South Staffordshire Council

Core Strategy

December 2012

Further information can be found at
www.sstaffs.gov.uk

A Local Plan for
South Staffordshire

Core Strategy Development Plan Document

Adopted 11th December 2012

South Staffordshire Council

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Structure of Strategic Objectives, Core and Development Policies

The Spatial Strategy

Strategic Objective 1

To protect and maintain the Green Belt and Open Countryside in order to sustain the distinctive character of South Staffordshire.

Strategic Objective 2

To retain and reinforce the current pattern of villages across South Staffordshire, and in particular protect and retain the important strategic gaps between existing settlements in order to prevent the coalescence of settlements.

National Policy 1: The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Core Policy 1: The Spatial Strategy

Policy GB1: Development in the Green Belt

Policy GB2: Land Safeguarded for Longer Term Needs

Policy OC1: Development in the Open Countryside Beyond the West Midlands Green Belt

Environmental Quality

Strategic Objective 3

To protect and improve South Staffordshire's environmental assets.

Strategic Objective 4

To protect, conserve and enhance the countryside, character and quality of the landscape and the diversity of wildlife and habitats.

Strategic Objective 5

To protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment and heritage assets and ensure that the character and appearance of the District's Conservation Areas is sustained and enhanced through management plans and high quality design.

Strategic Objective 6

To ensure that all new development is sustainable, enabling people to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations.

Strategic Objective 7

To reduce the effect of society on the environment, and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

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

Policy EQ1: Protecting, Expanding and Enhancing Natural Assets

Policy EQ2: Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation

Policy EQ3: Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets

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

Core Policy 3: Sustainable Development and Climate Change

Policy EQ5: Sustainable Resources and Energy Efficiency

Policy EQ6: Renewable Energy

Policy EQ7: Water Quality

Policy EQ8: Waste

Policy EQ9: Protecting Residential Amenity

Policy EQ10: Hazardous and Environmentally Sensitive Development

Core Policy 4: Promoting High Quality Design

Policy EQ11: Wider Design Considerations

Policy EQ12: Landscaping

Core Policy 5: Infrastructure Delivery

Policy EQ13: Development Contributions

Housing

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.

Core Policy 6: Housing Delivery

Policy H1: Achieving a Balanced Housing Market

Policy H2: Provision of Affordable Housing

Policy H3: Affordable Housing Rural Exception Sites

Policy H4: Delivering Affordable Housing

Policy H5: Specialist Housing Accommodation

Policy H6: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Economic Vibrancy

Strategic Objective 9

To meet local housing and employment needs, having regard to the Spatial Strategy for South Staffordshire, in a way that enables the existing villages within South Staffordshire to develop in a sustainable way that secures their future viability and prosperity, and supports the regeneration of rural communities and communities in neighbouring urban areas.

Strategic Objective 10

To support the urban regeneration of the Black Country Major Urban Area by distributing new housing and employment growth within South Staffordshire in a way that supports existing local communities and in particular discourages out-migration from the Black Country Major Urban Area.

Strategic Objective 11

To support the growth of a vibrant, prosperous and sustainable local economy; sustain, improve and enhance the vitality and viability of village centres and promote South

Staffordshire as a tourist destination.

Strategic Objective 12

To support thriving and sustainable communities by ensuring that local people enjoy access to jobs and key services such as social, health care, education, open space and recreation, cultural and other facilities.

Strategic Objective 13

To reduce the need to travel, to secure improvements to public transport infrastructure and services and make it safer and easier for the community to travel to jobs and key services by sustainable forms of transport, such as public transport, walking and cycling.

Core Policy 7: Employment and Economic Development

Policy EV1: Retention of Existing Employment Sites

Policy EV2: Sustainable Tourism

Policy EV3: Canals and Canalside Development

Policy EV4: South Staffordshire College (Rodbaston)

Core Policy 8: Hierarchy of Centres

Core Policy 9: Rural Diversification

Policy EV5: Rural Employment

Policy EV6: Re-Use of Redundant Rural Buildings

Policy EV7: Equine Related Development

Policy EV8: Agriculture

Core Policy 10: Sustainable Community Facilities and Services

Policy EV9: Provision and Retention of Local Community Facilities and Services

Policy EV10: Telecommunications

Core Policy 11: Sustainable Transport

Policy EV11: Sustainable Travel

Policy EV12: Parking Provision

Core Policy 12: Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport

Policy EV13: Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport - Approach to New Development

Policy EV14: Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport – Existing and Future Uses

Community Safety

Strategic Objective 14

To adopt a design-led approach to all new development to ensure that the distinctive character of the villages of South Staffordshire is maintained and enhanced and that attractive, well designed and safe places are created.

Core Policy 13: Community Safety

Policy CS1: Designing Out Crime

Health and Wellbeing

Strategic Objective 15

To improve the quality of outdoor and indoor leisure, sport and recreation facilities in South Staffordshire and ensure that each community has access to sufficient areas of green space and built facilities.

Core Policy 14: Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Policy HWB1: Protection of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities

Policy HWB2: Green Infrastructure

Children and Young People

Strategic Objective 16

To support the needs of children and young people in South Staffordshire, ensure that provision is made for children's play and that teenagers have access to leisure, sport and recreation and learning opportunities.

Core Policy 15: Children and Young People

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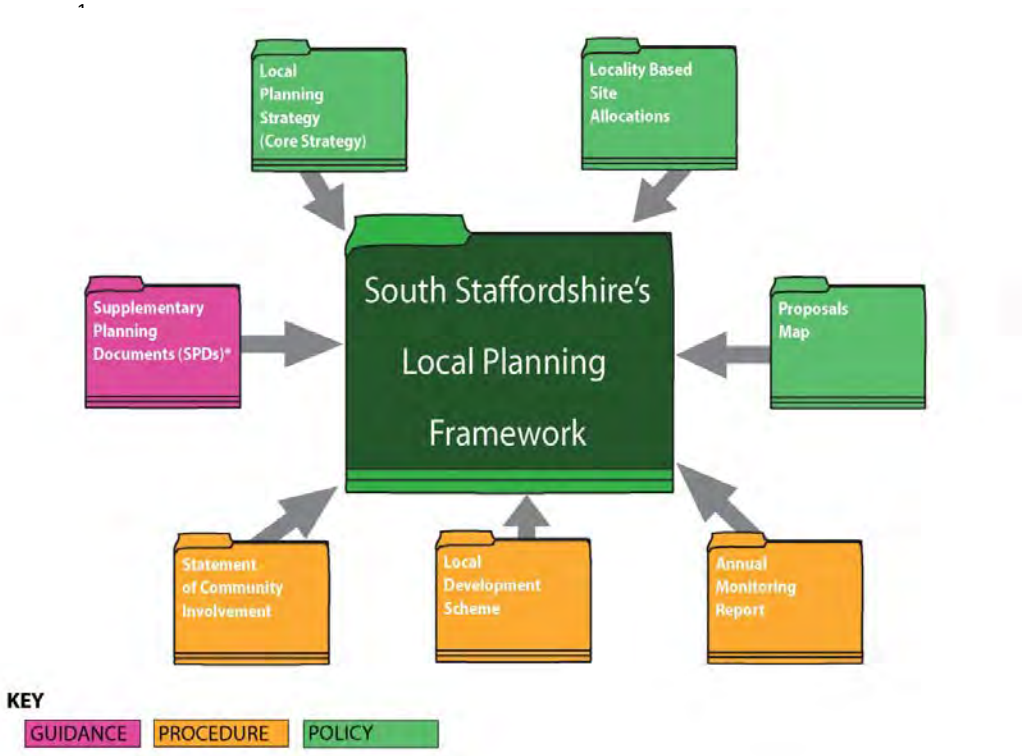
1. Introduction

1.1 A Local Plan is being prepared to help to shape a sustainable future for South Staffordshire. It will replace the existing Local Plan adopted in 1996 and will set out the spatial planning strategy for the District up to 2028. The Local Plan will consist of a number of statutory and non-statutory documents that together will set out the planning policies and proposals to guide the development of the District, and can be seen in the diagram below. The statutory documents are known as Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and these will form part of the Development Plan for South Staffordshire.

1.2 The period covered by the Plan has been moved forward to 2028 to enable the Council to deliver a continuous supply of housing for at least 15 years from the date of the adoption of the Plan and to accord with national planning policy on housing.



1.3 As part of the Local Plan a local planning strategy known as a 'Core Strategy' has been prepared for South Staffordshire and adopted. The Core Strategy is at the heart of the Local Plan and sets out the long-term vision, objectives and planning policies to deliver the vision and secure a sustainable future for the District. It has been informed by and draws upon other strategies produced by the Council and other organisations, particularly the Sustainable Community Strategy.

1.4 The Core Strategy contains broad policies for steering and shaping development as well as defining areas where development should be limited. It also sets out more

* Includes the Village Design Guide SPD, Green Belt and Open Countryside Policy Guidance SPD and other Guidance to be prepared by the Council (see South Staffordshire's Family Tree on page 9)

detailed day-to-day development policies through which development will be delivered. The overall strategy will manage change that is necessary to meet the needs of current and future generations.

1.5 The Core Strategy is the first major component of the Local Plan to be adopted. The Council will be preparing a number of other documents including a Site Allocations DPD and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) covering affordable housing, historic environment, development contributions and sustainable development. A Village Design Guide SPD was adopted in 2009 and is currently being refreshed to provide guidance to the adopted Core Strategy and will be known as the South Staffordshire Design Guide SPD. The Council has an adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which sets out the Council's approach for involving local communities, stakeholders and consultees in the process of preparing the Local Plan and in decisions on planning applications. Further details of the different documents in the development plan can be seen in the family tree on page 9 and can also be found on the Council's website at www.sstaffs.gov.uk

Supporting Documents

Sustainability Appraisal

1.6 The Council is required to ensure that documents prepared for the Local Plan are subject to a Sustainability Appraisal, which incorporates the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment. The purpose of sustainability appraisal is to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of the strategies and policies in the Local Plan from the outset of the plan preparation process. This will ensure that decisions are made that accord with the principles of sustainable development.

1.7 A Sustainability Appraisal has been prepared which has identified relevant sustainability objectives for the District and provided an independent assessment throughout the preparation of the local planning strategy. The Sustainability Appraisal has therefore informed the Spatial Strategy, vision, objectives and policies of the plan.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

1.8 Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the Habitats Regulations) a Habitats Regulations Assessment has been undertaken of the local planning strategy in order to see whether its proposals could have the potential to result in adverse effects upon international sites. These are sites that have been designated for their international nature conservation interests and include:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated under European Council Directive 92/43/EEC(a) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (the Habitats Directive);

- Special Protection Areas (SPA) designated under the European Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (the Birds Directive); and,

- The Government in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has as a matter of policy chosen to apply the Habitats Regulations Assessment procedures in respect of Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites), candidate SACs (cSACs) and potential SPAs (pSPAs) even though these are not European sites as a matter of law.

1.9 There is one international site entirely within South Staffordshire: Mottey Meadows SAC near Wheaton Aston. There are also two international sites in close proximity to the District boundary, Cannock Chase SAC and Cannock Extension Canal SAC. The first stage of the Habitats Regulations Assessment process (HRA) Stage 1 Screening of the Core Strategy has found that there are no likely significant effects on these three international sites. Further information on the HRA process and how it will be taken forward for future projects and plans arising from the Core Strategy is explained in the HRA Assessment and a copy of the assessment can be found on the Council's website at www.sstaffs.gov.uk.

Conformity with Other Policies and Strategies

1.10 The local planning strategy as set out in the Core Strategy is required to be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)[2] and have regard to any other relevant plans, policies and strategies relating to the area or to adjoining areas, in particular the Sustainable Community Strategies for Staffordshire and South Staffordshire District. All subsequent Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents in the Local Plan will need to be in conformity with the Core Strategy. Accordingly, the Core Strategy has been prepared in conformity with the following policies and strategies.

National Planning Policy

1.11 National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was published on the 27th March 2012. NPPF sets out 12 core planning principles, which are that planning should:

- be genuinely plan-led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings, with succinct local and neighbourhood plans setting out a positive vision for the future of the area. Plans should be kept up-to-date, and be based on joint working and co-operation to address larger than local issues. They should provide a practical framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made with a high degree of predictability and efficiency;

  - not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;

  - proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places

[2] Reference to the National Planning Policy Framework throughout the Core Strategy will be referred to as NPPF

that the country needs. Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth. Plans should take account of market signals, such as land prices and housing affordability, and set out a clear strategy for allocating sufficient land which is suitable for development in their area, taking account of the needs of the residential and business communities;

- always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;

- take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;

- support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change, and encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and encourage the use of renewable resources (for example, by the development of renewable energy);

- contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework;

- encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided it is not of high environmental value;

- promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognising that some open land can perform many functions (such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, carbon storage, or food production);

- conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations;

- actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable; and

- take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.

Further information on the NPPF can be obtained from: www.communities.gov.uk.

West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy

1.12 The planning strategy for the West Midlands is currently set out in the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS). The WMRSS was approved in 2004 but the strategy has been the subject of a phased revision. The revision process was intended to be carried out in three phases and the Phase 1 Revision setting out the long strategy for the Black Country area was issued in January 2008.

1.13 The Phase 2 Revision focused on housing development, employment land, town centres, transport and waste together with overarching policies on climate change and sustainable development. The Phase 2 Revision was progressed as far as the examination stage in April – June 2009 and the publication of the Panel report in September 2009 but has not been taken any further following the winding up of the West Midlands Regional Assembly. The Phase 3 Revision was intended to address a range of other topics including rural services, gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople, culture, sport and tourism, environment and minerals. Interim Policy Statements in respect of new accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and the Sub-Regional Apportionment of Construction Aggregates, was published in March 2010.

1.14 In May 2010 the Secretary of State wrote to local planning authorities announcing the Government's intention to rapidly abolish Regional Spatial Strategies.

1.15 Despite plans to abolish the WMRSS, the principles upon which it is based of rural/urban regeneration and sustainability remain valid. The aims and objectives of South Staffordshire's local planning strategy is underpinned by these principles and are a national objective of national policy, including Green Belt policy. The robust and up to date evidence base which underpinned the WMRSS will still support the local planning strategy for South Staffordshire.

Sustainable Community Strategies

Our County, Our Vision: A Sustainable Community Strategy for Staffordshire 2008-2023

1.16 The Sustainable Community Strategy for Staffordshire has been prepared by the Staffordshire Strategic Partnership. It is a fifteen year vision to improve the quality of life of all our residents, by increasing economic prosperity, improving local services, and developing partnership working. To achieve this vision the following priorities have been identified:

- a vibrant, prosperous and sustainable economy;
- strong, safe and cohesive communities;
- improved health and sense of wellbeing; and
- a protected, enhanced and respected environment

A Community of Communities: A Sustainable Community Strategy for South Staffordshire 2008-2020

1.17 The Sustainable Community Strategy for South Staffordshire has been prepared by the South Staffordshire Local Strategic Partnership and sets a long-term vision and plan for bringing about a sustainable improvement in the quality of life for all those living and working in the District. The Strategy contains a clear statement covering the future of South Staffordshire, its people, economy and environment. It brings together the needs, interest and aspirations of communities in South Staffordshire and is based around 6 key themes:

- Environmental Quality
- Housing
- Economic Vibrancy
- Community Safety
- Health and Wellbeing
- Children and Young People

1.18 The key priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy are:

Environmental Quality

- Maintain high standards of cleanliness on our streets and open spaces and take robust action to deter and reduce instances of environmental crime (littering, dog fouling and fly tipping)
- Reduce our impact on climate change and prepare for its effects
- Ensure residents have access to a diverse range of open spaces suitable to meet their needs
- Protect and enhance South Staffordshire's natural and built environments and distinctive landscape
- Minimise the amount of waste sent to landfill

Housing

- Maintain the sustainability of our local villages
- Ensure the supply of the right type of housing in the right locations
- Reduce and prevent homelessness
- Target poor quality housing and ensure that everyone has access to a decent house
- Ensure that a variety of housing options is available for our most vulnerable residents

Economic Vibrancy

- Increase the range of employment opportunities
- Support and develop the key business sectors

- Equip local people with the skills businesses require
- Attract new businesses and services into the area
- Improve access to services and jobs
- Deliver appropriate affordable and aspirational housing

Community Safety

- Reduce Violent Crime – including Actual Bodily Harm and alcohol fuelled violence
- Improve Road Safety
- Reduce Anti Social Behaviour – including Criminal Damage and Vehicle Related Nuisance
- Reduce Business Crime – including domestic burglary and distraction burglary
- Reduce Vehicle Crime – including theft of, and theft from, vehicles.

Health and Wellbeing

- Support older people to stay healthy and independent
- Promote healthy lifestyles of adults and young people
- Reduce health inequalities

Children and Young People

- Improve access to services
- Ensure the voices of children and young people in the District are heard
- Ensure families and parents are engaging with services

1.19 The Local Plan will be one of the primary means of delivering the spatial elements of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Other Strategies

South Staffordshire Council Plan 2012-2016

1.20 Our Council Plan sets out our main priorities for the next four years. The vision for the Council Plan is:

'We'll make South Staffordshire a safer and healthier place to live, work and visit with prosperous villages, thriving communities and a high quality environment.'

1.21 The Council Aims are set out under three headings; Your Place, Your Community and Your Council:

South Staffordshire - Your Place

- Supporting 'Better Broadband' access to homes and businesses.
- Providing good quality affordable housing.
- Promoting inward investment and sustaining local business and employment.

- Working with partners to deliver rural transport solutions.
- Promoting places to visit, play and enjoy as a tourist destination.
- Protecting the Green Belt.

South Staffordshire – Your Community

- Strengthening our rural communities.
- Making our district safe.
- Supporting the ageing population to be healthy and independent.
- Improving people's health and wellbeing.
- Creating a clean environment that is a great place to live for old and young alike.
- Ensuring that the Welfare Reform programme is managed efficiently, with appropriate support given to the most vulnerable.

South Staffordshire – Your Council

- Providing value for money and quality services.
- Being an ambitious council and excellent community leader.
- Being a council you can trust.
- Working with parish councils and other partners to plan and deliver services across our five localities.
- Maintaining a low Council Tax.
- Delivering good quality, efficient customer service.
- Investing in our workforce through training and development.

Staffordshire Local Transport Plan 2011

1.22 In preparing the Core Strategy account has been taken of the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) prepared by Staffordshire County Council. The Strategy sets out the transport strategy for South Staffordshire and identifies a number of transport improvements to be delivered and these include priority measures to improve accessibility, create safer roads and reduce the impact of traffic.

Staffordshire Minerals Core Strategy and Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Waste Core Strategy

1.23 The County Council is preparing a Minerals Core Strategy and a Waste Core Strategy. These documents will set out the vision, objectives and spatial strategies for future mineral and waste related development within Staffordshire for the next 15 to 20 years. The Waste Core Strategy is being prepared jointly with the City of Stoke-on-Trent. Currently, priority is being given to the preparation of the Waste Core Strategy and the strategy covering the period 2010-2026 was submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination on the 20th January 2012.

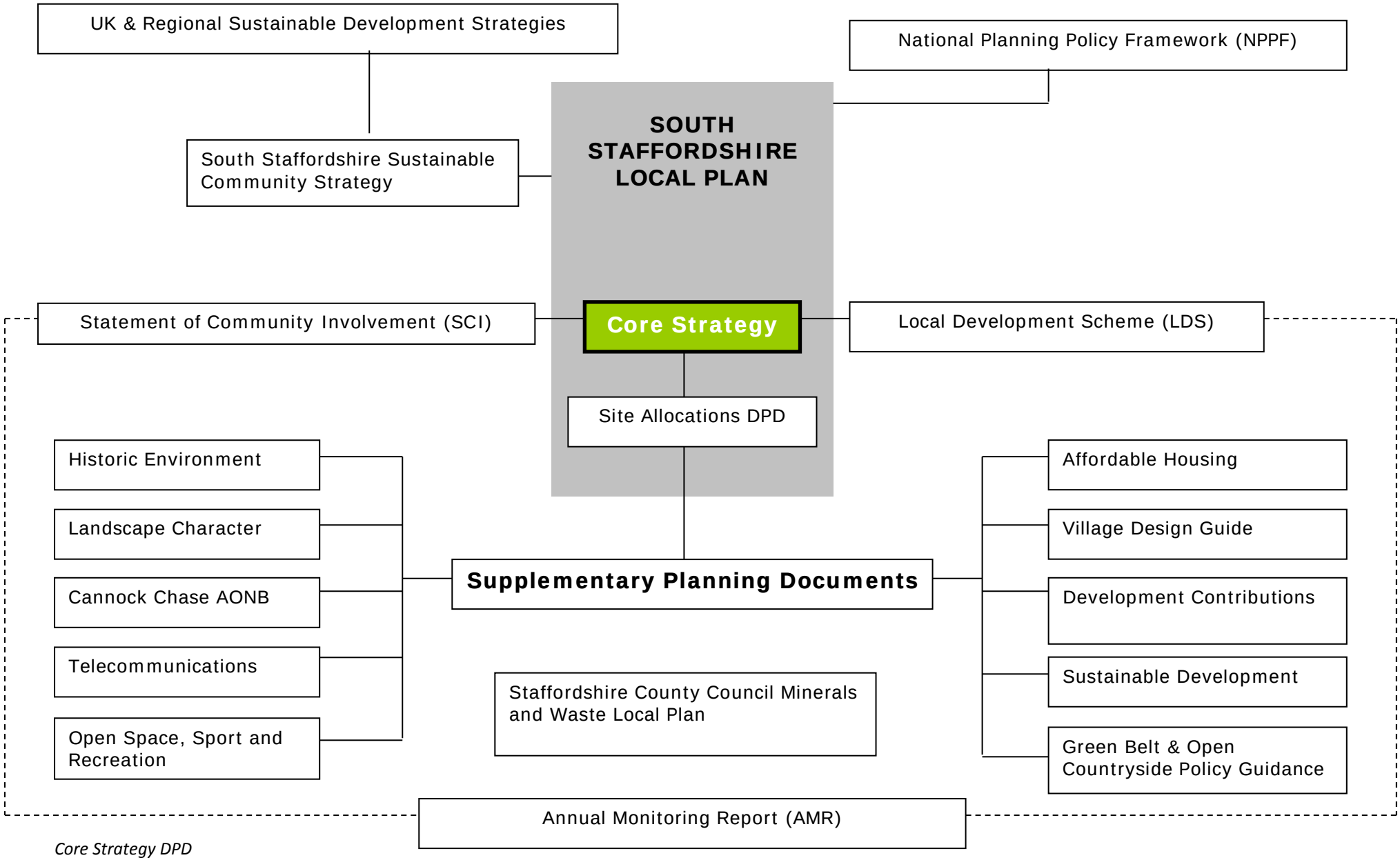
Key Evidence

1.24 The local planning strategy for South Staffordshire as set out in the Core Strategy is based on firm supporting evidence. A range of studies, assessments and background

documents have been produced that have informed the preparation of the Core Strategy and these are referred to throughout the strategy document. The strategy is also underpinned by the evidence base of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS).

1.25 There is a wide range of other plans and strategies at the local level that have informed the strategy and further information on these can be found on the Council's website at www.sstaffs.gov.uk.

South Staffordshire Local Plan – Family Tree



= The Statutory Development Plan

Consultation Process

1.26 The Core Strategy has been subject to extensive consultation since preparation began in 2005. In working towards the preparation of this Core Strategy, consultation took place on an initial **Issues and Options** Document (October 2006), **Development Policies** Document (2008), **Preferred Spatial Strategy** Document (January 2009) and a **Policy Choices** Document (January 2010). These consultation stages provided important information, identifying issues to be addressed, further issues to be examined, a vision to be aimed for, spatial objectives to be delivered and a framework upon which to develop core strategic policies and development management policies. These documents and summaries of the responses to the consultations can be viewed at the Council Offices or on-line at www.sstaffs.gov.uk

1.27 The Core Strategy was submitted to the Secretary of State on 9th September 2011 examined by a Planning Inspector, Mr Simon Berkeley BA MA MRTPI. The Hearing sessions of the Examination in Public took place on the 29th November 2011 lasting for two days. At the Examination a number of changes were suggested to ensure the soundness of the document.

1.28 The Council prepared a Schedule of Proposed Modifications following the Examination, and a 6 week period of consultation was undertaken from the 22nd February to the 4th April 2012.

1.29 During this consultation on post hearing proposed modifications, the Government issued the NPPF. As a result of this, the Council proposed further modifications in light of the NPPF.

1.29 All of the modifications proposed by the Council during these two consultation periods were recommended to be included in the adopted Core Strategy by the Inspector after full consideration of the representations from other parties on these issues.

2. A Spatial Portrait of South Staffordshire

Introduction

2.1 South Staffordshire is a rural District on the north western edge of the West Midlands Conurbation. It has an area of 101,000 acres (40,400 hectares) and has a population of just over 106,000, which results in a relatively low population density of 2.61 persons per hectare. Much of South Staffordshire lies within the West Midlands Green Belt – 32,310 hectares (80%) and the remainder to the north of the Green Belt boundary is defined as 'Open Countryside'. South Staffordshire District is shown on the context map at the end of this Chapter.

Map 1 – Regional Context Map

2.2 South Staffordshire is the southernmost of the nine Staffordshire districts including the City of Stoke-on-Trent, and adjoins the County Town of Stafford and the Market Town of

Cannock. The District adjoins the Major Urban Area of the West Midlands Conurbation and is very close to the Black Country towns of Dudley and Walsall and the City of Wolverhampton. The District also shares its boundaries with Shropshire and the towns of Bridgnorth and Telford to the west, and with the County of Worcestershire to the south.

2.3 South Staffordshire has historically proven to be an attractive location for people to live. It has been a destination for migrants from the West Midlands major urban area and other nearby towns and pressure for housing growth over and above the needs arising purely from within the District has continued.

Character, Environment and History

2.4 South Staffordshire is made up of 27 parishes with a dispersed and diverse settlement pattern of villages ranging from small hamlets to large villages with over 13,000 residents, each with their own distinctive character set in attractive countryside. There is no single dominant settlement and South Staffordshire can be described as a 'community of communities'.

2.5 The villages of Brewood, Codsall, Bilbrook, Cheslyn Hay, Great Wyrley, Kinver, Penkridge, Perton and Wombourne are the largest villages in the District and act as service centres for smaller villages in the surrounding rural areas. Post war growth saw some villages such as Wombourne expanded with large housing estates developed through 'overspill agreements' and several villages were the subject of growth from the 1960's to the 1990's.

2.6 The larger villages contain a wide range of community facilities and services, libraries, sport and recreation including leisure centres, shopping, commercial and employment areas and serve the smaller outlying villages and hamlets. However, local residents do rely on the services provided within towns and cities outside of the District to meet some of their 'higher order' needs such as hospitals, certain types of retail needs and employment opportunities. There is a network of community and village halls across South Staffordshire providing a valuable focus for social, community and recreational activities and voluntary working is a strong feature.

2.7 South Staffordshire has a rich legacy of historic buildings and landscapes with conservation areas, historic parklands and gardens, and buildings of local importance. These define the local identity and distinctive character of the historic environment of the District.

2.8 There are over 850 listed buildings and structures, and 19 Conservation areas (including 16 village conservation areas) together with many other locally important buildings and structures, which is an indication of the historic and architectural quality of many of the villages. The District's archaeological resource is also rich and varied and includes scheduled ancient monuments such as the clusters of Roman camps and non designated sites.

2.9 The landscape and wildlife heritage character of the South Staffordshire is varied. The predominant landscape structure is based on a pattern of trees, hedgerows and small woods and has changed significantly over the centuries. Many trees and hedgerows have been removed through agricultural activity and mineral extraction. Substantial areas of lowland heath have given way to forestry and woodland. Rapid development of settlements since the 2nd World War has also affected the character of the landscape. The high quality of the landscape owes much to the planting associated with historic parklands and gardens which are acknowledged as important features. There are 13 historic parklands and gardens in South Staffordshire and those at Chillington, Enville, Himley, Patshull and Weston Park are of particularly high quality.

2.10 The varied landscapes in the District are also home to a rich biodiversity resource providing many types of habitats including areas of international, national and local nature conservation importance including a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), National Nature Reserve (NNR), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs), and also Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) which alone total over 370 hectares. There are also important areas of lowland heath such as Shoal Hill Common.

2.11 There are many recreation and leisure facilities in South Staffordshire serving the local population and those that live outside the area. Within the villages, open space, children's play areas, playing fields, leisure centres and other indoor and outdoor facilities are an important part of community life.

2.12 The countryside outside the villages has a role to play in providing for the recreational needs of the Black Country and surrounding areas. Extensive areas of open land such as Kinver Edge, Highgate Common, Shoal Hill Common, Baggeridge Country Park, South Staffordshire Railway Walk, the Wom Brook Walk and the Wyrley Essington Canal Linear Walk provide informal leisurely pursuits as well as the enjoyment of the natural environment. The western fringe of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) lies within the District and is valued for its high landscape quality, wildlife and recreational value, and there is a statutory obligation to protect and manage the area.

2.13 The canals, rivers, ponds, lakes, reservoirs and the extensive network of footpath and bridleways in the District provide a wide range of recreation and leisure opportunities and for informal access to the countryside as well as providing links with adjoining areas. The canal network is of regional and local significance and consists of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, Shropshire Union Canal and the Stourbridge Canal providing opportunities for nature conservation, education and tourism. Many structures and buildings found along the canal network contribute to the historic environment of the District.

2.14 South Staffordshire is covered by two river catchments: Smestow Brook is within the River Severn catchment; and the River Penk is within the Trent catchment. Many additional tributaries flow into the Main Rivers contributing to the flood risk within the District. Penkridge, Wombourne and Kinver are known to be affected by fluvial flooding, with a number of other settlements also being affected by flooding from fluvial sources.

Water is abstracted from the Penk and its tributaries for uses such as irrigation of crops, with the local sandstones being used as a source of public drinking water. Both of these sources of water are restricted. The Water Framework Directive classifies 6 of the main watercourses within this district as being of Moderate Status, and 4 being of Poor Status. All these watercourses will need to be at Good Status by 2015.

Community Characteristics

2.15 There are some general characteristics of the population that will have a bearing on the development of the District and the delivery of future service provision. South Staffordshire has an increasingly ageing population especially the very old. 23.4%[3] of the population are of retirement age or older which compares with 19.1%[1] in England and Wales. The most rapidly increasing sector of the population is the 75+ age group, and over the next 20 years, it is expected that this age group will more than double. It is clear that the ageing population will be a significant issue for South Staffordshire and service delivery agencies such as the County Council and the Primary Care Trust (PCT).

2.16 In terms of the working age population in South Staffordshire, in 2009 this was 54.2%[4] compared to 63.6%[2] for the West Midlands as a whole and 65%[2] for Great Britain. However of these, some 83.5%[2] of the working population was economically active, compared to 75.6%[2] for the West Midlands and 76.5%[2] for Great Britain.

2.17 The ethnic make-up of South Staffordshire differs significantly from regional and national compositions, with white people accounting for a larger proportion of the population than any other ethnic group at 95.5%[5].

2.18 South Staffordshire is considered to be a relatively prosperous area with low levels of deprivation and is ranked 251[6] out of 354 (1 being the highest level of deprivation and 354 being the lowest) districts in England based on the average of ward scores (it falls into the 30% least deprived districts nationally by the measure). However, as with all information that is available at District level, issues do vary considerably throughout the localities and there are pockets of deprivation present in some communities. The most deprived parts of the District are around the areas of Huntington, Essington and the Giggetty Estate in Wombourne which all fall within the 40% most deprived Super Output Areas (SOAs) nationally. There are no (SOAs) falling within the 20% most deprived SOAs nationally.

Housing

2.19 There are five Housing Market Areas identified in South Staffordshire District in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (April 2010).

[3] ONS June 2008 mid estimate
[4] Nomisweb April 2009-March 2010 Statistics
[5] ONS June 2007 mid estimate
[6] ONS 2000

2.20 The overall quality of housing within South Staffordshire is generally good and there is a high level of ownership at over 86%, whilst social rented housing accounts for only about 14% of the total. The principal issues in relation to housing are addressing affordability, and mix and type of housing to meet local needs, whilst recognising the constraints that impact upon the District.

2.21 South Staffordshire has seen rapid housing expansion in the last 30 years as its villages have proved attractive to people prepared to travel to work in nearby major urban areas, including the West Midlands conurbation. The District contains over 44,000 households. As a result of this trend, house prices in South Staffordshire have been increasing and are now relatively high, with the average house price for the District of £221,000[7] in August 2010, in comparison with the West Midlands conurbation, which averaged at £121,398[8] at the same period. The ratio of house prices to incomes is high in regional terms, and therefore maintaining an adequate and suitable supply of affordable housing for people on low incomes and first time buyers presents a particular challenge.

Education, Economy and Employment

2.22 Both two and three-tier education systems of primary, middle, and high schools operate in South Staffordshire, and there are currently 36 primary schools, 5 middle schools, and 6 high schools in the District. South Staffordshire College at Rodbaston near Penkridge, provides education and training in land based and allied farm and rural industries.

2.23 In South Staffordshire the GCSE grades achieved by all pupils equal the level of achievement nationally; however boys exceed the national average, especially in Maths and English[9].

2.24 The nature and pattern of employment in the District has changed over time with the decline of traditional industries such as agriculture and coal mining, production, and manufacturing. The number of people employed in the service industries, including tourism, has grown and the service sector is now an important part of the local economy and accounts for 75.4%[10] of economically active residents' employment. The percentage of the workforce employed in manufacturing and construction is 22.4%[8]. Tourism is an important part of the local economy mainly based on the heritage, character and environment of the District.

2.25 South Staffordshire is relatively prosperous with 54.8%[11] of those economically active, employed within the top 3 professional and managerial sectors, with only 6.3%[9] of the economically active population unemployed. Overall, the District is an attractive location for industrial development with a diverse range of small businesses as well as

[7] Hometrack August 2010
[8] Land Registry 2010
[9] ONS Sept 08-Aug09
[10] Nomisweb 2008
[11] Nomisweb April 2009-March 2010

medium and large firms. In 2007 there was a net gain of 110[12] VAT registered businesses, taking the total to 3580[10]. The development of strategic employment sites at Hilton Cross and (i54) Wobaston Road will give a valuable boost to the local economy.

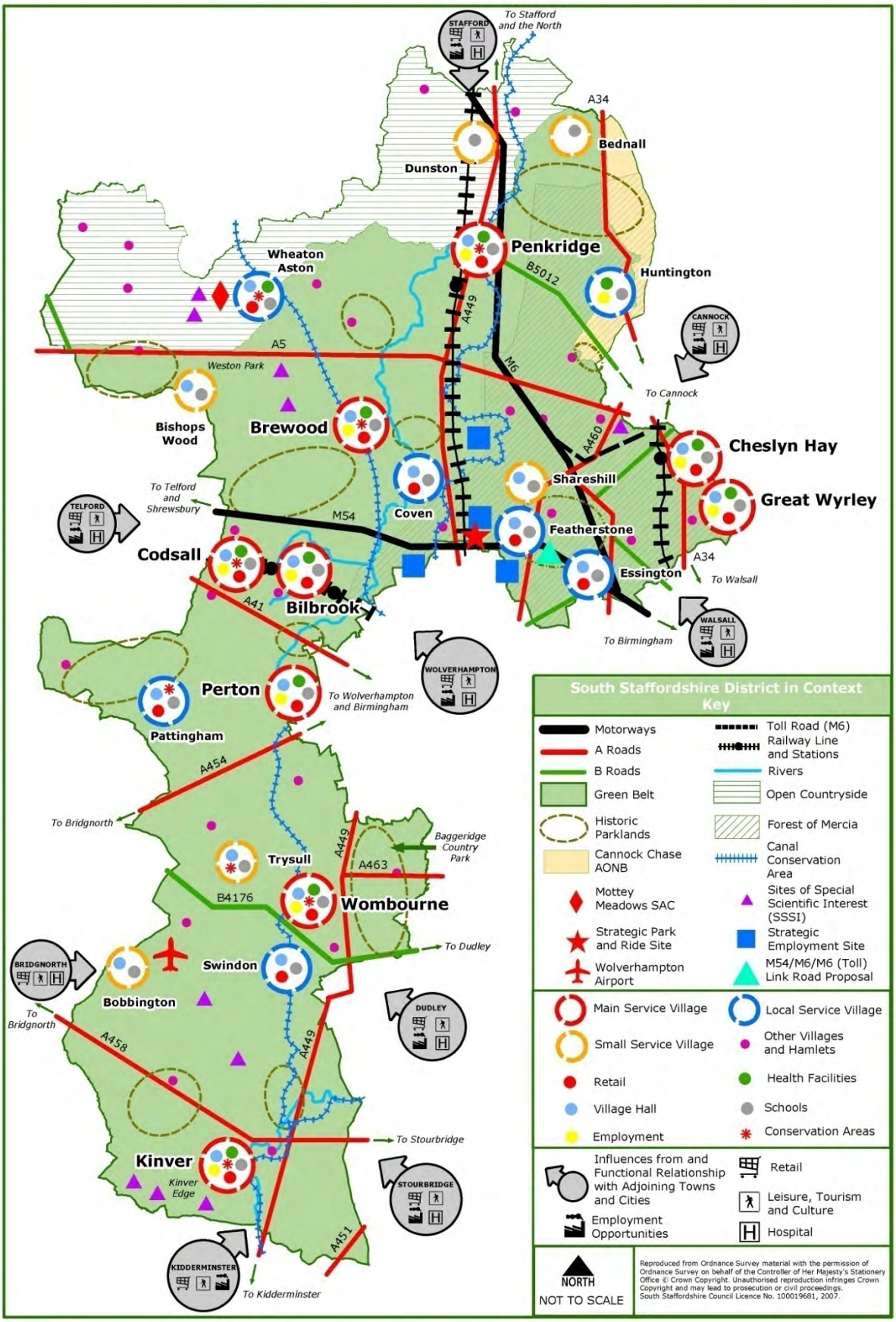
Transport and Communications

2.26 The District benefits from good road and rail links with the West Midlands and other parts of the country. The West Coast main railway line runs through the District and local services are provided on the Shrewsbury to Wolverhampton, and Walsall to Rugeley lines linking with towns and cities in the Region. The M6, M6 Toll and the M54 run through the District giving access to the Midlands motorway network and beyond.

2.27 Public transport in the District is not very good and transport links between the north and south are particularly poor. There is a high level of car dependence (85.6% of households have one or more cars), though continuing efforts are being made to improve public and community transport provision, and to improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. There is an airport on the western edge of the District at Halfpenny Green, close to the Shropshire border, providing general aviation including business and recreational flying and flying training.

[12] Nomisweb 2007

Map 2 - South Staffordshire District in Context



3. Issues and Challenges facing South Staffordshire

Introduction

3.1 The evidence base underpinning the preparation of the local planning strategy set out in the Core Strategy including residents' panel surveys, work on the Sustainable Community Strategy and the community engagement work for the Core Strategy to date, has identified a number of key issues that need to be addressed by the Local Plan. The key issues and challenges that will drive change in the District, the spatial issues that arise and which the Core Strategy seeks to address are summarised below under the Sustainable Community Strategy themes which are:

- Environmental Quality
- Housing
- Economic Vibrancy
- Community Safety
- Health and Wellbeing
- Children and Young People

Environmental Quality

- **Protecting the Green Belt and Open Countryside**. Maintaining the local distinctiveness, character and quality of the countryside and the villages in South Staffordshire will remain key priorities for the future of the District.

- **Determining the best way of achieving sustainable development in South Staffordshire.** Within the context of the new development requirements established by the Regional Spatial Strategy, determining the location and distribution of new housing and employment development will be some of the most important issues to be addressed. Ensuring that new development is sustainable, addressing the implications of climate change and the reduction of CO2 emissions, encouraging renewable energy and the promotion of energy efficiency will be major challenges.

- **Protecting and improving the environment.** Looking after the environment and ensuring that it is passed on to future generations in an improved state is an important responsibility. Many of the District's environmental assets are improving including air and water quality and work has been undertaken to identify the extent of contaminated land. Ensuring that the environment is protected, tackling environmental crime and reducing flood risk are key issues to be addressed, together with the location of new development and related transport issues such as the movement of traffic will need careful consideration.

- **Protecting and enhancing South Staffordshire's biodiversity.** It is recognised that existing wildlife sites including Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves, and Sites of Biological Importance need to be protected, managed and enhanced and that opportunities need to be taken to

create new wildlife habitats in order to sustain and restore biodiversity in the District.

- **Maintaining the historic character of villages and enhancing the historic environment.** There is a need to ensure that the local identity and distinctive character of the historic environment in South Staffordshire, including its buildings and landscapes, are sustained for the future. Ensuring high quality design and local distinctiveness in new development is an issue to be addressed.

Housing

- **Delivering affordable housing to meet local needs.** The average house price in South Staffordshire is high and has been increasing. Ensuring that affordable housing is provided to meet local needs will be a key priority.

- **Delivering Decent Homes.** Achieving the delivery of decent homes for all sections of the community will be one of the most important issues to be addressed.

- **Meeting the Provision of Extra Care Accommodation.** The provision of extra care accommodation and housing designed to meet the needs of the ageing population are key challenges.

Economic Vibrancy

- **Ensuring that local people have access to a diverse range of employment opportunities within South Staffordshire and the Black Country.** A large proportion of South Staffordshire's working population travels to work outside the District. Supporting local businesses through the identification of employment sites, encouraging new employment opportunities and supporting the development of skills and access to education and training opportunities, are important issues to be addressed. The aspiration will be to provide jobs locally and reduce levels of out commuting. The re-use of redundant rural buildings for employment uses could provide opportunities for residents to gain employment locally, thus reducing the need to travel.

- **Supporting the development of the Black Country Economy.** The Black Country economy is an important source of jobs for the residents of South Staffordshire and is an important factor in the economy of the District and prosperity of its residents.

- **Supporting farm diversification.** With the changes to the farming industry there has been increasing recognition of the need to diversify the rural economy whilst enabling farmers to continue managing the rural landscape. Farm complexes, with a range of different size buildings, can offer scope for alternative employment uses that support the rural economy, including tourism, in preference to other uses which may be less sustainable, such as conversions to residential uses.

- **Developing tourism and raising awareness of the District.** Tourism is an important part of the local economy. It is recognised that there is a need to support and encourage the improvement of tourist facilities and attractions and promote South Staffordshire as a tourist destination; particularly as a base from which to access a wide range of different tourist attractions within the West Midlands Region and beyond, in addition to the attractive rural surroundings and heritage of South Staffordshire.

- **Ensuring that local people have access to a good range of essential facilities and services.** The loss of facilities and services in villages are particular concerns. Protecting village shops and community facilities and providing accessible community delivered services to meet the needs of all sectors of the community are key priorities.

- **Ensuring the provision of a better public transport service.** The level of car ownership in South Staffordshire is high and improving public transport for those without a car remains a priority. A high quality and effective rural public transport service is essential to ensure that people have access to facilities and services within the District and access to key service centres outside the District. Innovative transport solutions will be needed to improve travel between villages in the District, including solutions that do not rely solely on public transport provision. Supporting the provision of sustainable transport through the development and improvement of footpaths and cycleways will be a key issue.

Community Safety

- **Keeping the population safe.** The reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour and people's fear of crime are key issues to be addressed. There is a need to promote community safety and ensure that opportunities are taken to design out crime in new development. There is also the need to ensure that children have safe routes to school and that identified highway safety issues in the District are addressed.

Health and Wellbeing

- **Meeting the needs of the elderly population in the District.** In line with national trends, South Staffordshire has an increasingly ageing population especially the very old and over the next 20 years it is expected that those in the age group 75 and over will more than double. There is a concern that the expected changes in the population structure, particularly the increase in the number of elderly residents, will have an impact on the social mix and balance of the population in some of the villages in the District. Meeting the needs of the elderly population including the development of new and improved services and the provision of the right mix of specialist housing, will be major challenges.

- **Keeping the population healthier longer.** The health and wellbeing of the people of South Staffordshire remains a priority. The population of the District is growing older and living longer and there is a need to ensure a good quality of life for everyone. It

is important that that each community has access to locally delivered facilities and services including primary care services, health centres and GP surgeries. There is also a need for access to leisure, recreational and cultural facilities and access to good quality green space, including the wider countryside, with provision for walking and cycling.

Children and Young People

- **Meeting the needs of children and young people in the District.** Supporting the provision of facilities for children's play and meeting the needs of teenagers in South Staffordshire including access to education and training are key issues to be addressed.

Cross Boundary Issues

3.2 In preparing the Core Strategy there has been liaison with adjoining local authorities and a number of cross-boundary issues have been identified. The issues identified are summarised below, and those issues that are of significance and the response to them are set out in the relevant sections of the Core Strategy document.

Stafford Borough Council

- Growth aspirations of Stafford
- Impact of growth of Stafford on Cannock Chase AONB and Special Area of Conservation
- Rural economy/open countryside – need for complementary approach
- Transport links – West Coast rail line, M6 Motorway, A449, A34, Staffs/Worcestershire Canal
- Green Infrastructure links – need for complementary approach to cross boundary green space corridors
- Cumulative impact of potential renewable energy proposals
- Sport and Recreation – reliance on Stafford for built facilities (sports halls and swimming pools)
- Regional Logistics Site –to consider if an RLS is needed in light of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) evidence base

Cannock Chase District Council

- Green Belt - consistent policy approach required
- Economic/labour market links – commuting into Cannock Town
- Transport links – M6 Toll Motorway, A5, A34, A460
- Housing links – Sub Regional Housing Market Area and Sub Regional Gypsies and Travellers Study Area
- Impact of housing growth, tourism and recreation on Cannock Chase AONB and Special Area of Conservation– need for complementary approach

- Hatherton Branch Canal – need for consistent policy approach to the restoration of the canal
- Landscape - Forest of Mercia need for complementary approach by forest partners
- Green Infrastructure links – need for complementary approach to cross boundary green space corridors
- Sport and Recreation – reliance on Cannock for built facilities (sports halls and swimming pools)
- Regional Logistics Site –to consider if an RLS is needed in light of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) evidence base

Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council

- Green Belt - consistent policy approach required
- Economic/labour market links - commuting into conurbation
- Pressure for housing development – need to constrain housing development adjacent to the MUA
- Impact of housing growth, tourism and recreation on Cannock Chase AONB and Special Area of Conservation– need for complementary approach
- Housing links - Sub Regional Housing Market Area
- Transport links – M6 Motorway, A34
- Hatherton Branch Canal - need for consistent policy approach to the restoration of the canal
- Landscape - Forest of Mercia need for complementary approach by forest partners
- Green Infrastructure links – need for complementary approach to cross boundary green space corridors
- Reliance on South Staffordshire for green space/outdoor recreation
- Sport and Recreation – reliance on Walsall for built facilities (sports halls and swimming pools)
- Regional Logistics Site –to consider if an RLS is needed in light of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) evidence base

Wolverhampton City Council

- Green Belt - consistent policy approach required
- Economic/labour market links – i54 Wobaston Road, links with Stafford Road Regeneration Corridor, high technology/creative industries, high levels of commuting into conurbation
- Pressure for housing development – need to constrain housing development adjacent to the MUA
- Impact of housing growth, tourism and recreation on Cannock Chase AONB and

Special Area of Conservation– need for complementary approach
- Housing links - Sub Regional Housing Market Area
- Transport links – public transport links into the conurbation
- Tourism links – links to tourist attractions
- Green Infrastructure links – need for complementary approach to cross boundary green space corridors
- Reliance on South Staffordshire for green space/outdoor recreation
- Sport and Recreation – reliance on Wolverhampton for built facilities (sports halls and swimming pools)
- Regional Logistics Site –to consider if an RLS is needed in light of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) evidence base

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

- Green Belt – consistent policy approach required
- Pressure for housing development – need to constrain housing development adjacent to the MUA
- Impact of housing growth, tourism and recreation on Cannock Chase AONB and Special Area of Conservation– need for complementary approach
- Housing links - Sub Regional Housing Market Area
- Economic links – commuting into conurbation, links to adjacent regeneration corridor
- Tourism/recreation links – links to tourist attractions
- Green Infrastructure links – need for complementary approach to cross boundary green space corridors
- Reliance on South Staffordshire for green space/outdoor recreation
- Sport and Recreation – reliance on Dudley for built facilities (sports halls and swimming pools)
- Regional Logistics Site –to consider if an RLS is needed in light of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) evidence base

Bromsgrove District Council

- Green Belt – consistent policy approach required

Wyre Forest District Council

- Green Belt – consistent policy approach required
- Rural Economy – need for complementary approach
- Transport links – A449, Staff/Worcs Canal
- Tourism/recreation links – Kinver Edge/Kingsford Country Park
- Green Infrastructure links – need for complementary approach to cross

boundary green space corridors

Shropshire Council

- Green Belt – consistent policy approach required
- Rural economy – need for a complementary approach
- Green Infrastructure links – need for complementary approach to cross boundary green space corridors

Telford and Wrekin Borough Council

- Housing links - Sub Regional Housing Market Area
- Rural Economy – need for a complementary approach
- Transport links – M54 Motorway, A5, A41, Shrewsbury to Wolverhampton rail line
- Green Infrastructure links – need for complementary approach to cross boundary green space corridors

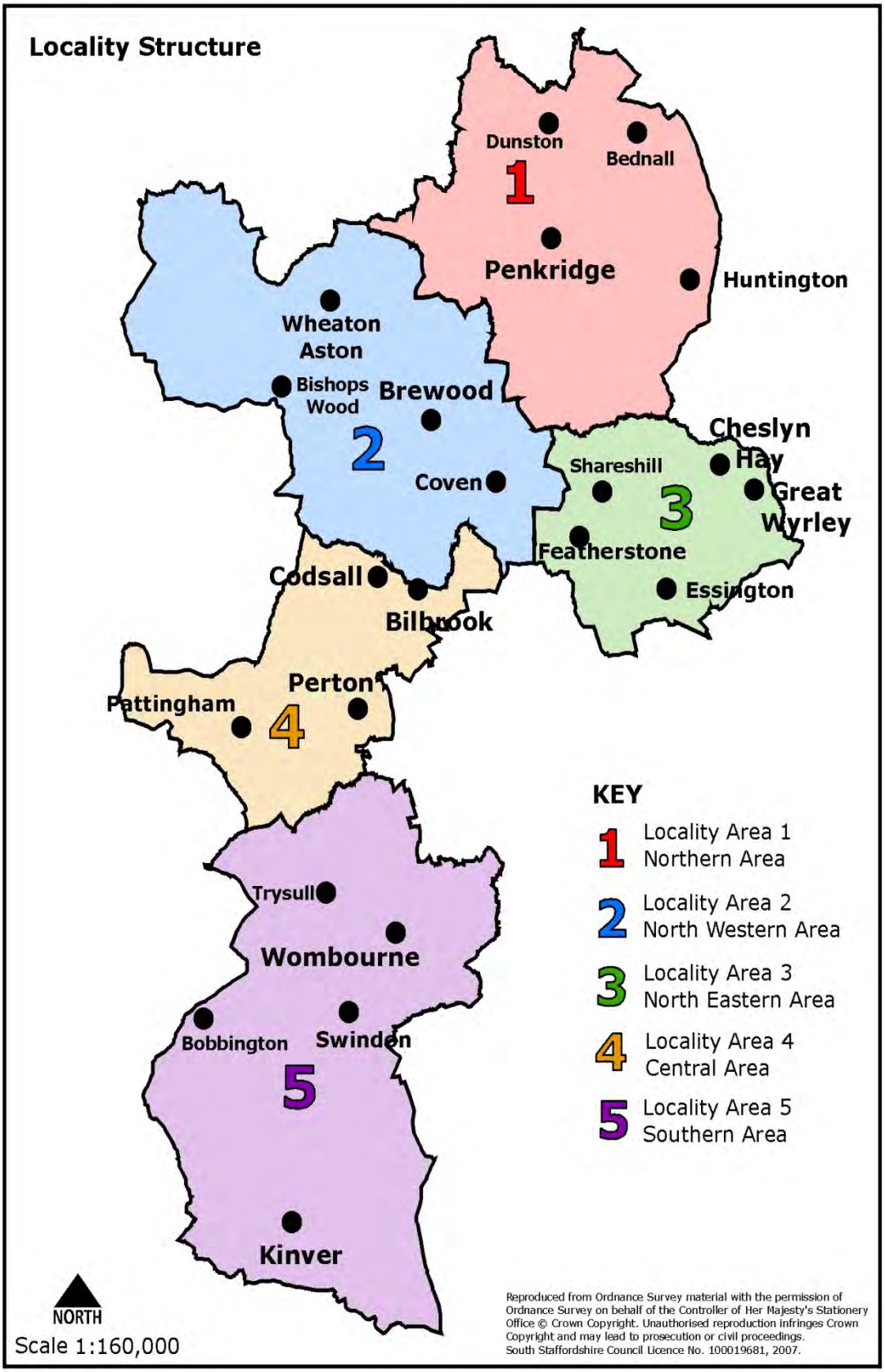
Locality Working

3.3 The Council has been working with its partners in the Local Strategic Partnership to establish the principle of 'locality working' in order to further develop service delivery across South Staffordshire. A locality model has been developed and five locality areas have been defined based on parish boundaries and electoral divisions and these are shown on the map on page 28. The key benefits of locality working are:

- Service providers engaging at a local level
- Making services better tailored to local needs
- Partners working together and agreeing local issues
- Identifying and fixing the little things in a specific area
- Providing a voice for each locality
- Strengthening communication/understanding and awareness

3.4 The Core Strategy seeks to address the issues and challenges identified above and sets out a local Spatial Strategy that will deliver change within each of the locality areas and that is distinctive to South Staffordshire. Following extensive consultation with local elected members and community groups, and having assessed data for each locality collected from partners and national sources, a series of Locality Delivery Plans have been developed. The Locality Delivery Plans highlight key priority projects that will benefit from partnership commitment and these will be over and above the work that is currently being delivered within the locality areas. Further information about the Locality Delivery Plans can be found on the LSP website at www.lsp.sstaffs.gov.uk.

Map 3 – Locality Structure



4. Vision for South Staffordshire

4.1 The following Vision is the guiding/principal aim for the Local Plan and sets out a long term vision of what South Staffordshire will be like by 2028. The Vision takes account of issues and challenges facing South Staffordshire and existing plans and strategies including the South Staffordshire and Staffordshire Sustainable Community Strategies (SCS) and the Council Plan.

Vision

"By 2028 the villages and countryside of South Staffordshire will have maintained and enhanced their character and local distinctiveness, including the natural and historic environment and character of the wider rural landscape. They will be places where sustainable safe communities have been encouraged to thrive and where local people, families and the elderly enjoy access to a broad range of well designed housing (including affordable housing and specialist housing), enjoy access to a good range of employment opportunities and enjoy improved access to local services and facilities (including shops, social, medical and educational facilities, open space, outdoor and indoor sports facilities). In recognition of the continuing interdependence of the area, particularly with the West Midlands Conurbation, concerns for the sustainable prosperity of the Black Country will be respected including the need to improve and maintain good public transport links."

4.2 The evidence gathered during the preparation of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Plan Core Strategy indicates that there are a number of key issues that are relevant to all localities and which will need to be addressed and these are:

- Maintaining Local Services
- Rural Accessibility
- Ageing Population
- Affordable Housing
- Local Impact of Climate Change

4.3 Working together with key partners and organisations the Local Plan will seek to realise and deliver a sustainable future for South Staffordshire. The Vision for South Staffordshire in 2028 is expressed further overleaf in relation to each of the five locality areas.

Vision Locality Area 1 (Northern Area)

Within the northern area of the District, planned and carefully managed housing growth, which will have contributed to meeting its local needs, will have taken place and key services and facilities delivered and maintained at local community level. Affordable housing to meet local housing needs will have been delivered on suitable

sites.

The village of Penkridge will have developed its key role as the main service village and improvements to community infrastructure, facilities and services including social care and health facilities and the provision of extra care housing will have been delivered with partners. A new village park adjacent to the River Penk will be providing additional accessible green space and a focus for community events and activities, and the aspiration to develop facilities for young people in the village will have been achieved. Penkridge market will have continued to be an integral and prosperous part of the village. High quality facilities will be available at Penkridge railway station including car and cycle parking and frequent passenger services will give access to nearby towns, the West Midlands and further afield.

In the smaller villages of Dunston and Bednall small-scale rural affordable housing will have been delivered to meet local needs and to support the sustainability of these communities.

The high quality built environment of the villages in the locality area will be maintained. Within Penkridge Conservation Area the quality of the environment will have been maintained and enhanced in accordance with the management plan for the area. The wider historic environment within the locality area, including the historic parklands at Teddesley and Hatherton and the archaeological resource will have been maintained and enhanced and progress will have been made in reducing the number of buildings identified as being at risk.

Within the locality area, identified needs for indoor and outdoor sport and recreation and improved community access to existing sports facilities will be addressed in partnership with key organisations. This includes improving the quality of existing facilities and delivering high quality new facilities.

The redevelopment and regeneration of the former Littleton Colliery site at Huntington will have been completed and a new school and community facilities provided to serve the local community.

Within the locality area, development in the Green Belt and Open Countryside will have been managed in order to maintain the separation and distinctiveness of villages, with protection for the environment and appropriate countryside uses, including support for farm diversification schemes. The landscape character and visual quality of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and its setting, including Shoal Hill Common Local Nature Reserve will have been maintained and enhanced through local initiatives.

The existing natural assets within the locality area including wildlife habitats and ecological networks will continue to be protected and enhanced. Proposals to enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure links will have been delivered with the support of key partners.

Vision Locality Area 2 (North Western Area)

The rural area to the north west of the District, with its variety of villages and small farming communities, will have developed gradually with managed housing growth, which will have contributed to meeting its local needs, in the villages of Brewood, Coven, Wheaton Aston and Bishops Wood. Affordable housing to meet local housing needs will have been delivered on suitable sites.

The village of Brewood will be the main service village and improvements to community infrastructure, facilities and services including social care and health facilities and the provision of extra care housing will have been delivered with partners to serve outlying rural communities. Opportunities will have come forward for the co-location of community facilities in order to maximise the sustainability of the village. The high quality of the built environment of Brewood Conservation Area will have been maintained and enhanced in accordance with the management plan for the area. The area of natural green space at Barnfield Sand Beds will be established as a valuable wildlife site and will be managed as a Local Nature Reserve.

The wider historic environment within the locality area including the historic parklands at Chillington, Somerford, Stretton and Weston Park and the archaeological resource, will have been maintained and enhanced and progress will have been made in reducing the number of buildings identified as being at risk.

The villages of Coven and Wheaton Aston will have experienced limited growth to meet local needs and to support existing facilities and services. In the smaller village of Bishops Wood small-scale rural affordable housing will have been delivered to meet local need and support the sustainability of the village.

Within the locality area, identified needs for indoor and outdoor sport and recreation and improved community access to existing sports facilities will be addressed in partnership with key organisations. This includes improving the quality of existing facilities and delivering high quality new facilities.

Development in the Green Belt and Open Countryside within the locality area will have been managed in order to maintain the separation and distinctiveness of villages, with protection for the environment and appropriate countryside uses, including support for farm diversification schemes. The high quality landscape in the area including the historic parklands and gardens at Chillington Hall and Weston Park will continue to be a distinctive feature and an attraction for visitors.

The existing natural assets within the locality area including wildlife habitats and ecological networks will continue to be protected and enhanced. Proposals to enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure links will have been delivered with the support of key partners.

Mottey Meadows Special Area of Conservation near Wheaton Aston will continue to be protected for its nature conservation importance.

Vision Locality Area 3 (North Eastern Area)

The local communities within the north eastern area of the District have seen considerable development and change over the last 30 years, and mineral working and other activities have left a degraded landscape in parts of the locality. The period up to 2028 will be a time of consolidation with the emphasis on improving the environment and much reduced levels of development.

The villages of Cheslyn Hay and Great Wyrley will have retained their role and distinctive character as main service villages and improvements to community infrastructure, facilities and services including social care and health facilities, the provision of affordable housing and extra care housing and cemetery provision will have been delivered with partners.

The villages of Essington and Featherstone will have experienced limited growth which will have contributed to meeting their local needs and to support existing facilities and services. Affordable housing and proposals to provide extra care housing within these communities will have been delivered with partners. In Featherstone, practical projects to improve the environment and the development of services and activities for young people will have reshaped the village and helped to develop a sense of place and community pride. New open space and recreation facilities including playing pitches to serve the community will have been delivered through new development.

In the smaller village of Shareshill small-scale rural affordable housing will have been delivered to meet local need and support the sustainability of the village.

The wider historic environment within the locality area, including the historic parkland at Hilton Park and the archaeological resource will have been maintained and progress will have been made on reducing the number of buildings identified as being at risk.

Within the locality area, identified needs for indoor and outdoor sport and recreation and improved community access to existing sports facilities will be addressed in partnership with key organisations. This includes improving the quality of existing facilities and delivering high quality new facilities.

The strategic employment site at Hilton Cross will have been completed to a high standard of design and landscaping, and will be providing job opportunities for local communities and the Black Country. The redevelopment and regeneration of brownfield land at the Royal Ordnance Factory for employment use will have transformed the character and appearance of the area bringing further job opportunities.

Within the locality area, development in the Green Belt will have been managed in order to maintain the separation and distinctiveness of villages, with protection for

the environment and appropriate countryside uses, including support for farm diversification schemes. Schemes to improve the character and quality of the landscape in the area will have been delivered through the Forest of Mercia and new development.

The existing natural assets within the locality area including wildlife habitats and ecological networks will continue to be protected and enhanced. Proposals to enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure links will have been delivered with the support of key partners.

Vision Locality Area 4 (Central Area)

Within the central area of the District, planned and carefully managed housing growth, which will have contributed to meeting its local needs, will have taken place and key services and facilities delivered and maintained at local community level. Affordable housing to meet local housing needs will have been delivered on suitable sites.

The villages of Codsall, Bilbrook and Perton will have developed their key roles as the main service villages and improvements to community infrastructure, facilities and services including social care and health facilities and the provision of extra care housing will have been delivered with partners.

The village of Pattingham will have experienced limited growth to meet local needs and to support existing facilities and services, including the primary school. The Grade 1 Agricultural land surrounding Pattingham will have been protected as far as possible.

The high quality built environment of the villages in the locality area will be maintained. The environment within Codsall and Pattingham Conservation Areas will have been enhanced in accordance with the management plans for these areas. The wider historic environment within the locality area, including the historic parklands at Patshull and Wergs and archaeological resource, will have been maintained and enhanced and progress will have been made on reducing the number of buildings identified as being at risk.

Within the locality area, identified needs for indoor and outdoor sport and recreation including allotments and improved community access to existing sports facilities will be addressed in partnership with key organisations. This includes improving the quality of existing facilities and delivering high quality new facilities.

Improved facilities will be available at Codsall and Bilbrook stations and frequent passenger services will give access to nearby towns, the West Midlands and further afield.

The strategic employment site at i54 Wobaston Road will have been completed to a high standard of design and landscaping, and will be providing a range of job opportunities for local communities within the District and the Black Country and will give a major boost to the sub regional economy.

Within the locality area, development in the Green Belt will have been managed in order to maintain the separation and distinctiveness of villages, with protection for the environment and appropriate countryside uses, including support for farm diversification schemes.

The existing natural assets within the locality area including wildlife habitats and ecological networks will continue to be protected and enhanced. Proposals to enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure links will have been delivered with the support of key partners.

Vision Locality Area 5 (Southern Area)

Within the southern area of the District, planned and carefully managed housing growth, which will have contributed to meeting their local needs, will have taken place and key services and facilities delivered and maintained at local community level. Affordable housing to meet local housing needs will have been delivered on suitable sites.

The villages of Kinver and Wombourne will have developed their key roles as the main service villages serving outlying rural settlements and improvements to community infrastructure, facilities and services including social care and health facilities, the provision of affordable housing and extra care housing will have been delivered with partners. Within Wombourne environmental improvements and improved access to facilities will have transformed the Giggetty Estate and delivered an improved quality of life for the residents.

The village of Swindon will have experienced limited growth to meet local needs and to support existing facilities and services including the primary school. In the smaller villages of Bobbington and Trysull small-scale affordable housing will have been delivered to meet local needs and to support the sustainability of these villages.

The high quality of the built environment of Kinver, Trysull and Wombourne Conservation Areas will have been maintained and enhanced in accordance with the management plan for these areas. The wider historic environment within the locality area, including the historic parklands at Enville, Four Ashes, Himley/Wodehouse and Prestwood, and archaeological resource, will have been maintained and progress will have been made on reducing the number of buildings identified as being at risk.

The identified needs for indoor and outdoor sport and recreation including

allotments and improved community access to existing sports facilities within the locality will be addressed in partnership with key organisations. This includes improving the quality of existing facilities and delivering high quality new facilities.

Within the locality area, development in the Green Belt will have been managed in order to maintain the separation and distinctiveness of villages, with protection for the environment and appropriate countryside uses, including support for farm diversification schemes. The high quality of the landscape in the area including Kinver Edge and historic parklands and gardens at Enville and Himley will continue to be distinctive features of the District and an attraction for visitors. The South Staffordshire Railway Walk, Baggeridge Country Park and Highgate Common will be providing good quality green spaces for quiet leisure and recreation. Within Wombourne, the Wom Brook Walk Nature Reserve will be established as an important local wildlife site and will be managed to a high standard.

The existing natural assets within the locality area including wildlife habitats and ecological networks will continue to be protected and enhanced. Proposals to enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure links will have been delivered with the support of key partners.

Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport will be continuing to provide facilities for business aviation, recreational (private) flying, and flying training consistent with its role as a general aviation airport. The replacement of derelict and obsolete buildings with high quality well designed aviation related development and associated landscaping will have significantly improved the appearance of the site.

5. Strategic Objectives

5.1 The following Core Strategy objectives outline what will need to be achieved to deliver the Vision and address the key issues and challenges that have been identified in the District. The Strategic Objectives give direction to the Spatial Strategy which follows.

5.2 The Strategic Objectives to achieve the long-term vision, manage change and deliver policies to shape a sustainable future for South Staffordshire are set out below under the Sustainable Community Strategy themes.

The Spatial Strategy

Strategic Objective 1

To protect and maintain the Green Belt and Open Countryside in order to sustain the distinctive character of South Staffordshire.

Strategic Objective 2

To retain and reinforce the current pattern of villages across South Staffordshire, and in particular protect and retain the important strategic gaps between existing settlements in order to prevent the coalescence of settlements.

Environmental Quality

Strategic Objective 3

To protect and improve South Staffordshire's environmental assets.

Strategic Objective 4

To protect, conserve and enhance the countryside, character and quality of the landscape and the diversity of wildlife and habitats.

Strategic Objective 5

To protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment and heritage assets and ensure that the character and appearance of the District's Conservation Areas is sustained and enhanced through management plans and high quality design.

Strategic Objective 6

To ensure that all new development is sustainable, enabling people to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations.

Strategic Objective 7

To reduce the effect of society on the environment, and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Housing

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 matches in type, tenure and size the needs of the residents of South Staffordshire and to meet the needs of an ageing population.

Economic Vibrancy

Strategic Objective 9

To meet local housing and employment needs, having regard to the Spatial Strategy for South Staffordshire, in a way that enables the existing villages within South Staffordshire to develop in a sustainable way that secures their future viability and prosperity, and supports the regeneration of rural communities and communities in neighbouring urban areas.

Strategic Objective 10

To support the urban regeneration of the Black Country Major Urban Area by distributing new housing and employment growth within South Staffordshire in a way that supports existing local communities and in particular discourages out-migration from the Black Country Major Urban Area.

Strategic Objective 11

To support the growth of a vibrant, prosperous and sustainable local economy; sustain, improve and enhance the vitality and viability of village centres and promote South Staffordshire as a tourist destination.

Strategic Objective 12

To support thriving and sustainable communities by ensuring that local people enjoy access to jobs and key services such as social, health care, education, open space and recreation, cultural and other facilities.

Strategic Objective 13

To reduce the need to travel, to secure improvements to public transport infrastructure

and services and make it safer and easier for the community to travel to jobs and key services by sustainable forms of transport, such as public transport, walking and cycling.

Community Safety

Strategic Objective 14

To adopt a design-led approach to all new development to ensure that the distinctive character of the villages of South Staffordshire is maintained and enhanced and that attractive, well designed and safe places are created.

Health and Wellbeing

Strategic Objective 15

To improve the quality of outdoor and indoor leisure, sport and recreation facilities in South Staffordshire and ensure that each community has access to sufficient areas of green space and built facilities.

Children and Young People

Strategic Objective 16

To support the needs of children and young people in South Staffordshire, ensure that provision is made for children's play and that teenagers have access to leisure, sport and recreation and learning opportunities.

The Local Planning Strategy

5.3 The local planning strategy is expressed through a number of Core Policies and supporting Development Policies and these are set out in individual chapters. The Spatial Strategy, National Policy 1, Core Policy 1 and Development Policies GB1, GB2 and OC1 are the principal focus for the strategy.

5.4 The following chapters are all structured in the same way and commence by setting out the 'Strategic Objectives' and then identify a series of 'Core Policies'. These are the higher level or 'strategic' policies to guide the growth and development of the District and they are then followed and supported by more detailed 'Development Policies' which are intended to manage the types of land uses and development that will take place in South Staffordshire over the lifetime of the plan. The following diagram shows how it all links together.

Sustainable Community Strategy Theme
Strategic Objectives
Core Policies
Development Policies

6. The Spatial Strategy

Strategic Objectives
Strategic Objective 1: To protect and maintain the Green Belt and Open Countryside in order to sustain the distinctive character of South Staffordshire. **Strategic Objective 2:** To retain and reinforce the current pattern of villages across South Staffordshire and in particular protect and retain the important strategic gaps between existing settlements in order to prevent the coalescence of settlements.

Introduction

6.1 The Spatial Strategy sets out the overall approach to the provision of new homes, jobs, community facilities and infrastructure over the plan period and outlines the broad strategic direction that will be followed for managing change and development in the District to 2028. The Spatial Strategy seeks to address the key issues and challenges facing South Staffordshire and ensures that future development meets the needs of its residents, businesses and visitors. It is consistent with the vision for the District and locality areas, the strategic objectives needed to deliver the vision and provides the link between those objectives and the policies that will guide the implementation of the Core Strategy.

6.2 The Core Strategy seeks to ensure that new development occurs in a sustainable way and is directed to the most sustainable locations as illustrated in the South Staffordshire Key Diagram and Locality Area Maps, making the best use of, safeguarding and improving, our existing facilities and infrastructure to create sustainable local communities.

General Principles underpinning the Spatial Strategy

6.3 The following general principles underpin the Spatial Strategy:

- **The Local Plan must seek to achieve development which is sustainable and delivers significantly higher levels of affordable housing throughout South Staffordshire.** Ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and in the future is a fundamental aim of the Local Plan. The provision of affordable housing to meet local needs is a key priority and reflects the views of the residents of South Staffordshire.

- **South Staffordshire's distinctive and attractive environment, which includes significant areas of Green Belt and Open Countryside, must be protected.** The Local Plan must meet the local needs of South Staffordshire in ways that protect the environment. This will be an important consideration in determining the location of development and provision of facilities and services. The protection of the Green Belt reflects the views of residents and local communities.

- **The existing villages of South Staffordshire must have a viable and sustainable future that is underpinned, where appropriate, by sensitive new development in order to support rural regeneration.** Ensuring that local communities thrive and develop in a sustainable way is an important objective for the Local Plan. Carefully planned new development can help local communities to sustain essential local facilities and services.

- **The residents of South Staffordshire must have access to jobs, open space, facilities and services.** Access to jobs and the facilities and services people need is one of the important determinants of quality of life particularly in rural areas and is a priority for the Local Plan.

- **The urban regeneration of the Black Country Major Urban Area (MUA) must be supported by managing the housing growth in South Staffordshire particularly in the villages close to the MUA and ensuring that all housing meets local needs, in order to ensure that the Black Country retains and attracts people in professional and senior management jobs.** The Local Plan has an important role to play in supporting the urban regeneration of the Black Country by preventing the outward movement of people and investment from the MUA.

- **The Local Plan must ensure that the local needs of South Staffordshire are met and local issues are addressed, whilst recognising the constraints that impact upon the District.** The needs of local communities expressed through the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Residents' Panel and consultations carried out on the Core Strategy have helped to define the key priorities for the Local Plan.

- **The Local Plan must ensure that the local implications of climate change are addressed.** The Local Plan has a key role to play in helping the District to mitigate and adapt to the adverse effects of climate change.

- **The Local Plan must accord with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** in order to meet national planning objectives.

National Policy 1: The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

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

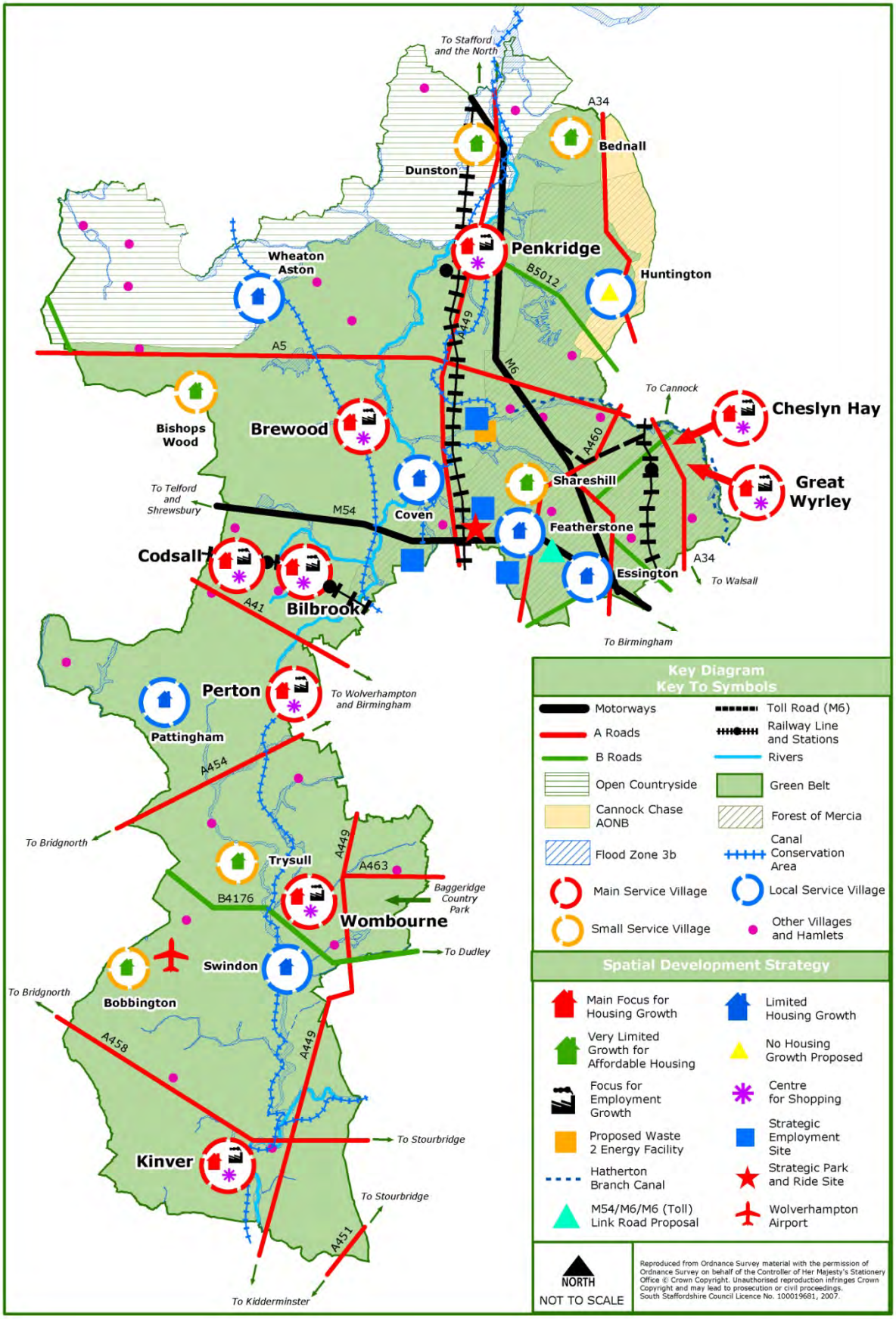
Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

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

1. Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole; or

2. Specific policies in the NPPF indicate that development should be restricted.

Map 4 South Staffordshire's Key Diagram



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

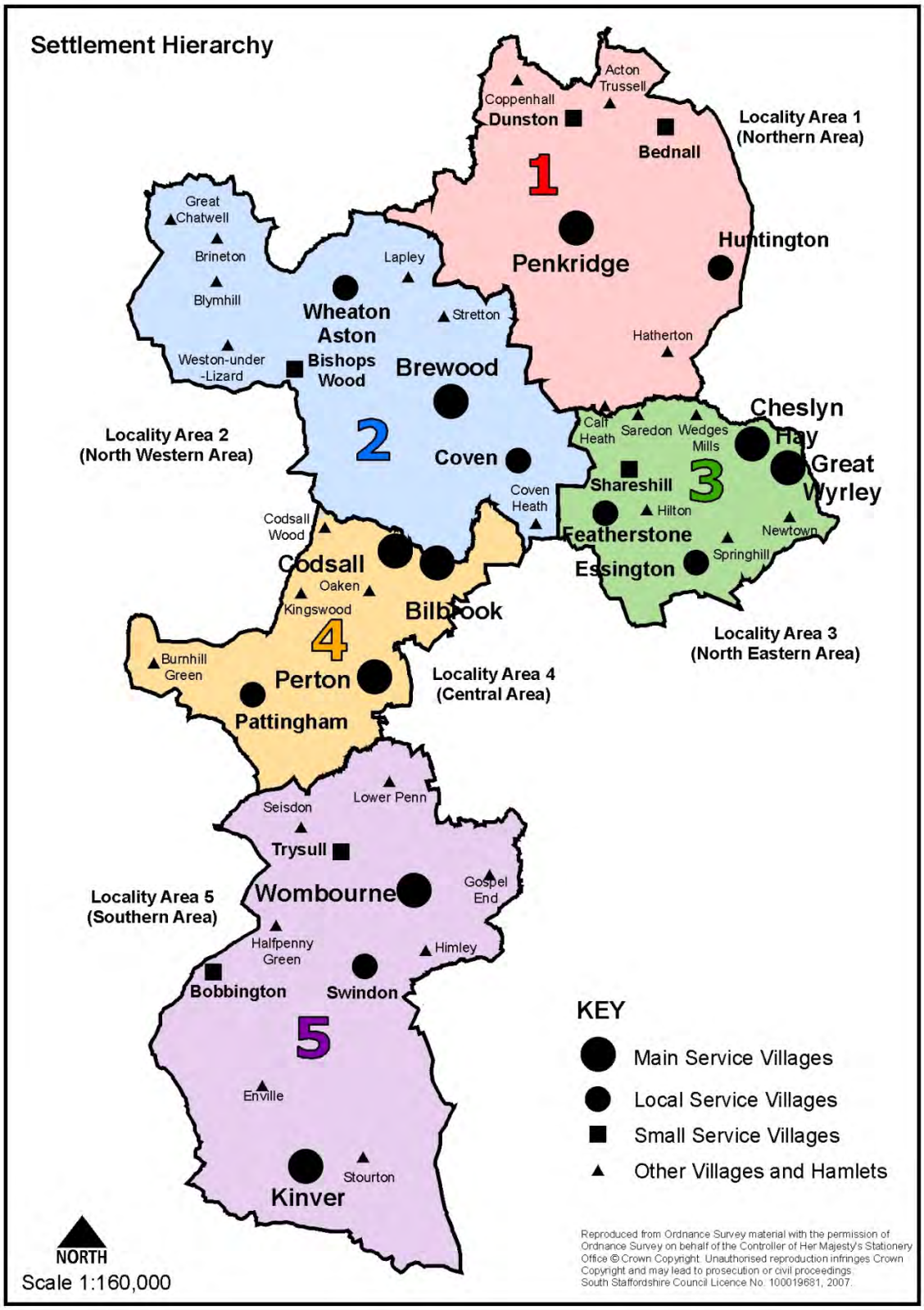
The Spatial Strategy will be delivered through the Core Policies and Development Policies. In all cases development should not conflict with the local planning policies, particularly the environmental policies. Development should be designed to be sustainable, seek to enhance the environment, and should 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 County 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.

Map 5 – Settlement Hierarchy



6.6 In order to support and achieve sustainable communities in South Staffordshire it is proposed that the majority of development and service provision should be focused on the **Main Service Villages**. These villages are considered to be the most sustainable locations in terms of the level of essential community facilities and services available, access to public transport and supporting infrastructure. Locating growth to the main service villages will help create better balanced settlements, reduce the need to travel and utilise and consolidate existing physical, social and community and green infrastructure.

6.7 In the **Local Service Villages** the focus will be on limited growth aimed at meeting local needs. These villages have a more limited range of essential community facilities but are considered capable of sustaining limited development. The focus for these villages will be on maintaining and enhancing existing local facilities and services, in particular their schools and other social and community and green infrastructure.

6.8 In the **Small Service Villages** the emphasis will be on very limited development for the provision of rural affordable housing only to support a local need. These villages have a very limited range of facilities and services but it is considered that some limited development delivered through rural exception sites will support their sustainability and maintain existing essential services, such as village schools, maintain community cohesion and help to meet the needs of local populations and outlying villages.

6.9 The **Other Villages and Hamlets** in the District have very limited, if any community facilities and services and generally rely on the larger villages for schools, social care and health facilities, shops, and the provision of other goods and services. Because of the limited services available, these villages and hamlets are not considered suitable locations for development. The focus for these villages therefore will be for very limited change. Development will be limited to rural affordable housing schemes delivered through rural exception sites and the conversion and re-use of redundant rural buildings to appropriate uses.

6.10 The local planning strategy will shape the future of villages and places in South Staffordshire over the plan period and the nature of this change will need to be managed sensitively. The emphasis will be on maintaining the character and local distinctiveness of villages as far as possible. The following summary table expresses key elements of the strategy for each of the villages in the settlement hierarchy.

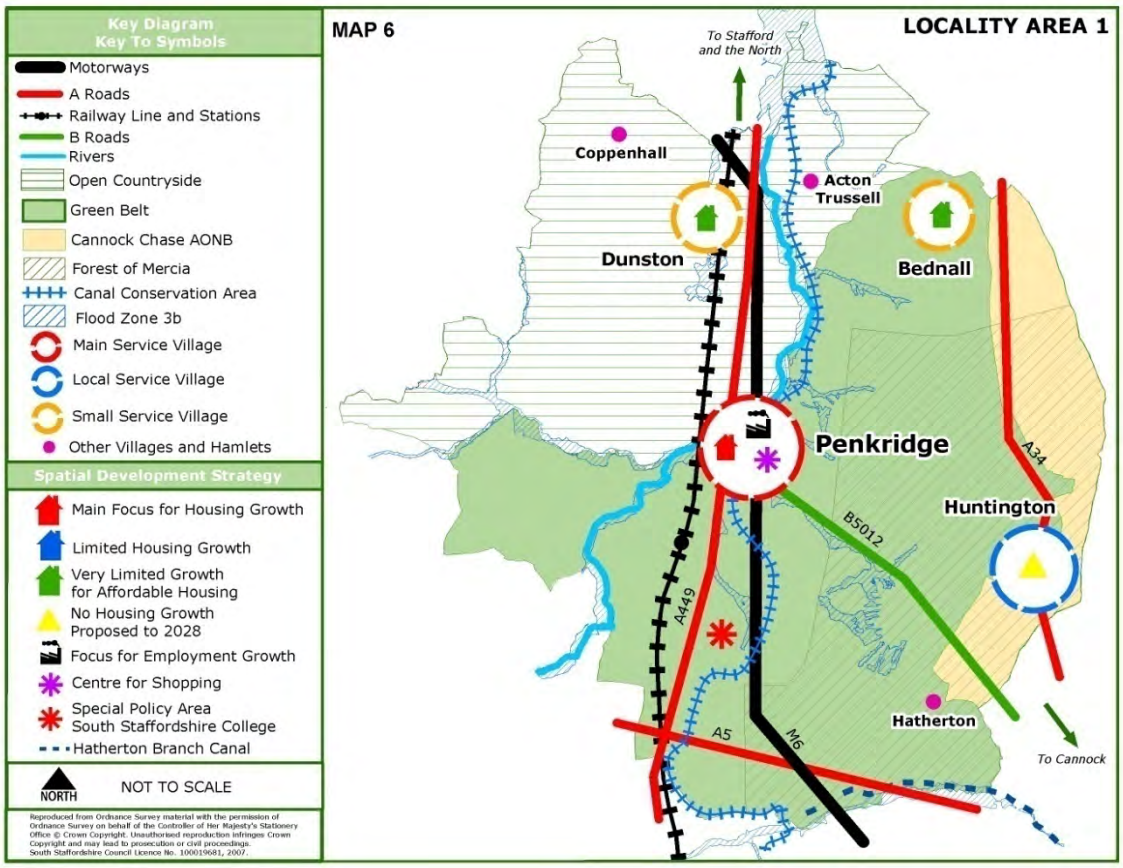
The Local Planning Strategy for the Villages in South Staffordshire

Settlement	Housing	Employment	Centres	Social and Community
Main Service Villages Bilbrook Brewood Cheslyn Hay Codsall Great Wyrley Kinver Penkridge Perton Wombourne	The main focus for housing growth. Approx 90% of the District's housing growth will take place in these villages. A choice of housing will be delivered to meet identified local needs, whilst recognising the constraints that impact upon the District, including affordable housing, with extra care and specialist housing for the elderly being a particular priority. Housing to be of a high quality of design and of an appropriate character and density. The focus will be to make efficient use of land and buildings with priority given to the reuse of previously developed land (brownfield land) in sustainable locations, provided it is not of high environmental value.	The focus for economic growth, employment development and investment. Employment will be delivered through the implementation of existing commitments, redevelopment and new mixed use sites where appropriate. Existing employment areas will be protected and retained for employment use unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of a site being delivered. The redevelopment and modernisation of existing sites for employment use will be supported. New development to be of a high quality of design. The priority will be for the reuse of previously developed land (brownfield land) in sustainable locations, provided it is not of high environmental value.	Village centres will be the focus for shopping and small scale office development to maintain their vitality and viability. Smaller neighbourhood centres will provide local shopping, service and community facilities to meet the day needs of local communities.	Existing social and community facilities will be maintained and enhanced. Improvements to social care and health facilities including new single site health centres will be supported. The co-location of facilities through the shared use of buildings and sites will be supported to enhance the provision of services within local communities. Existing open space, sport and recreation facilities will be safeguarded and enhanced and improved access to indoor and outdoor facilities will be sought. The provision of additional facilities will be supported.

Local Service Villages Coven Essington Featherstone Huntington Pattingham Swindon Wheaton Aston	Limited housing development to meet local needs, whilst recognising the constraints that impact upon the District. Approximately 10% of the District's housing growth will be accommodated in these villages. Housing to be of a high quality of design and of an appropriate character and density. The focus will be to make efficient use of land and buildings with priority given to the reuse of previously developed land (brownfield land) in sustainable locations, provided it is not of high environmental value.	The employment allocation at ROF Featherstone/ Brinsford will be delivered. Elsewhere employment development will be limited to that which meets local business and community needs and maintains the vitality and viability of communities. Existing employment areas will be protected and retained for employment uses unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of a site being delivered.	Village centres will be the focus for shopping and office development.	The focus will be on maintaining and enhancing local facilities and services particularly schools and other social and community and green infrastructure. Existing sole facilities will be safeguarded. The co-location of facilities through the shared use of buildings and sites will be supported to enhance the provision of services within local communities. Existing open space, sport and recreation facilities will be safeguarded and enhanced and improved access to indoor and outdoor facilities will be sought. The provision of additional facilities will be supported.
Small Service Villages Bednall Bobbington Bishops Wood Dunston Shareshill Trysull	Limited housing development for the provision of rural affordable housing only where it clearly supports a local need and the sustainability of these local communities. Housing will be delivered through rural exception sites. Housing to be of a	Rural employment will be limited to that which meets local business and community needs.	These villages rely on the Main Service Villages and Local Service Villages for local shopping needs.	The focus will be on maintaining and enhancing local facilities and services particularly schools and other social and community and green infrastructure. Existing sole facilities will be safeguarded. Existing open space, sport and

	high quality of design and of an appropriate character and density. The focus will be to make efficient use of land and buildings with priority given to the reuse of previously developed land (brownfield land) in sustainable locations, provided it is not of high environmental value.			recreation facilities will be safeguarded and enhanced and improved access to indoor and outdoor facilities will be sought. The provision of additional facilities will be supported.
Other Villages and Hamlets Acton Trussell Blymhill Brineton Burnhill Green Calf Heath Codsall Wood Coppenhall Coven Heath Enville Gospel End Great Chatwell Halfpenny Green Hatherton Hilton Himley Kingswood Lapley Lower Penn Newtown Oaken Saredon Seisdon Springhill Stourton Stretton Wedges Mills Weston- Under-Lizard	These villages are not identified for housing growth. Housing will be delivered on rural exception sites for the provision of rural affordable housing to meet identified local needs.	Rural employment and diversification	These villages rely on the Main Service Villages and Local Service Villages for local shopping needs.	Existing sole facilities will be safeguarded. Existing open space, sport and recreation facilities will be safeguarded and enhanced and improved access to indoor and outdoor facilities will be sought. The provision of additional facilities will be supported.

6.11 The local planning strategy is expressed diagrammatically for each of the 5 Locality Areas in the following key diagrams.


Key Diagram
Key To Symbols
Motorways
A Roads
Railway Line and Stations
B Roads
Rivers
Open Countryside
Green Belt
Cannock Chase AONB
Forest of Mercia
Canal Conservation Area
Flood Zone 3b
Main Service Village
Local Service Village
Small Service Village
Other Villages and Hamlets
Spatial Development Strategy
Main Focus for Housing Growth
Limited Housing Growth
Very Limited Growth for Affordable Housing
No Housing Growth Proposed to 2028
Focus for Employment Growth
Centre for Shopping
Special Policy Area South Staffordshire College
Hatherton Branch Canal
NORTH
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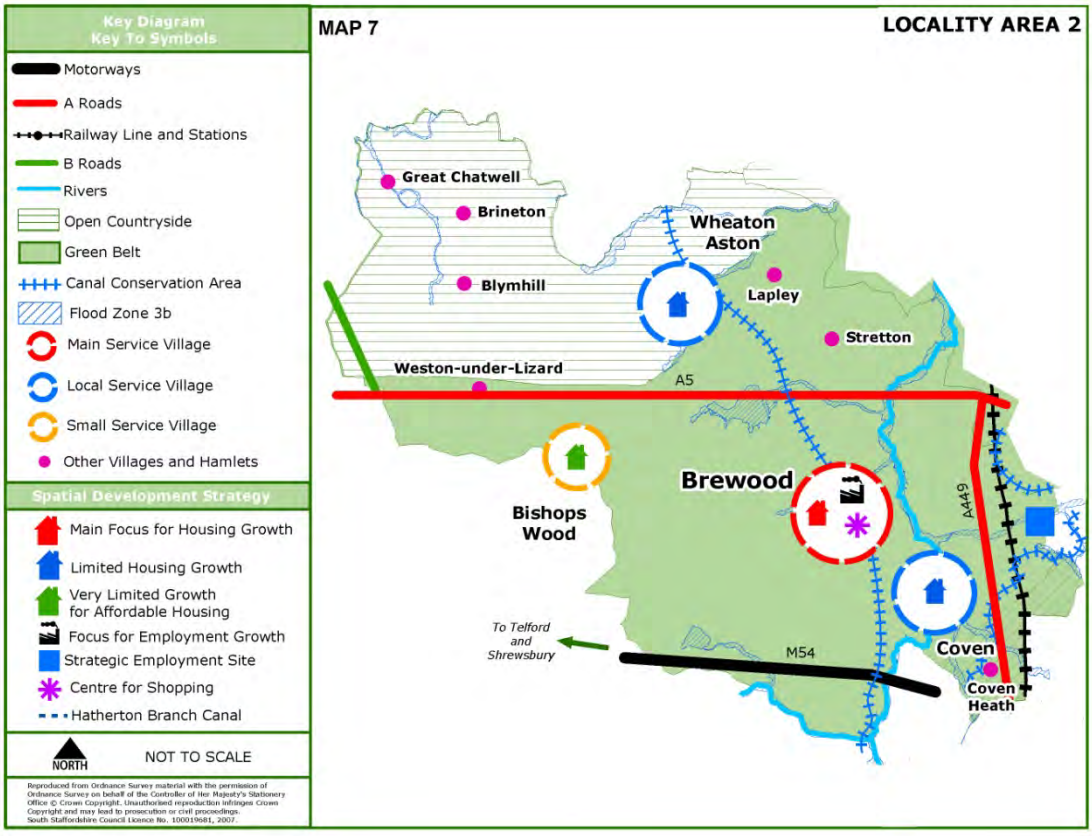
MAP 6
LOCALITY AREA 1
To Stafford and the North
Coppenhall
Acton Trussell
Dunston
Bednall
Penkridge
A34
Huntington
B5012
A449
A5
M6
Hatherton
To Cannock


Key Diagram
Key To Symbols
Motorways
A Roads
Railway Line and Stations
B Roads
Rivers
Open Countryside
Green Belt
Canal Conservation Area
Flood Zone 3b
Main Service Village
Local Service Village
Small Service Village
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Spatial Development Strategy
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Limited Housing Growth
Very Limited Growth for Affordable Housing
Focus for Employment Growth
Strategic Employment Site
Centre for Shopping
Hatherton Branch Canal
NORTH
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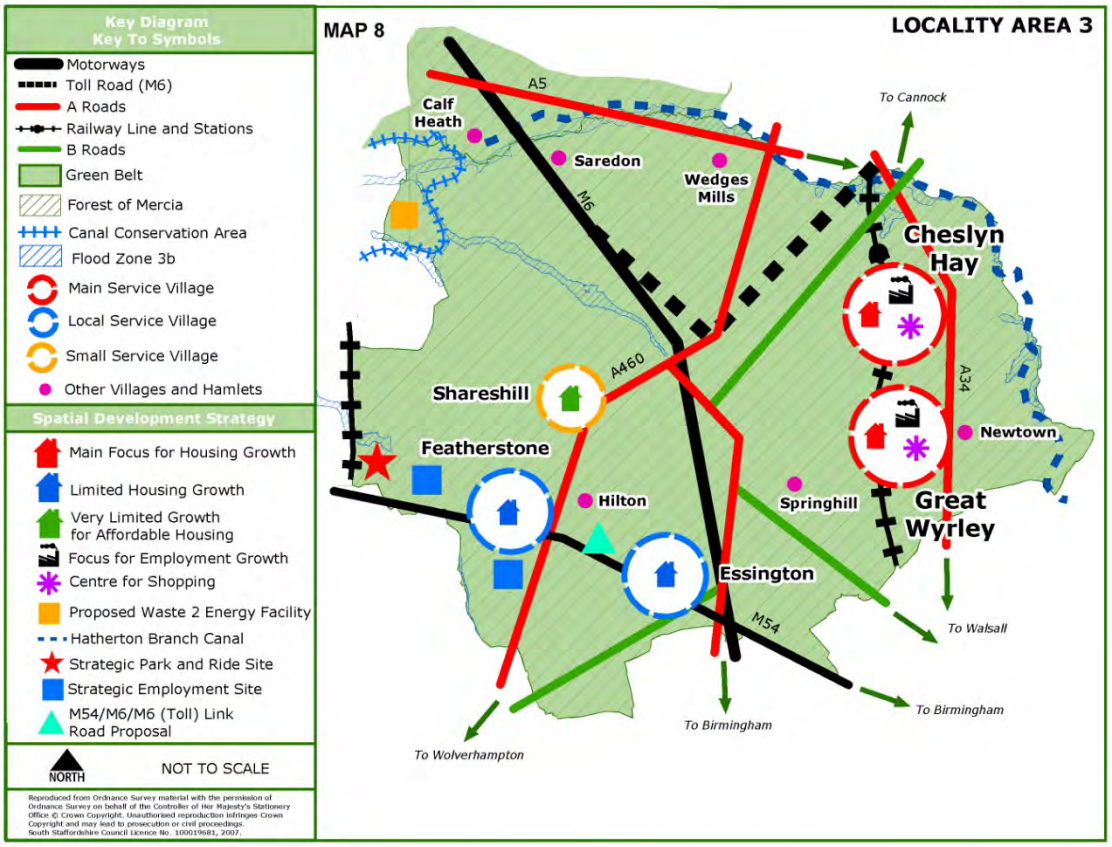
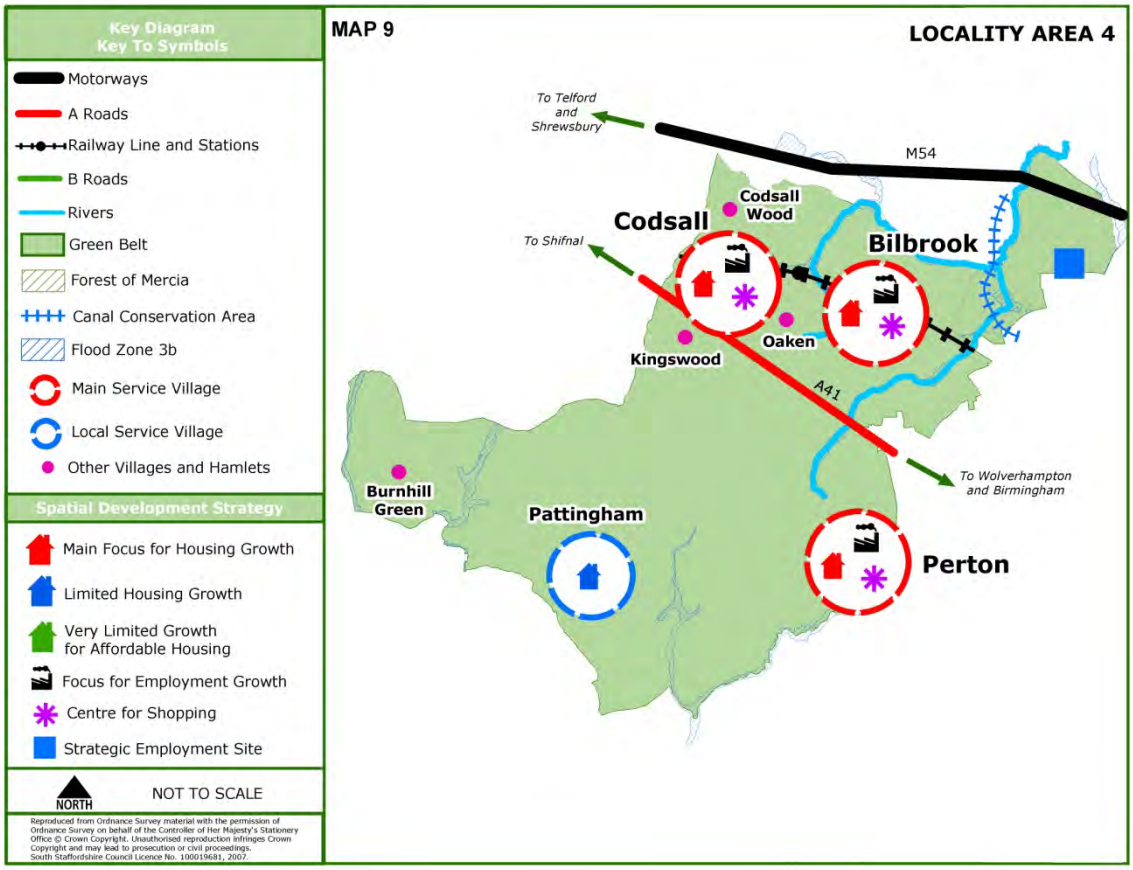
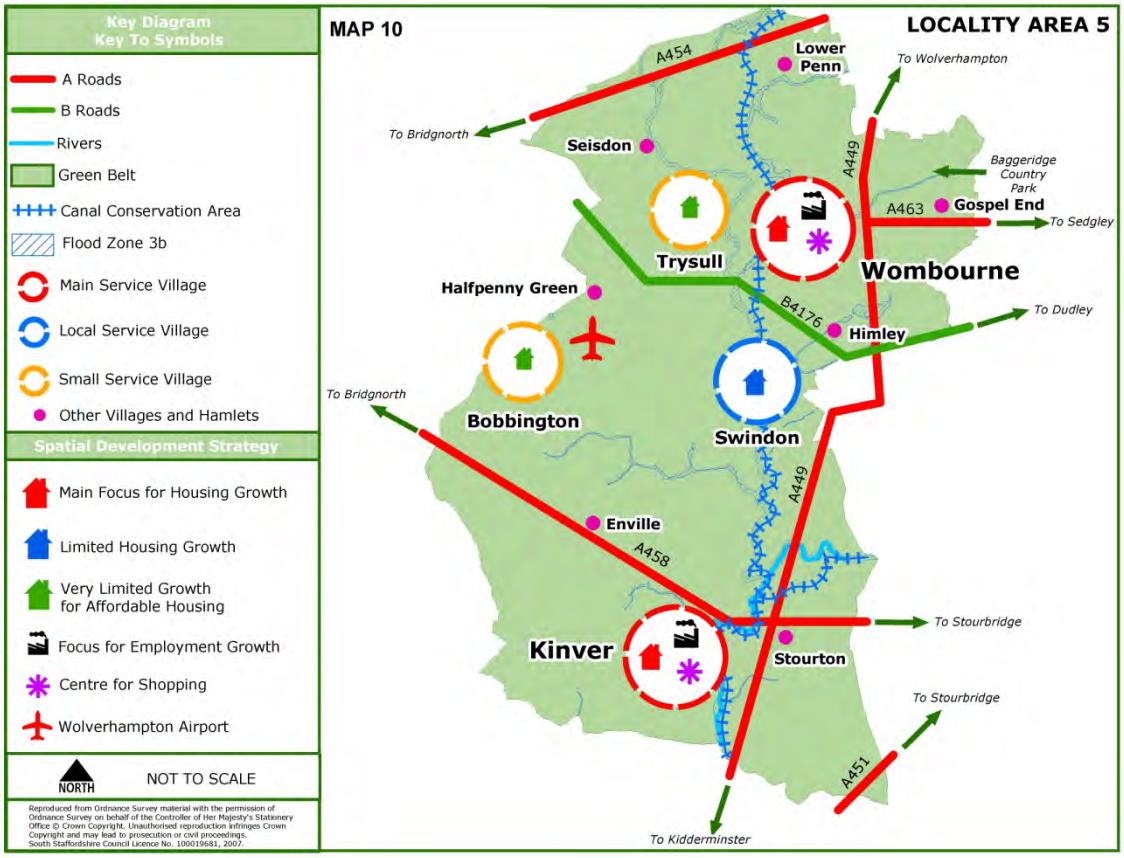
MAP 7
LOCALITY AREA 2
Great Chatwell
Brineton
Wheaton Aston
Blymhill
Lapley
Stretton
Weston-under-Lizard
A5
Bishops Wood
Brewood
A449
To Telford and Shrewsbury
M54
Coven
Coven Heath


Key Diagram
Key To Symbols
Motorways
Toll Road (M6)
A Roads
Railway Line and Stations
B Roads
Green Belt
Forest of Mercia
Canal Conservation Area
Flood Zone 3b
Main Service Village
Local Service Village
Small Service Village
Other Villages and Hamlets
Spatial Development Strategy
Main Focus for Housing Growth
Limited Housing Growth
Very Limited Growth for Affordable Housing
Focus for Employment Growth
Centre for Shopping
Proposed Waste 2 Energy Facility
Hatherton Branch Canal
Strategic Park and Ride Site
Strategic Employment Site
M54/M6/M6 (Toll) Link Road Proposal
NORTH
NOT TO SCALE
MAP 8
LOCALITY AREA 3
A5
Calf Heath
Saredon
Wedges Mills
To Cannock
M6
Cheslyn Hay
A460
Shareshill
A34
Featherstone
Hilton
Springhill
Newtown
Great Wyrley
Essington
M54
To Walsall
To Birmingham
To Birmingham
To Wolverhampton


Key Diagram
Key To Symbols
Motorways
A Roads
Railway Line and Stations
B Roads
Rivers
Green Belt
Forest of Mercia
Canal Conservation Area
Flood Zone 3b
Main Service Village
Local Service Village
Other Villages and Hamlets
Spatial Development Strategy
Main Focus for Housing Growth
Limited Housing Growth
Very Limited Growth for Affordable Housing
Focus for Employment Growth
Centre for Shopping
Strategic Employment Site
NORTH
NOT TO SCALE
MAP 9
LOCALITY AREA 4
To Telford and Shrewsbury
M54
Codsall Wood
Codsall
To Shifnal
Bilbrook
Oaken
Kingswood
A41
To Wolverhampton and Birmingham
Burnhill Green
Pattingham
Perton



The Green Belt and Open Countryside

6.12 Currently, 80% of South Staffordshire is designated Green Belt and the remaining area to the north is defined as Open Countryside. Faced with strong pressure for development, the Green Belt plays a fundamental role in maintaining the current pattern of villages and the distinctive character of the District. Key priorities for the Council will be to ensure that the distinctive local character of South Staffordshire is protected and enhanced. The protection of the Green Belt from inappropriate development will help us achieve this ambition together with the sensitive consideration of new development proposals within the Open Countryside. The Council Plan 2012-2016 states that one of the key priorities for South Staffordshire 'Your Place' is to protect the Green Belt, and as such sets a measure and target to protect at least 99% of the Green Belt from development.

6.13 In accordance with national planning policy, the Core Strategy will seek to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development in order to protect against the encroachment of the Black Country Major Urban Area and the coalescence of settlements, to retain the attractive character and rural setting of settlements and to maintain its openness. The character of the countryside beyond the Green Belt is also of high quality and should be protected.

6.14 There is no justification for fundamental changes to the general extent of the Green Belt 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, and modest extensions to the four

existing freestanding strategic employment sites (i54, Hilton Cross, ROF Featherstone/Brinsford and Four Ashes) will be considered to accommodate justified development needs. The housing allocation proposed, including a 10 year supply of safeguarded land, would equate to less than 1% loss of Green Belt at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare, even if all sites were to be located in the Green Belt. The existing Green Belt boundaries and village boundaries are shown on the Policies Map and Inset Plans and the detailed boundaries will be reviewed as necessary in the Site Allocations DPD.

6.15 This Spatial Strategy has identified broad locations to accommodate housing growth up to 2028. The Settlement Hierarchy has provided a clear direction for the subsequent Site Allocations DPD. In addition, possible extensions to the four existing freestanding strategic employment sites have been indicated (see para 6.14). This direction has been strengthened by the apportionment of housing numbers to identified Main and Local Service Villages within the Settlement Hierarchy. This approach has been 'strategy led' by the fundamental aim of achieving Urban Renaissance within the Major Urban Areas (MUAs) and its counterpoint, the achievement of Rural Renaissance in rural areas. In rural areas which are subject to strong influences from the MUAs, such as South Staffordshire, the main priorities are to meet local needs whilst ensuring that the local character is protected and enhanced. This approach accords with the Government's core planning principles (see para 1.11) which require plans to take account of the different roles and characters of different areas by promoting the vitality of our main urban areas and protecting the Green Belts around them.

6.16 The inter-relationship between the Black Country and South Staffordshire has been fundamental to the development of this Spatial Strategy. The Black Country services many of the higher order service needs of our local residents, including access to town and city centre shopping facilities, large indoor leisure activities and hospitals; and provides important sources of employment. South Staffordshire, on the other hand, offers access to open space and recreation opportunities for residents of the Black Country in addition to South Staffordshire residents. However, perhaps the most significant feature of the inter-relationship has been the continued out-migration of population from the Black Country and into South Staffordshire District.

6.17 Over the years this has been supported by policy that has planned for this out-migration to take place and led to large extensions to the villages of South Staffordshire into land that was formerly Green Belt. This trend has caused a hollowing out of the Black Country whilst services and house prices in South Staffordshire have been put under great pressure. This out-migration has also placed significant pressures on the Green Belt and has impacted on the local character of our villages.

6.18 A fundamental policy shift was made in 2004 through the confirmation of the West Midland Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and its comprehensive evidence base which aimed to reverse this outflow – stimulating an urban renaissance through improved housing, access, employment and services. The objectives of the Black Country are to reverse out-migration, raise income levels, to create an inclusive and coherent society and to transform the Black Country environment. South Staffordshire will provide the

counterpoint to an Urban Renaissance, where meeting local needs will be the focus of a Rural Renaissance through the provision of affordable housing and better access to services and jobs.

6.19 The quantum of housing growth to be accommodated up to 2028 is significantly lower than historic trends through patterns of out-migration. It is the short range migration, to South Staffordshire villages close in to the Black Country boundaries, where the propensity to out-migrate has been the greatest. Average annual build rates in South Staffordshire in the 20 years, prior to the 2004 fundamental policy shift, averaged 400 dwellings per annum. The fundamental policy shift, which helps to achieve the urban renaissance objectives of the Black Country, means that the average annual build rate for the plan period will be 175 dwellings per annum. This will help to limit the scale of housing that needs to be added to South Staffordshire's villages and this will help to protect and enhance local character and limit the extent to which the release of Green Belt land will be necessary.

6.20 The Core Strategy needs to provide a strong direction to the Site Allocations DPD to assist in the forthcoming engagement and consultation with local communities to select the most appropriate sites for the growth of their villages. We recognise that in some cases there will be no alternative but to alter the boundaries of the Main and Local Service Villages in order to accommodate housing growth. These alterations will be led by the need to accommodate housing growth only. It is not intended to alter the current boundaries of Main and Local Service Villages in order to accommodate solely other forms of development. If however, it is demonstrated that a mixed use development can deliver the required housing growth in a more effective, efficient and sustainable way, then allocations for mixed use sites will be taken forward through the Site Allocations DPD. In some cases it may help to limit the impact on local character by identifying a number of smaller sites rather than one large site. In order to protect the Green Belt, the Site Allocations DPD will use a sequential approach to guide housing site selection when consulting with local communities as follows:

- Firstly – Sites within the current development boundaries of our Main and Local Service Villages;

- Secondly – Land not within the Green Belt i.e. Existing safeguarded land identified under policy GB2 or land located in the Open Countryside that is adjacent to the current development boundaries of our Main and Local Service Villages and situated in sustainable locations;

- Thirdly - Previously developed land (brownfield land), provided it is not of high environmental value, that is located outside but adjacent to the current development boundaries of our Main and Local Service Villages and situated in sustainable locations;

- Lastly – Sites that are currently within the Green Belt and are located adjacent to the current development boundaries of our Main and Local Service Villages and situated in sustainable locations.

6.21 In order to deliver the Core Strategy, it is recognised that in a number of Main Service Villages and Local Service Villages it will be necessary to immediately consider land that is currently Greenfield and Green Belt because the opportunities to explore the first three stages in the sequential approach do not exist. In these cases preference will be given to sites where the new settlement boundary will be clearly defined using readily recognisable features such as roads, streams, belts of trees or woodland edges where possible.

6.22 Engagement with local communities and the effectiveness of the consultation processes will be an important part of the Site Allocations DPD. The sequential approach identified above will be supported by other site selection criteria and weighed in the balance in order to assist with selection of the most suitable site or sites. For example site accessibility, environmental constraints, proximity to existing services and facilities and seeking to limit the impact of coalescence with neighbouring settlements will be among these criteria. These criteria will be clearly set out in the Site Allocation DPD.

6.23 Government policy in respect of Green Belts is clear about the importance of securing the long term protection of Green Belts. The Core Strategy strongly supports this approach. The 1996 Local Plan removed certain areas of safeguarded land from the Green Belt to meet possible longer-term development needs and these areas will be considered for development in the Site Allocations DPD. The identification of additional safeguarded land will ensure that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period. For this reason a further 10 years of safeguarded land will be identified within the Site Allocations DPD.

6.24 The Government set out its future aims for the UK Economy in a 'Planning for Growth Statement' of the Minister of State for Decentralisation on 23 March 2011. It is not intended to alter the current boundaries of the Main Service Villages solely to accommodate employment growth. However, where there is evidence to demonstrate that an allocation of land for mixed use development, that includes employment land, will help to secure the delivery of housing growth at Main Service Villages then a mixed use allocation will be identified through the Site Allocations DPD, rather than solely a residential allocation. The decision to allocate mixed use sites rather than solely residential sites shall be informed by a refresh of the District's Employment Land Study (ELS) 2008. The partial review of Green Belt in relation to employment sites will be limited to modest extensions of the four existing freestanding strategic employment sites, specifically at i54, Hilton Cross, ROF Featherstone/Brinsford and Four Ashes.

6.25 The Local Plan also defined a Special Policy Area in the Green Belt at Smestow Bridge, Wombourne as an area where proposals to intensify or expand existing industrial and commercial uses or to redevelop the site for alternative employment uses will be appropriate. The Special Policy Area and other Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt will be reviewed as part of the Site Allocations DPD.

6.26 The Spatial Strategy is consistent with the national policies and reflects the principles of rural regeneration and the rural character of South Staffordshire, and relates well to the

principles of locality working. It will deliver the key outcomes and benefits set out below.

- Locally target the delivery of affordable housing close to the heart of existing communities.

- Reinforce the existing settlement pattern in South Staffordshire that builds on the physical and social fabric of existing villages and does not seek to introduce new settlements.

- Contribute towards rural regeneration by helping local communities to sustain essential community facilities and services.

- Contribute towards an urban regeneration of the MUAs; particularly the Black Country, by limiting the risk of people and investment being attracted away from the MUAs.

- Contribute towards the aims and objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy for South Staffordshire.

- Protect and enhance the character and local distinctiveness of the settlements of South Staffordshire.

Key Evidence

The range of key evidence that has informed the Spatial Strategy is identified in relation to the individual Core Policies and Development policies and these are set out in the following chapters of the Core Strategy.

Delivery and Monitoring

This policy will be delivered and monitored through the arrangements set out for individual policies in the Core Strategy as identified in the Monitoring Framework.

Development Policies

6.27 The following Development Policies support Core Policy 1 in respect of the Council's approach to the protection of the Green Belt and Open Countryside.

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.*

Policy GB2: Land Safeguarded for Longer Term Needs

a) Existing safeguarded land, formerly identified under the 1996 Local Plan will be considered for future development in the Site Allocations DPD in accordance with the sequential approach as outlined in paragraph 6.20.

b) Additional safeguarded land will be identified in the Site Allocations DPD for housing and employment development for the period 2028 – 2038. This will be at Main and Local Service villages and at the four existing freestanding strategic employment sites at i54, Hilton Cross, ROF Featherstone/Brinsford and Four Ashes.

c) All safeguarded land identified for longer term development needs and removed from the Green Belt (including existing safeguarded land) will retain its safeguarded land designation until a review of the Local Plan proposes development of those areas in whole or part. Planning applications for permanent development prior to allocation in the Local Plan will be regarded as departures from the Plan.

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 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 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.*

Explanation

6.28 The importance attached to protecting the Green Belt and Open Countryside is recognised in Strategic Objectives 1 and 2 and Core Policy 1 and is a general principle that underpins the Local Plan. Development policies GB1, GB2 and OC1 support Core Policy 1 and set out the types of development that will be permitted in the Green Belt and Open Countryside.

Safeguarded Land

6.29 There are two elements of safeguarded land – existing safeguarded land, formerly GB4 of the 1996 Local Plan, and proposed safeguarded land which will be identified in the Site Allocations DPD. The existing safeguarded land in whole or part will contribute to the allocation of housing sites up to 2028, as such land forms part of the sequential test set out in paragraph 6.20 and is at locations which accord with the settlement hierarchy. The existing undeveloped safeguarded sites can be seen on the Policies Maps and are:

- Land at Hobnock Road, Essington
- Land at Cherrybrook Drive, Penkridge
- Land west of Watery Lane, Codsall

6.30 The NPPF is clear that once the general extent of Green Belt has been established it should only be altered in exceptional circumstances. It is considered therefore that those areas of land which were removed from the Green Belt in the 1996 Local Plan, and are not yet developed, will retain their safeguarded land status and be considered for future development. Where only part of a safeguarded site (existing or proposed) is allocated, the remainder of that site will remain as safeguarded land for future long term needs. All existing and proposed safeguarded land will be confirmed by a new policy in the Site Allocations DPD when adopted.

6.31 As stated in Policy GB2, it is important to identify safeguarded land in order to protect the Green Belt and therefore an additional 10 year supply will be identified for this purpose in the Site Allocations DPD. At the average annual build rate of 175 dwellings per annum on which our Strategy is based, this equates to a total of 1,750 dwellings. Safeguarded land shall be apportioned to Main Service Villages and Local Service Villages identified in Core Policy 1. Apportionment shall be at a ratio of 90/10. This means 1,575 dwellings to Main Services Villages and 175 dwellings to Local Service Villages. Apportionment of these dwellings amongst the different Main Service Villages and Local Service Villages shall take account of the key factors as set out in para 8.8 of this Core Strategy DPD.

Key Evidence

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2020
South Staffordshire Council Plan 2012 - 2016

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Green Belt and Open Countryside SPD

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

7. Environmental Quality

Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objective 3:

To protect and improve South Staffordshire's environmental assets.

Strategic Objective 4:

To protect, conserve and enhance the countryside, character and quality of the landscape and the diversity of wildlife and habitats.

Strategic Objective 5:

To protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment and heritage assets and ensure that the character and appearance of the District's Conservation Areas is sustained and enhanced through management plans and high quality design**.**

Strategic Objective 6:

To ensure that all new development is sustainable, enabling people to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations.

Strategic Objective 7:

To reduce the effect of society on the environment, and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Introduction

7.1 Ensuring that the environmental quality of South Staffordshire is maintained and where possible enhanced is a key issue for the Local Plan, and reflects the aims and objectives set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy. It also reflects the views of our local communities which have been expressed in consultations on the Core Strategy and in Residents' Panel surveys. We have a responsibility to look after the environment and ensure that it is protected and passed on to future generations in an improved state.

Natural and Historic Environment

7.2 South Staffordshire has a diverse and distinctive environment, with a wide range of natural and heritage assets and is characterised by villages set in attractive countryside. It is an environment that is valued by residents and visitors alike. Our natural and heritage assets make a major contribution to the District; they give the area its sense of

place, local identity and distinctiveness; they are of recreational, cultural and tourism value, and contribute to quality of life.

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 Mottey Meadows, Kinver Edge and Highgate Common. Mottey 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 Mottey 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;
- Mottey 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.

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
Management Plans for Local Nature Reserves
Management Plans for major open spaces
Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan
LSP Environmental Quality Delivery Plan
Biodiversity and Geodiversity Action Plans
Biodiversity SPD

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

Policy EQ2: Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation

Development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that it will not be likely to lead directly or indirectly to an adverse effect upon the integrity of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

A net increase of housing development within the areas of South Staffordshire that fall within the Zone of Influence around Cannock Chase SAC (as identified by current evidence and subject to further research) that is likely to have an adverse impact upon Cannock Chase SAC should mitigate for such effects, in line with the ongoing work to outline the pressures on the SAC caused by recreation and visitor pressure. This may include contributions to habitat management, access management and visitor infrastructure, publicity, education and awareness raising; and provision of suitable alternative natural green recreational space, within development sites where they can be accommodated and where they cannot by contributions to offsite alternative green space.

The effective avoidance of and/or mitigation for any identified adverse effects on the Cannock Chase SAC must be demonstrated to the Council as the Competent Authority and Natural England and secured prior to the Council giving approval of development. This Policy has jurisdiction over developments within South Staffordshire only; however it will be implemented jointly with neighbouring authorities via the application of complementary policies in partner Local Plans.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

7.13 South Staffordshire Council has worked jointly with Staffordshire County Council, Cannock Chase District Council, Lichfield District Council and Stafford Borough Council on a Study to look at the Evidence Base relating to Cannock Chase SAC and the Appropriate Assessment of Local Authority Core Strategies Appropriate Assessment in relation to Cannock Chase SAC (as per the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC). The Study highlights that increased development within a certain distance of the SAC could result in increased pressures placed on the integrity of the SAC, from increased visitor numbers and trampling, and also potential increases in road traffic air pollution. As it is paramount for the responsible authorities to protect the integrity of all European sites, the Council must ensure that the site is not harmed as a result of additional development in the District. The Study demonstrates that in order to maintain the integrity of the SAC, there is a need to provide additional recreation spaces in the District, alongside other mitigation measures e.g. developer contributions to positive habitat management.

7.14 The Study also considered the impact of water use on the SAC but demonstrated that there are unlikely to be any significant impacts arising from increased water use and abstraction in this District (although this is an issue for some neighbouring authorities). By implementing the Cannock Chase Visitor Impact Mitigation Strategy and relevant policies in the relevant Core Strategies, suitable mitigation measures will be in place to overcome possible adverse impacts affecting the integrity of the SAC. Cross-boundary working will be supported in order to ensure strategic sites, such as the AONB and Cannock Chase SAC, are protected and enhanced. Implementation of the Visitor Impact Mitigation Strategy for Cannock Chase SAC requires the provision of additional recreation space within the SAC Zone of Influence. Such measures will be progressed on a cross-boundary basis and through a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The proposed SPD will not be a cross-boundary document. The SAC policy has been informed by evidence which is based on a visitor survey carried out in 2000. It has been recognised that further work is needed on the visitor use of the SAC and research is ongoing on a new visitor survey involving a partnership of local authorities, including the Black Country authorities, and an up-to-date impact assessment will be produced based on this new survey information.

Key Evidence

Evidence Base relating to Cannock Chase SAC and the Appropriate Assessment of Local Authority Core Strategies 2010
Cannock Chase Visitor Impact Mitigation Strategy 2010
Habitats Regulation Assessment Review of the Core Strategy 2010

Delivery and Monitoring

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

Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan

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

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 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
South Staffordshire Landscape Assessment 2003
Historic Environment Character Assessment 2011
Tree and Woodland Strategy 2010
Village Design Guide SPD 2009
Open Space Strategy 2009
Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan 2009 - 2014
Forest of Mercia Plan 1993
Assessment of Physical and Environmental Constraints 2009
Staffordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation Project 2010

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process in consultation with Natural England, the County Council and other partners
Landscape advice
Management plans for major open spaces
Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan
Forest of Mercia Plan
LSP Environmental Quality Delivery Plan
Landscape Character SPD
Biodiversity SPD

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

Sustainable Development

Introduction

7.27 Development which embodies the principles of sustainable development is at the heart of the local planning strategy and is fundamental to the creation of sustainable communities. This means creating a pattern of resource use that aims to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The movement towards low carbon lifestyles is one way in which South Staffordshire can respond positively to the challenge of climate change, and therefore the local planning strategy is focused on directing development towards the most sustainable locations, minimising the need to travel and distances travelled, particularly by private car, and providing supporting facilities and infrastructure.

7.28 Climate change is recognised as the most urgent environmental challenge facing the world today. The need to respond pro-actively to this issue has been identified as a

major priority for local authorities including South Staffordshire, and planning has a key role to play in ensuring that development minimises its impact on the environment, helps to mitigate and adapt to adverse effects of climate change and provides renewable energy generation in a sensitive way.

7.29 As a means of tackling climate change South Staffordshire must be a place where sustainable communities are created and a District where people want to live and work, now and in the future. The Council is therefore seeking to create communities which meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. Communities must be safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

Core Policy 3: Sustainable Development and Climate Change

The Council will require development to be designed to cater for the effects of climate change, making prudent use of natural resources, enabling opportunities for renewable energy and energy efficiency and helping to minimise any environmental impacts. This will be achieved by:

a) giving preference to development on previously developed land (brownfield land) in sustainable locations, provided it is not of high environmental value; and supporting and encouraging the reuse of buildings as a sustainable option;

b) supporting and encouraging development which facilitates sustainable modes of transport, including the transport of materials and recycling products, by requiring travel plans for developments which would have significant transport implications;

c) ensuring that development on brownfield land affected by contamination or land instability is remediated in accordance with the NPPF;

d) ensuring that all new development and conversion schemes, are located and designed to maximise energy efficiency, and incorporate the best environmental practice and sustainable construction techniques appropriate to the size and type of development; and minimises the consumption and extraction of minerals by making the greatest possible reuse and recycling of materials in new construction;

e) ensuring that building design is flexible to future needs and users, and reduces energy consumption by appropriate methods, such as high standards of insulation, layout, orientation, using natural lighting and ventilation, and capturing the sun's heat where appropriate;

f) minimising and managing waste in a sustainable way, particularly through re-use and recycling;

g) protecting and enhancing South Staffordshire's natural and historic assets including natural habitats, the character and quality of the landscape and valued historic landscapes and the wider countryside, mitigation against the worst effects of climate change and pursuing biodiversity enhancement schemes and historic environment management proposals;

h) protecting and enhancing the character, local distinctiveness and setting of villages;

i) protecting and enhancing essential community facilities and services including sole facilities, buildings and open spaces, primary care and healthcare facilities;

j) guiding development away from known areas of flood risk as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Surface Water Management Plan and consistent with NPPF;

k) ensuring the use of sustainable drainage (Sustainable Drainage Systems) in all new development and promoting the retrofitting of SUDs where possible;

l) ensuring that all development includes pollution prevention measures where appropriate to prevent risk of pollution to controlled waters;

m) protecting the amenities of our residents and seeking to improve their overall quality of life through the provision of appropriate infrastructure, facilities and services.

n) consideration of the impact that development will have on the sterilisation of mineral resources and the potential for future extraction of these minerals

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

Explanation

7.30 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).

7.31 Sustainable development is at the heart of the local planning strategy for South Staffordshire and the Council has a key role to play in reducing carbon emissions, stabilising the climate adapting to unavoidable changes in the District, such as new housing development and infrastructure. The aim will be to manage change in a

sustainable way in accordance with national planning objectives and the Council's strategic objectives. This will be addressed through focusing on the efficient use of energy and resources as well as encouraging innovative design and construction techniques, and accommodating renewable energy. Development must be located, designed, serviced and accessed in ways that contribute to the character and local distinctiveness of South Staffordshire and help promote sustainable communities and the achievement of sustainable development.

7.32 Core Policy 3 underpins the Core Strategy and provides a set of key criteria that will be applied to development proposals. It reflects the importance attached to sustainable development in Strategic Objectives 6 and 7. The Sustainable Community Strategy will have an important role to play in delivering action at the community level, through community based initiatives and locality working.

Key Evidence

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 - 2020
Staffordshire County-wide Renewable / Low Carbon Energy Study 2010
Southern Staffordshire Outline Water Cycle Study 2010
Southern Staffordshire Surface Water Management Plan Phase 1 2010
South Staffordshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 2008
South Staffordshire Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2008
Draft Phase 2 Surface Water Management Plan for Penkridge Village 2011

Monitoring

Through Development Policies EQ5, EQ6, EQ7, EQ8, EQ9 and EQ10
LSP Environmental Quality Delivery Plan

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

Development Policies

7.33 The following Development Policies support Core Policy 3.

Policy EQ5: Sustainable Resources and Energy Efficiency

To ensure that development minimises environmental impacts, including lowering the demand for energy and water, securing the highest viable standards of resource and energy efficiency and achieving greater resilience to changes in climate, minimum sustainability standards are required for all new build and retrofitted developments.

With regard to reducing carbon emissions, all new residential development will be required to achieve the minimum carbon standards as set out in the following carbon

targets framework:

Period	Domestic Reductions	
	Regulated (vs Part L 2006)	Minimum Proportion of Low and Zero Carbon energy generation* (regulated carbon)
2010-13		
Minimum**	25%	10%
Maximum$^{\chi}$	44%	20%
2013-16		
Minimum**	44%	20%
Maximum$^{\chi}$	Zero carbon 100% (min. 70% Carbon compliance / 30% AS)	Obsolete at this carbon standard Zero Carbon
2016-19		
Minimum**		
Maximum$^{\chi}$		
Post 2019		

South Staffordshire's carbon standard requirements are based upon Building Regulations Part L and achieving high standards will improve the performance of developments against the CSH and BREEAM assessment frameworks.

All new residential development is required to examine how it could attain the maximum carbon targets. The Council has the expectation that where conditions or opportunities are favourable, for example through district heating or low carbon energy generation the maximum standards will be achieved. The minimum standards are required to be met on all schemes. Development which is proposed in excess of the maximum recommended standards would not be precluded. Development should follow the 'energy hierarchy' of maximising the energy efficiency, then low carbon energy then finally off-site offsetting options.

The Council wishes to encourage the inclusion of low carbon energy technologies. It is recognised that technologies must be 'fit for purpose' for specific developments, however, the Council wishes to encourage the inclusion of biomass boilers in the district (or community) heating to make the best use of the available renewable resources, and requires development proposals to demonstrate that these technologies have been duly considered.

Conversion and refurbishment of existing residential buildings will be expected to meet high standards of the forthcoming 'BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment standard'.

Extensions to existing residential buildings will be expected to improve the overall energy and water efficiency of the building.

Achieving improved resource and energy efficiency in the existing built environment will be considered in a Sustainable Development SPD.

Non-residential development over 1000m2 should be built to BREEAM 'Excellent' standard. In relation to reducing carbon emissions all non-domestic development is required incorporate low or zero carbon (LZC) energy generation systems. The degree of carbon reduction required is as follows:

- 10% for developments completed between 2010 and 2013
- 20% for developments completed from 2013 onwards,
- or a scoring of two credits within the Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) Energy section, if this method of assessment is used.

Major refurbishment of existing non-residential buildings or conversions greater than 1000m2 floor space should achieve BREEAM 'Very Good' Standard.

Economic viability should also be considered in an assessment of achieving the above targets.

The Council is developing a carbon investment fund which will support the achievement of carbon targets through financial contribution. The CIF will support the implementation of off-site carbon reduction measures, which will meet appropriate carbon and additionality criteria.

With regard to the management of water resources in new development, new residential development should seek to achieve Level 4 of the Water section of the CSH. For all non-residential development over 1000m2 at least a scoring of two credits within the water section of BREEAM should be sought, if this method of assessment is used.

Explanation

7.34 The Council supports the Government target of at least an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, and of at least 34% by 2020 (against a 1990 baseline), as headlined in the Climate Change Act of 2008.

7.35 On a per capita basis, South Staffordshire District has one of the largest annual CO2 emissions in the County, exceeding the West Midlands regional average. South Staffordshire also consumes the largest amount of energy per capita compared to the rest of Staffordshire. Reducing carbon emissions in the built environment is recognised nationally as one way to assist in addressing the impact of climate change. The "Building a Greener Future Policy Statement" of July 2007 aims to ensure that all new homes built after 2016 will have zero carbon net emissions from all energy uses and the Coalition Government is continuing to pursue this timetable. South Staffordshire Council is committed to reducing carbon emissions from the built environment, and this is reflected in the above policy, but also through the aspirations of the Council's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

7.36 For new buildings reducing carbon emissions can be achieved through utilising the Zero Carbon Hierarchy, which focuses on a combination of:

- Energy efficiency - a high level of energy efficiency in the fabric and design of new buildings
- Carbon compliance - a minimum level of carbon reduction to be achieved from on-site low and zero-carbon energy supply and/or connections to low carbon heat networks
- Allowable solutions - a range of measures available for achieving zero carbon beyond the minimum carbon compliance requirements (including achieving further reductions on-site and a range of off-site measures).

7.37 Essentially the carbon targets framework for residential development, and the targets for non-residential development, as set out in the policy above, follows this hierarchy and advocates a flexible approach which will allow new development to come forward incorporating a range of appropriate measures. The framework is aligned to the Code for Sustainable Homes energy credits.

7.38 Evidence from the Water Cycle Study and Surface Water Management Plan has indicated that a high level of implementation of water demand management techniques will be necessary to ensure that current resources are not exceeded and that the water environment is not negatively impacted by development. Utilising the CSH and BREEAM assessment methods will ensure that these issues are addressed consistently.

7.39 South Staffordshire has the second smallest forecast for new dwellings within Staffordshire, and the smallest expected development of non-residential uses. Therefore the uptake of renewable energy technologies in the existing built environment offers great potential in order to meet Government targets. The conversion and refurbishment of existing residential buildings will need to have regard to the forthcoming 'BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment standard' which will be encompassed within the Council's Sustainable Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), after publication of this standard. Similarly the exact requirements of extensions to existing residential buildings in improving overall energy and water efficiency will be set out in this SPD, following further evidence gathering and analysis.

7.40 To support the targets from 2013 for both residential and non-residential development the Council will work with Staffordshire authorities to establish a Carbon Investment Fund designed to facilitate development to achieve off-site (or Allowable Solutions) carbon reductions through a variety of measures, which could include retrofitting of existing properties, urban greening or flood mitigation measures. (The basis for calculating contributions under this fund will be set out in the Development Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)).

7.41 The Council's forthcoming Sustainable Development SPD will provide developers and the broader community with more detailed guidance on renewable energy technology

and sustainable construction issues to support the implementation of the above policies.

Key Evidence

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 - 2020
Staffordshire County-wide Renewable / Low Carbon Energy Study 2010
Southern Staffordshire Outline Water Cycle Study 2010
Southern Staffordshire Surface Water Management Plan Phase 1 2010
South Staffordshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 2008
South Staffordshire Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2008

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process in consultation with Environment Agency and other partners
South Staffordshire Climate Change Strategy Action Plan
LSP Environmental Quality Delivery Plan
Sustainable Development SPD

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

Policy EQ6: Renewable Energy

Provision should be made for renewable energy generation within South Staffordshire to maximise environmental and economic benefits whilst minimising any adverse local impacts. South Staffordshire should strive to meet a minimum of 9.6% of its energy demand through renewable energy sources by 2020 through a variety of technologies. In particular, opportunities for biomass and wind energy developments will be assessed on the following basis:

Biomass Energy Development

Projects and developments which utilise bio-energy, and particularly those using locally derived resources, are supported by the Council. The Council would support the use of bio-energy for power generation and the provision of heat/thermal energy in planning applications. Development of community/district heating schemes are encouraged, particularly those:

- using bio-energy as a significant proportion of the required input fuel
- providing services to the Main Service Villages of Cheslyn Hay, Codsall, Great Wyrley, Penkridge, Perton and Wombourne

- providing services to areas with high heat density including employment sites, especially where they offer opportunities for extension to other neighbouring buildings or communities either at the time of development or in the future.

For bio-energy heat and power proposals, the following criteria will be considered:

- the impact of the proposal on designated biodiversity sites and species and ancient woodland and heritage assets and their settings;
- brownfield sites or co-located with other wood processing industries;
- located and scaled to avoid adverse off-site impacts;
- located close to the point of demand or adjacent to existing transport corridors;
- minimise pollution from noise, emissions and odours;
- minimise any adverse impacts on amenity and on existing residential development.

All major refurbishments must be Combined Heat & Power (CHP) ready and able to connect to a network at the earliest opportunity.

Wind Energy Development

A maximum of four large scale* wind turbines will be considered within the District to 2020. Opportunities for wind energy developments will be assessed on the following basis:

- the degree to which the scale and nature of the proposal reflects the capacity and sensitivity of the landscape to accommodate the development;
- the impact on local amenity and on existing residential development;
- the impact of the proposal on designated biodiversity sites and species and ancient woodland;
- the impact on the historic environment, including important views and landscapes and archaeological interests;
- the cumulative impact of the proposal on the wider landscape of South Staffordshire and adjoining areas; and
- the proximity to, and impact on, transport infrastructure and the local highway network.

The Council will support the development of community led, residential and business scale turbines where they present a lower level of impact on the landscape character of the District.

The environmental and local amenity impact of **all** renewable energy schemes (both small and large scale) including any infrastructure or buildings must be fully assessed and development proposals will be considered in accordance with Core Policy 2 and policies EQ1, EQ2, EQ3 and EQ4.

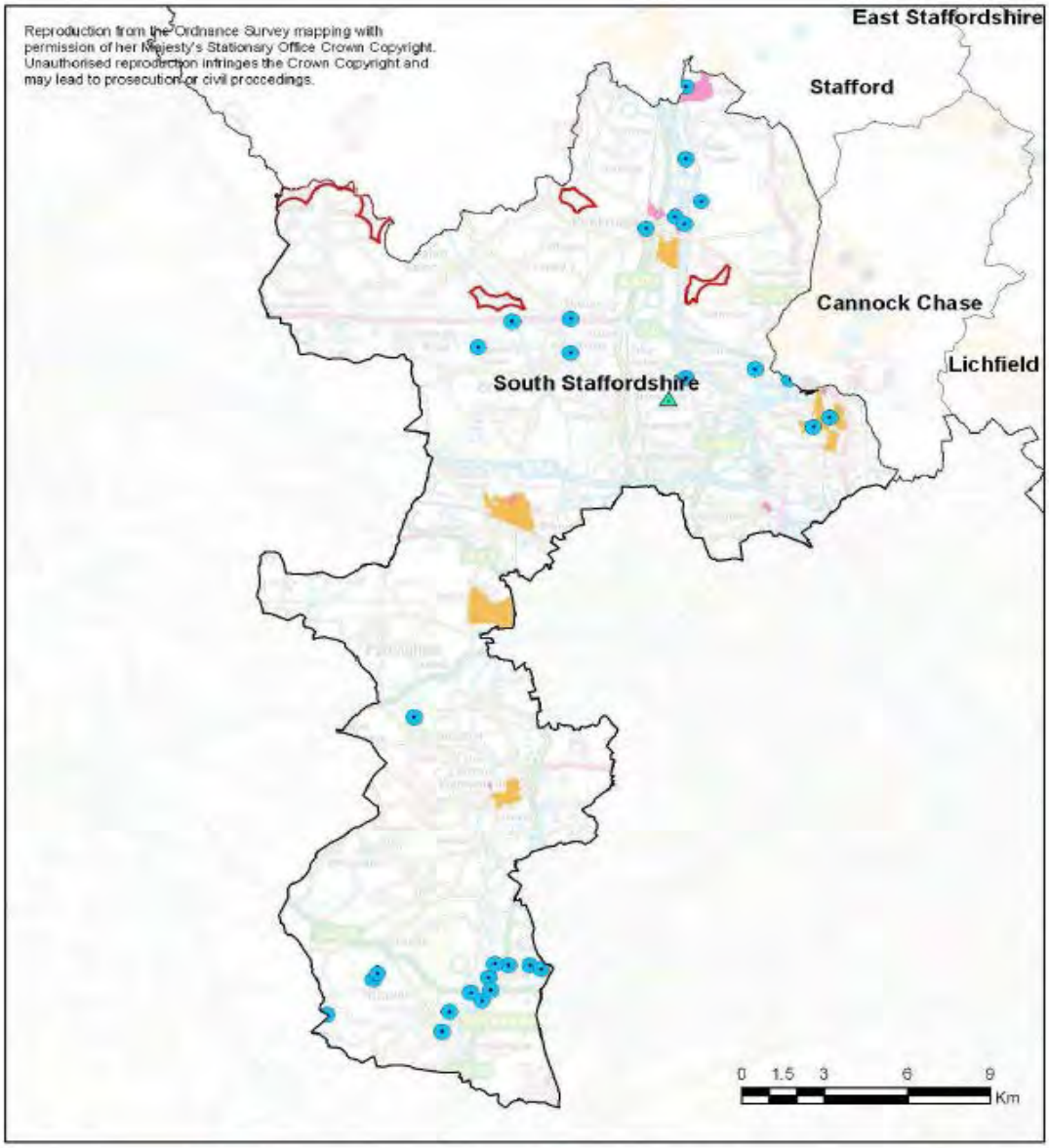
Applicants will be required to provide evidence to demonstrate that the renewable energy benefits arising from the proposed development outweigh the impacts on

local amenities, including environmental and landscape impacts, impact on the historic environment and impact on the amenities of local residents.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

**Footnote: the definition of a large scale wind turbine (taken from the Staffordshire Renewable Energy Study) is approximately 120m to the tip of the blade at the top of its swept area.*

Map 11 Locations with Renewable Energy Potential



Biomass energy sources have not been mapped due to their highly distributed nature.

Explanation

7.42 South Staffordshire has an attractive and varied environment containing a number of sensitive areas, including internationally important nature conservation sites, historic landscapes, land within Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Sites of Biological Importance (SBI), conservation areas, listed buildings, and Scheduled Ancient Monuments. It is recognised, however, that in delivering sustainable communities it is essential that energy needs are minimised and that low carbon communities are developed through the relevant infrastructure provision.

7.43 Under EU Directive 2009/28/EC on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources the UK has committed to sourcing 15% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020. Exploiting the District's biomass and wind resources is one way in which the District can contribute to this national target. In order to establish local feasibility and the potential for renewable energy generation within Staffordshire, the Staffordshire Strategic Partnership (of which South Staffordshire Council is a member) has commissioned a study.

7.44 The Staffordshire County-wide Renewable/ Low Carbon Energy Study has estimated that the authority is capable of meeting between 9.6% and 12% of its energy demand through renewable energy sources by 2020 (Although the Core Strategy runs to 2028 the evidence base has utilised a timescale of 2020 to tie in with Government targets. Policies containing targets to 2020 will therefore be reviewed at this date.) The study has identified that South Staffordshire's greatest opportunity lies in the diversion of biomass sources as alternative fuel sources, with the most significant sources being agricultural and wood waste streams, which is estimated could contribute almost 65% of renewable resources in 2020. As such the Council will require developers to consider biomass as the preferred solution to meeting the requirements of Policy EQ5. It is therefore recognised that demand may arise for large scale bio-energy heat and power facilities to utilise this resource and that a criteria-based planning policy is required to manage such development.

7.45 For wind energy, scenarios modelled within the study, have identified that four turbines could be installed in the District, which would generate between 14% and 26% of the modelled renewable energy in 2020. The study has identified four potential sites of greatest opportunity for wind development, as shown on the Locations with Renewable Energy Potential Map. However, as with large-scale biomass development, a criteria-based policy for wind turbine development is considered necessary, especially given the attractive and distinctive environment of South Staffordshire District, which contains a variety of ecologically and historically sensitive locations, and to protect the amenity of our residents. Whilst suitable areas for renewable energy development have been identified in Map 12, any subsequent application for renewable energy development outside of these mapped areas will need to demonstrate that the proposed location meets the criteria used in the study to identify these suitable areas. In order to preserve landscape character the Council will expect that renewable

technologies, such as wind turbines, will be decommissioned at the end of their lifespan.

Key Evidence

Staffordshire County-wide Renewable / Low Carbon Energy Study 2010
Southern Staffordshire Outline Water Cycle Study 2010
Southern Staffordshire Surface Water Management Plan Phase 1 2010
South Staffordshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 2008
South Staffordshire Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2008

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process in consultation with Environment Agency and other partners
South Staffordshire Climate Change Strategy Action Plan
LSP Environmental Quality Delivery Plan
Sustainable Development SPD

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

Policy EQ7: Water Quality

Development will be permitted where proposals do not have a negative impact on water quality, either directly through pollution of surface or groundwater or indirectly through overloading of Wastewater Treatment Works. Consultation must be held with Severn Trent Water ahead of the progression of any potential development to ensure appropriate wastewater infrastructure is in place in sufficient time, particularly where potential development will depend on Codsall, Penkridge and Wombourne Wastewater Treatment Works where there is a known capacity restriction.

Further site specific analysis of any development proposals located in proximity or upstream of environmentally significant sites, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), and European Sites including Mottey Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) will be required in order to validate any relevant planning application to demonstrate that the development will have no adverse effect on environmentally significant sites. Non mains drainage will not be permitted where it is likely to cause adverse effects at sensitive ecological sites. In line with objectives of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), development proposals must not adversely affect the water quality of waterbodies in the District and wherever possible take measures to improve it.

All planning applications must include a suitable Sustainable Drainage (SUDs) scheme,

and greater detail will be considered in a Sustainable Development Supplementary Planning Document. Developers are advised to refer to the guidance on SUDs contained in section 4.3 of the Southern Staffordshire Outline Water Cycle Study.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

7.46 Evidence from the Water Cycle Study and Surface Water Management Plan has indicated that the implementation of key water management techniques will be necessary to ensure that current resources are not stretched and that the water environment is not negatively impacted by development. The recommendations for this policy are taken from the evidence base as reported in the Water Cycle Study and through discussions with the Environment Agency and Natural England. The above policy is written to ensure that development causes no negative impact upon the waterbodies in the District in line with the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive. The Water Cycle Study identifies the Back Brook and Wom Brook as currently having low water quality. The River Sow, River Stour, River Worfe and Wom Brook have been identified as having 'poor' ecological status in the River Basin Management Plan, and the Back Brook, Church Eaton Brook, River Penk, River Tame, Saredon Brook and Smestow Brook as having 'moderate' ecological status. Potential developments within the catchments of these watercourses may be impacted by abstraction and wastewater treatment limitations and should be discussed with Severn Trent Water Limited and the Environment Agency at the earliest opportunity. The WFD sets a target of achieving at least 'good status' or 'good potential' in all waterbodies by 2015. Severn Trent Water is a regulated business with statutory responsibilities for the provision of water and waste water treatment services in much of South Staffordshire. South Staffordshire Water is also responsible for public water supply in parts of the District.

Key Evidence

Southern Staffordshire Outline Water Cycle Study 2010
Southern Staffordshire Surface Water Management Plan Phase 1 2010
South Staffordshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 2008
South Staffordshire Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2008
Evidence Base relating to Cannock Chase SAC and the Appropriate Assessment of Local Authority Core Strategies 2010
Hatherton Canal Restoration Feasibility Report 2006
Hatherton Canal Restoration Supplementary Feasibility Report 2009
Planning for Landscape Change, Staffordshire County Council SPG 1996 - 2011
Habitats Regulation Assessment Review of the Core Strategy
Humber River Basin Management Plan 2009
Severn River Basin Management Plan 2009
Draft Phase 2 Surface Water Management Plan for Penkridge Village 2011

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 EQ8: Waste

Development and activities must support the minimisation of waste together with the efficient use of materials, and in particular assist in the delivery of the priorities of the waste hierarchy – which seeks first to promote the reduction of waste, followed by its re-use, then recycling and composting, followed by energy recovery, before finally accepting its disposal as a last resort.

Support will be given for the provision of well designed recycling facilities and recycling collection points, in locations accessible to all members of the communities that are served.

Development must make appropriate provision for recycling facilities and the storage and collection of waste. Development should provide for on-site recycling, and seek to re-use building construction and demolition waste.

Proposals for waste facilities should be in accordance with the policies in the Staffordshire Waste Local Plan and the replacement Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Waste Core Strategy.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

7.47 The County Council is preparing a Waste Core Strategy which will set out the vision, objectives and Spatial Strategy for future waste related development within Staffordshire for the next 15 years. This strategy will form part of the Development Plan for the District.

7.48 The Policy sets out the principles of waste management to support the County Council's Waste Core Strategy and to express the national approach to waste issues set out in Planning Policy Statement 10 (PPS10) 'Planning for Sustainable Waste Management'. The Policy supports minimisation of waste 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.

Permission for potentially hazardous or polluting activities will only be granted where these are kept separate from other uses likely to be sensitive, in order to prevent potential conflicts and in particular to protect the health, safety and

amenity of the general public and protect the natural environment.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

7.50 There is a range of activities and operations, although essential in themselves, that can give rise to environmental and safety concerns. These can include installations and pipelines and sites the subject of Hazardous Substances Consent (e.g. the manufacture or storage of dangerous chemicals). Many of the activities concerned are heavily controlled and prescribed through specific legislation, and under the jurisdiction of Government bodies such as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Environment Agency.

7.51 There are a number of dangerous substance establishments and major accident hazard pipelines including high-pressure gas transmission pipelines in South Staffordshire. The location of installations handling notifiable substances and the consultation distances advised by the HSE are shown on the Development Management Constraints Maps held by the Council.

7.52 The above Policy sets out the principles and local considerations for dealing with proposals involving hazardous and environmentally sensitive operations.

Key Evidence

Development Management constraints information
Mapping of installations and pipelines

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process in consultation with the HSE and Environment Agency

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

Promoting High Quality Design

Introduction

7.53 Planning has a key role to play in achieving better-designed buildings and enhancing the environment of our villages. Good design has an important role in promoting sustainable development and protecting local character and distinctiveness. 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.

Core Policy 4: Promoting High Quality Design

The Council will expect all development proposals to achieve a high quality of design of buildings and their landscape setting, in order to achieve the vision of a high quality environment for South Staffordshire. Support will be given to proposals that are consistent with the detailed design policy set out in Policy EQ11 and the guidance in the adopted Village Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (or subsequent revisions), and be informed by any other local design statements, and meet the following requirements:

a) to provide an attractive, functional, accessible, safe, healthy and secure environment;

b) to respect and enhance local character and distinctiveness of the natural and built environment including opportunities to improve the character and quality of the area and the way it functions;

c) to incorporate measures to reduce the risk of flooding and prepare for the predicted effects of climate change;

d) to make a positive contribution to the public realm including the incorporation of public art where appropriate;

e) to adopt sustainable construction principles and use locally sourced and recycled materials wherever possible;

f) to incorporate accessibility measures to meet the needs of users and facilitate access through sustainable forms of transport;

g) to facilitate and encourage physical activity through outdoor sport, recreation (informal sport and play) walking and cycling;

h) to secure improvements to public spaces and the provision of additional public spaces.

Development proposals will be assessed against the design criteria in the Village

Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (or subsequent revisions) and where appropriate should take into account the actions and recommendations contained in the Council's Conservation Area Management Plans.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

7.54 The Council has adopted a Village Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document with the aim of promoting the highest standards of design and construction in new development and to encourage buildings that are sustainable in construction and in use. The Council will also promote a high standard of landscape design to secure the best environment. Supported by the strong commitment to protect South Staffordshire's environmental assets, the Council will seek to ensure that the historic character of our villages is maintained and enhanced and that new development respects local character and distinctiveness. Development should be designed to create a safe, healthy and secure environment and make efficient use of resources. This approach reflects Strategic Objectives 5 and 14.

7.55 All new buildings and spaces must enhance and respect their surroundings and contribute towards local character and distinctiveness. Developments must be of the appropriate scale, design and materials for their location and conform to the design principles set out in above Policy. Public art may make a contribution in enhancing local character and distinctiveness and will be supported wherever appropriate.

7.56 Further detailed guidance on design and the requirements for new development is set out below in Policy EQ11 and reference should be made to the adopted Village Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (or subsequent revisions). All those proposing development will be advised to refer to the Department for Transport Manual for Streets, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) Building for Life standards, the CABE document Physical Activity and the Built Environment, Sport England's Active Design and the web-based toolkit the 'West Midlands Sustainability Checklist (Advantage West Midlands). Those proposing new housing development are also advised to consult the Government document 'Code for Sustainable Homes' which provides a national standard for the construction of new homes.

7.57 Reference to 'Building for Life', the 'West Midlands Sustainability Checklist' and the Department for Transport Manual for Streets is to ensure that early in the development stage, careful attention is given to high quality and sustainable design principles. Reference to the Council's adopted Village Design Guide (or subsequent revisions) is also essential to ensure that careful attention is given to the requirements and guidance relevant to the distinctiveness of South Staffordshire.

Key Evidence

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 - 2020

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 CABE 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 1996-2011
South Staffordshire Landscape Assessment 2003
Historic Environment Character Assessment 2011
Village Design Guide SPD 2009

Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans 2010
Open Space Strategy 2009

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
LSP Environmental Quality Delivery Plan
Village Design Guide SPD (or subsequent revisions)
Conservation Area Management Plans
Open Space Strategy Action Plan

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

Policy EQ12: Landscaping

Landscaping of new development must be an integral part of the overall design, which complements and enhances the development and the wider area, and:

a) creates a visually pleasant, sustainable and biodiversity rich environment;

b) provides for sustainable solutions including the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS). Designs should respond to the potential implications of climate change;

c) protects and enhances key landscape features;

d) creates new features and areas of open space that reflect local landscape character;

e) contributes to character, appearance and sense of place;

f) promotes a public realm which is attractive and safe.

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

7.61 The NPPF stresses the importance of giving due consideration to landscaping issues. The above Policy provides specific guidance on landscaping and stresses the need to ensure appropriate landscaping for all developments. It is important to achieve landscaping

which protects and enhances key landscape features, and can take advantage of them, and that creates natural and sustainable features which contribute to biodiversity, and in terms of public realm are rich in identity, and are attractive and safe.

7.62 Sustainability considerations are also key elements of the policy including the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) and sustainable construction methods. Landscape designs should take into account the implications of climate change through species selection and by planting that provides for additional shade or winter solar gain. Further guidance on detailed landscaping and sustainability issues will be given in a Supplementary Planning Document on Landscape Character.

Key Evidence

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2020
South Staffordshire Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2009
Southern Staffordshire Surface Water Management Plan Phase 1 2010
Planning for Landscape Change – Staffordshire County Council SPG 1996-2011
South Staffordshire Landscape Assessment 2003
Open Space Strategy 2009

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Landscape Character SPD
Open Space Strategy Action Plan
LSP Environmental Quality Delivery Plan

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

Infrastructure Delivery

Introduction

7.63 The term infrastructure is broadly used to define all of the requirements that are needed to make places function efficiently and effectively and in a way that creates sustainable communities. Infrastructure is commonly split into three main categories, defined as:

- **Physical Infrastructure**: the broad collection of systems and facilities that house and transport people and goods, and provide services e.g. transportation networks, housing, energy supplies, water, drainage and waste provision, ICT networks, public realm and historic assets.

- **Social and Community Infrastructure**: covers the range of activities, organisations and facilities supporting the formation, development and

maintenance of social relationships in a community. It can include the provision of community facilities (education, healthcare, community centres, sports and leisure facilities), local networks, community groups, skills development and volunteering.

- **Green Infrastructure:** the physical environment within and between our villages. It includes the network of multi-functional open spaces, including formal parks and gardens, woodlands, green corridors, rights of way, waterways, street trees and open countryside.

Core Policy 5: Infrastructure Delivery

New development must be supported by the required infrastructure at the appropriate stage. The Council will work with the Local Strategic Partnership and its partners to ensure the co-ordinated delivery of facilities and infrastructure to support sustainable communities, and the delivery of the Spatial Strategy for South Staffordshire.

The physical, social and community and green infrastructure required is set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). Strategic and local infrastructure needs are identified in the IDP and provision will be linked to the phasing of new development.

The Council will seek to protect, and where appropriate improve, existing facilities and services that are essential to the function, operation and sustainability of existing communities as set out in Policy EV9.

New facilities and infrastructure, of an appropriate scale, must be located and designed so that they are integrated, accessible and compatible with the character, local distinctiveness and needs of the local community.

New development will be required to provide the necessary infrastructure at a timely stage to meet the community needs arising from the proposal. Development will also be expected to contribute, as appropriate, to projects that support sustainable development and the wider community.

Explanation

7.64 The maintenance and improvement of infrastructure will be fundamental to achieving our ambitions for the development of South Staffordshire District up to 2028. The growth and development of South Staffordshire must be supported by improvements to physical, social and green infrastructure, and where necessary, be delivered in advance of development. The infrastructure will include facilities needed for development to function and to ensure the integration and creation of sustainable communities.

7.65 In general, infrastructure requirements can also be divided into strategic and local.

- *Strategic Infrastructure* refers to facilities or services serving a wider area that may be the whole District or beyond – for example investment in water, gas and electricity networks. Strategic infrastructure may also include major road schemes

- *Local Infrastructure* is about facilities or services that are essential to meet the day-to-day needs of the population – for example schools, social care and health facilities, housing, community facilities and local green spaces. These are often essential for development to take place and/or are needed to mitigate the impact of development at the site or neighbourhood level.

7.66 The delivery of the full range of infrastructure needs of existing and new communities is dependent on partnership working between a variety of public and private sector agencies. Where new development creates a need for new or improved infrastructure, contributions from developers will be sought. Contributions will be assessed in accordance with the provisions of Circular 05/2005 'Planning Obligations' (or any subsequent replacement of the Circular), to ensure that they are fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development and reasonable in all other respects.

7.67 Infrastructure provision and contributions will be informed by the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The IDP gives a broad indication of what infrastructure is required, where, when, how much it will cost, who is responsible for delivery and how it will be funded during the plan period. Throughout the Core Strategy preparation process the IDP has been informed by discussions that have taken place with key infrastructure delivery agencies. The IDP will be a 'live' document continuously updated through the plan period to reflect new requirements when they are known and also to identify when infrastructure needs have been met.

Key Evidence

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) 2010

Delivery and Monitoring

Through Development Policy EQ13
Infrastructure Delivery Plan
Business/Investment Plans of infrastructure providers
LSP Delivery Plans

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

Development Policies

7.68 The following Development Policy supports Core Policy 5.

Policy EQ13: Development Contributions

Contributions will be sought from developers where necessary to ensure the achievement of sustainable development including the provision of additional infrastructure and community facilities and the improvement and enhancement of existing facilities, whenever there is a need generated by the new development, i.e. where there is an existing or potential identified need that would be exacerbated by further development. These include where appropriate:

a) the provision of affordable housing;

b) the provision and improvement of community facilities such as community centres, libraries and health facilities;

c) extension and improvement of educational facilities or the construction of new schools to meet demand generated by children in new development;

d) the provision of employment training schemes which develop the skills of the local workforce;

e) schemes designed to maximise the employment of local people in new development;

f) children's services/facilities where existing services in the area have insufficient capacity to cater for the potential increase in the number of children, or are inappropriately placed to serve a development, having regard to the need to minimise travel;

g) new facilities and/or enhancement of existing facilities for the elderly, young people and disabled people;

h) landscaping of the setting of development on or off site;

i) the provision of new accessible public open space, play facilities and spaces and sport and recreation facilities to serve new residents or the enhancement of the quality and accessibility existing public open space, and sport and recreation facilities;

j) the management of existing sites designated for their nature conservation value including Mottey Meadows SAC, Cannock Chase SAC, and the Cannock Extension Canal SAC (and the effects of recreation upon them) and the creation and expansion of new habitats contributing to priorties in the UK Biodiversity Action

Plan and/or new nature conservation sites and habitats such as ponds, wetlands, native woodland or wildlife corridors;

k) the provision of green infrastructure;

l) conservation and enhancement of heritage assets particularly those identified as being at risk;

m) highway and infrastructure improvements;

n) car parking provision including improvements to public car parks;

o) extension and improvement of the public transport system including the provision of community bus services and supporting infrastructure, such as new shelters;

p) improvements to the existing and proposed footpath and cycle route network and links to or the creation of new public rights of way and links to green infrastructure;

q) the preparation, implementation and monitoring of Travel Plans;

r) water supply, and surface and foul water disposal infrastructure improvements;

s) flood protection measures and sustainable drainage systems and the long term maintenance of these features;

t) environmental improvements including street furniture, street trees and public art;

u) the provision of waste recycling facilities;

v) the provision of policing infrastructure and services and measures to reduce crime such as closed circuit television (CCTV);

w) the provision of other facilities which are important locally.

Contributions through full provision, land or commuted payments will be secured through planning obligations or conditions. A reduced level of contributions will only be considered where it is demonstrated that full provision would make the proposed development unviable.

Detailed guidance setting out how this Policy will operate will be contained in the Supplementary Planning Document on Development Contributions.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

7.69 Developer contributions are expected to play a significant role in infrastructure delivery, such as related highway and sustainable transport improvements, the provision of green spaces, community facilities, schools and health centres. It is recognised, however, that other mechanisms may be required to help deliver infrastructure.

7.70 Infrastructure requirements may need to be reviewed to deal with changing circumstances that arise through the plan period, or that need to be refined to take account of site specific requirements identified later in the plan making process. It is recognised that delivery agencies may have to review their management and investment plans and priorities over time.

7.71 The above Policy sets out the general principles concerning the use of planning obligations for the delivery of infrastructure, and identifies the main local priorities. The list is purely indicative of the possible range of matters for which obligations could be sought and is not in any priority order. As a general principle, obligations will be sought to meet a specific identified need and this need will be considered on a case by case basis. As a consequence, direct provision of the facility required will be a clear preference to the provision of payments in the form of commuted sums. In some cases the payment of commuted sums will be appropriate for the adoption and on going maintenance of open space areas.

7.72 Further detailed guidance on planning obligations will be set out in a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The Government is currently undertaking reviewing the way in which developer contributions are collected and the Council will need to consider the appropriateness of introducing a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for South Staffordshire District to meet future infrastructure needs. Consideration may be given to the delivery of infrastructure on a locality basis. Much of the information set out in the IDP would inform CIL calculations and if developer contributions are sought through this method, then the appropriate methodology would be set out in the proposed SPD.

Key Evidence

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) 2010
Business/Investment Plans of infrastructure providers
Sport England Sports Facilities Statement 2011'
Playing Pitch Strategy 2007

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Infrastructure Delivery Plan
Infrastructure providers
LSP Delivery Plans
Development Contributions SPD
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 1st 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:

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

*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 Mottey 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 the 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 1st 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 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

Homelessness Strategy 2007 - 2012
Older Persons Strategy 2007
Staffordshire Flexi Care Strategy 2010 - 2015
Parish Housing Need Surveys
Affordable Housing Viability Assessment 2011

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Site Allocations DPD
Affordable Housing SPD
LSP Housing Strategy Delivery Plan
Working with Registered Social Landlords, private sector and other partners
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update 2011

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

Policy H2: Provision of Affordable Housing

The Council is committed to improving housing affordability in South Staffordshire. Through negotiation it will seek to secure the provision of affordable housing in accordance with the following size thresholds for new housing developments:

a) 10 or more dwellings (or sites of 0.3 hectares or more in size) within the Main Service Villages, or

b) 5 or more dwellings (or sites of 0.2 hectares or more in size) within the Local Service Villages, or

c) 2 or more dwellings (or sites of 0.1 hectares or more in size) within the Small Service Villages.

The Council will seek to ensure that a proportion of affordable housing is provided on qualifying sites meeting the above threshold criteria in accordance with the following targets:

On sites of 10 or more dwellings – 30% affordable housing on previously developed land: 40% affordable housing on greenfield land:

Within the Local Service Villages and Small Service Villages on sites of 5 – 9 dwellings – 20% affordable housing (provided on-site);

Within Small Service Villages on sites of 2 – 4 dwellings – 20% affordable housing equivalent in-lieu of on-site provision

The settlement hierarchy of service villages is set out in Core Policy 1.

The Council will support the delivery of schemes for the provision of 100% affordable housing on rural exception sites at the service villages and other villages and hamlets where a need has been demonstrated in accordance with Policy H3 Affordable Housing – Rural Exception Sites.

As a general principle, affordable housing should be provided on site and only in very exceptional circumstances will financial contributions in lieu of on-site provision, be acceptable in respect of developments of 5 dwellings or more.

There is a shortage of affordable housing across the District however, in some areas the local need for affordable housing may be for less than the above affordable housing targets. In any such case a financial contribution to offsite affordable housing will be required at the equivalent rate to contribute towards meeting priority needs elsewhere.

Affordable housing may be in the form of social rented, intermediate housing or a mix of both. The Council has set an initial target of 50% of the affordable housing on a sites to be social rented and 50% intermediate tenures and the precise proportion will be agreed with the Council having regard to local housing needs within the locality of the development, exceptional circumstances and the effects on the viability of a scheme. Policy H4 sets out the principles on which affordable housing will be delivered. This will be kept under review with regard to Government policy.

The overall delivery of affordable housing in the plan period will be related to the ability to deliver housing in the market conditions that prevail at the time a planning application is made.

In applying this Policy, the Council will negotiate with developers for the provision of affordable housing on a site by site basis to reflect local housing needs, the nature of the development and taking into account the economic viability of the scheme. The Council will seek to take an approach that is responsive to market conditions. Where the level of affordable housing provision required alongside other obligations and costs is proven to undermine the viability of a development, then this will be subject to further individual site viability assessment undertaken by the applicant in discussion with the Council.

The Council will require affordable housing schemes to be fully integrated with market housing and be consistent in the quality of design and standard of private and public spaces, to create mixed and sustainable communities. It should be assumed that affordable housing will be required to be provided without subsidy.

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

Explanation

8.22 The provision of more affordable housing is a key priority for the Council and reflects the views of the residents of South Staffordshire. It is also a national priority, a key priority in the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Strategic Partnership's Housing Strategy, and is highlighted in the Council Plan for the provision of good quality affordable housing.

8.23 The local Housing Market Assessment identifies an annual need of 684 affordable dwellings which over a five year period is greater than the local housing target proposed in the Core Strategy. However, the housing figure derived from the evidence base of the WMRSS balanced housing need with environmental protection and proximity to the Black Country Major Urban Area. In view of the Council's objective to protect the Green Belt and the environment of South Staffordshire it is not going to be possible to meet all our identified housing need. However, the Council will continue to work with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to maximise opportunities to increase the number of affordable homes across the District.

8.24 The Affordable Housing Viability Study carried out in 2010 highlighted that up to 40% affordable housing on qualifying sites is likely to be achievable in most parts of the District. The Council considers that this is an appropriate target which would help deliver affordable housing in the plan period and assist in the creation of sustainable and balanced communities as part of the overall local planning strategy. The Council will negotiate with developers for provision on a site by site basis taking into account viability and the economics of provision and recognises that there may be cases where a financial contribution in lieu of on-site provision may be appropriate on smaller sites and contribute towards meeting priority needs elsewhere. Achieving a 40% target, on qualifying sites, would deliver around 644 affordable homes across the District between 2006 and 2028, which equates to approximately 29 per annum.

Key Evidence

Housing Market Assessment Update 2010
Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008
LSP Housing Strategy 2009 - 2012
Parish Housing Need Surveys
Affordable Housing Viability Assessment 2011

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
LSP Housing Strategy Delivery Plan
Site Allocations DPD
Affordable Housing SPD
Working with Registered Social Landlords, private sector and other partners

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

Policy H3: Affordable Housing – Rural Exception Sites

As an exception to planning policies relating to the location of housing development in the Green Belt and Open Countryside, small rural exceptions sites for 100% affordable housing to meet the identified needs of local people will be supported where the following criteria are met:

a) the site lies immediately adjacent to the existing village development boundary;

b) a housing need has been identified in the parish, or in one or more of the adjacent parishes for the type and scale of development proposed;

c) the proposed development is considered suitable by virtue of its size and scale in relation to an existing village and its services, and its proximity to public transport links and key infrastructure and services;

d) the initial and subsequent occupancy is controlled through planning conditions and legal agreements as appropriate to ensure that the accommodation remains available in perpetuity to local people in need of affordable housing;

e) the development is in accordance with design principles set out in the adopted Village Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (or subsequent revisions) or other local design documents, and respects the scale, character and local distinctiveness of its surroundings.

The Council will work with the private sector and Registered Social Landlords to achieve the delivery of affordable housing in South Staffordshire and ensure that affordable housing is provided in perpetuity.

For the purposes of this Policy, the definition of affordable housing is that contained in Annex 2 of the NPPF, which states that affordable housing includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.

The Council will require developments to incorporate and suitably integrate affordable housing and market housing, with a consistent standard of design and public spaces, to create mixed and sustainable communities.

In exceptional circumstances, in rural areas outside the Green Belt, a small number of market homes may be permitted at the Council's discretion where essential to subsidise the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

8.25 To enable affordable housing to be provided within other small rural communities to meet local needs, the NPPF allows small sites outside existing village boundaries to be used for affordable housing. These are sites which would not normally be released for housing but in the case of specified rural settlements, housing can be permitted as an exception to normal policies where there is a proven need within the community. Rural Exception Sites should only be used for affordable housing in perpetuity and the local need for affordable housing should be identified through the preparation of a robust Parish Needs Survey.

8.26 South Staffordshire Housing Association has commissioned a Rural Housing Enabler to work with Parish Councils to help identify local need and potentially deliver small rural affordable housing schemes in Parishes. The findings of local surveys accurately assess the level of need specific to a Parish. Where the need has been identified, Parish Councils then have the opportunity to help identify sites for rural affordable housing in their Parish in partnership with the Council, Housing Associations and Rural Housing Enabler.

Key Evidence

Housing Market Assessment Update 2010
Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008
Interim Affordable Housing Policy 2006
LSP Housing Strategy 2009 - 2012
Parish Housing Need Surveys
Affordable Housing Viability Assessment 2011

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
LSP Housing Strategy Delivery Plan
Working with Registered Social Landlords, Parish Councils and other partners
Affordable Housing SPD

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

Policy H4: Delivering Affordable Housing

Where new housing development makes provision for affordable housing in accordance with Policy H2 such development must:

a) be secured in perpetuity by an appropriate means (legal, ownership etc), ensuring that affordability remains for successive occupiers where possible and does not

run against existing legislation relating to Right to Buy, Right to Acquire and staircasing to 100% on shared ownership that are all permitted outside of rural exception sites; and

b) achieve a balance between rental property and intermediate affordable housing which reflects current market conditions and housing needs: an initial target will be set of 50% social rental and 50% intermediate tenures (such as shared ownership/equity (Homebuy) or intermediate rent). This may vary from site to site depending on local housing needs and exceptional circumstances but these figures should provide some indication and certainty for developers/landowners; and

c) be fully integrated within the development where the affordable housing is located within a larger housing scheme.

There will be a presumption against proposals to extend dwellings built as affordable housing to ensure that housing remains affordable for the benefit of initial and future occupiers unless an extension is required for a disabled adaptation. To that end it is likely that permitted development rights for extensions will be removed on the original consent.

Explanation

8.27 The provision of affordable housing to meet identified local need is one of the key objectives of the Core Strategy and is reflected in the Sustainable Community Strategy, LSP Housing Strategy and the Council Plan. However, the affordability of buying a home in the District has become a major problem.

8.28 The Policy provides the principles on which the provision of affordable housing will be achieved. Practical issues concerning the implementation of affordable housing policy will be set out in the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.

Key Evidence

Housing Market Assessment Update 2010
Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008
Interim Affordable Housing Policy 2006
Parish Housing Need Surveys
Affordable Housing Viability Assessment 2011

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
LSP Housing Strategy Delivery Plan
Working with Registered Social Landlords, Parish Councils and other partners
Affordable Housing SPD

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

Policy H5: Specialist Housing Accommodation

The Council will enable and support the provision of specialist housing accommodation in South Staffordshire. Sites for sheltered accommodation, nursing/residential care homes, dementia care units, and retirement villages to meet the needs of the District will also be supported. Sites may be allocated in the Site Allocations DPD or approved through planning permission. In identifying sites and/or determining planning applications development must:

a) be in a sustainable location and considered suitable by virtue of its size and scale in relation to an existing village and its services, and its proximity to public transport links and key infrastructure and services;

b) consider the re-use of previously developed land (brownfield land) in sustainable locations, provided it is not of high environmental value, as a priority including the extension of existing nursing/residential care homes and/or redevelopment of existing sites or co-location of facilities where there is an acknowledged need.

The Council will resist development that would lead to a loss of specialist accommodation unless alternative provision is being made by replacement or new facilities locally.

The Council will also work with partners including Staffordshire County Council to identify suitable sites and to secure the provision of schemes.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

8.29 Ensuring a variety of housing options is available for our most vulnerable residents is one of the key priorities of the LSP Housing Strategy. The rapidly ageing population of the District will provide significant strategic housing, care, support and health challenges for agencies operating in South Staffordshire.

8.30 Staffordshire County Council has been working on an evidence base looking at the requirement for Extra Care accommodation in Staffordshire, and in South Staffordshire it is projected that by 2025 there will be a need for 590 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 Mottey 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.

9. Economic Vibrancy

Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objective 9:

To meet local housing and employment needs, having regard to the Spatial Strategy for South Staffordshire, in a way that enables the existing villages within South Staffordshire to develop in a sustainable way that secures their future viability and prosperity, and supports the regeneration of rural communities and communities in neighbouring urban areas.

Strategic Objective 10:

To support the urban regeneration of the Black Country Major Urban Area by distributing new housing and employment growth within South Staffordshire in a way that supports existing local communities and in particular discourages out-migration from the Black Country Major Urban Area.

Strategic Objective 11:

To support the growth of a vibrant, prosperous and sustainable local economy; sustain, improve and enhance the vitality and viability of village centres and promote South Staffordshire as a tourist destination.

Strategic Objective 12:

To support thriving and sustainable communities by ensuring that local people enjoy access to jobs and key services such as social, health care, education, open space and recreation, cultural and other facilities.

Strategic Objective 13:

To reduce the need to travel, to secure improvements to public transport infrastructure and services and make it safer and easier for the community to travel to jobs and key services by sustainable forms of transport, such as public transport, walking and cycling.

Introduction

9.1 South Staffordshire occupies a unique position on the edge of the West Midlands conurbation. There are around 30,000 jobs provided in South Staffordshire but many of our residents commute out of the District and into the conurbation and surrounding areas. A significant proportion of new jobs in South Staffordshire are in the knowledge driven sector of the economy and tourism. Local residents rely heavily on nearby towns and cities such as Stafford, Cannock, Walsall, Wolverhampton, Dudley and Stourbridge

for their higher order services, such as hospitals, leisure activities, higher education facilities as well as employment opportunities. However, South Staffordshire has an important role to play in achieving economic growth within the West Midlands. Our aim is to harness the opportunities that South Staffordshire has to offer by encouraging business growth, raising skill levels, raising aspirations and promoting better engagement with local businesses. Increasing employment opportunities in South Staffordshire will improve the sustainability of our communities.

9.2 Creating prosperous villages and thriving sustainable communities are key objectives of the Spatial Strategy and this is reflected in the priorities set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy. The proposed strategy for employment and economic development is to support local businesses and jobs, to encourage new employment opportunities and the development of sites, to support the development of skills and to meet local employment needs in a way that enables existing villages to develop in a sustainable way that secures their future viability and prosperity.

Core Policy 7: Employment and Economic Development

The Council, working in partnership with businesses and local communities, will support measures to sustain and develop the local economy of South Staffordshire and encourage opportunities for inward investment and further economic development of the District. The Council will support the development of creative and high technology industries at strategic employment sites in suitable locations within South Staffordshire.

Measures to sustain the development of key economic sectors in the District, particularly manufacturing, storage and distribution, the service and tourism sectors will be encouraged and supported.

The Council will support the delivery of the strategic employment sites at i54 Wobaston Road and Hilton Cross. Support will also be given for the development of ROF Featherstone/Brinsford for general employment use*. The portfolio of employment sites in the District provides a range of sites including the proposed energy from waste facility at Four Ashes. This strategic site will provide employment and contribute to the delivery of sustainable waste management in the County and generate energy.

Proposals for modest extensions to the four freestanding strategic employment sites in South Staffordshire (i54, Hilton Cross, ROF Featherstone/Brinsford and Four Ashes) to accommodate justified development needs will be supported where robust evidence and a reasoned justification is provided to support their expansion.

Opportunities for new business formations, including Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) will be fostered and the survival and growth of these businesses supported, with sustainable forms of business, including home-working, and the expansion of ICT being supported.

Working with partners, the Council will encourage education and skills development, in order to provide employers with access to a skilled labour force. The Council will support proposals for the development of education and training facilities at South Staffordshire College (Rodbaston) that are consistent with Policy EV4.

In addition to the four freestanding strategic employment sites identified above, the focus for economic growth, development and investment will be on the Main Service Villages identified in the settlement hierarchy in Core Policy 1.

The Council will support measures to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of village and neighbourhood centres. Small scale office development should be located within these centres in accordance with the retail hierarchy defined in Core Policy 8.

Opportunities for small-scale employment development to meet local needs will be supported in appropriate locations within the development boundaries of Local and Small Service Villages.

Outside the Main Service Villages, Local Service Villages, and Small Service Villages, proposals for small-scale employment development and the sustainable diversification of the rural economy, including the conversion and re-use of suitable redundant rural buildings for employment use and live/work units, will be supported where they are consistent with Core Policy 9 and do not conflict with other local planning policies.

Employment development will be expected to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The priority will be for the re-use of previously developed land (brownfield land) in sustainable locations, provided it is not of high environmental value; that is accessible by public transport, walking and cycling and development should be appropriate in scale and design to the location for which it is proposed. Mixed use sites incorporating high quality layouts, landscaping and design will be supported in appropriate locations.

The Council will support measures which provide the infrastructure necessary to support economic development, supporting transport investment which will help sustain the local economy giving priority to schemes which improve links and improve local accessibility between homes and jobs across the District and in particular improve accessibility to and from the main service villages by sustainable forms of transport e.g. public transport, walking and cycling.

The Council will seek to ensure that a supply of employment land is readily available in South Staffordshire to meet justified development needs for general employment development throughout the plan period, whilst recognising the constraints that impact upon the District.

Unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of a site being delivered, existing employment areas will be protected and retained for employment

uses in accordance with Policy EV1 and the redevelopment and modernisation of existing sites for employment will be supported.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

**Footnote: General Employment Use refers to use classes B1, B2 and B8 and sui generis uses of an industrial nature or appropriate to an employment area with those use classes. Suitability of a site to accommodate the entire range of 'general employment' uses will depend upon site specific factors which affect their suitability for uses with potential adverse impacts on local amenities.*

Explanation

9.3 Supporting the local economy, existing businesses and jobs and providing new employment opportunities are key elements of the Spatial Strategy. Small and medium sized enterprises will continue to play an important role in the prosperity of the District and it is important that there are opportunities for these to flourish. In order that the local economy benefits from a wide skills base within the local population, the Council will work with partners to ensure that education and skills levels are improved. New business formations will be actively encouraged and access to the labour market in more deprived areas will be supported.

9.4 The thrust of the strategy for employment and economic development in South Staffordshire will be to focus on the four freestanding strategic employment sites (i54, Hilton Cross, ROF Featherstone/Brinsford and Four Ashes) and within the Main Service Villages to support sustainable patterns of development where people will be able to access jobs and services by sustainable means of transport. The Employment Land Study (ELS) will be refreshed in order for the Council to ensure sufficient employment land is identified in South Staffordshire to meet justified needs, whilst recognising the constraints which impact upon the District. The findings of the ELS will be weighed in the balance to inform the Site Allocations DPD to support the delivery of mixed use sites in the Main and Local Service Villages and modest extensions to the four existing freestanding strategic employment sites.

9.5 In Local and Small Service Villages, employment development will be limited to that which meets local business and community needs and maintains the vitality and viability of these communities. The priority will be for the re-use of previously developed land (brownfield land) in sustainable locations, provided it is not of high environmental value, and employment development will need to be appropriate in scale and design to the location for which it is proposed.

9.6 In locations outside the service villages, proposals for small scale employment development relating to and supporting existing small businesses and the creation of new businesses will be supported where they do not conflict with national planning policy or other local planning policies.

9.7 The portfolio of existing and proposed employment sites generally provides a range of industrial and other employment based land and property in South Staffordshire. The current employment land supply in the District is set out in the table below.

Table Employment Land Supply

Employment Location	**Hectares of land available for general employment 2006-2028**	**Status**
South Staffs Business Park	0.48	With planning permission
Gailey Park	1.92	With planning permission
Enterprise Drive, Four Ashes	3.63	With planning permission
Smestow Bridge Industrial Estate	0.99	With planning permission
Acton Gate	0.56	With planning permission
Heath Mill Road, Wombourne	0.15	With planning permission
Total new land available	**7.73 Ha**	
	Hectares of land available for redevelopment for general employment 2006-2028	
Essington Brickworks Site, Hobnock Road	5.34	With planning permission
Coppice Farm	0.85	With planning permission
Moat House Farm	0.76	With planning permission
Chasepool Lodge Farm	1.45	With planning permission
College Farm Six Ashes	0.06	With planning permission
Land Off Gravelly Way, Four Ashes	21.95	With planning permission
Vernon Park – Site of Unit D	1.11	With planning permission
Total redevelopment land identified	**31.52 Ha**	
	Hectares of land available for high technology employment	
I54 Wobaston Road	101.93	With planning permission
Hilton Cross	4.93	With planning permission
Total of high technology land identified	**106.86 Ha**	
	Hectares of land allocated in Adopted Local Plan	
Royal Ordnance Factory, Featherstone	14.00	With planning permission

Total land allocated	**14.00 Ha**	
All Completions 2006 - 2010	**11.65 Ha**	
Under Construction at 2010	**0.00 Ha**	
Total Land Available for Employment Use 2006 - 2028	**171.76 Ha**	

9.8 The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 2 Revision set an indicative target of 24 hectares of land for general employment development for the period 2006-2026 including a rolling five-year reservoir of 8 hectares of land including both new land and redevelopment land. The portfolio of available employment land taking into account land already available with planning permission, under construction or developed at March 2010 stands at around 172 hectares. The strategic sites at i54 Wobaston Road and Hilton Cross will contribute to the portfolio of employment land in South Staffordshire, which will provide important new job opportunities and give a valuable economic boost to the District. The Council will continue to support the development of these important sites and the redevelopment of ROF Featherstone/Brinsford for general employment use.

9.9 The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) Phase 2 Revision contained a policy relating to the provision of a Regional Logistics Site (RLS) to serve the needs of the Black Country, and local authorities within Southern Staffordshire have been identified as an area of search for such a facility. Representations have been made to the Core Strategy supporting the provision of a RLS to serve the Black Country and development interests are promoting a potential site north of Wolverhampton.

9.10 The Panel Report into WMRSS Phase 2 Revision noted that there were differences of opinion as to whether the provision of a large logistics site was indeed the best way of meeting the aspirations of Urban Renaissance within the Black Country. The report also noted that 'there are a number of possibilities in other local authorities than South Staffordshire north of the conurbation.'

9.11 The Council accepts that the RLS issue remains outstanding and that a comprehensive study should now be set in train. The need that was expressed through the RSS Phase 2 Revision, and supported in the EiP Phase 2 Revision Panel Report in September 2009, was also supported in the Inspector's Report into the Examination of the Black Country Core Strategy, subsequently adopted in February 2011. In this regard, Wolverhampton City Council has agreed to lead on joint working with the Black Country and southern Staffordshire Districts to update the evidence base prepared in support of the RSS Phase 2 Revision with respect to the understanding as to how the identified need for large scale logistics activity to serve the needs of the area can best be met.

9.12 The Council considers that the comprehensive study should explore alternative approaches, such as 'hub and spoke', that could limit environmental impact, including loss of Green Belt; and also should include technical work to consider the feasibility of

making connections to the Rail Network and assessing issues of capacity. The Council considers that the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), the Black Country LEP and the Black Country Consortium, should be engaged in the Study. The Council acknowledges that 2 sites within South Staffordshire District have been identified as 'possibilities to be explored' (RSS Phase 2 Revision Panel Report) – Four Ashes and ROF Featherstone/ Brinsford. Others mentioned are Cannock, Fradley and Meaford. Both sites are adjacent to large freestanding strategic employment sites and Core Policy 7 states that modest extensions to the four existing freestanding strategic employment sites will be considered against other local planning policies to deliver sustainable development. However, the Council recognises that, an RLS would require a scale of development beyond a modest extension of either ROF Featherstone/Brinsford or Four Ashes. It is also recognised that the refresh of the Employment Land Study (ELS) might demonstrate a pressing need for new employment sites in the District which would be contrary to the agreed Spatial Strategy. In order to provide flexibility if either of these events were to occur, the Council will carry out a partial review of the Core Strategy to take account of such changes. The provision of an RLS in South Staffordshire would need to be justified by robust and comprehensive evidence. The Council will co-operate with partners and relevant parties and will use its best endeavours to ensure that the Comprehensive Study is completed by 31 December 2012.

9.13 The Council will continue to support existing employment sites for employment use both within villages and rural locations and will support proposals that would result in better, higher quality and more modern employment facilities where these are consistent with other policies. The proposed strategy will be to protect existing employment sites and proposals for the redevelopment, modernisation and expansion of sites for employment use will be supported in accordance with the suite of policies within the Economic Vibrancy chapter.

Key Evidence

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 - 2020
Southern Staffordshire Economic Regeneration Strategy 2006
Tourism Strategy 2010
WMRSS Evidence Base
Staffordshire Local Economic Assessment 2009
Understanding the Economy of Rural Staffordshire 2009
Staffordshire Prospects Research Papers 2009
Employment Land Study 2009
Staffordshire Employment Land Availability Survey 2010

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
LSP Economic Vibrancy Delivery Plan
Working with Economic Development partners

Site Allocations DPD

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

Development Policies

9.14 The following Development Policies support Core Policy 7.

Policy EV1: Retention of Existing Employment Sites

Sites and premises used and/or allocated for industrial or commercial purposes (B1 – B8) purposes will be safeguarded for that use. Proposals for development which would lead to the loss of land and premises for employment will not be permitted, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that:

a) the supply and variety of available alternative employment land is sufficient to meet the District and local requirements; or

b) following appropriate marketing of the site no suitable and viable alternative employment use can be found, or is likely to be found in the foreseeable future; or

c) there would be substantial planning benefit in permitting an alternative use, for example in removing a use which creates residential amenity problems such as noise or odours; or

d) economic benefits to the area would result by allowing redevelopment, for example by facilitating the retention of a business in the area through funding a new site or premises.

The strategic employment sites at i54, Hilton Cross, ROF Featherstone/Brinsford and Four Ashes shall be used for employment purposes that accord with their substantive planning permissions and their strategic planning and economic justifications.

In respect of i54 there shall be a strong presumption in favour of retaining the integrity of this site as being for the purpose of attracting high quality technology related development to diversify the local economy. For this reason, variations to the permitted employment uses at i54 will only be accepted if exceptional circumstances, including a robust business case and strategic planning justification, can be demonstrated.

At Hilton Cross, where the strategic site is smaller, there may be some scope for allowing variations from the permitted uses through the presentation of a robust business case and strategic planning justification.

ROF Featherstone/Brinsford has a history of support for B1 & B2 development through previous local plans for South Staffordshire. B8 has not been supported because of the implications arising from the movement of heavy goods vehicles along minor rural roads which link the site to the A449, A460 and the Bushbury areas of Wolverhampton. In addition, the ROF site is situated within the Forest of Mercia where there has been an ambition to restore and improve landscape quality. For that reason new forest planting (10 hectares) was a requirement of the previous Local Plan for South Staffordshire. The Council expects these issues to be addressed in any future redevelopment of the ROF site.

Four Ashes has been a strategically important industrial location within South Staffordshire for a number of years. The site is located close to the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area and the Saredon Brook. In assessing new development proposals the Council will seek to ensure that valuable wildlife areas and landscapes are protected and, where possible, enhanced.

Where redevelopment of employment land is acceptable, particular attention will be given towards ensuring the future viability of individual businesses (e.g. tenants of an estate or premises) that might be displaced.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

9.15 The loss of existing employment sites and premises could impact on the Council's ability to meet its employment and economic development objectives. The Council's Employment Land Study (ELS) recommends, as a general principle, that existing employment land and premises and employment allocations should be safeguarded for employment use. However, it is recognised that circumstances may arise where the lack of viability of an existing business or operation may lead to proposals to find an alternative use. A business case will be required to support and justify the loss of an existing employment site. Where the local need for employment land can be met elsewhere, it may be that alternative uses could be considered favourably within the context of other local planning policies.

9.16 Exceptionally, an alternative use may be preferable, for example where continuation of the employment use would be detrimental to other planning objectives such as protecting or enhancing residential amenity or the appearance of the countryside, or where other economic benefits to the area might result.

Key Evidence

Employment Land Study 2009
Staffordshire Employment Land Availability Survey 2010
WMRSS Evidence Base

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
LSP Economic Vibrancy Delivery Plan

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

Policy EV2: Sustainable Tourism

The Council will support the growth of tourism in South Staffordshire consistent with the heritage and cultural associations of the District including attractive villages and hamlets, historic houses, parklands and gardens with particular focus given to the promotion of sustainable tourism. In accordance with the Council's Tourism Strategy, the aim will be to raise the profile of South Staffordshire as a visitor destination.

Within the development boundaries, the establishment and expansion of tourist related businesses, including tourist accommodation, that are appropriate to South Staffordshire will be encouraged provided that they make a sustainable contribution to the local economy, and do not have a detrimental impact on, and where possible enhance the local environment and landscape.

Opportunities for the development and enhancement of the canal network for appropriate tourism development will be supported subject to the requirements of Policy EV3.

Outside development boundaries it will be necessary for a business case to be made, which identifies how the development will support and make a sustainable contribution to the local economy. Priority will be given to reuse and conversion of redundant buildings rather than new build. The provision of tourist accommodation, including the location of static and touring caravans, will only be permitted if it does not adversely affect the character and appearance of the area, taking account of the capacity of the local area and the highway network to absorb the development.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

9.17 Tourism makes a valuable contribution to the local economy with around 3,600 jobs in South Staffordshire in the tourism sector. Tourism helps to diversify job opportunities and sustain farming through diversification. The aim will be to promote South Staffordshire as a tourist destination, encourage tourism and tourist related activities that are appropriate and consistent with the cultural and heritage associations of South

Staffordshire in a way that does not destroy the very qualities that make the District an attractive place to visit. The Policy reflects Strategic Objective 11.

Key Evidence

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2020
South Staffordshire Council Plan 2012 - 2016
Tourism Strategy 2010
Staffordshire Destination Management Partnership Delivery Plan 2008 - 2011
West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy 2008

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
LSP Economic Vibrancy Action Plan
Working with Economic Development partners
Tourism Strategy Action Plan
Tourism promotion activities

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

Policy EV3: Canals and Canalside Development

Proposals for new canalside facilities such as moorings, service facilities and marinas will be supported where they conserve and enhance the scenic and wildlife value of canals conserve their heritage and enhance their recreation and tourism value. Canalside development should contribute positively to the function and appearance of canals, wherever possible providing new life for redundant buildings. The recreational value of canals for walking, cycling and canoeing will be encouraged and promoted for their contribution to the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors to South Staffordshire.

Proposals that are located close to villages will be preferred over more isolated locations. The reason is that these locations offer the opportunity for the development to support the vitality and viability of local communities within South Staffordshire. Developers will be required to demonstrate their commitment to their proposals integrating with the local community and becoming part of the 'public realm' of the village through agreement to planning obligations and planning conditions. In locations remote from villages, proposals will only be supported where the following criteria apply:

a) The closest village offering the prospects of a suitable site for moorings, service facilities and marinas is a significant distance from the proposal; and

b) The proposal would provide an opportunity to enhance the local infrastructure of public footpaths, bridleways, cycleways, car parking facilities and canalside towpaths in a way that supports the visitor economy and accords with the Council's Tourism Strategy; and

c) The proposal would provide an opportunity to enhance the local environment (including natural habitats and ecology), landscape and historic character of South Staffordshire in a way that supports the visitor economy and accords with the Council's Tourism Strategy.

Developers will be required to demonstrate their commitment to the opportunities that were identified in support of their proposal under criteria b) and c) above, through agreement to planning obligations and planning conditions that will also confirm a commitment to the development being an integral part of the 'public realm' of tourism assets that attract visitors to the canal network of South Staffordshire.

Proposals should be sensitively designed and the form and scale of development and the materials to be used should respect the character and local distinctiveness of the area in accordance with Policies EQ3, EQ4 and EQ12 and be consistent with the design guidance set out in the Village Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (or subsequent revisions).

Proposals for the environmental improvement and restoration of canals, including the Hatherton Branch Canal, will be supported having regard to the benefits to the canal system and rural regeneration provided there will be no adverse impact on the natural and historic environment including designated sites and habitats in accordance with Policy EQ1. An indicative route for the Hatherton Branch Canal Restoration Project is shown on the Key Diagram and a more precise route will be identified and safeguarded in the Site Allocations DPD and identified on the Policies Map.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

9.18 South Staffordshire has an extensive canal network with the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, Shropshire Union Canal and the Stourbridge Canal providing opportunities for tourism, leisure, recreation and cultural activities including boating, walking and cycling. There are facilities, for moorings, boat hire and boat maintenance and canals are also important as green corridors for wildlife.

9.19 The Council will continue to work with Canal and River Trust (formally British Waterways) and other partners to safeguard and enhance the canal network in the District. Improvements to the environment of the canal network will be encouraged

particularly in locations where the environmental quality is poor, including improved access to towpaths, links to the public footpath system and open spaces, the protection and creation of nature conservation areas and the conservation of canal structures and heritage features. A review of existing canal conservation areas will be undertaken and management plans produced. The Council will work with adjoining local authorities on cross boundary canal improvement and nature conservation issues.

9.20 The restoration of the Hatherton Branch Canal is being promoted by the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust. The aim is to restore the route from Hatherton Junction at Calf Heath on the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal to connect through the disused Lords Hayes Branch near Pelsall junction with the Wyrley and Essington Canal on the Birmingham Canal Navigations network. The positive contributions the restoration of the Hatherton Branch Canal can make to tourism, recreation and the creation of a green corridor are recognised by the Council.

Key Evidence

British Waterways 2020 Vision for the Future
Hatherton Canal Restoration Feasibility Report 2006
Hatherton Canal Restoration Supplementary Feasibility Report 2009

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process in consultation with British Waterways Working with Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust

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

Policy EV4: South Staffordshire College (Rodbaston)

Within the Special Policy Area defined on the Policies Map, proposals for new development associated with the use of South Staffordshire College (Rodbaston) as an education and training establishment will be supported. Proposals for the site should be in accordance with a Master Plan to be submitted to the Council for approval following consultation with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

Proposals should show:

a) that the development proposed is for education and training uses directly related to the activities of the College and can include business start up activities to support people into work in areas of employment related to College Curriculum subjects;

b) That the development is of a scale and massing appropriate to its location having regard to the guidelines in respect of building footprints, heights and design that are set out in the approved Master Plan;

c) that the design and external appearance of the development is of a high standard and uses high quality sustainable materials;

d) where appropriate, existing buildings that are surplus to requirements are demolished;

e) the provision of satisfactory access and vehicle parking;

f) the incorporation of a satisfactory landscaping scheme, which complements and enhances the development and the local environment;

g) that the development is located outside Flood Zones 2 and 3;

h) that the development will not lead to the loss of sports facilities or, if it does, then compensatory provision/investment in sports facilities can be found in a suitable location elsewhere within the College estate. Any replacement sports provision must be equivalent if not better than that being replaced in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

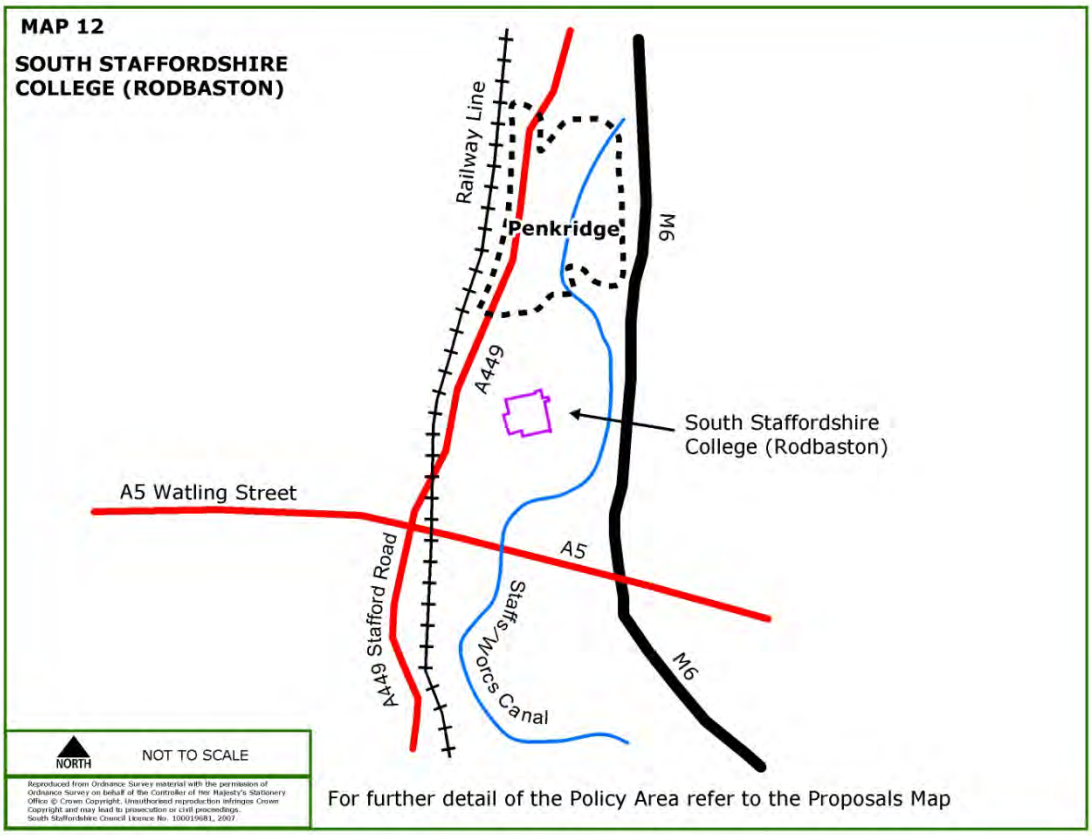
9.21 South Staffordshire College (Rodbaston) lies in the Green Belt to the south of Penkridge and to the east of the A449 Stafford Road. There has been an established agricultural college on the site for over 80 years and the college estate covers an area of 160 hectares. The area of the Rodbaston complex is well defined by existing boundaries and internal access roads and there is an established wooded area close to Rodbaston Hall.

9.22 Rodbaston specialises in providing further and higher courses for construction related industries and land-based activities such as fisheries and aquaculture, animal care and equestrian pursuits. It also offers a range of training services that support land-based businesses. Extensive investment in recent years has enabled the development of an extensive range of state-of-the-art learning centre facilities, equipment and buildings. It includes a working farm, animal care unit, veterinary nursing centre, equestrian centre, indoor and outdoor equine centres, floristry centre, gardens and hot houses, a fisheries centre, visitor centre and animal zone. Some residential accommodation is also provided on the site.

9.23 It is recognised that Rodbaston is a long established educational institution in the Green Belt and it is the only centre of its kind in Staffordshire delivering land based environmental and sustainable training for industry. However, the evolution of the

college over a number of years has produced an eclectic mix of buildings – many of which are in a poor state of repair and not 'fit for purpose'. South Staffordshire College was recently founded, following the merger of a number of colleges across southern Staffordshire. The Rodbaston Site has now become the headquarters for the new South Staffordshire College – and this has been established in a locally listed heritage asset on the Rodbaston site. The College has a critical need to modernise and improve the condition of its buildings on the site in order to remain viable and competitive amongst other Higher Education facilities and to attract students. The Council supports the College's aims to improve the skills base in the District which in turn will lead to economic growth. A new campus building, the Fosters Centre, opened in September 2011 and is located centrally within the site, adjacent to the former granary building. The development of a Master Plan for the Site will enable the College to set out a long term vision for the site and the re-development of its stock of built development so that its long-term future as an educational establishment, fit for the 21st Century, can be secured. The Council supports the long term aim to retain a viable educational establishment in this Green Belt location for many years to come.

Map 12 South Staffordshire College (Rodbaston)



Key Evidence

South Staffordshire College – Vision for Rodbaston
South Staffordshire College Master Plan/Estates Plan

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
South Staffordshire College Master Plan/Estates Plan

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

Village Centres and Shopping

Introduction

9.24 Village centres in South Staffordshire act as the main focus for local shopping activity and also perform a valuable function of providing jobs, services and facilities for local people and meeting the needs of the local community. The larger villages also act within localities as a local hub for small villages in the surrounding rural areas. Shopping patterns in the District are strongly influenced by the location of larger district and major shopping centres adjoining South Staffordshire particularly those in the Black Country such as Wolverhampton and Dudley. Higher order shopping needs are often catered for in towns and cities adjoining the District.

9.25 There are no towns or major retail centres in South Staffordshire. The village centres of Bilbrook, Brewood, Cheslyn Hay, Codsall, Great Wyrley, Kinver, Penkridge, Perton and Wombourne act as district centres providing a range of shops and services. There are also neighbourhood centres within residential areas containing smaller clusters of shops and services meeting the day-to-day needs of local residents. Some smaller rural communities also have small village shops providing basic goods.

Core Policy 8: Hierarchy of Centres

Development proposals for retail, office and cultural facilities will be focused within the centres of the Main Service Villages and Local Service Villages.

The Council will encourage and support proposals that sustain, improve and enhance the vitality and viability of centres. The centres hierarchy for South Staffordshire is set out below.

Hierarchy	Location
Village Centres – providing shops and services serving the village and surrounding rural areas.	• Bilbrook – Duck Lane, Bilbrook Road • Brewood – Market Place • Codsall – The Square, Station Road • Coven – Brewood Road • Cheslyn Hay – High Street

	• Great Wyrley – Quinton Court • Kinver – High Street • Pattingham – The Square • Penkridge – Market Street • Perton – Anders Square • Swindon – High Street • Wheaton Aston – High Street • Wombourne – High Street
Neighbourhood Centres – smaller groups of shops and services meeting some of the day to day shopping needs of local residents.	• Cheslyn Hay - Glenthorne Drive • Codsall - Birches Bridge • Featherstone - The Avenue • Great Wyrley - Tower View Road, Walsall Road • Kinver - Potters Cross • Penkridge - Boscomoor Shopping Centre • Wombourne - Bull Lane, Common Road, Giggetty Lane, Planks Lane

Village Centres

Encouragement will be given to appropriate uses, activities and investment in village centres that will sustain or enhance their character, attractiveness, and conservation heritage and lead to the centres becoming more vibrant and economically successful and preserve a range of services appropriate to the centre. The priority will be to retain existing class A1 retail uses. Office (A2) uses should be located within village centres.

Development proposals for appropriate non-retail uses in village centres, including leisure, recreation, cultural facilities, educational, community facilities and residential development, will be supported where they will not create a concentration of non-shopping uses and result in unacceptable change in the retail character of the immediate area or have an adverse effect on the vitality and viability of the centre.

Proposals for retail development outside existing village centres should accord with the sequential approach set out in national planning policy in order to protect the vitality and viability of those centres and proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Neighbourhood Centres

Neighbourhood centres providing local shopping, service and community facilities to meet the day to day needs of local communities will be protected and enhanced. Small scale retail development to serve the neighbourhood centres will be supported.

Development Proposals

Proposals should be appropriate in scale and type to the roles of the centres, respect the character of the environment and the local distinctiveness of the centre and assist in maintaining its existing retail, cultural and community function. Proposals should be of a high quality of design and be consistent with the adopted Village Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (or subsequent revisions), the NPPF and be informed by other local design documents. Proposals should be accessible by a choice of means of transport including walking, cycling and public transport.

The Council will seek to deliver more attractive public spaces and streetscapes in village centres to support existing retailers and attract visitors to these centres.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

9.26 The village centres in South Staffordshire perform the essential function of providing jobs, services and other facilities for local people and also serve villages and hamlets in the surrounding rural area. Our aim is to ensure the vitality, viability and attractiveness of our village centres.

9.27 The Policy defines the hierarchy and roles of village and neighbourhood centres and supports appropriate development that will maintain and enhance their function. The Policy supports the retail function of village and neighbourhood centres and seeks to ensure that new retail development is of an appropriate scale and type and respects the character and local distinctiveness of the centres. The Policy provides support to other village centre uses such as commercial, leisure and cultural uses, community facilities and residential development which will contribute to sustainability. Within the village centres new development should respect and enhance their character, attractiveness and conservation heritage. In order to protect and enhance the vitality of village and neighbourhood centres, a study of retail centres will be carried out to underpin the Site Allocations DPD in order for centres to be identified and supported.

Key Evidence

Settlement Study 2009
Retail Survey

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Village Centre enhancements

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

Rural Diversification

Introduction

9.28 Employment in traditional rural industries is now at a lower level than in the past but it is still an important part of the local economy. Farm diversification can help sustain farming as an industry and allow farmers to continue managing the rural landscape for the benefit of the whole community, help the rural economy, support rural communities and help to maintain rural services.

Core Policy 9: Rural Diversification

The Council will support the social and economic needs of rural communities in South Staffordshire. In all cases development should not conflict with other 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.

The Council will support:

a) the retention and appropriate expansion of businesses on existing sites within development boundaries. Outside village development boundaries, the Council will adopt the approach set out in Core Policy 7 for the redevelopment, modernisation and expansion of businesses;

b) the sustainable reuse of rural buildings for appropriate uses which support the rural economy and communities and based on an appraisal of the character and significance of the farmstead and its sensitivity to potential for change;

c) the provision of live-work units in sustainable locations;

d) the appropriate diversification of the agricultural economy;

e) recreation uses appropriate to a countryside location;

f) small-scale renewable energy projects;

g) the improvement of public transport links to villages;

h) the development of high speed broadband technology

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

9.29 There are employment opportunities within the rural areas of South Staffordshire and proposals which aim to diversify the rural economy will generally be supported where they are consistent with Green Belt and environmental objectives. Home working is becoming an increasing feature in rural areas and the expansion of broadband internet and other technologies will help to support sustainable forms of employment.

9.30 Suitable uses in rural areas based around existing farming activities, leisure and tourism could include farm shops, bed and breakfast accommodation, conversion of barns to holiday cottages or small-scale office use. There may also be opportunities for the development of live/work units in appropriate countryside locations.

9.31 The creation of small-scale businesses in the countryside would enable people who live in the countryside to have a greater range of opportunities to work near home. However, it will be important to ensure that businesses in the countryside are small in scale and contribute to the overall requirement for development to be sustainable. The emphasis will be on the conversion and reuse of existing buildings for employment use.

Key Evidence

Understanding the Economy of Rural Staffordshire 2009
Staffordshire Rural Forum Strategic Action Plan 2006 - 2009
WMRSS Evidence Base
Rural Evidence Base 2008

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Working with Economic Development partners

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

Development Policies

9.32 The following Development Policies support Core Policy 9.

Policy EV5: Rural Employment

Proposals for employment development in locations outside development boundaries will be supported where:

a) it is small in scale;

b) it comprises the conversion and reuse of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing rural buildings;

c) the development is not capable of being located within the development boundaries of a village, by reason of the nature of the operation or the absence of suitable sites;

d) it is supported by an appropriate business case which demonstrates that the proposal will support the local economy, which in turn would help sustain rural communities. The Council will adopt the approach set out in Core Policy 7 for the redevelopment, modernisation and expansion of businesses;

e) the development would not adversely impact on the economy of the service villages;

f) the development is accessible by a choice of means of transport including walking, cycling and public transport;

g) the local highway network is capable of accommodating the traffic generated by the proposed development.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

9.33 Core Policy 9 sets out the Council's support for the diversification of the rural economy in South Staffordshire and the Policy focuses specifically on support for sustainable rural employment consistent with the NPPF. The Policy recognises the potential for rural locations, outside settlement boundaries, to contribute towards the economic prosperity of South Staffordshire and thus provide economic and social benefits for these rural communities.

Key Evidence

Understanding the Economy of Rural Staffordshire 2009
Staffordshire Rural Forum Strategic Action Plan 2006 – 2009
WMRSS Evidence Base
Rural Evidence Base 2008

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Working with Economic Development partners
LSP Economic Vibrancy Delivery Plan

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

Policy EV6: Re-use of Redundant Rural Buildings

The Council will support the sustainable re-use of redundant rural buildings. The preference will be for re-use for economic development purposes, including tourism, unless it can be demonstrated, through marketing at a realistic price, or reasons of sustainability or historical significance that an alternative use would be preferable. The next best alternative use would be for residential accommodation. Thereafter, other alternative uses will be considered on their individual merits.

Development proposals should be based on the appraisal of the character and significance of the farmstead as a whole, its landscape setting and sensitivity to and potential for change. The County Council's Landscape Character Assessment and Historic Landscape Characterisation Project together with the West Midlands Farmsteads and Landscapes Project will provide an informed framework for decision making.

Proposals for the conversion and re-use of redundant rural buildings must demonstrate that the building is:

a) in a condition capable of conversion without demolition and rebuilding, or substantial reconstruction; and

b) is capable of conversion without detrimental alterations affecting its character, appearance, significance, general setting and immediate surroundings.

Development proposals should be sensitively designed and the form and scale of development and the materials to be used should respect the character and local distinctiveness of the area in accordance with Policies EQ3, EQ4 and EQ12 and be consistent with the design guidance set out in the Village Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (or subsequent revisions) and should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

9.34 Conversion of existing rural buildings to alternative uses is generally an acceptable form of development, however historically in South Staffordshire the majority of such development has tended to relate to the conversion to residential accommodation. The NPPF supports the re-use of buildings in the countryside for economic development purposes, and as such the Council's preferred approach is that the re-use of rural buildings will usually be for economic purposes rather than residential accommodation. Increasing economic development opportunities in South Staffordshire's rural communities will not only help sustain the rural economy but is also compatible with

South Staffordshire's rural character and landscape by reducing demand for new buildings and the loss of agricultural land. If there is a potential for an economic development reuse, then it should be marketed as such in advance of considering other uses. South Staffordshire is supportive of the growth of sustainable tourism in the District, and as such, the second preferred use for rural buildings would be for it to contribute to the tourism industry, which in itself will contribute to economic development. Only after such uses can be demonstrated as unviable will residential uses be considered.

9.35 In considering applications for the conversion and re-use of redundant rural buildings, the Council will have to be satisfied that the building is structurally sound and capable of re-use and that, where a listed or other locally important building is concerned, the future of the building is safeguarded, with minimal effect on its character and on its setting and the character of the surrounding rural area. It will also be important to ensure that schemes for the conversion and re-use of redundant rural buildings do not harm protected species or their habitats.

Key Evidence

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2020
South Staffordshire Council Plan 2012 - 2016
Tourism Strategy 2010
Understanding the Economy of Rural Staffordshire 2009
Staffordshire Rural Forum Strategic Action Plan 2006 – 2009
Staffordshire Destination Management Partnership Delivery Plan 2008 - 2011
West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy 2009/2010
WMRSS Evidence Base
Rural Evidence Base 2008
West Midlands Farmsteads and Landscapes Project 2010
Staffordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation Project 2010

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Working with Economic Development partners
LSP Economic Vibrancy Delivery Plan

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

Policy EV7: Equine Related Development

Horse related facilities and equine enterprises in the Green Belt and Open Countryside will be supported provided that:

a) new buildings in association with equine development such as stables and field shelters are sited within close proximity to existing rural buildings and are a suitable distance away from dwellings as to not impact on the amenity of nearby residents;

b) the design, materials and siting are sympathetic to the rural character of the area in which the building(s) are situated;

c) the proposal does not have an adverse impact on the natural environment and the integrity of designated protected sites;

d) any associated developments such as maneges are sympathetic to the character of the area;

e) the proposal is located close to the bridleway network and is located so as to reduce conflict between road users due to the transportation of horses, deliveries and horses using narrow lanes.

Proposals for larger scale equine enterprises will be considered on whether they will be beneficial to the local rural economy through sound financial planning and should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

9.36 Equine Related Development is an acceptable form of development in rural areas and is becoming increasingly popular within South Staffordshire due to the rural nature of the District. A large proportion of the District is designated as Green Belt and the NPPF states that appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation are suitable uses. The Council also recognises that where appropriate, equine enterprises should be supported to contribute positively to the local rural economy. However, such enterprises must maintain environmental quality and not impact negatively on the character of the landscape.

9.37 It is recognised that local planning policies should provide a positive framework for facilitating sustainable development that supports traditional land-based activities and makes the most of new leisure and recreational opportunities that require a countryside location whilst maintaining environmental quality and the openness of the Green Belt and appearance or character of the Open Countryside.

Key Evidence

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2010
Tourism Strategy 2010
Understanding the Economy of Rural Staffordshire 2009
Staffordshire Rural Forum Strategic Action Plan 2006-2009
Staffordshire Destination Management Partnership Delivery Plan 2008 - 2011
West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy 2009/2010
WMRSS Evidence Base
Rural Evidence Base 2010

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process

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

Policy EV8: Agriculture

The Council will support proposals for agriculture and related development which is consistent with national policy for the protection of agricultural land and other local planning policies by:

a) encouraging farm diversification which is complementary to, and helps to sustain the existing agricultural enterprise;

b) supporting small scale farm shops selling local produce;

c) encouraging the re-use or adaptation of existing farm buildings including redundant buildings, provided it would not result in a need for further agricultural buildings and is consistent with Supplementary Planning Guidance on barn conversions;

d) encouraging sustainable forms of agriculture which include environmentally sensitive, organic and locally distinctive produce, together with its processing, marketing and retailing;

e) encouraging the management of land for biodiversity;

f) guiding development, including the design and siting of new agricultural buildings, including agricultural workers dwellings to the least environmentally sensitive locations.

g) supporting proposals for temporary and permanent agricultural and occupational workers dwellings provided that they satisfy the following criteria:

Temporary Dwellings:

- there is clear evidence of a firm intention and ability to develop the enterprise concerned;
- there is a clear functional need which cannot be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on the unit, or any other existing accommodation in the area which is suitable and available for occupation by the workers concerned;
- clear evidence that the proposed enterprise has been planned on a sound financial basis; and
- the proposal satisfies all other normal planning requirements.

Permanent Dwellings:

- there is a clearly established existing functional need which cannot be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on the unit, or any other existing accommodation in the area which is suitable and available for occupation by the workers concerned;
- the need relates to a full-time worker;
- the unit and the agricultural activity concerned have been established for at least three years, have been profitable for at least one of them, are currently financially sound, and have a clear prospect of remaining so; and
- the proposal satisfies all other normal planning requirements.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

9.38 Agriculture will continue to be an important part of the local economy of South Staffordshire and one of the most significant land uses. The NPPF provides guidance on the ways of supporting economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. Local authorities should support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings. The Council will also support the changing nature of agriculture in order to make it more competitive, sustainable and environmentally friendly. This may involve adaptation to new markets and ways of operation, and diversification of activities including opportunities to grow crops for biomass.

9.39 The operational needs of agriculture, as well as the environmental and economic aspects and the need to protect the countryside and amenity of local residents will be taken into account in considering proposals for agricultural development. Should any applications for large scale pig or poultry units come forward, these will have to be subject to the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) process to ensure that there are no significant effects on internationally important wildlife sites. The Policy expands on the guidance contained in the NPPF and provides specific local guidance relevant to

South Staffordshire, to help achieve more sustainable development. Proposals for dwellings for workers associated with agriculture or forestry are an established feature in South Staffordshire, and such development will be supported as far as possible because of their contribution to the local economy. However, the impact of such development on the character and appearance of the countryside and other environmental implications will require careful consideration in accordance with other local planning policies.

Key Evidence

WMRSS Evidence Base
Rural Evidence Base 2008

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Working with Economic Development partners

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

Sustainable Community Facilities and Services

Introduction

9.40 Ensuring that local communities in the District thrive and develop in a sustainable way is an important aspect of achieving a sustainable future for South Staffordshire and this is reflected in Strategic Objective 12.

9.41 Access to the services and facilities people need is one of the important determinants of quality of life particularly in rural areas. Basic facilities such as local shops/convenience stores, village/community halls, schools, places of worship, public houses, doctor's surgeries, post offices, and banks are important to local communities and have a social and cultural role with other services which are essential to people such as the elderly. Such facilities can add vibrancy to communities and provide a focus for activities and foster community spirit and cohesion.

Core Policy 10: Sustainable Community Facilities and Services

The Council will support proposals and activities that protect, retain or enhance existing community facilities and services or lead to the provision of additional facilities that improve the wellbeing and cohesion of local communities and ensure that communities are sustainable.

The Council will support the co-location of facilities (shared use of buildings) where it

would enhance the provision of services within local communities and involve the most efficient and sustainable use of land.

Proposals involving the loss of community facilities and services including the sole or last remaining facilities and land in community use such as community/village halls, village shops, convenience stores, post offices, schools, nurseries, places of worship, health services, police services, libraries, public houses, sport and recreation and cultural facilities will not be supported.

In preparing the Site Allocations DPD, the Council may allocate land to provide community facilities where there is evidence of need through engagement with local communities.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

9.42 Our aim is to ensure that our villages retain a range of essential facilities and services such as social, healthcare, education, open space and recreation and that these are accessible to local people and delivered locally, and that they are maintained and improved and meet the needs of all sectors of the community including the most vulnerable. The potential loss of community facilities can have adverse consequences for local communities and lead to unsustainable travel patterns, and such loss will not be supported.

Key Evidence

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2020
South Staffordshire Council Plan 2012 - 2016
Review of Protection and Provision of Community Facilities in South Staffordshire 2008
Settlement Study 2009
WMRSS Rural Services Scoping Report 2006

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Locality Areas Delivery Plans

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

Development Policies

9.43 The following Development Policies support Core Policy 10.

Policy EV9: Provision and Retention of Local Community Facilities and Services

The Council will support the provision and enhancement of essential community facilities and services, and their retention, particularly where these are the sole or last remaining facility such as a village shop, post office or public house, where these make an important contribution to the vitality of the place and quality of life/wellbeing of local communities and the maintenance of sustainable communities.

Proposals for redevelopment or change of use of any premises currently used or last used to provide essential facilities or services which support the local community, whether of a commercial nature or not, will only be permitted where the Council is satisfied that:

a) it has been demonstrated through a viability test that the use concerned is no longer economically viable, that all reasonable efforts have been made to sell or let the property at a realistic price for a period of at least 12 months, the use could not be provided by some other means, or is genuinely redundant; and

b) the premises or site or an unused part of the building cannot readily be used for, or converted to any other community facility; or

c) the facility or service which will be lost will be adequately supplied or met by an easily accessible existing or new facility in the local area or the village concerned, unless it has been accepted as redundant under criterion (a) above; and

d) the facility concerned was not required to be provided and or retained as part of a planning permission for a new development.

Development proposals that enhance the provision of community facilities and services in accordance with Core Policy 10 will be encouraged and supported.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

9.44 The presence of essential facilities and services in villages will be important in maintaining community cohesion, quality of life, and reducing the need to travel. These facilities include village shops, post offices, pubs, petrol filling stations, community facilities such as village/community halls, meeting rooms, open space, sport and recreation facilities together with schools, places of worship, doctor's surgeries and

libraries. The Council will support the provision, enhancement and retention of such facilities and services where this will enhance the sustainability of community life.

9.45 Where local communities are well served with a particular type of facility such as a shop, the loss of one shop may not be critically important. However, where the facility is in short supply such as a public house or post office, the retention of the last remaining facility will be very important. In considering proposals for the redevelopment or conversion of facilities valued by the community, the Council will require applicants to meet the criteria set out in the Policy and will expect local communities to be consulted about the facility that may be lost. A particularly important element of the Policy is the need to demonstrate through a viability test that the use is no longer economically viable.

Key Evidence

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2020
South Staffordshire Council Plan 2012 - 2016
Review of Protection and Provision of Community Facilities in South Staffordshire 2008
Settlement Study 2009
WMRSS Rural Services Scoping Report 2006
Sport England Sports Facility Statement 2011
Playing Pitch Strategy 2007

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Locality Areas Delivery Plans

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

Policy EV10: Telecommunications

Proposals for telecommunications development (including radio masts), equipment and installations will only be permitted provided that:

a) within the South Staffordshire portion of the West Midlands Green Belt it can be demonstrated that there are very special circumstances to justify the development;

b) there is no acceptable alternative location which would be less harmful to the environment;

c) the development is sited and designed so as to minimise the impact on the distinctive character of the South Staffordshire landscape and respects the character, appearance and local distinctiveness of the villages;

d) there is no reasonable possibility of sharing existing telecommunication facilities;

e) there is no reasonable possibility of erecting new antennas on an existing building, mast or other structure;

f) all reasonable steps are taken to reduce to a minimum any environmental damage and where applicable impact on any building on which equipment is installed;

g) within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), it can be demonstrated that the benefits of the proposal outweigh the landscape or visual impacts.

Proposals that will individually or cumulatively have a significant adverse impact on the landscape, character and local distinctiveness of villages or nature conservation interests will not be permitted. Proposals should be consistent with the NPPF, the Supplementary Planning Document on Telecommunications and other local planning policies.

Explanation

9.46 Modern telecommunications are an essential element in both the national and local economy. The benefits in reducing the need to travel, and a fast, reliable, and cost effective communication network are an important factor in attracting inward investment into the District. Mobile telecommunications are now considered an integral part of the success of many business operations and individual lifestyles.

9.47 With the development of new and advanced mobile telephone services the demand for new telecommunications infrastructure is continuing to grow. The Council supports the enhancement of telecommunications in the District whilst at the same time seeking to ensure that environmental impacts are minimised. A balance must be found between the provision of telecommunications infrastructure and the protection of the environment and amenities of those living or working in close proximity to telecommunications installations. It is the Council's aim to reduce the proliferation of new masts by encouraging mast sharing where possible.

9.48 When considering applications for telecommunications development applicants will be required to demonstrate that they have explored the possibility of erecting apparatus on existing buildings masts or structures. The design and location of apparatus will be important in considering and assessing proposals for telecommunications infrastructure. The Council will work with operators on such proposals taking into account national

policy and other local planning policies and further guidance will be set out in a Supplementary Planning Document on Telecommunications.

Key Evidence

Review of Mobile Telecommunications Infrastructure 2010

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Working with Telecommunications operators
Telecommunications SPD
Village Design SPD
Infrastructure Delivery Plan

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

Sustainable Transport

Introduction

9.49 South Staffordshire is a predominantly rural District and the car remains the main choice of transport for most residents, workers and visitors. With some exceptions, the District is poorly served by public transport and travel between villages and to other parts of the District is not good and some villagers feel isolated. The reliance of our villagers on towns and cities in neighbouring authorities for higher order facilities and services means that often the transport links out of the District are better than between villages.

9.50 Some members of the community are not able to access jobs, facilities and services and this can lead to issues of social disadvantage, inequality, and social exclusion. It is those without their own transport, those unable to afford a car and those unable to use a car - the young, elderly or disabled - who are most affected. It is important that the residents of South Staffordshire have access to jobs, education, social care and health facilities, shopping, open space, leisure, recreation and local services.

9.51 We can make a contribution to mitigating the effects of climate change by improving everyone's access to public transport, their ability to walk and cycle, minimising the need to travel by car and reducing levels of congestion. The Spatial Strategy for South Staffordshire seeks to achieve this as far as possible, through locating growth and change that maximises the opportunities to travel less and to integrate transport choices within development.

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;

b) bus stops/shelters and transport information;

c) support for sustainable forms of transport (e.g. community transport schemes, workforce buses, and share-a-lift schemes);

d) development, adoption, monitoring and promotion of Travel Plans;

e) levels of car parking, commensurate with road safety, the reduction of congestion, and the availability of alternative means of transport; and

f) facilities for charging plug-in and other low emission vehicles.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

9.59 The provision of sustainable transport presents particular challenges in South Staffordshire given the predominately rural nature of the District with dispersed settlements and high car ownership. The strategy seeks to reflect these characteristics and adopt a balanced approach which acknowledges both the high level of car ownership (and the importance of car usage to local communities) whilst also seeking more sustainable patterns of development and more sustainable forms of transport. There is also the need to respond to the needs of people without access to a car particularly young and elderly people.

9.60 The Policy sets out specific requirements for accessibility at a site level to deliver the transport objectives in Core Policy 11. The intention to seek appropriate levels of car parking is designed to encourage movements by non-car modes, and is consistent with national planning policy on transport. Policy EV12 below covers the requirements relating to parking provision.

Key Evidence

Staffordshire Local Transport Plan 2006 - 2011
Rural Transport Review 2009

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Transport Assessments and Travel Plans
Working with transport operators and private sector partners
Infrastructure Delivery Plan

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

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

Through the Development Management process
Village Design Guide SPD (or subsequent revisions)

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

Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport

Introduction

9.62 Wolverhampton Airport lies in the Green Belt at Halfpenny Green, close to the Shropshire border and about one kilometre to the east of the village of Bobbington. The Airport was originally a Royal Airforce (RAF) training airfield and dates from the Second World War.

9.63 The Airport is used as General Aviation (GA) airport providing for business aviation, recreational (private) flying and flying training and is licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority for public use and flying instruction. The Airport also provides a base for various non-aviation businesses. The Airport comprises a level grassed area crossed by 3 runways linked by perimeter taxiways. The Airport buildings are grouped near the main entrance to the site and include many former RAF single storey buildings, 3 large hangars, with the control tower nearby. To the west of the main complex is a group of buildings known as the Rotor Village and these provide a base for helicopter operations.

9.64 The Airport benefits from Permitted Development Rights (PD) within the Airport boundary under Part 18 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 as amended. This means that certain types of development within the Airport boundary required in connection with the provision of services and facilities at the Airport do not need planning permission, although as the local planning authority the Council must be consulted.

9.65 There is a long planning history associated with the Airport and it has been used for private flying since the early 1960's when a flying club was established and an aerodrome licence was issued. In 1967 planning permission was granted on appeal for the use of the site as an aerodrome for light aircraft subject to conditions and hours of operation were defined. The permission restricted flying operations to light aircraft and imposed a condition that no jet propelled aircraft should use the airport except in emergencies. Planning permission was subsequently granted subject to conditions in 1978 for limited use of the airport by light executive jet aircraft.

9.66 In recent years, there have been some concerns raised by residents and local communities about the possible expansion of the Airport to accommodate commercial passenger services and the use by jet aircraft. The Council originally intended to produce a separate policy document on the Airport and carried out an Issues and Options consultation in 2007 but subsequently concluded that it would be better to incorporate policies for the Airport within the Core Strategy. It is important that the Core Strategy provides a strong planning framework for the future of the Airport.

Core Policy 12: Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport

The Council supports the role of Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport as a General Aviation airport providing facilities and services for business aviation (business use of aircraft and helicopters), recreational (private) flying and flying training (flying schools). Development unrelated to these uses will not be supported.

The Council will support development proposals directly related to the General Aviation role of the Airport within the developed area of the site defined on the Policies Map and as set out in Policy EV11. The Council will also support the continued occupation of the site by existing non-aviation businesses that play an important role in ensuring its viability and providing employment for the local rural community.

The Council will resist development proposals that are not permitted development that would have a detrimental impact on the environment and nearby residents including the physical expansion of the site, extensions to runways and the operation of commercial passenger and freight services. Development proposals relating to the existing uses required for the safe and efficient operation of the Airport will be supported.

The Council recognises the evolving nature of general and businesses aviation and will encourage the Airport owners to produce a Master Plan/Planning Statement setting out their long term vision and aspirations for the Airport.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

9.67 The Air Transport White Paper (ATWP) published in 2003, and the ATWP Progress Report 2006 set out the Government's strategic framework for the development of aviation in the United Kingdom over the next 30 years and the roles of the airports in the Midlands. The ATWP considered the role of Wolverhampton Airport and stated that:

"Wolverhampton Business Airport should continue its role of serving business and general aviation. The airport could be capable of delivering commercial services on a limited scale, but should do so only in-line with regional planning and transport priorities, and the scale of development at the site must take account of the constraints imposed by the lack of strategic road access. With this in mind, any such development should be a matter of decision locally."

9.68 The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) Phase 2 Revision considered the role of airports in the region including Wolverhampton Airport, and the evidence base that underpinned the WMRSS is relevant to the formulation of local planning policies for the Airport.

9.69 The Council considers that any future decisions relating to development of Wolverhampton Airport will be a matter to be determined through the Local Plan. The Airport lies in the Green Belt in a quiet rural area surrounded by attractive countryside and is served by rural roads and there is a lack of strategic road access. Furthermore, it is not served by public transport. The protection of the Green Belt and the environment are key objectives for the Council and reflect the views of the residents and local communities in South Staffordshire.

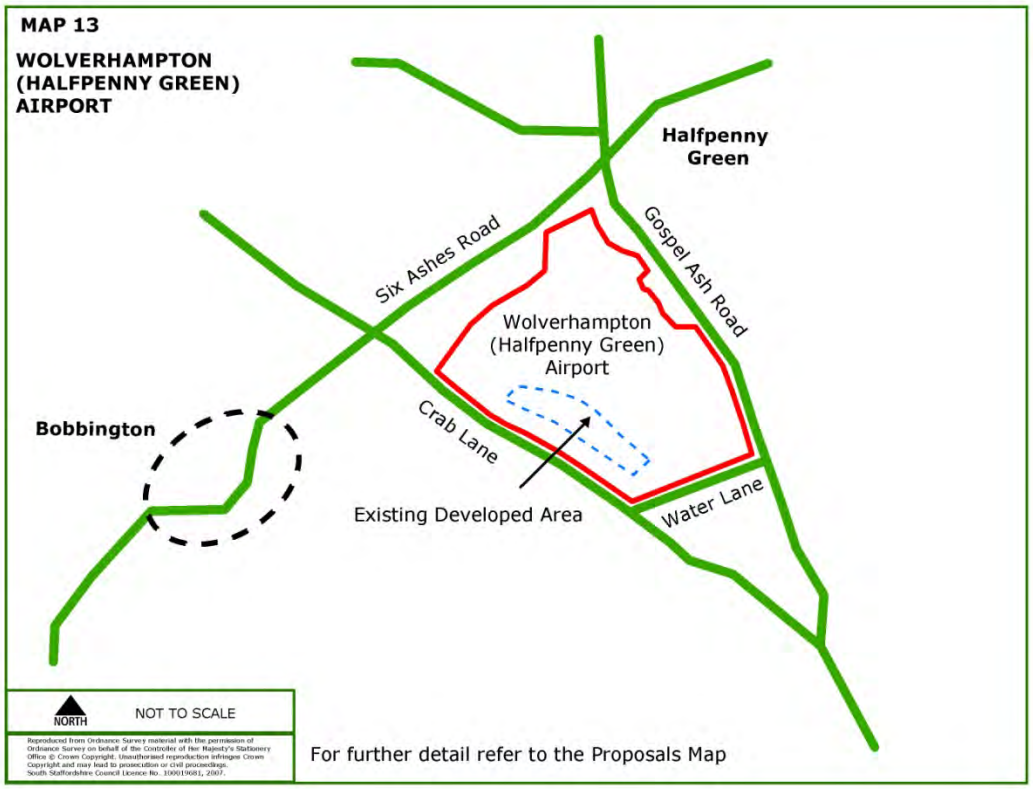
9.70 The Council supports Wolverhampton Airport and wishes to see it continue in its present role as a General Aviation airport serving business and general aviation and which complements the role of Birmingham Airport. The Council also recognises the importance of the existing non aviation uses for the viability of the Airport. The Council considers that continuing the current general aviation role of the Airport with a 'gentle evolution' of the site over time (within the existing defined role and boundaries) is the right way forward for the future. This approach is consistent with the views of residents and key stakeholders.

9.71 However, the Council considers that it would not be appropriate for the Airport to physically expand beyond its current boundaries or for the site to be used for commercial passenger and freight services. The Policy specifies that new development directly related to the General Aviation role of the Airport should be located within the defined developed area. The Council will work with the Airport owners/operators to deliver a sustainable future for the Airport and the preparation of an Airport Master Plan will be encouraged.

9.72 The Council recognises that there are concerns about the use of the Airport by jet aircraft and in April 2008 the Airport owners submitted an application for a Certificate of Existing Lawful Use (CLEUD) for the use of the whole Airport by jet propelled aircraft. The CLEUD sought to establish that the Airport has been used continuously by jet aircraft for a period of 10 years contrary to existing planning permission. The application was subsequently withdrawn in June 2009 without determination.

9.73 In assessing the CLEUD application, the Council accepted, based on the evidence provided, that the Airport has been used on a continuous basis by jet aircraft over a period of more than 10 years. The Council was prepared to grant a certificate of lawfulness with limitations on the type and maximum size of aircraft and helicopters using the Airport and limitations on the number of aircraft movements per year. There has been no further progress on this issue.

Map 13 Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport



Key Evidence

WMRSS Report on Regional Economic Impact of Airport Expansion in the West Midlands 2005
WMRSS Report on Air Transport - Surface Access and Environmental Issues 2005
WMRSS Report on West Midlands Airports – Environmental Baseline Reference Document 2006
Wolverhampton Airport Expansion - Transportation Review 2004
Wolverhampton Airport Expansion - Review of Environmental Statement 2004
Wolverhampton Airport Issues and Options Consultation Statement 2008

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Working with Airport Owner/Operator
Airport Master Plan

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

Development Policies

9.74 The following Development Policies support Core Policy 12.

Policy EV13: Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport - Approach to New Development

The Council will support proposals for new high quality sustainable development directly related to the General Aviation role of the Airport located within the developed area of the site identified on the Policies Map.

Within the developed area, the Council will support proposals for aviation uses including the replacement of existing outdated and unsustainable buildings and high quality infill development where the proposals are consistent with national policy and other local planning policies and will not have a detrimental impact on the environment and nearby residents.

Outside the developed area, only development permitted by the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) or required for the safe and efficient operation of the Airport will be supported.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

9.75 Many of the buildings at the Airport are the original former RAF buildings, and over the years some of these have been repaired and improved to provide accommodation for both aviation and non aviation uses. However, some of the buildings remain unused and are in poor condition. As the site is in the Green Belt, it is important that proposals for new development are for aviation uses directly related to the general aviation role of the Airport. Proposals should be of a high quality design and construction in accordance with the Council's design objectives as expressed in the adopted Village Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (or subsequent revisions). The replacement of obsolete wartime buildings with new high quality development that improves and enhances the appearance and environment will be supported where the proposals are consistent with other local planning policies.

Key Evidence

WMRSS Report on Regional Economic Impact of Airport Expansion in the West Midlands 2005
WMRSS Report on Air Transport - Surface Access and Environmental Issues 2005
Wolverhampton Airport Issues and Options Consultation Statement 2008

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Working with Airport Owner/Operator
Airport Master Plan

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

Policy EV14: Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport – Existing and Future Uses

The Council will support existing aviation related businesses on the site and will encourage appropriate new aviation related development in accordance with Core Policy 12 and Policy EV13 to help sustain the local economy.

The existing buildings at the Airport should be used for aviation related uses in connection with the General Aviation role and operational needs of the Airport and should not be used for commercial passenger or freight services.

The continued occupation of buildings on the site by existing established non-aviation uses that support the viability and sustainability of the Airport will be accepted where it is consistent with national planning policy.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

9.76 There are a number of buildings that are currently used for non-aviation purposes and these provide support income for the aviation activities and overall operation of the Airport. It is recognised that these existing non-aviation businesses play an important role in ensuring its viability and sustainability, and in providing employment for the local rural community. The Council accept the continued occupation of the site by existing non-aviation uses, but the overall aim is that the existing buildings should be used for aviation uses related to the General Aviation role of the Airport.

Key Evidence

Survey of existing Airport buildings and uses
Wolverhampton Airport Issues and Options Consultation Statement 2008

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Working with Airport Owner/Operator
Airport Master Plan

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

10. Community Safety

Strategic Objectives
Strategic Objective 14: To adopt a design-led approach to all new development to ensure that the distinctive character of the villages of South Staffordshire is maintained and enhanced and that attractive, well designed and safe places are created.

Introduction

10.1 The comments received during the preparation of the Core Strategy and expressed through the Sustainable Community Strategy consultations have highlighted that crime, and fear of crime, are important issues. Crime and disorder levels in South Staffordshire are relatively low but there is perception amongst some residents that crime levels are high. The reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour, people's fear of crime and improving public confidence are key issues to be addressed. Community safety is more than just crime it is also about how to be safe both in the home and in the community and considering the needs of our ageing population

10.2 Feeling safe is important to the wellbeing and quality of life of all communities throughout South Staffordshire. These concerns are recognised as priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy, Community Safety Partnership Plan and in Strategic Objective 14.

10.3 In delivering the local planning strategy, the emphasis will be on ensuring high quality design, reducing opportunities for crime through good design and creating a safe and secure living environment for local communities. Community safety infrastructure needs will be indentified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

Core Policy 13: Community Safety

The Council will work with its partners and support initiatives and activities that promote the safety of people of all ages, particularly the ageing population both in their home and the local community.

The design of all developments must take account of the need to reduce the opportunities for crime and fear of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour, and promote safe living environments. Encouragement will be given to initiatives to design out crime in public areas, village centres and elsewhere whilst ensuring that the distinctive character of the villages of South Staffordshire is maintained and enhanced and attractive well-designed and safe places are created.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

10.4 The design of buildings and spaces can make a significant contribution towards reducing the scope for crime, and create more pleasant and reassuring environments in which to live, work and play. The opportunities for crime to occur can be minimised by designing and planning out crime in new development. The Council supports the national guidance 'Secured By Design' and will continue to work with Staffordshire Police architectural liaison officer in relation to the design and layout of development proposals.

10.5 The Council will also continue to support the work of the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service in the delivery of services and initiatives that ensure that our residents and businesses are safe and secure including support for the provision of new and enhanced infrastructure. Deficits in the provision of community safety infrastructure such as fire stations will be identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Key Evidence

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2020
South Staffordshire Council Plan 2012 – 2016
Community Safety Partnership Plan 2008 – 2011
Locality Area Profiles
Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) 2010

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Community Safety Partnership Delivery Plans
Working with the Police, Fire and Rescue and other key partners
LSP Delivery Plans
Infrastructure Delivery Plan

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

Development Policies

10.6 The following Development Policy supports Core Policy 13.

Policy CS1: Designing Out Crime

In accordance with Core Policy 13, the design of development must include means of reducing the opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour, and must also seek to reduce the potential for fear of crime.

This will include support for:

a) social facilities to be provided in locations which can be adequately controlled and supervised;

b) development to be designed to increase natural surveillance of public and private spaces, with continuous public surveillance as an alternative;

c) liaison with the Police to design out crime and fear of crime in specific schemes which also meet other design objectives in Policy EQ11.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

10.7 Core Policy 13 sets out the strategic policy for community safety that supports the aims and objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Community Safety Partnership Plan. The above Policy provides further detail on the design of development and 'Secured by Design', and in turn supports Policy EQ11 covering wider design considerations.

Key Evidence

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2020
South Staffordshire Council Plan 2012 – 2016
Community Safety Partnership Plan 2008 - 2011
Locality Area Profiles

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Community Safety Partnership Delivery Plans
Working with the Police, Fire and Rescue Service and other key partners
LSP Delivery Plans

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

11. Health and Wellbeing

Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objective 15:

To improve the quality of outdoor and indoor leisure, sport and recreation facilities in South Staffordshire and ensure that each community has access to sufficient areas of green space and built facilities.

Introduction

11.1 There are many factors which contribute to creating healthy, safe and sustainable communities. People need to be able to access a choice of facilities and activities to suit their needs; formal and informal, indoor and outdoor, which enable them to keep fit and well, both physically and mentally. The provision of high quality and accessible open space, sport and recreation facilities is therefore very important for the health and wellbeing and sustainability of our residents. The importance attached to these key issues is reflected in the Sustainable Community Strategy and in Strategic Objective 15.

11.2 There are facilities for indoor and outdoor sport and recreation within our villages including sports halls, swimming pools, village halls and community buildings, sports clubs, open spaces and playing fields. There is also a green network of open space within the villages consisting of playing fields, open spaces for informal play and recreation, and areas of natural and semi natural green space which are important for wildlife and biodiversity. The countryside provides a wide range of quiet leisure and recreational activities and important areas include Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Shoal Hill, Kinver Edge and Baggeridge Country Park.

Core Policy 14: Open Space, Sport and Recreation

The Council will work with its partners to promote and provide an appropriate network of high quality accessible open space, sport and recreation facilities that meet the needs of South Staffordshire's current and future population and encourage active participation in sport and recreation by all members of the community including adults and older people. This will be achieved by:

a) safeguarding all existing open space, sport and recreation facilities, including playing pitches from loss or displacement where there is a proven and existing need in accordance with Policy HWB1;

b) supporting and securing additional provision and the enhancement of the existing quantity, quality and accessibility of open space, sport and recreation facilities as informed by the Council's evidence base including the Sports Facilities Statement, Open Space Strategy and Playing Pitch Strategy. The following

priorities will be supported:

- improving access to school sports facilities through secured community use agreements – in particular to sports halls and swimming pools
- encouraging a broader range of sports opportunities on school sites to include: archery and athletics
- encouraging opportunities for outdoor sport at Baggeridge Country Park – to include: archery, mountain biking, orienteering and running
- to support the delivery of a 3G Artificial Grass Pitch in the south of the District
- to maintain and replace/refurbish swimming pools and sports halls in the District to ensure the facilities are fit for purpose
- to support the refurbishment/replacement of facilities at Gailey Canoe Club and enhance the recreational value of Gailey Reservoirs for sailing
- delivery of projects targeting adult and older people; and

c) allocating sites for new open space, sport and recreation facilities to meet local needs;

d) supporting the use of community and village halls for indoor sport and recreation;

e) supporting proposals that improve access to facilities, particularly by sustainable means of transport;

f) supporting proposals and initiatives to improve the amenity and biodiversity value of existing open spaces;

g) giving a commitment to the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document on Open Space, Sport and Recreation and to produce a comprehensive strategy for indoor and outdoor sports.

The standards for quantity, quality and accessibility for open space, sport and recreation provision will be set out in the Supplementary Planning Document.

New development will be expected to make provision, or a contribution towards the provision and/or improvement, of open space, sport and recreation facilities in accordance with Policy EQ13.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

11.3 The local planning strategy as expressed in the Core Strategy has an important role in helping people lead healthier lifestyles. It is proposed to achieve this through a combination of protecting, improving, replacing and promoting existing open spaces and sport and recreation facilities in South Staffordshire and developing new ones. This

approach will encourage and enable our local communities and visitors to actively participate in a variety of indoor and outdoor activities which meet their needs and interests, reducing the need to travel and ensuring a range of provision and opportunities are available locally. It will be important that both existing and new spaces and facilities are maintained to a high standard.

11.4 It will be important to ensure that every village has access to and sufficient areas of good quality, well-designed green space and that the required amount of open space is provided as part of new residential development.

11.5 Sport England has produced a Sports Facility Statement which sets out the current position with regards to Sports Halls, Swimming Pools and Artificial Grass Pitches (AGP) provision in South Staffordshire, informed by Sport England National Facility Audit data and using facility planning modelling software. The work provides a broad evidence base to inform local planning policies. The statement summarises the current position and initial recommendations for other sports assessed through the Sport Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Sports Facilities Framework 2009-2021 (SFF) and the current state of play with National Governing Body Whole Sports Plans.

11.6 The evidence shows that the supply of swimming pools in South Staffordshire is relatively low and is insufficient to meet the demands arising from our residents. However, although there is a shortfall in swimming pool space, the level of satisfied demand is high and the reason for this is that over half of the demand is being met by residents travelling to nearby facilities which can often be just outside the District (i.e. exported demand). The statement considers that the unmet demand is not significant enough to merit the provision of a new swimming pool. The Council will continue to work with sport and recreation providers to improve facilities and access to facilities where appropriate.

11.7 The evidence also shows that there is relatively low provision of sports halls for the size of the population and that supply is insufficient to meet the demands of our resident population. The evidence shows that whilst there is a shortfall of facilities the amount of satisfied demand is high and this is again due to the fact that over half of demand generated by South Staffordshire residents is met by nearby facilities just outside the District. The statement considers that the unmet demand is not significant enough to merit the provision of a new sports hall. This situation for swimming pool and sports hall provision however is based on the current demand and supply. It is recognised that adjoining local authorities are reviewing sports provision in the light of the current economic climate and some facilities might close which might alter the current balance. The Council will therefore review sports hall and swimming pool provision in the light of future changes in the supply and demand through the preparation of the Comprehensive Strategy for Indoor and Outdoor Sports.

11.8 The facility statement looked at the provision of Artificial Grass Pitches (AGP) and the evidence shows that there is a current shortfall in the provision of 3rd generation (3G) AGP for football/rugby in the District. The figures show that the demand from South Staffordshire for the use of AGP particularly for football is currently being met by nearby

facilities just outside the District. However, a new 3G pitch is to open at the end of 2010 and planning permission has been granted for a new 3G pitch in the south of the District therefore if these are delivered successfully there is unlikely to be an immanent need for further new facilities.

11.9 The facility statement concludes that there is a need to improve community access to a number of key indoor facilities in the District including swimming pools and sports halls. The other key priorities identified in the statement are for the creation of more accredited sports clubs, increasing skills in the coaching workforce, and for the delivery of projects that target adults and older people in the District.

11.10 An outdoor Playing Pitch Strategy was completed in 2007 and the Action Plan was updated in 2010. The Strategy looks at provision in relation to football, cricket, rugby, hockey, bowls, tennis, athletics and golf. It concludes that generally there is an adequate quantity of pitches available to meet demand, highlighting a small under supply of junior/mini football pitches and cricket pitches in some localities and a small shortage of rugby and hockey provision.

11.11 The Council's Open Space Strategy and Audit considers a range of publicly accessible open spaces in South Staffordshire including amenity green space, provision for young people and children and allotments and identifies recommended quantity, quality and accessibility standards. On the whole the audit identifies the majority of open spaces as being of a very high quality, well maintained and having a good level of accessibility. In terms of overall quantity of provision this also appears to be quite high with 20ha of open space per 1000 population. However, it is noted that there are variations in quantity, quality and accessibility between wards and typologies. The audit recommends standards for amenity green space, young people and children and allotments and in terms of future provision, it concludes that there is a need for additional allotment provision in a number of localities.

11.12 The Visitor Impact Mitigation Strategy (VIMS) for the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) also identifies a requirement for the provision of land to provide Sites of Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS). This provision may be delivered through the provision of new sites or the enhancement of existing poor quality open space sites within proposed Zone of Influence of the SAC.

11.13 The provision of additional open space, sport and recreation facilities in the District will be considered through the Site Allocations DPD and will be informed by refreshing the information contained in the Open Space Strategy and Audit, Playing Pitch Strategy and the Sports Facility Statement. New sites and improvements to existing sites will be required to take into account the requirements of the VIMS for Cannock Chase SAC. Where new sites are required these will be identified in the Site Allocations DPD. Deficits in open space, sport and recreation provision will be identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

11.14 A commitment is made to produce an Open Space, Sport and Recreation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to give further guidance on the requirements in South

Staffordshire. The SPD will also set out the standards for quality, quantity and accessibility.

11.15 New housing developments place increased demand on existing open space, sport and recreation facilities within communities and the Council will require developers to make appropriate provision for new facilities within their developments or alternatively make a financial contribution towards the maintenance and enhancement of existing facilities in the local area. Development within the Zone of Influence of the Cannock Chase SAC will need to give special consideration to the provision of SANGS as part of the proposals and be in accordance with Policy EQ2.

Key Evidence

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2020
South Staffordshire Council Plan 2012 – 2016
Open Space Strategy 2009
Open Space Audit and Assessment 2008
Playing Pitch Strategy 2007
LSP Play Strategy 2007 – 2010
Sport England Sports Facilities Statement 2011
Sports Facilities Framework 2009 – 2021
Locality Area Data Profiles
Evidence Base relating to Cannock Chase SAC and the Appropriate Assessment of Local Authority Core Strategies 2010
Cannock Chase Visitor Impact Mitigation Strategy 2010

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Working with Sport England, Sport Governing Bodies and other partners
LSP Health and Wellbeing Action Plan
Open Space, Sport and Recreation SPD
Infrastructure Delivery Plan

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

Development Policies

11.16 The following Development Policies support Core Policy 14.

Policy HWB1: Protection of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities

The Council will not permit the loss or displacement of existing indoor and outdoor

open space, sport and recreation facilities to other uses unless it can be demonstrated through up-to-date and robust evidence that:

a) there is a proven surplus of provision and the site is no longer needed, or is unlikely to be required in the future; or

b) an alternative facility of an equal quantity and quality or higher standard will be provided in at least an equally convenient and accessible location to serve the same local community.

Where such spaces and/or facilities are lost, any replacement must be provided and made available for use before existing facilities are lost.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

11.17 The availability of, and accessibility to, indoor and outdoor sports facilities is an important factor in promoting the health and wellbeing of our local communities in South Staffordshire. The Policy seeks to protect existing open space, sport and recreation facilities to ensure that communities continue to have access to local facilities. The Policy covers indoor facilities such as sports halls, and swimming pools and outdoor facilities including open space, play areas, allotments, playing pitches, tennis courts and bowling greens.

Key Evidence

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 - 2020
Open Space Strategy 2009
Open Space Audit and Assessment 2008
Playing Pitch Strategy 2007
LSP Play Strategy 2007 – 2010
Sport England Sports Facilities Statement 2011
Sports Facilities Framework 2009 – 2021
Locality Area Data Profiles

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Working with Sport England, Sport Governing Bodies and other partners
LSP Health and Wellbeing Action Plan
Open Space, Sport and Recreation SPD

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

Policy HWB2: Green Infrastructure

The Council will support the protection, maintenance and enhancement of a network of open space, natural and semi-natural greenspace in South Staffordshire and cross boundary links. The Council will support proposals to improve and expand the key components of this green infrastructure network including the enhancement of green corridors such as disused railway lines and the enhancement and creation of native woodlands. The Council will also support proposals for the enhancement of blue corridors such as canals, rivers, and other watercourses and promote the maintenance of undeveloped buffer zones along the banks of watercourses. Proposals to enhance the biodiversity value of the green infrastructure network providing opportunities for habitat creation and linkages
will also be supported.

The network of green infrastructure should provide safe, accessible, high quality links between recreational areas and facilities, residential, leisure and commercial areas and also provide cross boundary links as well as access to the wider countryside. Such links should provide for walking, cycling and horse riding.

Development proposals that are consistent with and would contribute to the delivery of local green infrastructure initiatives and strategies including the Council's Open Space Strategy, Forest Of Mercia, Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan, Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan and the vision set out in the West Midlands Green Infrastructure Prospectus will be supported.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

11.18 Within the District there are many existing green spaces including natural and semi-natural green spaces, amenity green spaces, parks, allotments and designated parklands and gardens and these contribute to the health and wellbeing of our residents and the overall landscape and environment of the District.

11.19 Green spaces perform many different roles from their aesthetic and biodiversity value through to recreation value for informal play. There are many such green spaces spread throughout the District including wooded and amenity grassed areas. Areas of natural and semi-natural green space are scattered throughout the District varying in size from substantial areas such as, Kinver Edge, Shoal Hill Common, Baggeridge Country Park, Highgate Common and part of Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to smaller sites. The green spaces and corridors in the District also include the 'blue' infrastructure provided by canals, rivers, streams and ponds.

11.20 It is recognised that green spaces and recreational facilities are important, but equally the linkages between them are significant. Green space networks connecting residential

areas with recreation sites and the open countryside can help promote healthier lifestyles and greater recreational and physical activity. These networks should be accessible as far as possible to all users including pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders and should link with existing networks such as public rights of way and cross boundary links. The networks should, where possible, seek to utilise and protect existing features such as footpaths, canal towpaths and disused railway lines, and link into longer distance routes such as the Staffordshire Way, Monarch's Way and the Sustrans cycle network.

11.21 The development, enhancement and management of the green space network can support biodiversity objectives by helping to enhance, restore and reconnect habitats. Networks of natural habitats provide a valuable resource as they can link local sites of biodiversity importance and provide routes or stepping stones for the migration and dispersal of species.

11.22 Evidence is being collected to consider the role of green infrastructure for both recreation and wellbeing but also for biodiversity and wildlife, which will inform the Site Allocations DPD.

Key Evidence

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 - 2020
Open Space Strategy 2009
Open Space Audit and Assessment 2008
Locality Area Data Profiles
Evidence Base relating to Cannock Chase SAC and the Appropriate Assessment of Local Authority Core Strategies 2010
Cannock Chase Visitor Impact Mitigation Strategy 2010
Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2010

Delivery and Monitoring of Policies

Through the Development Management process
LSP Health and Wellbeing Delivery Plan
Open Space, Sport and Recreation SPD
Infrastructure Delivery Plan

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

12. Children and Young People

Strategic Objectives
Strategic Objective 16: To support the needs of children and young people in South Staffordshire, ensure that provision is made for children's play and that teenagers have access to leisure, sport and recreation and learning opportunities.

Introduction

12.1 South Staffordshire has over 25,000 children and young people aged 0 –19 years. Being a rural community, local and accessible services for children and young people are needed to ensure that they have the opportunities to participate and engage in positive activities that will develop their skills in preparation for adult life.

12.2 Comments received during the preparation of the Core Strategy and expressed through the Sustainable Community Strategy consultations have highlighted improving access to services and the provision of facilities for children and young people are key issues to be addressed. The importance attached to these issues is reflected in Strategic Objective 16.

12.3 The Spatial Strategy will support the improvement of services and facilities for children and young people and will seek to link into activities and initiatives being developed at locality level through the Local Strategic Partnership. In delivering the spatial strategy, consideration will need to be given to the impact it will have on children and young people, accessibility to services and their movement around the District. It may be that young people will be drawn to the larger main service villages to socialise and the impact of this on transport requirements and development priorities for play spaces/youth areas will need to be addressed. Deficits in youth provision will be identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, (IDP) particularly where new and improved youth clubs are required in our villages.

Core Policy 15: Children and Young People

The Council will support proposals and initiatives to improve access to services for children and young people and the provision, improvement and enhancement of facilities for children's play and youth development.

The Council will encourage the provision of additional facilities for young people within appropriate locations where a need has been identified and which are accessible by a range of transport options. Such facilities should be appropriate to the target age group, should be well managed and flexible to meet changing needs. Any development of youth facilities will be required to demonstrate that the views

of young people have been incorporated into the development.

Development proposals should be consistent with other local planning policies.

Explanation

12.4 The Sustainable Community Strategy provides the context for children and young people issues in South Staffordshire. The Policy gives support to the provision of services and facilities for children and young people. A number of other Core Strategy policies will be relevant in considering proposals and initiatives for children and young people including Core Policy 7 Employment and Economic Development, Core Policy 14 Open Space, Sport and Recreation and Development Policies EQ13 – Development Contributions and Policy HWB1 – Protection of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities.

12.5 It will be important to ensure that children and young people are involved and engaged in the design elements and project development of services and facilities in the District.

Key Evidence

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2020
South Staffordshire Council Plan 2012 - 2016
Community Safety Partnership Plan 2008 - 2011
LSP Play Strategy 2007 - 2010
Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2010

Delivery and Monitoring

Through the Development Management process
Working with key partners including youth support groups
Children and Young People's District Board Delivery and Action Plan
Community and Learning Partnerships
Community Safety Partnership
LSP Delivery Plans
Play Partnership
Infrastructure Delivery Plan

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

Appendix 1: Delivery and Monitoring Framework

Introduction

1. The local planning strategy, as expressed in the Core Strategy, will be delivered by the Council through the Core Policies and Development Policies working with partners and delivery agencies and through planned investment by the public and private sector. The key partners include service and infrastructure providers (utility companies), housing associations, landowners and developers. The partnerships established through the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) will be particularly important in delivering the strategy.

2. The implementation of the local planning policies and the delivery of infrastructure included in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) will require combined and concerted action by a range of public, private and voluntary bodies working in partnership. The Core Strategy has an important role in providing a clear and robust framework for development in order that investment and action can be co-ordinated and geared towards efficient and effective delivery.

3. However, it is clear that the Core Strategy alone cannot deliver the ambitions set out in the Spatial Vision and Spatial Objectives; these ambitions are equally reliant on the Sustainable Community Strategies and the plans and programmes of many partner bodies particularly those in the LSP. Within South Staffordshire the emphasis will be on working at locality level and delivering projects and initiatives in line with the locality area delivery plans

Infrastructure Delivery Plan

4. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is a supporting document to the Core Strategy. It identifies, as far as possible, the physical, social and community and green infrastructure that will be needed to support the level of growth and development proposed in the plan period. It sets out information on the committed infrastructure in South Staffordshire within the next 5 years or so and the infrastructure expected to be required in the future. It also indicates the lead delivery agency/agencies, funding sources and the cost of infrastructure where known. The expected timescales are also indicated where these are known but in some cases the timing of certain infrastructure provision is uncertain or unknown and further work on delivery will be required.

5. A cautious approach will be needed to infrastructure requirements at this time because the investment plans and budgeting processes of the different agencies may not be aligned and information may be commercially sensitive and not be available. It is also recognised that infrastructure requirements may change in response to changing or unexpected circumstances and that delivery agencies may have to review their management and investment plans and priorities over time taking into account economic conditions.

6. The IDP will be a working and evolving document that will require continual review in order to be effective and reflect progress through the lifetime of the Core Strategy.

Further discussions on infrastructure requirements will take place as progress is made in delivering the Core Strategy and the requirements will be identified in the IDP.

7. The Council will be seeking to form partnerships with delivery agencies and developers to co-ordinate development and infrastructure delivery and facilitate more effective resource management. In some cases this will build upon existing long-standing partnership arrangements such as those established through the LSP and the various theme groups.

Monitoring and Review

8. The planning system places great importance on the process of monitoring and review and these are particularly important in relation to the Core Strategy. The Council will prepare an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) which will contain an assessment of progress in preparing the Local Plan against identified milestones. It will also contain an assessment of the extent to which objectives set out in the Local Plan are being achieved and targets are being met. If as a result of monitoring, objectives are not being met, or circumstances have changed nationally or locally, this may give rise to a review of the Core Strategy or other elements of the Local Plan.

9. The monitoring framework for the Core Strategy is set out below. This contains a series of performance indicators, incorporating the AMR indicators that will form the basis for monitoring the success of the Strategic Objectives, Core Policies and Development Policies contained within the Core Strategy. The framework references the indicators with the relevant Core Policies, Development Policies, and the key outcomes. It is important to note that the monitoring framework will be reviewed and refined overtime. The assistance of the implementation agencies and partner organisations that will be involved in implementing the policies and the proposals in the plan will be important in collecting data and measuring performance.

Monitoring Framework

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency
National Policy 1: The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	**To be monitored through other Core Strategy Policies**		
Core Policy 1: The Spatial Strategy	**To be monitored through other Core Strategy Policies.**		
Policy GB1: Development in the Green Belt	(i) Percentage of Green Belt land lost through development. (ii) Number of inappropriate developments granted in the Green Belt	(i) <1% Green Belt land lost to development in plan period. (ii) None without Very Special Circumstances demonstrated	Consider review of availability of sites within development boundaries or outside Green Belt through SHLAA; increased densities on identified sites; further call for sites
Policy GB2: Land Safeguarded for Longer Term Needs	(i) Percentage of existing safeguarded land lost through development prior to Site Allocations DPD review. (ii) Number of inappropriate developments granted in safeguarded land	(i) <1% safeguarded land lost to development prior to the Site Allocations reviewing safeguarded land. (ii) None without Very Special Circumstances demonstrated	Consider review of availability of sites within development boundaries or outside Green Belt through SHLAA; increased densities on identified sites; further call for sites
Policy OC1: Development in the Open Countryside Beyond the West Midlands Green Belt	(i) Percentage of Open Countryside land lost through development	(i) <0.5% Open Countryside lost to development in plan period	Consider review of availability of sites within development boundaries or outside Open Countryside through SHLAA; increased densities on identified sites; further call for sites

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency
Core Policy 2: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment	**To be monitored through measures in policies EQ1-EQ4.**		
Policy EQ1: Protecting, Expanding and Enhancing Natural Assets	(i) Through Development Management process (ii) Annual environmental survey undertaken by Staffordshire County Council	(i) No planning permissions granted that would have a negative impact on designated sites. (ii) See SBAP Targets	If negative impact is demonstrated assess and improve the role of Natural England in the Development Management process.
Policy EQ2: Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation	(i) Through Development Management process	(i) No planning permissions granted contrary to policy which would have an adverse affect on the SAC (ii) Deliver SANGS determined by VIMS	If adverse effects are demonstrated refer to the SAC partnership and review study/VIMS.
Policy EQ3: Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets`	(i) Publication of Local List (ii) Buildings at risk register (iii) Number of Listed Buildings and buildings in Conservation Areas lost through development proposals (iv) Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans	(i) Establish Local List and review annually (ii) <4 buildings on at risk register (iii) No loss (iv) Maintain up to date Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans	Maintain record of Heritage Assets and publish Historic Environment SPD. Work with English Heritage and owners for advice on restoration schemes. Work with key partners to update Village Design Guide SPD if necessary.
Policy EQ4: Protecting the Character and Appearance of the Landscape	(i) Number of planning applications refused on landscape character grounds.	(i) 100% of planning applications that do not protect and/or enhance landscape character should be refused.	Assess reasons for failure and improve training and understanding for officers and members.

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency
	(ii) Number of planning applications approved within Cannock Chase AONB that are contrary to policy	(ii) No planning applications approved that would have a negative impact on the AONB	
Core Policy 3: Sustainable Development	**To be monitored through measures in policies EQ5-EQ10**		
Policy EQ5: Sustainable Resources and Energy Efficiency	(i) Amount of energy efficiency savings made on relevant sites	(i) Minimum 9.6% energy efficiency savings by 2020.	Review Renewable Energy Study with partnership authorities. Assess reasons for failure and improve training and understanding for officers and members, and pre application and development team discussions.
Policy EQ6: Renewable Energy	(i) Amount of energy generated through wind energy. (ii) Amount of energy generated through biomass energy	(i) 20.8 GWh by 2020 (ii) 92.5 GWh by 2020	Review Renewable Energy Study with partnership authorities.
Policy EQ7: Water Quality	(i) Number of new developments incorporating SUDS schemes where agreed with the Council (ii) Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on flood risk and water	(i) Where relevant, 100% of planning permissions to include SUDS schemes (ii) No planning permissions granted contrary to EA advice.	Assess and improve the role of the Environment Agency in the Development Management process. Review Water Cycle Study and Surface Water Management Plan as and when required. If more than 4 planning permissions are granted per annum contrary to EA advice, contact EA for improved guidelines for

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency
	quality grounds.		applicants and at pre application and development team stage.
Policy EQ8: Waste	(i) Number of waste recycling & collection facilities within new development. (ii) Residual household waste produced per head of populations (kg) (iii) Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting	(i) 100% on sites over 10 dwellings. (ii) <225kg per head of population by 2020 (iii) 50% by 2020	Improve through Development Management process including pre application, development team discussions and County Waste. Pecuniary measures mean that the Council will not fall below target for (ii) and (iii)
Policy EQ9: Protecting Residential Amenity	(i) Development management process – development meeting the required amenity standards.	(i) No planning permissions approved contrary to policy which would have a negative impact on residential amenity	Improve through Development Management process including pre application and development team discussions.
Policy EQ10: Hazardous and Environmentally Sensitive Development	(i) Number of planning permissions refused on hazardous and environmentally sensitive grounds	(i) No planning permissions approved which would lead to hazardous impact	N/A
Core Policy 4: Promoting High Quality Design	**To be monitored through measures in policies EQ11-EQ12**		
Policy EQ11: Wider Design Considerations	(i) Number of planning permissions where Village Design Guide used to inform decision (ii) Number of	(i) No planning permissions approved contrary to guidance (ii) 100% of planning applications that do	Review Village Design Guide and its implementation if necessary.

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency
	planning permissions for major developments refused on poor design grounds	not meet design criteria should be refused.	
Policy EQ12: Landscaping	(i) Number of planning permissions for major development that incorporate a landscape scheme where agreed with the Council. (ii) Number of new developments incorporating SUDS where agreed with the Council	(i) 100% of planning applications that do not protect and/or enhance landscape should be refused. (ii) Where relevant 100% of planning permissions to include SUDS schemes	Through increased use of planning conditions.
Core Policy 5: Infrastructure Delivery	**To be monitored through measures in policy EQ13**		
Policy EQ13: Development Contributions	(i) Number of developments with legal agreements for infrastructure contributions (ii) Delivery mechanism of IDP	(i) Monitor only (ii) Targets met in IDP	Use of legal agreements more effectively. Review IDP with partners.
Core Policy 6: Housing Delivery	(i) Net housing completions (ii) Development on Previously Developed Land (brownfield land) (iii) Adequate supply of housing (iv) Safeguarded land identified for 10 years following end of plan period	(i) Meet Housing allocation for South Staffordshire (175 dwellings per annum to 2028). (ii) 60% of all new development on PDL. (iii) Maintain a 5 year supply of deliverable sites (iv) Sites to accommodate 1750	If the annual monitoring review (AMR) demonstrates that completions have fallen 20% below the annual target in the 5 year phasing period, look at safeguarded land, bring forward phasing in plan. Update SHLAA; consider further call for sites to identify additional brownfield land; reassess

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency
		dwellings to be identified as safeguarded land.	viability of target.
Policy H1: Achieving a Balanced Housing Market	(i) Number of 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings built each year. (ii) Number of dwellings added to stock which provide accommodation for the ageing population. (iii) Number of new developments permitted which are built to Lifetime Homes Standards (iv) Total number of affordable homes delivered	(i) To meet requirement in development briefs for individual sites yet to be determined. (ii) Deliver a minimum of one extra care facility in each of the District's localities. (iii) 100% (iv) 29 per annum reflecting (40%) of total housing stock	Update SHMA/HMA, improve relationships with strategic housing officers and RSLs.
Policy H2: Provision of Affordable Housing	(i) Total number of affordable homes delivered.	(i) 29 per annum reflecting 40% on qualifying sites (ii) On rural exception sites 100% dwellings should be affordable in perpetuity for lifetime of development.	Consider allocating sites solely for affordable housing. Work with parishes to bring forward needs surveys. Consider granting an element of market housing on exceptions sites to increase viability.
Policy H3: Affordable Housing Rural Exception Sites	(i) Number of dwellings permitted on rural exception sites	(i) On rural exception sites 100% dwellings affordable in perpetuity for lifetime of development.	Work with parishes to bring forward needs surveys. Consider granting an element of market housing on exceptions sites to increase viability.

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency
Policy H4: Delivering Affordable Housing	(i) Percentage of social rented and number of intermediate of the agreed affordable housing number	(i) 50% social rented and 50% intermediate tenures over plan period	Review ratio of social to intermediate tenures.
Policy H5: Specialist Housing Accommodation	(i) Number of dwellings added to stock which provide accommodation for ageing population	(i) No net loss of specialist accommodation (ii) deliver at least one extra care facility in each of the District's localities	Consider identifying sites with a specific requirement for an element of specialist housing.
Policy H6: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	(i) Number of net additional Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople pitches	(i) Meet numbers set out in the allocation set out in policy H6	If <42 pitches provided by 2017 reassess site allocations/extensions. Review baseline data.
Core Policy 7: Employment and Economic Development	**To be monitored through measures in policies EV1-EV4** (i) Number of new VAT registered businesses in the District	(i) Net gain of VAT registered businesses in District	Assess reasons for loss of businesses. Work in partnership with the local LEPs.
Policy EV1: Retention of Existing Employment Sites	(i) Quantity of employment land districtwide	(i) No net loss of good or best employment sites (ii) Complete development of i54 and Hilton Cross during the plan period.	Review ELS and identify alternative sites and reasons why losing employment land and prepare alternative delivery strategy. Potentially review policy if considered necessary. Review safeguarded land.
Policy EV2: Sustainable Tourism	(i) Planning permissions granted relating to new or improved tourism facilities	(i) Increase tourism growth by 5% per annum	If a decreasing trend is demonstrated in any 5 year period then publish further guidance on promoting opportunities

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency
			for sustainable tourism.
Policy EV3: Canals and Canalside Development	(i) Number of planning permissions granted for new canalside facilities.	(i) Monitor only	Carry out Canal Conservation Area Appraisals.
Policy EV4: South Staffordshire College (Rodbaston)	(i) Submission of an agreed masterplan	(i) Masterplan to be agreed with Council. Targets will be set in masterplan, yet to be determined.	Determine applications against the generic development policies relating to development in the Green Belt.
Core Policy 8: Village Centres and Shopping	(i) Total amount of additional retail and office floorspace through planning permissions granted.	(i) No net loss of shopping facilities unless a business case put forward (ii) New development directed towards village and neighbourhood centres.	Identify reasons why losing shopping facilities and prepare alternative delivery strategy. Review policy if necessary.
Core Policy 9: Rural Diversification	**To be monitored through measures in policies EV5 – EV8**		
Policy EV5: Rural Employment	(i) Number of planning permissions granted for employment development in locations outside development boundaries.	(i) Monitor only	N/A
Policy EV6: Re-Use of Redundant Rural Buildings	(i) Number of planning permissions granted for reuse of redundant rural buildings.	(i) 50% of buildings for conversion to employment use	Assess reasons for failure and improve training and understanding for officers and members.

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency
Policy EV7: Equine Related Development	(i) Number of planning permissions determined using policy EV7.	(i) Monitor only	N/A
Policy EV8: Agriculture	(i) Number of planning permissions granted for non agricultural purposes on Grade 1 agricultural land (ii) Number of planning permissions for farm diversification determined using policy EV8	(i) No planning permissions for alternative uses on Grade 1 agricultural land (ii) Monitor only	N/A
Core Policy 10: Sustainable Community Facilities and Services	**To be monitored through measures in policies EV9-EV10**		
Policy EV9: Provision and Retention of Local Community Facilities and Services	(i) Number of planning permissions determined where a loss of sole community facilities is proposed.	(i) No net loss of sole facilities	Consider co-location of facilities, identify reasons why losing sole facilities and review policy if necessary.
Policy EV10: Telecommunications	(i) Mobile network coverage in District	(i) 100% mobile network coverage in District during plan period	Liaise with network providers and consider review of policy if necessary.
Core Policy 11: Sustainable Transport	**To be monitored through measures in policies EV11 – EV12**		
Policy EV11: Sustainable Travel	(i) Number of planning permission for major development	(i) Direct new development to main/local service villages in hierarchy	If below 50% seek to restrict developments in areas of poor public transport access.

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency
	that incorporate a travel plan where agreed with the Council	with good access to sustainable modes of transport (ii) Deliver at least 50% of housing in plan in villages served by a railway station.	
Policy EV12: Parking Provision	(i) Development Management process	(i) All developments to be in accordance with the Car Parking standards in Appendix 6 of Core Strategy.	Review standards and policy if necessary.
Core Policy 12: Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport	**To be monitored through measures in policies EV13-EV14**		
Policy EV13: Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport - Approach to New Development	(i) Submission of agreed masterplan	(i) Masterplan to be agreed with Council. Targets will be set in masterplan, yet to be determined.	Determine applications against the generic development policies relating to development in the Green Belt.
Policy EV14: Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport – Existing and Future Uses	(i) Submission of agreed masterplan (ii) Number of planning permissions determined using policy EV14	(i) No planning permissions granted for new non 'general aviation' related uses.	Determine applications against the generic development policies relating to development in the Green Belt.
Core Policy 13: Community Safety	**To be monitored through measures in policies CS1**		
Policy CS1: Designing Out Crime	(i) Number of applications approved contrary to the advice of the Police Architectural Liaison Officer.	(i) No planning permissions granted contrary to advice	If permissions granted contrary to advice, assess and improve the role of the Police in the Development Management process.

Policy	Indicator	Target	Contingency
Core Policy 14: Open Space, Sport and Recreation	**To be monitored through measures in policies HWB1 – HWB2**		
Policy HWB1: Protection of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities	(i) Net loss of Open Space, Sport and Recreation facilities to new development. (ii) Monitoring of quality of open space through Open Space Audit	(i) No net loss in quantity or quality of open space, sport and recreation facilities (ii) Prepare Open Space, Sport and Recreation SPD which will include standards. Targets in SPD yet to be determined.	Improve through Development Management process including pre application and development team discussions. If an increasing trend of loss of open space occurs, bring forward Green Infrastructure Strategy.
Policy HWB2: Green Infrastructure	(i) Development Management process	(i) Prepare a Green Infrastructure Strategy, which will include targets (including those in the VIMS)	Improve through Development Management process including pre application and development team discussions. If an increasing trend of loss of open space occurs, bring forward Green Infrastructure Strategy.
Core Policy 15: Children and Young People	(i) Proportion of children and young people with good access to high quality leisure, cultural and sport experiences.	(i) CYP3.2.1-3.2.4, targets set out in Children and Young people's LAA Delivery Plan for South Staffordshire	Review Children and Young People's delivery plan with partners.

Appendix 2: Saved Local Plan Policies Replaced by Core Strategy Policies

South Staffordshire Local Plan Saved Policies	Replaced by Core Policies and Development Policies
GB1 – Green Belt (General)	GB1 – Development in the Green Belt
GB4 - Long Term Development Needs	GB2 - Land Safeguarded for Longer Term Needs
GB5 - Land Safeguarded under Policy GB4	GB2 - Land Safeguarded for Longer Term Needs
GB6 - Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt	GB1 – Development in the Green Belt EV4 - South Staffordshire College (Rodbaston)
OC1 – Open Countryside (General)	OC1 – Development in the Open Countryside Beyond the West Midlands Green Belt
C1 – Re-Use of Rural Buildings	CP9 – Rural Diversification EV5 – Rural Employment EV6 – Re-use of Redundant Rural Buildings EV8 – Agriculture
C2 – Use of Agricultural Land	EV8 – Agriculture
C3 – Development on Agricultural Land	CP2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment EV6 – Agriculture
C4 – Dwellings in the Countryside	GB1 – Development in the Green Belt OC1 – Development in the Open Countryside Beyond the West Midlands Green Belt
C8 – Extensions	GB1 – Development in the Green Belt OC1 – Development in the Open Countryside Beyond the West Midlands Green Belt EQ11 – Wider Design Considerations
C13 – Expansion of Businesses	CP9 – Rural Diversification EV5 – Rural Employment
HG1 – Halfpenny Green Airport	CP12 – Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport EV13 - Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport – Approach to New Development
HG2 – Support Uses	CP12 – Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport EV14 - Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport – Existing and Future Uses
HG3 – Other Non-Aviation Uses	CP12 – Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport EV14 - Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport – Existing and Future Uses
HG4 – Cessation of Use	EV14 - Wolverhampton (Halfpenny Green) Airport – Existing and Future Uses
SB1 – Smestow Bridge Policy Area	GB1 - Development in the Green Belt
H6 – Affordable Housing Provision	H1 – Achieving a Balanced Housing Market H2 – Provision of Affordable Housing H3 – Affordable Housing - Rural Exception Sites H4 – Delivering Affordable Housing
H11 – Local Needs Housing in Rural Areas	H2 – Provision of Affordable Housing H3 – Affordable Housing - Rural Exception Sites H4 – Delivering Affordable Housing
H12 – Local Needs Assessment Criteria	H2 – Provision of Affordable Housing H4 – Delivering Affordable Housing

	EQ11 – Wider Design Considerations
H15 – Financial Contributions to Infrastructure	CP5 – Infrastructure Delivery EQ13 – Development Contributions
H16 – Character of Surroundings	EQ1 – Protecting, Enhancing and Expanding Natural Assets EQ3 – Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets EQ4 – Protecting the Character and Appearance of the Landscape EQ11 – Wider Design Considerations
H17 – Spaces about Buildings	EQ9 – Protecting Residential Amenity EQ11 – Wider Design Considerations
H18 – Density of New Development	CP6 – Housing Delivery
H19 – Infilling	CP6 – Housing Delivery EQ11 – Wider Design Considerations
H21 – Travelling Showmen's Permanent Quarters	H6 – Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
E1 – Premium Sites (North of Wolverhampton)	CP7 - Employment and Economic Development EV1 – Retention of Existing Employment Sites
E3 - General Employment Proposals	CP7 - Employment and Economic Development EV1 – Retention of Existing Employment Sites
E4 – Royal Ordnance Factory	CP7 - Employment and Economic Development EV1 – Retention of Existing Employment Sites
E6 – Outside Storage	EQ11 – Wider Design Considerations
E8 – Relocation of Non-Conforming Uses	EV1 – Retention of Existing Employment Sites
TR3 – New Development Access and Highway Improvements	CP11 – Sustainable Transport EQ11 – Wider Design Considerations EQ13 - Development Contributions
TR4 – New Development Vehicle Parking and Manoeuvring	CP11 – Sustainable Transport EQ11 – Wider Design Considerations EQ13- Development Contributions EV12 – Parking Provision
BE5 – Listed Buildings – Applications for Listed Building Consent	EQ3 – Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets
BE7 – Conservation Areas – Planning	EQ3 – Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets
BE9 – Conservation Areas – Demolition Prior to Redevelopment	EQ3 – Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets
BE12 – Conservation Areas – Removal of Intrusive Features	EQ3 – Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets
BE14 – Retention of Shop Fronts	EQ3 – Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets
BE15 – Replacement Shop Fronts	EQ3 – Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets
BE16 – Security Screens	EQ3 – Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets
BE17 – Internally Illuminated Signs	EQ3 – Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets EQ9 – Protecting Residential Amenity
BE18 – New Advertisements	EQ3 – Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets

BE19 – Existing Signs	EQ3 – Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets
BE20 – Re-Use and Adaptation of Rural Buildings – Physical Suitability	EQ11– Wider Design Considerations
BE21 – Re-Use and Adaptation of Rural Buildings – Planning Applications	EQ11 – Wider Design Considerations
BE22 – Re-Use and Adaptation of Rural Buildings – Permitted Development	EQ11 – Wider Design Considerations
BE25 – Location of New Buildings	CP4 – Promoting High Quality Design EQ11 – Wider Design Considerations
BE26 – New Development - Design Criteria	CP4 – Promoting High Quality Design EQ11 – Wider Design Considerations
BE27 – Protection of the Natural Watercourse System	CP2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment EQ1 – Protecting, Enhancing and Expanding Natural Assets EQ7 – Water Quality CP3 – Sustainable Development
BE28 – Protection of Ground Water Resources	CP2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment EQ7 – Water Quality CP3 – Sustainable Development
RE1 – Renewable Energy	EQ6 – Renewable Energy
R1 – Provision of Recreation and Leisure Facilities	CP5 – Infrastructure Delivery EQ13 – Development Contributions CP14 – Open Space, Sport and Recreation HWB1 – Protection of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities
R2 – Sports Pitches – Protection of Pitches and Replacement Facilities	CP14 – Open Space, Sport and Recreation HWB1 – Protection of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities
R4 – Open Space – Protection of Open Spaces and Parks	CP14 – Open Space, Sport and Recreation HWB1 – Protection of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities
R5 – Open Space – Provision of Open Space and Children's Play	CP5 – Infrastructure Delivery EQ13 – Development Contributions CP14 – Open Space, Sport and Recreation
R10 – Countryside Recreation – Noise Nuisance	EQ9 – Protecting Residential Amenity
LS1 – Landscape Character Protection and Enhancement	CP2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment EQ1 – Protecting and Enhancing Natural Assets EQ4 – Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape EQ12 - Landscaping
LS2 – Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerow Protection	CP2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment EQ1 – Protecting, Enhancing and Expanding Natural Assets EQ4 – Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape EQ12 - Landscaping
LS5 – Retention and Protection of Trees	CP2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment

	EQ1 – Protecting, Enhancing and Expanding Natural Assets EQ4 – Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape EQ12 - Landscaping
LS6 – Reinstatement of Hedgerows and Woodlands on Development Sites	EQ1 – Protecting, Enhancing and Expanding Natural Assets EQ4 – Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape EQ12 - Landscaping
LS7 – Special Landscape Area	CP2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment EQ4 – Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape
LS9 – Landscape Improvement Areas – Tree and Shrub Planting	EQ4 – Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape EQ12 - Landscaping
LS10 – Landscape Improvement Areas – Development Proposals	CP2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment EQ4 – Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape EQ12 - Landscaping
LS11 – Historic Landscapes – Protection of Character and Setting	CP2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment EQ3 – Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets EQ4 – Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape EQ12 - Landscaping
LS12 – Cannock Chase AONB – Landscape Conservation and Development Proposals	CP2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment EQ2 – Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation EQ4 – Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape
NC2 – Protection of National Sites of Nature Conservation and Ecological Importance	CP2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment EQ1 – Protecting, Enhancing and Expanding Natural Assets
NC3 – Protection of Sites Designated Locally of Nature Conservation and Ecological Importance	CP2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment EQ1 – Protecting, Enhancing and Expanding Natural Assets
NC4 – Site Protection – Retention of Features and Replacement Habitats	CP2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment EQ1 – Protecting, Enhancing and Expanding Natural Assets
NC5 – Green Lanes	CP2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment EQ1 – Protecting, Enhancing and Expanding Natural Assets HWB2 – Green Infrastructure
NC7 – Habitat Creation	CP2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment EQ1 – Protecting, Enhancing and Expanding Natural

	Assets
NC8 – Wildlife Corridors	CP2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment EQ1 – Protecting, Enhancing and Expanding Natural Assets HWB2 – Green Infrastructure
NC9 – Wetlands and Watercourse	CP2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment EQ1 – Protecting, Enhancing and Expanding Natural Assets
The remaining saved Local Plan policies R6 (Recreation and Open Space Proposals), R8 Bratch Policy Area – Land East of Canal and R16 Hatherton Branch Canal will be reviewed in the Site Allocations DPD. The policies in the South Staffordshire Local Plan as adopted in December 1996 expired on 27th September 2007 except for 74 policies which were saved by the Secretary of State's Direction issued on 7th September 2007.	

Appendix 3: Sustainable Community Strategy Themes and Spatial Issues

Sustainable Community Strategy Theme	**Spatial Issues**
Environmental Quality green belt and landscape natural and historic environment air quality water quality contaminated land open space waste management energy efficiency	• supporting the protection and enhancement of the green belt • supporting the protection and enhancement of biodiversity • supporting the protection and enhancement of historic assets • assisting in reducing flood risk • developing a supplementary planning document on sustainable development • supporting the reduction of contributions to climate change, encouraging renewable energy and promoting energy efficiency • providing areas of accessible green space
Housing housing needs affordable housing homelessness housing stock condition housing support vulnerable groups	• providing for the housing needs of all sectors of the community • providing affordable housing, sheltered housing and support for elderly people
Economic Vibrancy business farm diversification tourism education and skills transport	• supporting businesses through the identification of employment sites • supporting farm diversification schemes • supporting the improvement of tourist facilities and attractions • supporting access to education and training opportunities • maintaining vibrant villages • protecting village shops and sole facilities • supporting the improvement of existing

	rural transport services • improving public transport links between villages, other parts of the District and beyond • supporting the provision of sustainable transport through the development and improvement of footpaths and cycleways
<u>Community Safety</u> crime and fear of crime youth related matters	• promoting community safety and reducing fear of crime through designing out crime
<u>Health and Wellbeing</u> older people health care leisure	• supporting the development of new and improved services for older people • supporting the development of locally delivered facilities and services including primary care services, health centres and GP surgeries • supporting the provision of improved leisure and recreation facilities
<u>Children and Young People</u> young people issues education	• supporting access to education and training • supporting the provision of sport, recreation and cultural facilities

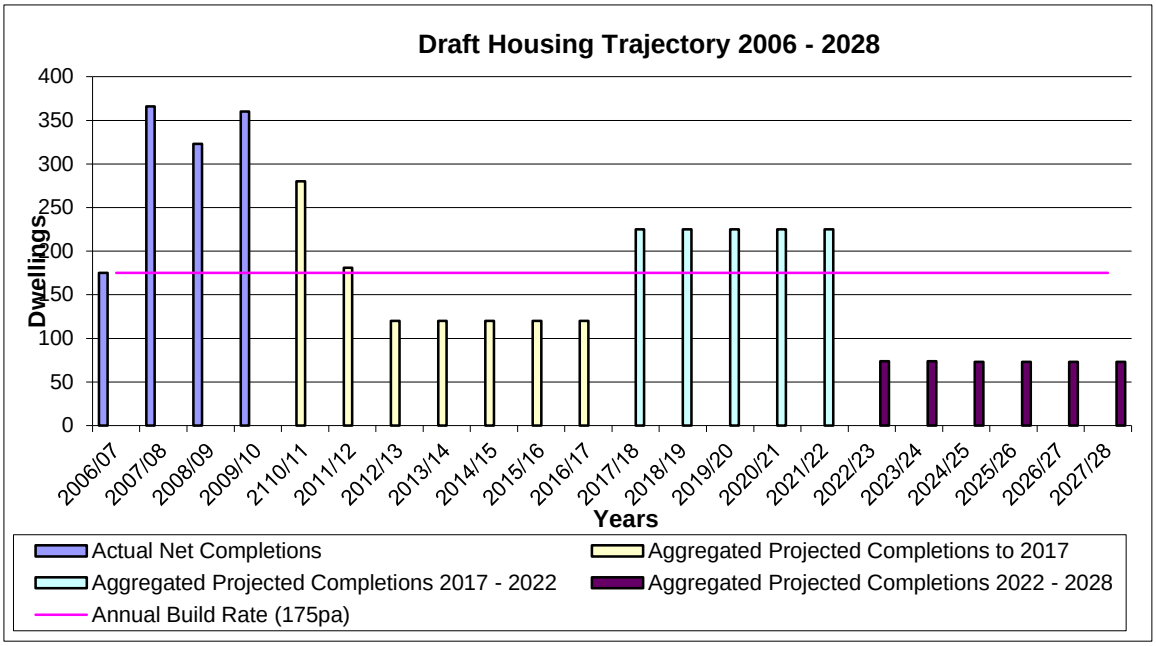
Appendix 4: Housing Supply and Trajectory

The housing supply position for South Staffordshire District as at 1st April 2010 is set out in the table below. The table shows net housing completions in the period 2006-2010, dwellings under construction and those with planning permission.

Housing Supply	Dwellings
Housing Target 2006 – 2028	3,850
Net Completions 2006 – 2010	1,224
Dwellings under construction	245
Dwellings with planning permission	775
Residual housing requirement 1,610 dwellings	1,606 dwellings rounded to

Housing Trajectory

The housing trajectory for the period 2006 to 2028 is set out below.



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 conversation 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

Development Type	Requirement
RETAIL/FOOD & DRINK 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^2 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
INDUSTRIAL& COMMERCIAL 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
ACCOMMODATION/ INSTITUTIONS C1. Hotels	1 space per 3 employees employed at busiest time Guests: 1 space per bedroom
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
RESIDENTIAL 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.
OTHER 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 ad 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

Development Type	**Requirement**
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 &	1 space per 1000 sq.m. gross floor area

distribution	
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 to flank side wall over private space	13m	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.
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.

<u>Minimum overall floor areas</u>

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.

Appendix 7: Glossary

Adoption – The stage at which the Local Planning Authority (LPA), can adopt, by resolution of the Council a Local Development Document (LDD) as Council policy.

Affordable Housing (or sub-market housing) - Housing provided at a cost considered affordable in relation to average incomes or the price of general market housing.

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) – A report produced by the LPA to show how the Authority is performing against all agreed targets.

Appropriate Assessment (AA) – An assessment of the potential effects of a proposed plan – in combination with other plans and projects – on one or more European sites, including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). The Assessment itself is a statement that says whether the plan does, or does not, affect the integrity of the European site.

Area Action Plan (AAP) – A Development Plan Document (DPD) that will provide a planning framework for areas of significant change or conservation.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) - An area with statutory national landscape designation, the primary purpose of which is to conserve and enhance natural beauty.

Bio-diversity - The whole variety of life encompassing all genetics, species and ecosystem variations, including plants and animals.

Bio-diversity Action Plan (BAP) - A strategy prepared for a local area aimed at conserving biological diversity.

Brief / Planning Brief - A planning brief can include site-specific development briefs, design briefs, development frameworks and master plans that seek to positively shape future development.

Brownfield Land and Sites - See 'Previously-Developed Land'.

Climate Change - Long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind and all other aspects of the Earth's climate. Often regarded as a result of human activity and fossil fuel consumption.

Community Facilities
Community facilities provide for the health, welfare, social, educational, spiritual, recreational, leisure and cultural needs of the community.

Community Forest - A large area of land transformed into a wooded landscape by a partnership of local authorities, national agencies and private, voluntary and community organisations to support employment, recreation, education and wildlife. The Forest of Mercia is a Community Forest.

Communities and Local Government (CLG) – It is the aim of the Government to create sustainable communities. The CLG is responsible for housing, planning, regional and local government, regeneration, social exclusion, neighbourhood renewal and the fire and rescue service. It is also lead sponsor department for the Government Offices for the Regions.

Conservation Area - Areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character, appearance or setting of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Conservation Area Character Appraisal - A published document defining the special architectural or historic interest that warranted the area being designated.

Core Strategy – A Development Plan Document (DPD) which forms part of the Local Plan, that sets out the long-term spatial vision and spatial objectives for the LPA area and the strategic policies and proposals to deliver that vision.

Cultural Strategy - A Cultural Strategy aims to "promote the cultural well-being" of the area it covers.

Cycle Network - An integrated network of both on and off road routes to facilitate an easier and safer journey for cyclists.

Density - In the case of residential development, a measurement of either the number of habitable rooms per hectare or the number of dwellings per hectare.

Design guide - A document providing guidance on how development can be carried out in accordance with the design policies of a local authority or other organisation often with a view to retaining local distinctiveness.

Design statement - A design statement can be made at a pre-planning application stage by a developer, indicating the design principles upon which a proposal is to be based. It may also be submitted in support of a planning application.

Development - Development is defined under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act as "the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land." Most forms of development require planning permission (see also "permitted development").

Development Management - The process whereby a local planning authority manages, shapes, and considers the merits of a planning application and whether it should be given permission with regard to the development plan.

Development Plan - This will consist of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) until such time as it is revoked, and the documents which make up the Local Plan.

Development Plan Documents (DPDs) – Spatial planning documents prepared by the LPA and subject to Independent Examination. For South Staffordshire, they include the Core Strategy,

the Site Allocations DPD, and the Policies Map. DPDs are required to have a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

District Centres - Usually comprising groups of shops and some services, separate from the town centre, but with more variety than local centres. Can include suburban centres.

Employment Land Study – An assessment of the suitability of sites for employment development, to safeguard the best sites in the face of competition from other higher value uses and help identify those which are no longer suitable for other uses.

Evidence Base – The researched, documented, analysed and verified basis for all the components of a Local Plan. The work used to create the Local Plan can be published in the form of background papers.

Flood Plain - Generally flat-lying areas adjacent to a watercourse, tidal lengths of a river or the sea where water flows in times of flood or would flow but for the presence of flood defences.

Flood Risk Assessment - An assessment of the likelihood of flooding in a particular area so that development needs and mitigation measures can be carefully considered.

Front-loading - The important pre-production community participation processes involved in preparation of Local Development Documents (LDDs). Seen by the DCLG as the key to efficient production and examination of LDDs. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), Local Development Scheme (LDS) and the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) play a large part in ensuring front-loading.

General Conformity - A process by which Regional Planning Bodies consider whether a Development Plan Document is in "general conformity" with the Regional Spatial Strategy. Also, all other DPDs must conform to a Core Strategy DPD.

Green Belt (not to be confused with the term 'greenfield') – A designation for land around certain cities and large built-up areas, which aims to keep this land permanently open or largely undeveloped. The purposes of Green Belt are to:

- check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
- prevent neighbouring towns from merging;
- safeguard the countryside from encroachment;
- preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Greenfield Land or Site - Land (or a defined site) which has never been built on before or where the remains of any structure or activity have blended into the landscape over time.

Habitat – An area of nature conservation interest.

Historic Parks and Gardens - A park or garden of special historic interest. Graded I (highest quality), II* or II. Designated by English Heritage.

Independent Examination – An examination held in public by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State into all Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The examination will consider the "soundness" of the document. The Inspector's report will be binding on the LPA.

Issues and Options – produced during the early production stage of the preparation of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and may be issued for consultation.

Key Diagram - The diagrammatic interpretation of the Spatial Strategy as set out in the Core Strategy Development Plan Document. (As distinct from a Structure Plan Key Diagram prepared to explain its policy content). In a Regional Spatial Strategy, the key diagram illustrates the spatial strategy and may show links and relationships with other strategies and neighbouring regions.

Landscape Character - The distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occur consistently in a particular type of landscape. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement.

Listed Building - A building of special architectural or historic interest. Graded I (highest quality), II* or II.

Local Centre - Includes a range of small shops and perhaps limited services of a local nature, serving a small catchment. Sometimes also referred to as a local neighbourhood centre.

Local Development Document (LDD) – A local planning document which can be either a statutory Development Plan Document (DPD) or a non-statutory Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Local Development Scheme (LDS) – A document setting out the LPA's programme for the preparation of the Local Development Documents (LDD's) within a three-year period and a timetable for their production and review. It will also state which policies will be saved from the existing Local Plan.

Local Landscape Designation (for example, 'Area of High Landscape Value') - Non-statutory and locally designated areas outside the national landscape designations, which are considered to be of particular landscape value to the local area.

Local Listing (Sometimes listed as a 'Building of Local Importance') - Locally important building valued for contribution to local scene or for local historical situations but not meriting Listed Building status.

Local Plan (new) – A collection of statutory Development Plan Documents (DPDs) prepared by the LPA that sets out policies and allocations for delivering the economic, environmental and social aims of the area. A number of SPDs will also provide additional guidance to the policies contained in the Local Plan.
For South Staffordshire the Local Plan consists of the following DPDs:

- The Core Strategy,

- The Site Allocations DPD; and
- The Policies Map.

Local Plan (old) - An old-style development plan prepared by District and other Local Planning Authorities. These plans will continue to operate for a time after the commencement of the new development plan system.

Local Planning Authority (LPA) - The local authority or council that is empowered by law to exercise planning functions. Often the local borough or district council.

Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) - An overall partnership of people that brings together organisations from the public, private, community and voluntary sector within a local authority area, with the objective of improving people's quality of life.

Local Transport Plan - A five-year integrated transport strategy, prepared by local authorities in partnership with the community, seeking funding to help provide local transport projects. The plan sets out the resources predicted for delivery of the targets identified in the strategy. Local transport plans should be consistent with the policies and priorities set out in the Regional Transport Strategy as an integral part of the RSS.

Localism Act 2011 - The Localism Bill was introduced to Parliament in December 2010, and was given Royal Assent on 15 November 2011, becoming an Act. The Localism Act includes wide-ranging changes to local government, housing and planning and seeks to shift power from central government back into the hands of individuals, communities and councils. It sets the direction for change to the national and local planning system.

Mixed Use (or mixed use development) - Provision of a mix of complementary uses, such as say residential, community and leisure uses, on a site or within a particular area.

Monitoring (and review) – The process of measuring (in terms of quantity and quality) the changes in conditions and trends, impact of policies, performance of the plan against its objectives and targets, and progress in delivering outputs. Please also refer to Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

Nature Conservation - The protection, management and promotion of wildlife habitat for the benefit of wild species, as well as the communities that use and enjoy them.

Neighbourhood Centre - A number of shops serving a local neighbourhood and separate from the district centre. Sometimes referred to as a Local Centre.

Open Space - All space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs, which can offer opportunities for sport and recreation. They can also act as a visual amenity and a haven for wildlife.

Out-of-Centre - In retailing terms, a location that is clearly separate from the primary shopping area of a town centre but not necessarily outside the urban area.

Plan-led System - The principle that decisions upon planning applications should be made in accordance with adopted development plans (and DPDs), unless there are other material considerations that may indicate otherwise.

Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 - The Act updates elements of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a statutory system for regional planning; and a system for local planning known as Local Development Frameworks (LDFs). The local planning system has since been subject to government reforms and the details of which were set out in the Localism Act 2011 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Planning Out Crime - The planning and design of street layouts, open space, and buildings so as to reduce the actual likelihood or fear of crime, for example by creating natural surveillance.

Preferred Options – During formal public consultation on a Development Plan Document (DPD), the LPA will offer preferred option and proposals. The Council will offer those options, which are reasoned to be the most appropriate.

Previously Developed Land (PDL) or 'Brownfield' Land - Previously developed land is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

Policies Map – The component of a local plan showing the location of proposals in the plan, on an Ordnance Survey base map.

Protected Species - Plants and animal species afforded protection under certain Acts of Law and Regulations.

Public Open Space - Urban space, designated by a Council, where public access may or may not be formally established, but which fulfils or can fulfil a recreational or non-recreational role (for example, amenity, ecological, educational, social or cultural usages).

Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) – A strategy for how a region should look in 15 to 20 years time and possibly longer. It identifies the scale and distribution of new housing in the region, indicates areas for regeneration, expansion or sub-regional planning and specifies priorities for the environment, transport, infrastructure, economic development, agriculture, minerals and waste treatment and disposal. The West Midlands Regional Planning Guidance (RPG11) approved in June 2004 is now considered RSS and forms part of the Development Plan. The RPB has commenced a partial review of the RSS.

Renewable Energy – Energy produced from a sustainable source that avoids the depletion of the earth's finite natural resources, such as oil or gas. Sources in use or in development include energy from the sun, wind, hydropower, ocean energy and biomass.

Rural Diversification - The expansion, enlargement or variation of the range of products or fields of operation of a rural business (branching out from traditional farming activities, for example new income generating enterprise like renewable energy).

Rural Exceptions Policy/Site - A development plan or Development Plan Document may allocate small sites within rural areas solely for affordable housing, which would not otherwise be released for general market housing.

Safeguarded Land – A term to describe land that has been removed from the Green Belt to meet possible longer term development needs, formally known as 'White Land'.

Saved Plans and Policies – Existing adopted Local Plans will be "saved" for 3 years. The policies will remain in force for development control purposes until replaced by new Local Development Document (LDD) policies.

Sequential approach / sequential test - A planning principle that seeks to identify, allocate or development certain types or locations of land before the consideration of others. For example, Brownfield housing sites before Greenfield sites, or town centre retail sites before out-of-centre sites.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - A site identified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as incorporated in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) as an area of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features (basically, plants, animals, and natural features relating to the Earth's structure).

Site-specific allocations and policies – Sites that are proposed for development to meet the LPAs requirements set out in the Core Strategy. Policies will identify any specific requirements for individual proposals.

Soundness - A term referring to the justification of a Development Plan Document. A DPD is considered "sound" and based upon good evidence unless it can be shown to be unsound.

Spatial Development - Changes in the distribution of activities in space and the linkages between them in terms of the use and development of land.

Spatial Planning - Spatial planning goes beyond traditional land use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function. That will include policies which can impact on land use, for example by influencing the demands on, or needs for, development, but which are not capable of being delivered solely or mainly through the granting or refusal of planning permission and which may be implemented by other means.

Spatial Vision - A brief description of how the area will be changed at the end of the plan period (often 10 – 15 years).

Stakeholders – People who have an interest in the activities and achievements of the Council, including residents, local communities of interest, partners, employees, customers, shareholders, suppliers, opinion leaders, regulators and "hard to reach" groups.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) – A Local Development Document (LDD) that sets out the standards which the LPA intends to achieve in relation to involving the community in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all Local Development Documents (LDDs) and in significant development control decisions, and also how the local planning authority intends to achieve those standards. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) will not be a Development Plan Document (DPD) but will be subject to Independent Examination.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) - A generic term used internationally to describe environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes. The SEA will form and integral part of the preparation process for all Local Development Documents (LDDs) and will be used to explain the environmental implications of polices and development as part of a Sustainability Appraisal (SA).

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is a tool used by the Local Planning Authority to assess flood risk for spatial planning, producing development briefs, setting constraints, informing sustainability appraisals, identifying locations of emergency planning measures and requirements for flood risk assessments.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) – Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments are a key component of the evidence base to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing to meet the community's need for more homes. These assessments are required by national policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Structure Plan - An old-style development plan, which sets out strategic planning policies and forms the basis for detailed policies in local plans and Development Plan Documents. These plans will continue to operate for a time after the commencement of the new development plan system, due to transitional provisions under planning reform.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) – A guidance document that supplements policies and proposals in the Local Plan. It will be subject to public consultation, but will not form part of the Development Plan or be subject to Independent Examination.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) – The examination of a Local Development Documents (LDDs) to ascertain whether its policies and proposals accord with the principles of sustainable development. The Sustainability Appraisal will incorporate a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

Sustainable Communities – Places where people want to live and work, now and in the future.

Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) - A strategy prepared by local authorities to help deliver local community aspirations, under the Local Government Act 2000.

Sustainable Development - A widely used definition drawn up by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987: "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". The Government has set out four aims for sustainable development in its strategy "A Better Quality of Life, a Strategy for Sustainable Development in the UK". The four aims, to be achieved at the same time, are: social progress which recognises the needs of everyone; effective protection of the environment; the prudent use of natural resources; and maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

Sustainable Travel/Sustainable Transport - Often meaning walking, cycling and public transport (and in some circumstances "car sharing"), which is considered to be less damaging to the environment and which contributes less to traffic congestion than one-person car journeys.

Travel Plan (sometimes called a 'green travel' or 'commuter' plan) - A travel plan aims to promote sustainable travel choices (for example cycling) as an alternative to single occupancy car journeys that may impact negatively on the environment, congestion and road safety. Travel Plans can be required when granting planning permission for new developments.

Viability - In terms of retailing, a centre that is capable of success or continuing effectiveness.

Vitality - In terms of retailing, the capacity of a centre to grow or develop.

Windfall Site - A site not specifically allocated for development in a development plan, but which unexpectedly becomes available for development during the lifetime of a plan. Most "windfalls" are referred to in a housing context.

Written Representations - A procedure by which representations on development plans and DPDs can be dealt with without the need for a full public inquiry or independent examination.

Written Statement - A documentary statement supplementing and explaining policy, forming part of a development plan.

Strategic Planning Team

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