene**

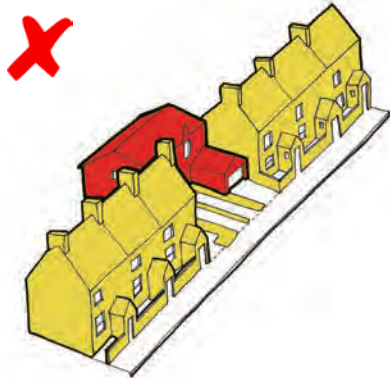
South Staffordshire's villages usually have a loose hierarchy, where larger buildings and streets are found in the centre of villages, and other parts of the village have a more irregular mix of scales and forms. The variations of scale and form in buildings and streets can be quite subtle. Minor developments should fit in with the general pattern of the surrounding environment, taking account of the subtle variations in scale and form, and contribute to a sense of cohesion and unity.

### **Infill**

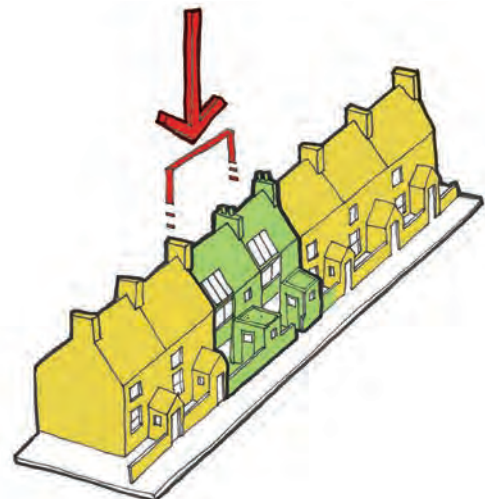
For infill developments where a particular street has an established pattern of building heights, developments should aim to continue the established pattern, without creating a sharp or sudden change in height or building scale.



*This modern infill development respects and continues the rhythm of the existing street.*



*Here, the new infill development is not sympathetic with the surrounding pattern of buildings. The lower roof pitch and lower ridge of the roof breaks up the continuity of the street, the building materials are unrelated and stand out starkly, and the set-back disrupts the building line.*



*Along this street, the repetition of certain building elements such as the chimneys, porches and windows, creates a visual rhythm. Infill proposals should aim to reflect the rhythm in the proposed building. Some variation is acceptable—for example larger windows, roof lights to an attic room, and similar materials but with subtly different detailing. This creates individuality and interest, whilst still fitting in well with the surrounding buildings.*



### ***Infill in a village centre***

Infill development on prominent village centre plots should be given particular attention in the form and detail of buildings. These are opportunities for new buildings to be landmarks, but they should also relate well to the neighbouring buildings and features.



*This illustration shows an infill site at a junction of two streets between two and three storey terraces. New development on the site will need to mediate between the scale and character of the two streets as well as create a suitable landmark on the prominent corner location.*

*This development steps up in height from one side to the other, by subdividing the site into different units. It incorporates a clock tower, forming a focal feature above the entrance to emphasise the prominent landmark location. The design of the development has subtle variations in scale so that the block of buildings has a visual cohesion and interest.*

*This is a poor example, as it relates poorly to surrounding buildings. The building line is set back and car parking is visually disruptive. The poor detailing, signage and glazing all contribute to a building which is not appropriate for its infill context.*

### ***Extensions***

**Generally, extensions should be subservient to the main building.** The extension should respect the scale and form of the main building and its relationship to adjacent buildings, including the gaps in between them. Developers should consider the overall effect of the extension on the appearance of the building as a whole, and extensions should not detract from the original building or nearby buildings by overshadowing.

For extensions, additions should fit in with the character and form of the existing building. Special attention to detail should be paid to the design of extensions where they form an addition to a building with historic or architectural merit.

It is generally not appropriate for extensions (other than small porches or canopies) to project forward of the existing front facade of a building.



*An example of a successful extension, showing careful detailing and sensitively responding to the stone construction of the house. The extension is subservient to the main house in terms of scale, mass and height.*

## Barn conversions

Conversion of existing rural and agricultural buildings should retain as many of the original building's qualities as possible. They should be legible as former agricultural buildings. It will usually be appropriate to retain the original internal spaces where there are full height spaces and roof structures exposed.

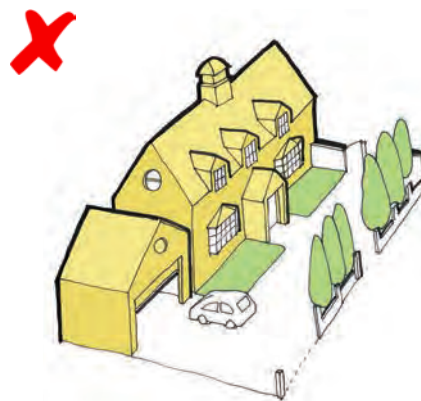
New elements should preferably be designed so that they are distinguishable from the original building. For example, there may be a change in materials.

Many traditional buildings form part of a larger group, with other outbuildings. These buildings provide a history and context for how older buildings were used historically. The other buildings in the group should usually be retained. New additions such as garages should be set back from the main building and use similar materials or style to create overall unity.

The simple qualities of barns and agricultural buildings should be retained, with minimal fussy adornments as this tends to create a generic suburban character that disguises the building's history and interest. Restoring original features such as boundary walls can enhance the character of the existing site.



*This successful barn conversion retains the original brick detailing whilst simple roof lights have been used to bring light into the building without compromising the traditional form.*



*This is an inappropriate barn conversion. Architectural additions such as dormer windows, bay windows and a porch conceal the original building. The ornately adorned boundary adds a 'suburban' character. The new garage is too large and prominent in relation to the main building.*



*This barn conversion retains the original building outline using flush fitting conservation roof lights. The original barn openings have been retained, and therefore the windows and doors retain their original proportions as much as possible. The new windows have been created in the less visible end gable by opening (but not enlarging) the blocked window and creating a new window alongside. The ventilation holes have been retained with internal glazing.*



### ***Overlooking and overshadowing***

Development should not create overshadowing, overlooking or reduce the existing scale of the street.

### ***Boundaries***

Ensure boundaries are not visually intrusive and note that planning consent is required for any boundary structure adjacent to the highway if over 1m in height.

**It is especially important to pay attention to detail at the development boundaries of minor developments in order to create a unified street scene.** Usually it will be appropriate to continue the pattern of adjacent boundaries (such as low walls, fences or hedges) as well as matching the building line and degree of set back from the pavement.

For sites near or adjacent to the wider countryside, landscape design should be kept simple, reflecting the simple, informal rural setting. Include native planting rather than 'suburban' borders.

### ***Garages***

Garages should be positioned and designed so that they do not stand out abruptly from their surroundings, especially when they are located in more rural locations. One idea to help garages fit in to their surrounding environment is to take inspiration from small, historic out buildings typical of the rural areas of South Staffordshire.



*This barn conversion retains the arrangement of buildings looking inward to a central courtyard.*



*An example of a refurbished mill in Penkridge. Important qualities which have been retained include the simple building form and brickwork detailing.*

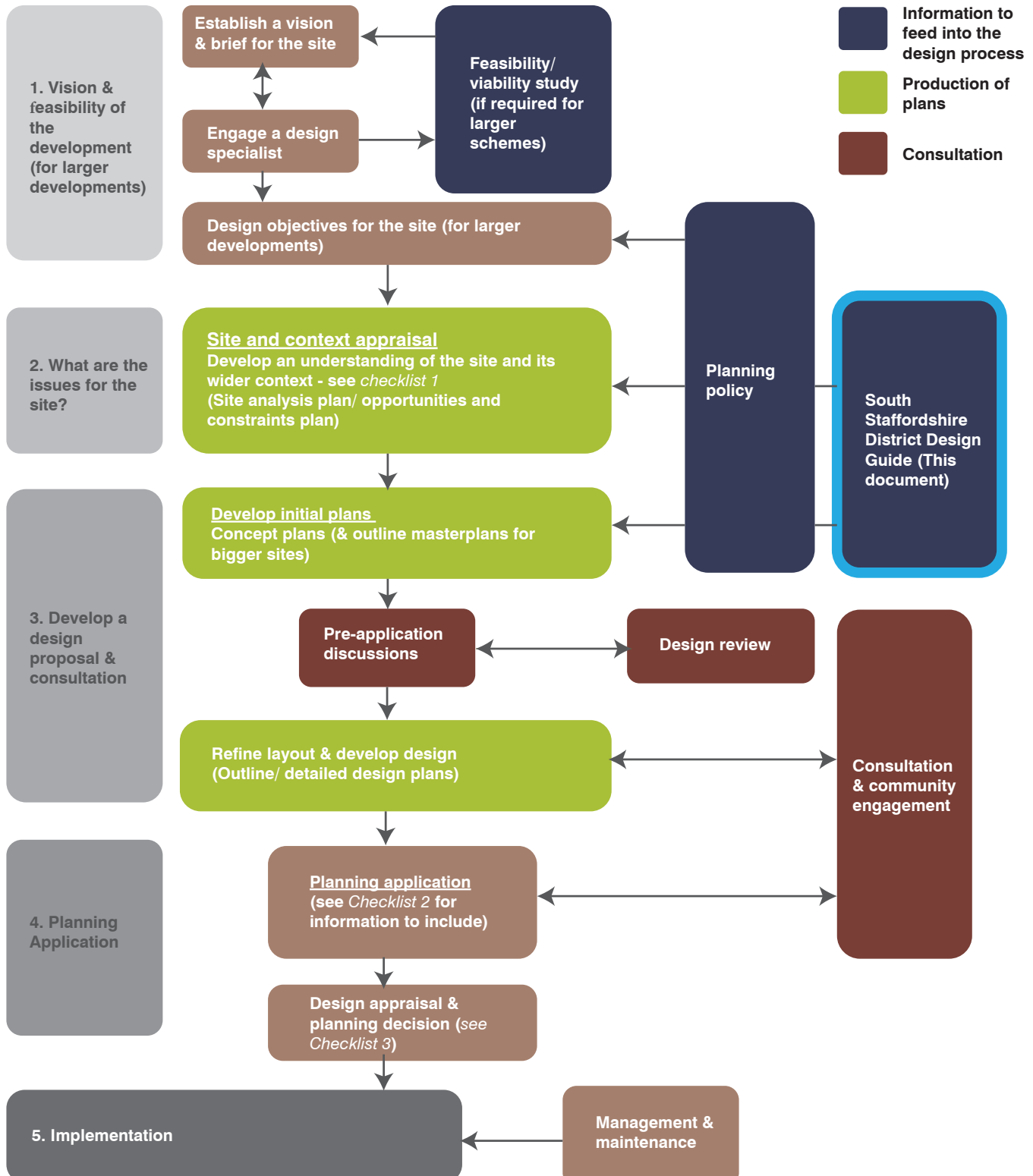
### ***References for Minor Developments***

- + **Chapter 3 Design Principles** (p.25)
- + **Chapter 2. South Staffordshire's Character** (p. 9)
- + **Staffordshire Farmsteads Guidance**
- + **Conservation Area Appraisals** - see Council website <http://www.sstaffs.gov.uk/>
- + **Listed buildings** - see Council website or Historic England -<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/>
- + **Appendix 6 of the Local Plan - Space About Dwellings Standards**
- + **Green Belt and Open Countryside SPD**

(See **Chapter 7. References** for full details of the publications).

# 6. Process

This chapter sets out the main steps applicants should take when planning and designing new development, and then goes on to set out the process for submitting an application and the information required by the Council.





## Site and context appraisal

The design of a high quality new development must be based on a good understanding of the site, and the opportunities and constraints each site presents. It is also important to understand the wider surroundings of the site (its context). A context and site appraisal must be carried out before designing the scheme.

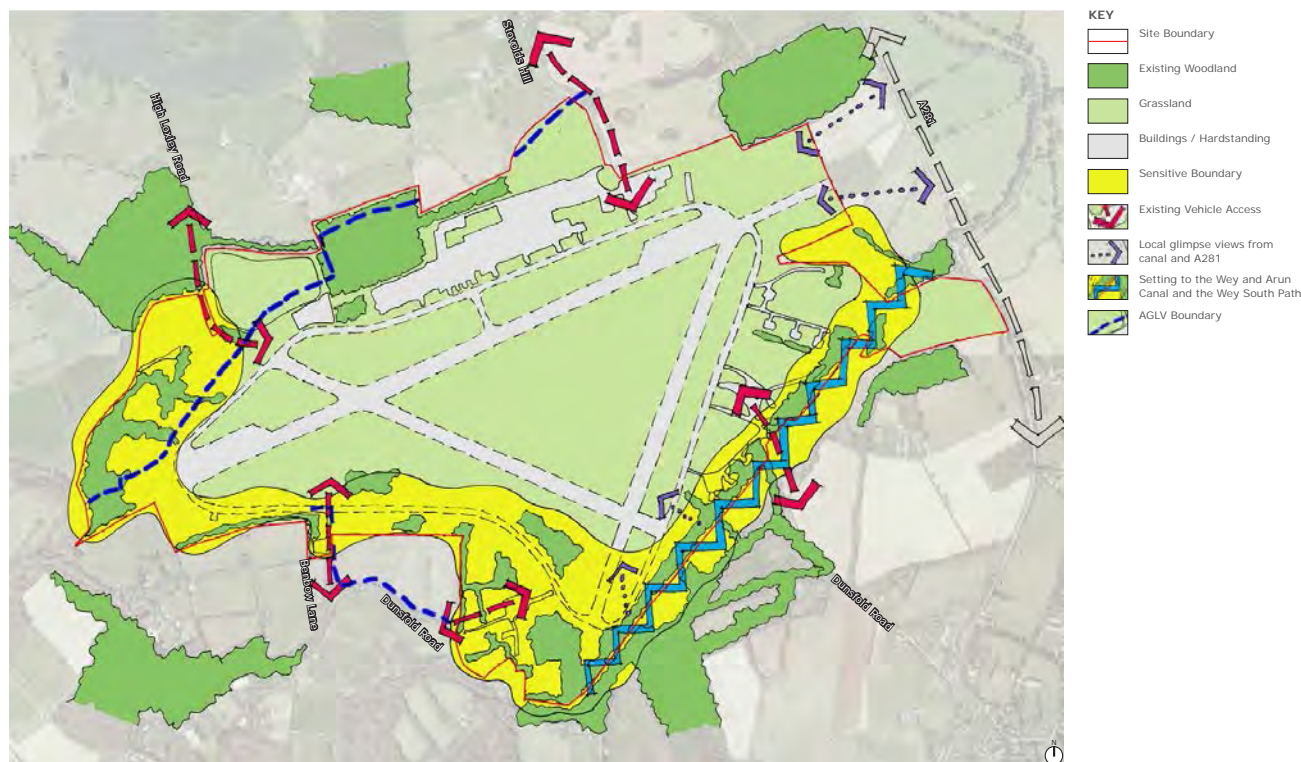
Each site and context appraisal will vary according to the particular location of the site and the type and size of development being proposed.

**Checklist 1** overleaf shows the aspects should be covered in a site and context appraisal.

Evidence of the site appraisal should be submitted with the planning application to show how it has influenced the development's design. This should include annotated plans, photographs and/or sketches.

For larger sites, the site appraisal plan may be used to inform a site opportunities and constraints plan as illustrated below.

### Landscape Design Appraisal - Site Analysis /Constraints



Example of a site appraisal plan

## Checklist 1: Information that may inform site and context appraisal

<b>Site &amp; adjacent area - overview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Site history</i></li> <li>• <i>Character of the site &amp; surroundings</i></li> <li>• <i>Key natural features</i></li> <li>• <i>Key heritage assets or structures</i></li> <li>• <i>Layout &amp; form of existing buildings or built elements</i></li> <li>• <i>Relationship of the site to the village or landscape context</i></li> </ul>
<b>Physical &amp; natural features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Landscape &amp; vegetation: green spaces; trees &amp; their spread, height &amp; condition; hedges</i></li> <li>• <i>Boundary features &amp; whether they are to be retained</i></li> <li>• <i>Wildlife habitats and whether they are to be preserved</i></li> <li>• <i>Topography &amp; levels; ground conditions</i></li> <li>• <i>Microclimate: orientation, wind shelter, overshadowing</i></li> </ul>
<b>Built &amp; human features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Existing buildings &amp; structures on &amp; adjacent to the site &amp; whether they are to be retained</i> <small>Note: for conversion of existing barns, the qualities of the existing building should be established through survey of the fabric, consideration of its original use and study of its history.</small></li> <li>• <i>The height, scale &amp; skyline the buildings create</i></li> <li>• <i>Building materials</i></li> </ul>
<b>Visual character</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Visual character of the site</i></li> <li>• <i>Views into &amp; out of the site; key views &amp; vistas</i></li> <li>• <i>Landmarks in the site &amp; surrounding area</i></li> </ul>
<b>Connections &amp; movement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Existing routes - footpaths/desire lines across &amp; around the site</i></li> <li>• <i>Barriers to movement</i></li> <li>• <i>Proximity to public transport routes, stops &amp; the frequency of service</i></li> <li>• <i>Access points to the site</i></li> <li>• <i>Existing &amp; potential nodal points within or near the site</i></li> </ul>
<b>Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Relevant local and national planning policies</i></li> <li>• <i>Natural designations - e.g. protected trees and habitats.</i> <small>Note: It may be necessary to carry out an ecological survey for protected species such as bats and owls as it is an offence to damage or disturb their habitat.</small></li> <li>• <i>Historic/ heritage designations - e.g. Conservation Area/listed buildings</i></li> </ul>
<b>Feasibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Presence of filled ground and potential sources of contamination</i></li> <li>• <i>Water courses, ponds, opportunities for sustainable drainage.</i></li> <li>• <i>Location of utilities</i></li> <li>• <i>Land ownerships and tenures</i></li> </ul>

# Consultation

## *Consulting with the local community*

The process should also include consultation with the local community who may be affected by the new development.

### **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

The SCI sets out the Council's vision, standards and approach for community and stakeholder involvement in planning matters.

Applicants will always be encouraged to consider the benefits of involving the community in developing their proposals, whether it is legally required or not. Methods that may be suggested include:

- Questionnaires and surveys
- Public exhibitions or meetings
- Development briefs
- Use of websites
- Site notices

Applicants for householder and other minor schemes should discuss their proposals with neighbours.

## **Pre-application discussions with the Council**

Early consultation with the Council is recommended, as this can highlight any major constraints on the scale or type of development proposed at an early stage.

Pre-application discussions can confirm whether the principle of development is acceptable and clarify the format, type and level of detail required to enable an application to be determined. These discussions can remain confidential where necessary.

The benefits of pre-application discussions are:

- *Advice can be sought on the principle of development before the brief and design are finalised*
- *Site, location and design options can be discussed*
- *Good quality information at an early stage means issues or concerns can be addressed before the application is submitted*
- *Getting the right advice can avoid the need to change the plans later which can be costly*
- *The necessary information to support an application can be identified and agreed*
- *The subsequent planning application may be registered more quickly*
- *Clear and complete applications are easier to process through the planning system*

Further information about the pre-application process is available on the Council's website.

## **Design Review**

Design review allows developers, designers and the Council to make and receive constructive, impartial feedback on the design proposals as they develop, to ensure high standards of design.

It can range from informal discussions or take a more formal format such as a design workshop, involving the design team, the client and the Council. Formal pre-application discussions with the Council will form one part of design review.

Planning Officers will undertake design review when a planning application is submitted for determination, based on this Guide, utilising the **Design Appraisal Framework** provided in **Checklist 3**.

## Information to include in planning applications

The following pages provide information to applicants on what information is expected to be provided in a planning application. The main aspects are:

- *A design and access statement*
- *Other supporting information*
- *Design proposals*

## Householder / Other minor applications

Householder and other minor applications which don't need to provide a Design and Access Statement should ensure they consider the site context and design issues set out in this guide, and be ready to explain how their chosen approach meets the relevant requirements of Policy EQ11. This could be done as part of a covering letter to accompany the application.

### Checklist 2: Information to include in Planning Applications

#### 1. *Design and Access Statement*

A Design and Access Statement is a short structured report that supports applications for planning and listed building consent. It explains and justifies the design of the development. It should be proportionate to the complexity of the application, but need not be long. It should explain:

- *the design process used including incorporating comments from consultation or design reviews\**
- *the design principles that have been applied - showing consideration for good design principles outlined in this Design Guide*
- *evidence of site appraisal (plans, photographs, sketch and written description and analysis)*
- *the alternative options considered and the reasons for the chosen site (where relevant), layout, form and detailed design*
- *how the development responds to its context*
- *how the design addresses the other requirements of Core Policy 4 and Policy EQ11 and this Design Guide*
- *how issues related to access to the development have been addressed (pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access and parking)*
- *retention and creation of green spaces and landscaping including the type and size of trees and shrubs to be provided, root protection zones*

(continued on following page)

\* Recording design reviews, particularly where this has involved the Council, and writing this up concisely as part of the Design and Access Statement for a planning application is encouraged. This can help explain why certain aspects of a development have been designed in a particular way.



## Checklist 2 (continued): Information to include in Planning Applications

### 2. Other Supporting Information

- Evidence of pre-application consultation /engagement
- Details of environmental performance:
  - *Non-residential – equivalent of Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) and meet minimum 'very good' standard.*
- For developments affecting a Heritage Asset a Statement of Significance (including Historical, Archaeological features, setting and Scheduled Ancient Monuments)
  - *Management and maintenance plan*

This guide focuses on design. See the current Guidance Notes for Validation of Planning Applications for other requirements.

See **p. 65** for references.

### 3. Proposals

Applications should include clear drawings with adequate detail (visually and in words) so that planning officers can gain a realistic impression of what the scheme will be like.

Drawings should include a key, scale, labels and specification of materials and comprise plans, sections, and street scene views, photographs/ photomontages. 3D models may be required.

For more detail on the information required to accompany applications see:

- Guidance Notes for Validation of Planning Applications and other submissions for consideration by the Local Planning Authority

## Design Appraisal Framework

The Design Appraisal Framework in **Checklist 3** indicates how applications will be reviewed by the Council with regard to design. The criteria in the checklist can be applied to the application using the scores 1-5 in the table opposite, as well as using this design guide and the relevant policies.

However, it should be noted that the scores will only give an *indication* of design quality and do not add up to give an answer on whether the development is acceptable or not in terms of design. This is because not all elements in the table are given equal weight, and professional judgement on the merits of each individual application will be applied.

The criteria in the appraisal framework relate to each of the design principles in this design guide and relevant policies. Examples of evidence that should be provided with applications to help the review process, and the standards of design expected, is provided in the right hand column.

### Score descriptions for the Design Appraisal Framework

Score	
1	<i>Does not meet expectations</i>
2	<i>Some expectations have been met</i>
3	<i>Satisfactory but could be improved</i>
4	<i>Expectations have been met to a good level</i>
5	<i>Excellent design quality</i>

### Checklist 3: Design Appraisal Framework

Ref. page	Criteria (How has the development considered and responded to the design principles)	Evidence	Score
27-31	<b>A. Landscape &amp; Open Space</b> ( <i>Policy references</i> <a href="#">Core Policy 4 Promoting High Quality Design</a> and c), d), h); <a href="#">EQ11 Wider Design Considerations</a> m), p), q), s)); ( <a href="#">EQ12 Landscaping</a> a), b), c), d), e), f); <a href="#">EQ4 Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape</a> ); <a href="#">HWB2 Green Infrastructure</a> ; <a href="#">EQ1 Protecting, Enhancing and Expanding Natural Assets</a> ).		
p. 27-29	Has the landscape been designed as an integral part of the scheme, with an appropriate range of types of open space including green infrastructure links provided where possible?	Design process shows that the landscape has influenced the design of the development. Landscape and open spaces form a strong framework to the development's design and respond well to the surrounding environment. Open space provision is policy compliant in terms of quantity standards. Appropriate range of types of landscape and publicly accessible open space, including green infrastructure links, with appropriate functions, including consideration of how spaces will be used and accessed.	
p. 27	Are landscape and open spaces designed to be attractive, safe and lively?	A well-considered palette of materials for hard and soft landscape that is appropriate to the village/rural location. An appropriate maintenance plan for planted areas. Consideration of natural surveillance and access to open spaces.	
p. 28	Have existing natural features and habitats been retained and enhanced where possible?	Plan of existing features on the site including tree survey/habitats and strategies for retaining trees (e.g. tree constraints plan). Key natural features have been retained. Strategies for maintenance or additional features for enhancement.	
p. 29	Does the scheme incorporate sustainable solutions and does it provide opportunities for biodiversity?	Sustainable drainage (SuDS) and other solutions such as green roofs, swales, planted areas and permeable paving have been incorporated where possible. Habitats including native planting have been included where possible.	
p. 30	Does the design of the landscape and open space contribute to surrounding landscape character with appropriate consideration of development boundaries?	The character of the area and the landscape setting has been reviewed (e.g. with reference to the Landscape Character Assessment or relevant character guides). Key views of and from the surrounding landscape have been retained or designed in. Appropriate boundaries have been designed to fit the development into its surroundings with well-designed interfaces between adjacent features such as canals and footpaths. Opportunities have been taken to add character and distinctiveness through the creation of new landscape features, particularly to landscapes which have been degraded.	
Subtotal			/25
32-35	<b>B. Context &amp; Local Distinctiveness</b> ( <i>Policy references</i> <a href="#">Core Policy 4 Promoting High Quality Design</a> and b); <a href="#">EQ11 Wider Design Considerations</a> e), f), g), h), i); <a href="#">EQ4 Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape</a> )		
p. 32 - 34	Does the design show understanding of the character and key features of the place and is local distinctiveness respected and reinforced?	Evidence of a robust site and context appraisal supported with illustrations and plans. Including landscape, historic features (Conservation Areas/ listed buildings), key views etc. as appropriate. Explanation of how context has informed design strategy (e.g. Design and Access Statement shows how it has influenced layout, density, building scale, form, materials, details). Opportunities have been taken to create new character if appropriate.	
p. 32	Does the scheme protect and enhance local landscape/ village character?	Evidence that appropriate assessments on landscape and visual impact have been carried out if appropriate. The siting and location of development is appropriate to the local landscape context. The development has respected and enhanced local views and surrounding landscape features.	
p. 34	Does the scheme protect and enhance historic character?	Evidence that relevant historic features have been retained and respected where possible. Opportunities have been taken to enhance historic features, setting, views or associations. Evidence that appropriate assessments on heritage assets have been carried out if appropriate including reference to relevant Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments.	
Subtotal			/15

36-41	<b>C. Layout &amp; Connectivity</b> (Policy references <a href="#">Core Policy 4 Promoting High Quality Design</a> and a), f), g); <a href="#">EQ11 Wider Design Considerations</a> a), c), d), i), l), n), o), r), m); <a href="#">EV11 Sustainable Travel</a> )		
p. 36	Does the scheme provide appropriate densities and mix of uses?	Density and mixture of uses is appropriate to the location and context of the site and community, and enhances vitality of village centres.	
p. 37	Does the layout of the development (buildings, streets and spaces) provide safe, secure and navigable places that function well?	The layout of buildings incorporates active frontage and natural surveillance of pedestrian areas, an integrated network of open spaces and pedestrian friendly places. The design of the development is in accordance with place-making or urban design principles including legibility, permeability, landmarks views and focal points, gateways, (hierarchies of connected streets and spaces and inclusive access -see below). Parking and servicing is integrated into the overall design layout.	
p. 39	Is the development well-connected and integrated to existing routes?	The layout of the development connects with existing streets logically, retains characteristic street patterns and has routes that connect key destinations or amenities, including footpaths and cycle paths.	
p. 39	Does the scheme provide an appropriate hierarchy and network of legible routes with provision for pedestrians and cycling?	Hierarchy of routes integrated into the design with appropriate attention to vehicular/cycle/pedestrian use - e.g. evidence in Design and Access Statement. Provision of cycle parking; footpaths/ cycleways link logically to bus stops and shops. Connections are made to long distance footpaths or Sustrans routes where possible.	
p. 39	Is the development pedestrian friendly, accessible and inclusive in design?	Pedestrian friendly places that have safe provision for walking and cycling as well as vehicles e.g. shared surfaces, pedestrian crossings. Meets inclusive access standards (e.g. Building Regulations Part M). Design of streets has considered safety and social interaction.	
	Subtotal		/25
42-45	<b>D. Building Scale and Form</b> (Policy references <a href="#">Core Policy 4 Promoting High Quality Design</a> ; <a href="#">EQ11 Wider Design Considerations</a> f), g), j), k), m)		
p. 42	Are buildings of appropriate scale and proportion?	Building scale, volume and massing achieves proportion and balance, contributing positively to the street scene. Development respects the scale of local buildings and spaces, including plot patterns. Building heights do not detract from local landmarks or overshadow neighbouring buildings or spaces.	
p. 43	Does the development incorporate appropriate building forms, rhythm and variety?	Building forms and rhythms contribute positively to the street scene and respect neighbouring buildings or key features. Larger development schemes show subtle variety in building forms and heights without sudden changes in scale. Developments respect distinctive skylines and key views e.g. through sensitive design of roofs.	
p. 44	Does the development provide high quality design and sustainable development?	The design of buildings is of high quality, including attention to detail in appearance and materials - explanations to approach provided in a Design and Access Statement. Innovation in building design, re-use of existing buildings where possible and incorporating sustainable solutions has been integral to the design. Sustainability standards (e.g. BREEAM) reached or exceeded. Schemes include SuDS; energy efficient layout/orientation/ renewable energy and adaptability.	
	Subtotal		/15
46-49	<b>E. Materials and Details</b> (Policy references <a href="#">Core Policy 4 Promoting High Quality Design</a> and e); <a href="#">EQ11 Wider Design Considerations</a> e), f), j), k), m)		
p. 46-49	Are materials and details carefully considered and appropriate to the local context?	Sensitive consideration of materials and details in buildings and boundaries which reflect local context. Use of materials and detailing respects and enhances local distinctiveness and identity e.g. incorporate local craftsmanship or patterns, or innovative use of materials. Sensitive interpretation of traditional building form in modern materials. Sustainability of materials has been considered. High quality detailing of buildings (including elements such as roof pitch) and ancillary features or structures such as boundaries, lighting, storage and shop frontages.	
	Subtotal		/5
			Total /85

# 7. References

Affordable Housing and Housing Mix Supplementary Planning Document, South Staffordshire Council, 2014 – see <http://www.sstaffs.gov.uk/>

Building for Life 12, CABE, 2015 – see <http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/>

Building Regulations – Part M – see <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/buildingregulations/>

By Design - Urban Design in the Planning System: towards better practice. Detr/CABE, 2000. (now replaced by the planning practice guidance but still a useful document)

Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan (2014-2019), DEFRA, 2014 – see <http://www.cannock-chase.co.uk>

CIRIA: Susdrain network - <http://www.susdrain.org/>

Conservation Area Appraisals, South Staffordshire Council – see website <http://www.sstaffs.gov.uk/>

Design and Access Statements: How to write, read and use them: CABE, 2006 - This guidance is not current and is now archived but may still be a useful reference

Extensive Urban Surveys, Staffordshire County Council.

Farm Buildings and Traditional Farmsteads - see website <http://historicengland.org.uk>

Green Belt and Open Countryside Planning Document (SPD), South Staffordshire Council, 2014 – see <http://www.sstaffs.gov.uk/>

Historic Environment Character Assessment, South Staffordshire Council, 2011 – see <http://www.sstaffs.gov.uk/>

Manual for Streets, DfL, 2007 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/manual-for-streets>

National Planning Policy Framework, DCLG, 2012 – see <https://www.gov.uk>

National Planning Practice Guidance: Design - <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/design/>

Planning for Places, CABE, 2009 <http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/>

Secured by Design - <http://www.securedbydesign.com/>

South Staffordshire Landscape Sensitivity Study, 2015

Staffordshire Landscape Character Assessment, 2015

South Staffordshire Local Plan – see <https://www.gov.uk>

South Staffordshire Open Space Strategy – see <https://www.gov.uk>

South Staffordshire Reviewed – A South Staffordshire Publication by Paul Collins & Craig Walker, 2004

Staffordshire Farmsteads Guidance – see <http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/home.aspx>

Streets for All. Historic England 2017 - <http://www.historicengland.org.uk>

The Setting of Heritage Assets. Historic England, 2017 - <http://www.historicengland.org.uk>

Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments, Historic England - <http://www.historicengland.org.uk>

Urban Design Compendium 1 & 2, HCA – see [www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/urban-design-compendium](http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/urban-design-compendium)

Urban Design Lessons - Housing Layout and Neighbourhood Quality, Homes and Communities Agency, 2014

'Why Invest in Landscape', Landscape Institute, 2014

'Profitable Places: Why housebuilders invest in landscape', Landscape Institute, 2014



### **Useful websites**

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/>

The government website for planning and building regulations for England and Wales

<http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/>

Design Council cabé (CABE is now part of the design council)

[www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/urban-design-compendium](http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/urban-design-compendium)

The urban design compendium online

<http://www.landscapeinstitute.co.uk/>

The website for the Landscape Institute

<http://www.sstaffs.gov.uk/>

South Staffordshire Council website – see the Planning Policy pages

<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/>

Historic England website

### **References for Design and Access Statements**

**What to submit in a planning application:** see planning applications - 'what to submit' at

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/>

**Writing Design and Access Statements:**

+ *Design and Access Statements, 'How to write, read and use them', CABE 2006*

+ *South Staffordshire Council website - <http://www.sstaffs.gov.uk/>*

# 8. Glossary

## Active Edges

Building frontages containing features which include activities e.g. building entrances, shop fronts, etc.

## Adopted Core Strategy

The Core Strategy sets out the long-term vision for our communities, objectives and policies to guide the future development of the District. It sets out how much development will take place locally and how it will be delivered. The Core Strategy was adopted in 2012.

## Adopted Local Plan

The South Staffordshire Local Plan will be made up of a number of separate documents including the Adopted Core Strategy, which collectively will guide development in the District. As and when the Council adopts documents in the Local Plan, they will supersede policies in the currently adopted Local Plan.

## Biodiversity

The ecological richness of an area represented by the number of plant and animal species present; which development should enhance rather than harm.

## BREEAM

The Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method - a set of environmental standards. Attainment of a particular level is often encouraged and for some developments required.

## Buildings of Special Local Interest (Local List)

South Staffordshire Council's list of Buildings of Special Local Interest – this identifies local buildings and structures important in their archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic terms which the Council will take action to preserve as far as possible.

## Connectivity

Links between streets, footpaths and spaces.

## Conservation Areas

A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest designated by the council to help preserve and enhance its character and appearance. Appraisals of the conservation areas have been undertaken and further information on these is available on the Council's website.

## Contemporary Design

Design particular to a specific point in time. It can be used in the context of the past, but is usually used to mean design particular to the present time period.

## Context

In terms of design and architecture, the characteristics of the area in which a place, building or site sits. These include vernacular and period styles, street pattern, topography urban form, legibility, landscape and views.

## Continuity

The quality of an unbroken street frontage which creates enclosure and defines the shape of the space thus formed. It is the most important element in creating unity of the street picture together with the street's architecture whether as a formal design or an informal common theme of style, scale, materials and building heights.

## Enclosure

Enfolding of a space by its surrounding buildings, walls or landscape. The relationship between the size of the space and the height of its "walls" can give feelings ranging from confinement to spaciousness; creating these variations in forms of space is one of the major accomplishments of the site planning.

## Evidence Base

To support the formulation of options for future development, the development of planning policies and to ensure a sound evidence base there are a number of studies, assessments and background documents that underpin the Local Plan for South Staffordshire. These studies maybe updated as and when necessary. The most up to date version will be included in the Evidence Base and may differ from the studies submitted for the Core Strategy in 2011.

## **Farmsteads Guidance**

Staffordshire County Council have been involved in a series of projects aimed at better understanding and managing historic farmsteads within Staffordshire and the wider West Midlands region. This work has included: A survey of Staffordshire's historic farmsteads; An assessment of farmsteads across the West Midlands region; The production of guidance to inform the sustainable development of farmsteads.

## **Green Roof**

A low pitch or flat roof on which plants are grown in a 'soil' layer in order to soften its appearance when seen from above as well as other benefits including for biodiversity, flooding and climate change.

## **Historic Environment Record (HER)**

A detailed database held and maintained by Staffordshire County Council containing information about the history and archaeology of areas and places.

## **Historic Environment Character Assessment (HEA)**

A study by South Staffordshire Council on the historic character of South Staffordshire, looking at 13 project areas around settlements.

## **Infill Development**

Development which fills a small site sandwiched between existing buildings; or larger sites which fill a 'hole' in the urban fabric. The closeness of adjacent buildings makes it important to respect the context.

## **Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)**

A standard methodology for identifying, describing, classifying and mapping what is distinctive about our landscapes. It shows us their variety, and helps us to understand what makes one landscape different from another.

## **Layout**

The arrangement and position of buildings, streets and open spaces.

## **Legibility**

The layout and design of development so as to help people form a mental map and easily identify routes through the area and their relationship to landmark features and destinations, e.g. the local centre. This implies distinctiveness in the design of each street picture and distinction between 'through' routes and intimate localised and detailed building groupings. It may also require an appreciable build-up to, and of, the neighbourhood centre.

## **Listed Buildings**

A building or other structure officially designated as being of special architectural, historical or cultural significance. Listing a building imposes restrictions on what an owner might wish to change or modify in the structure or its fittings.

## **'Local Service Village'**

Within South Staffordshire, smaller villages or settlements with essential facilities used by the local population.

## **'Main Service Village'**

Within South Staffordshire, larger villages or settlements that have a good range of facilities and services.

## **Massing**

A common phrase used by professionals to refer to the height, bulk and volume of buildings, the density of their distribution and physical closeness of their relationship. With 'scale' these are important qualities which need determining at an early design stage.

## **Natural Surveillance**

The overlooking of public spaces from windows of nearby buildings or busier adjacent areas in order to deter crime or anti-social behaviour.

## **'Other Villages'**

Within South Staffordshire, settlements that have a restricted range of facilities and services, such as a church, pub or playing field.

## **Permeability**

A quality which provides a choice of convenient and self-evident routes along which to traverse an area.

## Public Realm

The area which is freely accessible to the public. This includes streets, footpaths, parks, car parks, open land as well as the inside of some public buildings. In a wider sense it may refer to open areas which are private but comprise part of the publicly-visible scene, e.g. cricket pitches, building forecourts, etc.

## Robust Design

Design which has stature and implied strength or development which can withstand the test of time and changing demands and uses. It implies that evanescent or fleeting design fashions should be avoided, or only accommodated when they respond to the acknowledged local design context.

## Roofscape (also referred to as 'skyline')

The roof scenery of a street or urban area including roof shapes, materials and detailing, chimney stacks, tall structures and trees – the skyline and its silhouette. Especially when viewed from a distance or elevated position the roofscape can become an important defining feature of the townscape. Conscious roofscape design assumes an important role in new housing areas which commonly lack variety of building sizes and shapes and vertical features such as chimneys or gables, spires and turrets.

## Scale

The relationship of a building and its features to human size. Small sizes of the building elements – windows, doors etc – as well as the building itself can achieve domesticity; larger building elements represent grandeur and self-importance. Scale is of overriding importance where new buildings are introduced into the context of small-scale village groupings, whilst small-scale cottage designs may be incongruous in larger-scale formal settings.

## Scheduled Monuments

Monuments scheduled under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. This supports a formal system of Scheduled Monument Consent for any work to a designated monument. Scheduling is the only legal protection specifically for archaeological sites.

## Setback

The distance between the front of a building and the back of the pavement. The judicious use of setbacks to achieve considered effects can have a distinctive effect on enclosure and visual richness of a street.

## 'Small Service Village'

Within South Staffordshire, small villages or settlements with a modest level of facilities, such as a school or Post Office, used by the local population.

## SPD

Supplementary Planning Document.

## Staffordshire Farmsteads Guidance

Staffordshire County Council in conjunction with English Heritage (now Historic England) have produced guidance to help inform and achieve the sustainable development of historic farmsteads in Staffordshire, including their conservation and enhancement.

## Stakeholders

People and organisations, such as service providers and highways, heritage and other authorities, with a vested or statutory interest in a development. This includes the developer, adjoining landowners, residents, local businesses, local community and business groups, the local authority and statutory consultees.

## Street Frontage

The physical boundary between the street and the adjacent buildings. A street frontage can be 'live' or 'active' when it contains access points to a building or public open space, 'dead' when it is a blank wall or glass façade, and 'absent' when there is no boundary, for example when the land use is a car park.

## Street scape

The picture presented by the view along a street. This is, importantly, formed by the shape of the area enclosed by the street facades; the design and relationship of its defining buildings, walls, structures and vegetation; the surface of the street, wall-to-wall, and street furniture.

## SUDS

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (also may be referred to as Water Sensitive Urban Design) are drainage systems, often combined with green space, allowing surface water to drain away seeping naturally and gradually into the ground. This can economise on costs and reduce flooding surges.



## **Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

SPDs give more detailed guidance on policies or proposals.

### **Sustainability**

The ability to sustain a level of building or other economic activity without adverse effects on future generations; a phrase often extended incorrectly to embrace social inclusion, economic growth and environmental friendliness within its aims.

### **Village scape**

The pattern of topography, streets, spaces and buildings particular to that village; the view; locations of landmarks; feelings of enclosure and exposure; and of continuity and breakage of street frontages created by the layout of the buildings.

### **Urban Grain**

The urban grain is the complexity and scale of the pattern of buildings and spaces of an urban area. The fine urban grain of many old villages and neighbourhoods is characterised by small blocks with a large number of streets, lanes and passageways and considerable variations in the spacing of, largely, small-scale buildings. Modern town centre redevelopment with large development blocks and subservient minor open space features would be examples of a coarse urban grain.

### **Vernacular**

The traditional, local building style and materials which evolved through functional needs, without the input of professional architects.

### **Vista**

A distant view; in the urban design sense a view towards a single point such as a landmark building channelled along an avenue or by valley sides.

## **CONTACTS**

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# Appendix 1

## *Village Summaries*



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# **Green Belt and Open Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**



**South  
Staffordshire  
Local Plan**

**April 2014**



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## 1. Introduction

### What is the purpose of the SPD?

- 1.1 This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) seeks to provide greater detail on the issues and implications of proposals for various development types on sites within the Green Belt and Open Countryside in South Staffordshire.
- 1.2 Once adopted, the SPD will form part of the South Staffordshire Local Plan where the SPD is referenced in the policies.
- 1.3 This document is in addition to the policies contained in the Local Plan and is not the starting point for decision making. This document provides guidance as to how the policies will be interpreted and is not formal planning policy in its own right.
- 1.4 The SPD is divided into sections and is directly linked to policies GB1 and OC1 of the adopted Core Strategy, where the SPD is specifically mentioned.
- 1.5 All proposals for development in the Green Belt shall be compliant with the guidance contained in the Village Design Guide SPD<sup>1</sup>. In many circumstances, good design principles can contribute to the acceptability of potential impact.
- 1.6 Please note that this SPD and the guidance contained within it applies to developments where planning permission is required and does not affect your existing permitted development (PD) rights if you have them. The PD fallback position will be taken into account when assessing proposals.
- 1.7 The SPD covers three elements:
  - Replacement of existing buildings
  - Extension or alteration of existing buildings
  - Limited infilling



### The Green Belt

- 1.8 There are 5 main purposes of the Green Belt, which are upheld by South Staffordshire Council through planning new development in the most appropriate locations and through the careful management of all developments.
- 1.9 The purposes of the Green Belt are as follows:
  - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
  - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
  - To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
  - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
  - To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

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<sup>1</sup> The VDG is being updated and will be renamed South Staffordshire Design Guide.

- 1.10 In the Council's role in protecting the Green Belt, policies are contained in the Core Strategy which are used in the determination of planning applications and will be used when allocating sites for future developments. Around 80% of the district is made up of Green Belt land, which surrounds the majority of settlements in the district and is present in all 5 localities. Due to the restrictive nature of Green Belt policy at a national and a local level, the Council will seek to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development and to maintain the character and openness of the Green Belt.
- 1.11 This document seeks to clarify policy set out in policy GB1 and how this will be used in decision making in Development Management.
- 1.12 It is important to note that Core Policy 1: The Spatial Strategy of the Core Strategy applies to the Green Belt, which encourages development to be in sustainable locations. See the Core Strategy for further details.
- 1.13 Where the Core Strategy is silent on Green Belt issues, the Council will defer to the NPPF which is a material planning consideration. A recent appeal decision<sup>2</sup> has confirmed that the supporting text to GB1 makes it clear that in order to be acceptable, any proposals must comply with the provisions of the NPPF.

### The Open Countryside beyond the West Midlands Green Belt

- 1.14 The Open Countryside is located in the north west of the district and makes up a proportion of localities 1 and 2. 80% of the District is Green Belt, with the remaining 20% being Open Countryside and land within village envelopes. The main settlements surrounded by Open Countryside are:



- Penkridge (north)
- Dunston
- Coppenhall
- Acton Trussell
- Wheaton Aston
- Weston Under Lizard
- Great Chatwell
- Brineton
- Blymhill

- 1.15 It is important to note that National Policy 1: The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development of the Core Strategy applies to the Open Countryside,

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<sup>2</sup> APP/C3430/A/13/2196656

namely that the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' is applicable. However, the Open Countryside of South Staffordshire has a traditional agricultural landscape, with this being the main land use. Due to the important character of this landscape, the Council will retain this character by ensuring that development remains sympathetic to its setting and therefore development is restricted. This is reflected in policy OC1 of the adopted Core Strategy.

#### Using this SPD

- 1.16 The following principles are relevant in the application of guidance provided in this SPD
- 1.17 All applications for development in the Green Belt will be assessed using all relevant policies in the Development Plan, and Green Belt policy will not be used in isolation. Preference will be given to those sites in sustainable village locations. It is recommended that applicants request pre-application advice prior to submitting an application to ascertain whether or not an application is likely to be acceptable.
- 1.18 The principle of applying a range of percentage increases for extensions, alterations or replacements dwellings is to allow for flexibility in the application of the policy. For some proposals, a 20% (10%) increase may be considered disproportionate; whereas a 40% (20%) increase on a different building, in a different location may be acceptable. All proposals will therefore be considered on the individual merits of the case.
- 1.19 The onus is on the applicant to provide evidence of very special circumstances and each proposal is taken on its merits.
- 1.20 Where reference is made to floor area, this will be calculated on the basis of external floor area.
- 1.21 The Council expects good design to be an integral part of any proposal and this is supported by the Village Design Guide.



## 2. The Green Belt Policy

### **Core Strategy Policy GB1: Development in the Green Belt**

Within the South Staffordshire portion of the West Midlands Green Belt as defined on the Policies Map, development acceptable within the terms of national planning policy set out in the NPPF will normally be permitted where the development is for either:

A. A new or extended building, provided it is for:

- a) purposes directly related to agriculture or forestry; or
- b) appropriate small-scale facilities for outdoor sport or recreation , nature conservation, cemeteries and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with its purposes; or
- c) affordable housing where there is a proven local need in accordance with Policy H2; or
- d) limited infilling\* and limited extension(s), alteration or replacement of an existing building where the extension(s) or alterations are not disproportionate to the size of the original building, and in the case of a replacement building the new building is not materially larger than the building it replaces. Guidance in these matters will be contained in the Green Belt and Open Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

B. The re-use of a building provided that:

- e) the proposed use of any building (taking into account the size of any extensions, rebuilding or required alterations), would not harm the openness of the Green Belt land or the fulfilment of its purposes.

C. Changes of Use of Land:

- f) the carrying out of engineering or other operations, or the making of a material change of use of land, where the works or use proposed would have no material effect on the openness of the Green Belt, or the fulfilment of its purposes.

D. Development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

*\*Footnote: Limited infilling is defined as the filling of small gaps (1 or 2 buildings) within a built up frontage of development which would not exceed the height of the existing buildings, not lead to a major increase in the developed proportion of the site, or have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it.*

### 3. Replacement of existing buildings

#### **Use**

- 3.1 The replacement of an existing building is an acceptable form of development within the Green Belt as stated in policy GB1; this is also considered to be acceptable in terms of the NPPF (providing it is in the same use). Should an application be submitted for a replacement building in a different use, this would constitute inappropriate development – see para 1.13. In such cases the applicant will be required to demonstrate ‘very special circumstances’ in order to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt.

#### **Size**

- 3.2 The Council’s adopted policy (GB1) on replacement buildings states that the replacement must not be materially larger than the building it replaces. In order to judge this a range of floor area increases will be used as guidance, this range is between 10-20%. This will be the basis for making a judgment on planning applications put before the Council, however all applications will be judged on their merits on a case by case basis. We will require complete floor plans and elevations (of both existing and proposed), because we will, as part of the application process, calculate floor areas and in some cases volume. If the proposal is for a building that is considered to be materially larger it will be contrary to policy GB1 and is likely to be unsuccessful. However, intelligent architectural design can sometimes increase usable floor area, whilst reducing bulk and impact of the building on the openness of the Green Belt. For example this can include subterranean levels and reduced building height.

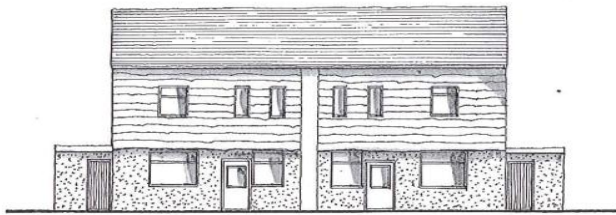
#### **Positioning**

- 3.3 In some instances replacement buildings are desired elsewhere on a site. Sometimes the replacement of buildings can have a greater or lesser impact dependent on their location on a site. In these cases the Council will assess the existing site and the impact the existing building has on the site. If the new position would be incongruous, and/or more open to view, or reduce the openness of the Green Belt, the proposal is less likely to be acceptable. However, if it is considered to improve the openness, it is likely to weigh in favour of the application.

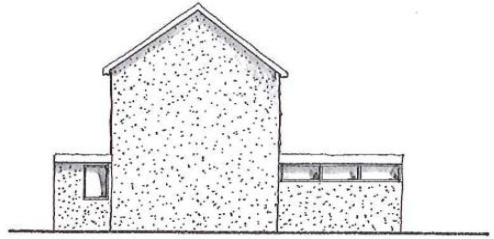
#### **Other buildings on site**

- 3.4 Generally off-setting garden or ancillary buildings would not be an acceptable approach to adding bulk, massing, floor area or volume to a new building. Ancillary buildings are usually low and sometimes constructed from more natural materials such as timber which blend into the landscape. Some ancillary buildings have been softened over time with landscaping and have a minimal impact on openness. Therefore these types of buildings are unlikely to be acceptable to adding significantly to a replacement building. The opportunity to off-set ancillary buildings in lieu of a larger replacement building will be dealt with on a case by case basis. If off-setting is considered to be an acceptable approach by the Council, removal of Permitted Development rights may be considered.

## Acceptable Replacement Dwelling – Not Materially Larger



Existing

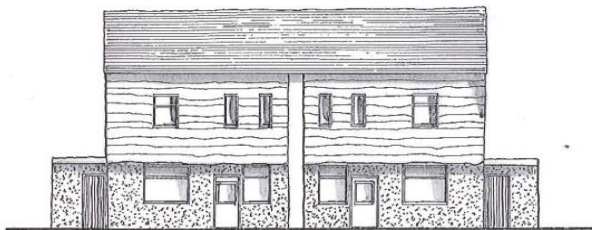


Proposed

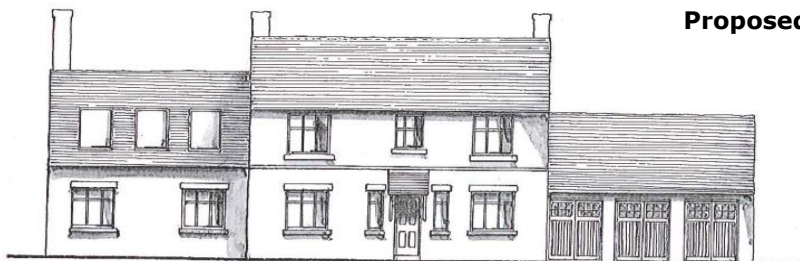
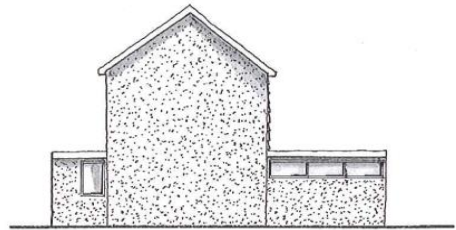


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## Unacceptable Replacement Dwelling – Materially Larger



Existing



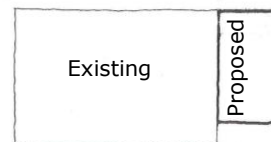
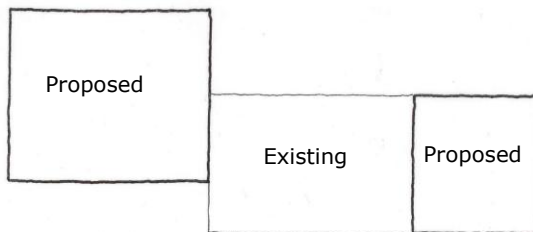
Proposed



#### **4. Alterations or extensions to existing buildings**

- 4.1 Extensions and alterations to buildings are not considered in National or Local planning policy to constitute inappropriate development, providing that any extension or alteration is not disproportionate and therefore by definition harmful to the openness of the Green Belt. This element of policy guidance was historically specific to dwellings. However following the publication of the NPPF and the requirement for Local Plan policies to conform to national guidance, the reference to buildings was introduced into policy GB1. This approach will therefore be reflected in the guidance to be in accordance with Local and National planning policy.
- 4.2 In relation to dwellings, the Council has historically applied a 30% limit on extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt; this related to an increase in 30% of footprint over the original footprint. [NB. Original footprint is that which existed on 01 July 1948 or as originally built if building constructed after that date.
- 4.3 For this SPD a percentage range is considered to be the most appropriate approach; this range is between 20-40%. A range is proposed to recognise that a 'one size fits all' approach is not always suitable.
- 4.4 Anything above the 20-40% range will be likely to be disproportionate simply because it would not be in proportion with the host building and therefore would be likely to have an impact on openness. This range will be applied to floor area, rather than footprint which had been used historically (for dwellings). The reason for this is that often single storey additions can have a limited impact on the openness of the Green Belt, and conversely multiple storey or bulky additions can have a significant detrimental impact on openness, whilst remaining within a percentage limit.
- 4.5 All cases will be dealt with on an individual basis and the Council will make a judgement, as part of the decision making process, as to whether the extension is disproportionate or not. If the extensions or alterations are likely to appear disproportionate the application will be unacceptable in Green Belt terms.
- 4.6 If, however, an applicant or agent considers that additions deemed disproportionate by the Council are absolutely necessary for the function of the building, or have a limited effect on the openness of the Green Belt, or will bring community or economic benefit, then a case to demonstrate 'Very Special Circumstances' will be required in the form of a supporting statement. This element will then be weighed up, including the quality of the design, in the planning balance and will form part of the decision making process.
- 4.7 If the 'Very Special Circumstances' are considered to outweigh the harm to the openness of the Green Belt and the application is acceptable, it will be determined by the Regulatory Committee which is not bound to follow the officer recommendation.

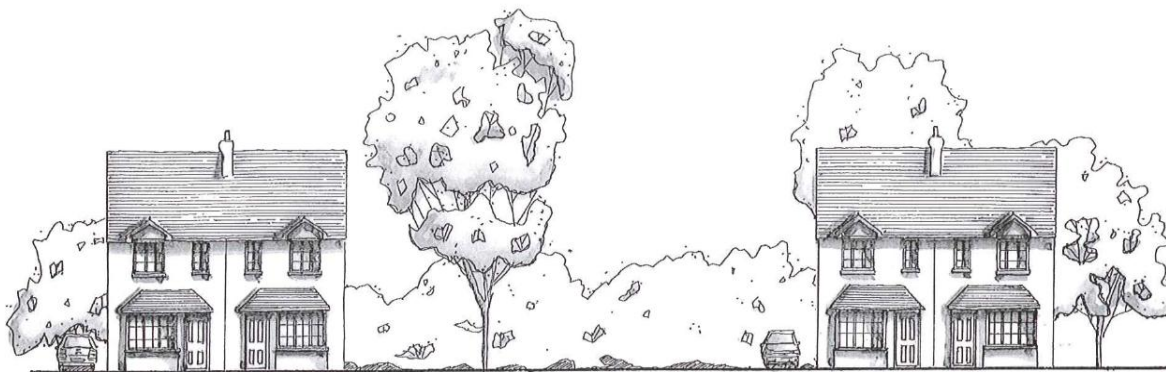




## Disproportionate/Proportionate Extensions

## **5. Limited Infilling**

- 5.1 Limited infilling does not constitute inappropriate development in Green Belt terms and was not previously defined in the 1996 Local Plan. However in the Core Strategy it is defined in policy GB1 as the filling of small gaps (1 or 2 buildings) within a built up frontage of development, which would not exceed the height of the existing buildings, not lead to a major increase in the developed proportion of the site, or have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it.
- 5.2 Limited infilling will be considered to be acceptable where it would not harm the character or the openness of the Green Belt. For example, a strong ribbon of development with a gap suitable for an additional building would not necessarily be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt, as it would strengthen the ribbon. This is providing the building is no higher than, and is sympathetic to the surrounding buildings. The design of the building would need to be suitable and the development would need to be acceptable in terms of other appropriate policies within the Core Strategy.
- 5.3 An example of limited infilling that is also likely to be acceptable is within a tight cluster of buildings, where the additional building is unlikely to impact on the openness of the area, due to its position within the cluster.
- 5.4 In both examples, a building at the end of a ribbon, or the edge of a cluster does not fall within the definition of limited infilling, and would therefore constitute inappropriate development and would therefore be unacceptable.
- 5.5 Where 'infilling' is considered to constitute 'appropriate development' in the Green Belt, as defined in Policy GB1 and the NPPF, it is important to remember that all relevant policies in the Development Plan for South Staffordshire need to be considered when making decisions on planning proposals. However, developments should be in sustainable locations in accordance with policy CP1 of the Local Plan.



## Limited Infilling

## 6. The Open Countryside beyond the West Midlands Green Belt Policy

### **Core Strategy Policy OC1 – Development in the Open Countryside Beyond the West Midlands Green Belt**

The Open Countryside beyond the South Staffordshire portion of the West Midlands Green Belt as defined on the Policies Map will be protected for its own sake, particularly for its landscapes, areas of ecological, historic, archaeological, agricultural and recreational value.

Development within the Open Countryside will normally be permitted where the proposed development is for either:

A. A new or extended building, provided it is for:

- a) purposes directly related to agriculture or forestry; or
- b) appropriate small-scale facilities for outdoor sport or recreation, nature conservation, cemeteries and for other uses of land which preserve the appearance or character of the Open Countryside beyond the Green Belt; or
- c) affordable housing where there is a proven local need in accordance with policy H2; or
- d) limited infilling\* and limited extension(s), alteration or replacement of an existing building where the extensions(s) or alterations are not disproportionate to the size of the original building, and in the case of a replacement building the new building is not materially larger than the building it replaces. Guidance in these matters will be contained in the Green Belt and Open Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

B. The re-use of a building provided that:

- e) the proposed use of any building (taking into account the size of any extensions, rebuilding or required alterations), would not harm the appearance or character and local distinctiveness of the Open Countryside beyond the Green Belt.

C. Changes of Use of Land:

- f) the carrying out of engineering or other operations, or the making of a material change of use of land, where the works or use proposed would have no material effect on the appearance and character of the Open Countryside beyond the Green Belt.

D. Development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

*\*Footnote: Limited infilling is defined as the filling of small gaps (1 or 2 buildings) within a built up frontage of development which would not exceed the height of the existing buildings, and not lead to a major increase in the developed proportion of the site.*



## 7. Replacement of existing buildings

### **Use**

- 7.1 The replacement of an existing building is an acceptable form of development within the Open Countryside, providing that 'it is not materially larger than the building it replaces', as stated in policy OC1. Should an application be for a replacement building in a different use, the judgment on suitability will be based on the social, environmental and economic implications of that use, having regard to Policy NP1 ('presumption in favour of sustainable development'), and additional paraphernalia resulting from that use. Whether or not the new use is likely to have a greater impact on the character of the landscape than the existing use is likely to be an important factor in the decision.

### **Size**

- 7.2 The Council's adopted policy (OC1) on replacement buildings states that the replacement must not be materially larger than the building it replaces. In order to judge this a range of floor area increases will be used as guidance; this range is between 10-20%. This will be the basis for making a judgement on planning applications put before the Council. We will require complete floor plans and elevations (of both existing and proposed), because we will, as part of the application process, calculate floor areas and in some cases volume. If the proposal is for a building that is harmful to the character of the landscape it will be contrary to policy OC1 and is likely to be unsuccessful. However, intelligent architectural design can sometimes increase usable floor area whilst reducing bulk and impact of the building on the character of the landscape. For example, this can include subterranean levels and reduced building height.


### **Positioning**

- 7.3 In some instances replacement buildings are desired elsewhere on a site. Sometimes the replacement of buildings can have a greater or lesser impact based on their location on a site. In these cases the Officer will assess the existing site and the impact the existing building has on the site. If the new position would be incongruous and/or more open to view, or have an impact on the character of the landscape, the proposal is less likely to be acceptable. However, if it is considered to improve the openness, it is likely to weigh in favour of the application.

### **Other buildings on site**

- 7.4 Generally, off-setting garden or ancillary buildings would not be an acceptable approach to adding bulk, massing, floor area or volume to a new building. Ancillary buildings are usually low and sometimes made from more natural materials such as timber which blend into the landscape. Some ancillary buildings have been softened over time with landscaping and have a minimal impact on the character of the area. Therefore these types of buildings are unlikely to be acceptable to adding significantly to a replacement building. The opportunity to off-set ancillary buildings in lieu of a larger replacement building will be dealt with on a case by case basis. If off-setting is considered to be an acceptable approach by the Officer, removal of Permitted Development rights may be considered.

## 8. Alterations or extensions to existing buildings

- 8.1 Extensions and alterations to buildings are not considered in local planning policy to be unacceptable within the Open Countryside. This is providing that any extension or alteration is not disproportionate to the original building.
- 8.2 The size of extension must be proportionate to the building and not adversely harm the intrinsic character of the Open Countryside.
- 8.3 For this SPD a percentage range is considered to be the most appropriate approach; this range is between 20-40%. A range is proposed to recognise that a 'one size fits all' approach is not always suitable.
- 8.4 Anything above the 20-40% range will be likely to be disproportionate, simply because it would not be in proportion with the host building and therefore would be likely to have an impact on the character of the landscape of the Open Countryside. This will be applied to floor area, rather than footprint which had been used historically (for dwellings). The reason for this is that often single storey additions can have a limited impact on the character of the area and conversely multiple storey or bulky additions can have a significant detrimental impact on character whilst remaining within a percentage limit.
- 
- 8.5 All cases will be dealt with on an individual basis and the Council will make a judgement as part of the decision making process as to whether the extension is disproportionate or not. If the extensions or alterations are likely to appear disproportionate, the application will be unacceptable in the Open Countryside as per policy OC1.
- 8.6 If however an applicant or agent considers that additions deemed disproportionate by the Council are absolutely necessary for the function of the building, or will bring community or economic benefit, then a case to justify the development will be required in the form of a supporting statement. This element will then be weighed up, including the quality of the design, in the planning balance and will form part of the decision making process.
- 8.7 If the justification put forward is considered to outweigh the harm to the character of the Open Countryside and the application is acceptable, it will be determined by the Regulatory Committee which is not bound to follow the officer recommendation.

## **9. Limited Infilling**

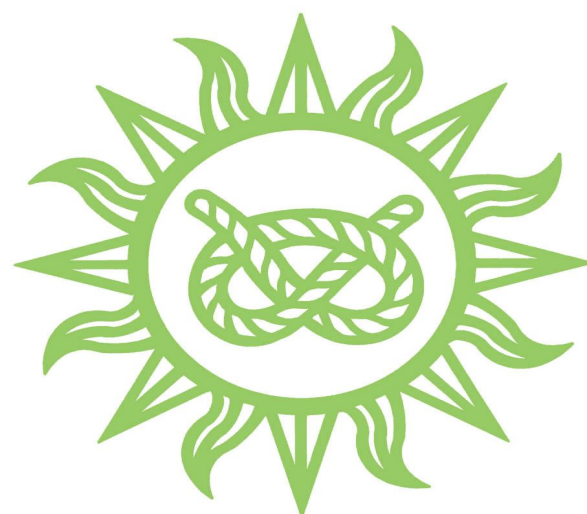
- 9.1 Limited infilling is acceptable within the Open Countryside and was previously defined in the 1996 Local Plan. Limited infilling has been defined in policy OC1 of the Core Strategy as the filling of small gaps (1 or 2 buildings) within a built up frontage of development, which would not exceed the height of the existing buildings and not lead to a major increase in the developed proportion of the site.
- 9.2 Limited infilling will be considered to be acceptable where it would not harm the character of the Open Countryside. For example, a strong ribbon of development with a gap suitable for an additional building would not necessarily be harmful to the character of the Open Countryside or the landscape as it would strengthen the ribbon and the character of that area. This is providing the building is no higher than, and is sympathetic to the surrounding buildings. The design of the building would need to be suitable and the development would need to be acceptable in terms of other appropriate policies within the Core Strategy.
- 9.3 An example of limited infilling that is also likely to be acceptable is within a tight cluster of buildings, where the additional building is unlikely to impact on the openness of the area due to the position within the cluster.
- 9.4 In both examples, a building at the end of a ribbon, or the edge of a cluster does not fall within the definition of limited infilling, and would therefore be unacceptable.











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format e.g., in large print, Braille, audio or in  
a language other than English, please contact  
the Customer Services Team on 01902  
696000**

**List of Persons and Interested Parties**

**Appeal Ref: APP/C3430/C/22/3312914**

**Enforcement Ref: 21/00375/BOC**

**Appeal by: Patrick Dunne**

**Site at: Land Adjacent Brinsford Bridge, Stafford Road, Coven Heath, Staffordshire**

---

**1 copy to the occupier**

**The Willows Shaw Hall Lane Coven Heath Staffordshire WV10 7HE**

The Laurels Shaw Hall Lane Coven Heath Staffordshire WV10 7HE

Bridge Farm Brinsford Lane Slade Heath Staffordshire WV10 7PR

Boat Yard Bridge Farm Brinsford Lane Slade Heath Staffordshire WV10 7PR

3 Shaw Hall Lane Coven Heath Staffordshire WV10 7HE

4 Shaw Hall Lane Coven Heath Staffordshire WV10 7HE

5 Shaw Hall Lane Coven Heath Staffordshire WV10 7HE

Perseverance Cottage Shaw Hall Lane Coven Heath Staffordshire WV10 7HE

**1 copy to the Clerk to Brewwood and Coven Parish Council**

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Email: [clerk@brewwoodandcoven-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@brewwoodandcoven-pc.gov.uk)

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**1 copy to those served with notice**

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To Occupier/Those served with notice

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Date: 27 January 2023

## TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 APPEAL UNDER SECTION 174

<b>Appellants name:</b>	<b>Mr Patrick Dunne</b>
<b>Site Address:</b>	<b>Land adjacent to Brinsford Bridge, Stafford Road, Coven Heath, South Staffordshire</b>
<b>Description of development:</b>	<b>Breach of Condition 1 of planning permission reference 21/00624/VAR ("the Planning Permission" for the erection of 2 Amenity Buildings) ("the Development"); was granted on 24th August 2021, in that it appears to the Council that the Development has not been carried out in accordance with the approved drawings</b>
<b>Appeal reference:</b>	<b>APP/C3430/C/22/3312914</b>
<b>Application reference:</b>	<b>21/00375/BOC</b>
<b>Appeal start date:</b>	<b>13 January 2023</b>

I refer to the above details. An appeal has been made to the Secretary of State against an enforcement notice issued by South Staffordshire District Council on 10 November 2022.

### **The enforcement notice was issued for the following reasons:**

It appears to the Council that the Breach of Planning Control took Place within the last 10 years.

The site is an existing traveller site that is occupied by one extended family. The site is in the Green Belt, approximately 1.2km south of Coven village, with access via the western side of the A449 Stafford Road.

The site is bordered by the A449 to the east, the Staffordshire and Worcester Canal to the north and west, and by an open field to the south.

The site is bound on all sides by mature hedgerows and trees that provide effective screening. The character of the area is semi-rural with sporadic residential development along Shaw Hall Lane to the west beyond the application site boundary with the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area. Brinsford Farm Boat yard

and repair workshop are located on the opposite side of the A449 to the east. There is a row of houses fronting the western side of the A449 approximately 70m south of the application site.

The application site is an allocated Gypsy site 'GT08 - Brinsford Bridge, Coven Heath'.

The site has permission for 2 permanent pitches and a further transit pitch. A modest amenity block and utility building for transit pitches already exist on the site.

On 18th September 2020, the Council granted planning permission for the erection of 2 amenity buildings under permission reference 19/00863/FUL.

On 8th December 2021, Council Officers conducted a site visit and found that the utility buildings were larger than the approved plans. The roof height had been given a modest increase, however this had allowed for a significant height increase to the eaves of over 0.6 metres. This in turn allowed for a significant height increase to the front porch of at least 1.90m to both buildings including an increase in the depth of the porch by over 1.00m.

In addition a large glass window had been inserted into the front first floor elevation. The front door has also been altered to a larger one which is more suburban in character. In addition, the majority of the windows had increased in size from two pane to three pane casements and additional windows had been added along with Velux roof lights to the rear elevations.

On 28th June 2022, a further planning application was received, (application reference 22/00641/VAR), to vary Condition 1 to change the floor plan and elevations to reflect what has been built, with the exception of the front elevation first floor glass window that had been removed. The application was refused.

Paragraph 137 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

Paragraph 149 of the NPPF confirms that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate development in the Green Belt unless they fall under certain listed exceptions. Included in this list, and not to therefore be regarded as inappropriate development is 'the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.' Policy GB1 of the adopted Core Strategy seeks to protect the Green Belt against inappropriate development and is broadly consistent with the Framework.

Policy GB1 of the of the South Staffordshire Core Strategy Development Plan adopted 2012 states that development acceptable within the terms of national planning policy set out in the NPPF will normally be permitted where the proposed development is for either a new or extended building, provided it is for:

- d) limited infilling and limited extension(s), alteration or replacement of an existing building where the extension(s) or alterations are not disproportionate to the size of the original building, and in the case of a replacement building the new

building is not materially larger than the building it replaces. Guidance in these matters will be contained in the Green Belt and Open Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

The original approved application, (permission reference 19/00863/FUL) had a modest design and was single storey with amenity accommodation found at ground floor only. The building was constructed with floor area contained within the roof area, and two pitched roof dormers along with a extended forward facing gable. Whilst the 2021 variation application noted an increase of around 66%. The LPA calculates this to be 70%, a 4% difference is not material. The case officer at the time considered that this increase in floor area, although above the recommended 20-40% would not be considered as inappropriate as the increase in floor area was predominantly down to the installation of a first floor within the existing roof space.

The amendments now result in an increase in floor area of around 82% above the original building. Whilst the majority of floor area increase is due to the installation of the floor area within the existing roof, there has been a further increase of around 12% from the 2021 amended scheme, (permission reference 21/00624/VAR).

### **Case for very special circumstances**

Paragraph 148 of the NPPF states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

### **Impact on the character of the area**

Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:

- development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or
- outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

Policy EQ4 of the Core Strategy seeks for development to respect the intrinsic rural character and local distinctiveness of the South Staffordshire landscape and should be maintained and where possible enhanced.

Policy EQ11 of the Core Strategy requires that new development "respect local character and distinctiveness, including that of the surrounding development and landscape in accordance with Policy EQ4, by enhancing the positive attributes whilst mitigating the negative aspects", and that "in terms of scale, volume, massing and materials,



development should contribute positively to the street scene and surrounding buildings, whilst respecting the scale of spaces and buildings in the local area."

The modifications have turned the modest apex roofed porch, with its single door entrance and modest fenestration, of what was intended to be a utility building into a modern looking detached urban residence that fail to contribute to local distinctiveness or to the surrounding rural area and are therefore contrary to Policies EQ4 and EQ11 of the South Staffordshire Core Strategy Development Plan adopted 2012, as well as the National Design Guide [2021].

In conclusion, the alterations to the buildings consisting of the increased ridge height, increased height to the eaves and significantly increased height and depth of the porches to the previously approved amenity building have resulted in a bulky addition to the host dwelling that would be considered as disproportionate to the host building and thus represents inappropriate development, harmful to the Green Belt by definition. No very special circumstances have been presented that clearly outweigh this harm.

In addition, the design of the porch extension along with the materials used are contrary to the aims of both national and local planning policy that seeks to secure good design.

The Council consider that planning permission should not be given, and planning permission to retain the unauthorised amendments has recently been refused because it did not overcome these objections to the unauthorised development.

**The enforcement notice requires the following steps to be taken:**

- i) Reduce the total ridge height on both buildings to the approved drawing height, (Appendix 1 of this notice).
- ii) Reduce the height of the dormer windows on both buildings to the approved drawing height, (Appendix 1 of this notice).
- iii) Reduce the height of the eaves on both buildings to the approved drawing height, (Appendix 1 of this notice).
- iv) In respect of the redesigned central front entrance/porch on both buildings, reduce the height of the eaves to the approved drawings height and reduce the depth to the approved drawing depth shown on the approved drawing at 1.00m, (Appendix 1 of this notice).
- v) In respect of the redesigned entrance to the central front entrance/porch on both buildings, remove the double door and replace with a single door and two double paned windows to reflect the design shown on the approved drawing, (Appendix 1 of this notice).

**In respect of Building 1 Shaded Blue on the Plan at Appendix 2 attached to this Notice**

- vi) In the front elevation, replace the three paned windows with two paned windows on the ground floor and remove the side windows to the central front entrance/porch.

vii) In the left elevation, (from the front), insert the door shown on the approved drawing and replace the three paned window with a two paned window on the first floor.

viii) In the rear elevation, replace the three paned windows with two paned windows as shown on the approved plan and remove the three paned window on the lefthand side and Velux roof lights in the rear roof elevation.

ix) In the right elevation, (from the front) replace the three paned window with a two paned window on the first floor.

In respect of Building 2 – Shaded Green on the Plan at Appendix 2 attached to this notice

x) In the front elevation, replace the three paned windows with two paned windows on the ground floor and remove the side windows to the central front entrance/porch.

xi) In the left elevation, (from the front), remove the two windows to the ground floor, and large window to the first floor and replace with a single door and window show on the approved drawing and in the positions shown on the approved drawing.

xii) In the rear elevation, Velux roof lights in the rear roof elevation

xiii) In the right elevation, (from the front), replace the three paned windows to the left-hand side and first floor with two paned windows.

**The appellant has appealed against the notice on the following grounds:**

**Ground (a)** – that planning permission should be granted for what is alleged in the notice.

**Ground (f)** – the steps required to comply with the requirements of the notice are excessive and lesser steps would overcome the objections.

**Ground (g)** – that the time given to comply with the notice is too short.

The appeal will be determined on the basis of **written representations**. The procedure to be followed is set out in the Town and Country Planning (Enforcement) (Written Representations

If you wish to make comments, you can do so online at <https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk>. If you do not have access to the internet, you can send your comments to:

Corrina Clements  
The Planning Inspectorate  
Room 3b  
Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
Bristol  
BS1 6PN

**All representations must be received by 24 February 2023.** Any representations submitted after the deadline will not usually be considered and will be returned. The Planning Inspectorate does not acknowledge representations. **All representations must quote the appeal reference.**

Please note that any representations you submit to the Planning Inspectorate will be copied to the appellant and this local planning authority and will be considered by the Inspector when determining the appeal.

If you submit comments and then subsequently wish to withdraw them, you should make this request to the Planning Inspectorate by the date above.

The appeal documents (including the decision when made) are available for inspection at [Enforcement Appeal Cases South Staffordshire Council \(sstaffs.gov.uk\)](https://enforcement.sstaffs.gov.uk) by searching under the enforcement reference number.

You can get a copy of one of the Planning Inspectorate's "Guide to taking part in enforcement appeals" booklets free of charge from the Planning Portal at: [www.planningportal.gov.uk/pcs](https://www.planningportal.gov.uk/pcs) or from us.

When made, the decision will be published online at <https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk> and the Council website. Paper copies of the appeal decision can be obtained from the Council. Please be aware that there may be a copying fee.

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