

Tamworth Local Plan

2022 – 2043

Pre-submission (Regulation 19) consultation
version

Welcome to Tamworth, Capital of Mercia

List of Policies

Foreword

1. Introduction

What is the local plan and what does it do?

Preparation of the local plan and stakeholder engagement

2. Important supporting documents

3. A brief portrait of Tamworth

Strategic Location

Wider Context

Town Centre

Historical Significance, character and Tamworth's evolution

4. Sustainable Development

Key sustainability challenges for Tamworth

5. Vision for Tamworth

6. Strategic Objectives

7. A spatial strategy for Tamworth

Setting a housing target

Setting an employment target

Setting a retail target

Key diagram

Tackling the Climate Emergency in Tamworth

3

5

6

6

6

7

9

9

9

9

10

11

11

15

17

18

22

23

24

26

27

8. Green Belt

9. Housing

Housing mix

Housing density

Affordable housing

Older persons and specialist forms of accommodation

Gypsies and Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople

10. Economy and Employment

Existing employment areas

Employment uses outside of existing employment areas

Non-employment uses in employment areas

Strengthening the visitor economy

11. Town Centre and Retail

Hierarchy of centres

Tamworth Town Centre

Regeneration Opportunity Areas

Managing out of centre development

Development in Neighbourhood Centres

12. Healthy communities

Community facilities and public service infrastructure

Open space, sport, and recreational facilities

30

31

42

43

45

47

49

51

53

54

55

56

58

63

65

67

72

75

76

78

88

Other community infrastructure	96
13. Heritage	103
14. Design, placemaking and the built environment	111
Achieving high quality design	114
Residential Design Standards	119
Non-residential, commercial and employment design standards	126
15. Flooding	133
16. Protecting the natural environment	139
Designated sites and geodiversity	142
Biodiversity	148
Trees	152
17. Environmental Protection and Amenity	154
Land Quality, Minerals and Soils	157
18. Sustainable transport and active travel	161
19. Infrastructure and Obligations	169

List of Policies

Strategic Policy SP1: A Spatial Strategy for Tamworth	20	Policy TC4: Ankerside Regeneration Opportunity Area	69
Strategic policy SP2: Climate change	28	Policy TC5: Main town centre uses outside centres	72
Strategic Policy SP3: Protecting and Enhancing the Green Belt	30	Policy TC6: Development in Neighbourhood Centres	75
Strategic policy SP4: Housing allocations	32	Policy HC1: Development affecting existing community facilities and public service infrastructure	80
Policy HO1: Housing mix	42	Policy HC2: Community facilities, public service infrastructure and new development	82
Policy HO2: Housing density	43	Policy HC3: New and improved community facilities and public service infrastructure	84
Policy HO3: Affordable housing	45	Policy HC4: Glascote Heath and Stonydelph (Pride in Place)	86
Policy HO4: Older persons and other specialist forms of accommodation	47	Policy HC5: Existing open space, sport, and recreation facilities	88
Policy HO5: Gypsies and Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople	49	Policy HC6: Open space, sport and recreation provision in new development	90
Policy SP5: Employment allocation	52	Policy HC7: New and improved open space, sport and recreation provision	92
Policy EM1: Existing employment areas	53	Policy HC8: Tamworth Leisure Quarter	93
Policy EM2: Employment uses outside of existing employment areas	54	Policy HC9: Public realm	96
Policy EM3: Non-employment uses in employment areas	55	Policy HC10: Safeguarding burial space	99
Policy EM4: Strengthening the visitor economy	56	Policy HC11: Hot food takeaways	101
Strategic Policy SP6: Retail, centres and regeneration	61	Strategic Policy SP7: Securing the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets	104
Policy TC1: The Hierarchy of centres	63	Policy HE1: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets	106
Policy TC2: Development in the Town Centre	65		
Policy TC3: Gungate Regeneration Opportunity Area	67		

Policy HE2: Proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets	108	Policy NE3: Geodiversity	147
Policy HE3: Conservation areas	109	Policy NE4: Biodiversity Net Gain	148
Strategic Policy SP8: Design, placemaking and the built environment	112	Policy NE5: Biodiversity no net loss	150
Policy DE1: Delivering high quality design and respecting local distinctiveness	114	Policy NE6: Trees	152
Policy DE2: Masterplanning and design codes	117	Policy EP1: Safeguarding amenity and managing the impacts of development	155
Policy DE3: Design standards for new housing (including conversions and subdivision)	119	Policy EP2: Pollution, ground conditions and contamination	157
Policy DE4: Residential infill and backland development	122	Policy EP3: Safeguarding minerals and soils	159
Policy DE5: Existing buildings – extensions and alterations	124	Strategic Policy SP9: Sustainable Transport and Active Travel	163
Policy DE6: Non-residential and employment development	127	Policy TA1: Managing car use	165
Policy DE7: Shopfront design and security	129	Policy TA2: Impact on the transport network and highway safety	166
Policy DE8: Advertisements, signs and illumination	131	Policy TA3: Freight, Servicing and Logistics	168
Policy FL1: The sequential test and exception test	133	Policy IO1: Infrastructure delivery	170
Policy FL2: Ensuring development is safe from flooding	135	Policy IO2: Developer contributions	172
Policy FL3: Sustainable drainage systems, watercourses and water quality	136		
Policy FL4: Flood mitigation infrastructure	138		
Policy NE1: Blue and green infrastructure	140		
Policy NE2: National and local sites of importance for biodiversity	142		

Foreword

The local plan is a framework for how we grow our town so that it continues to be a great place into the future. There are many challenges facing Tamworth's communities, including town centre regeneration, infrastructure delivery, climate change, delivery of housing, providing opportunities for employment and education and protecting the heritage of the town.

Even though Tamworth has limited opportunities for growth due to the size of the town and the location of the borough boundary – this local plan has taken some decisive and bold decisions to accommodate growth where we can. It also sets out an ambitious strategy to continue to transform the town centre into the beating heart of Tamworth.

This plan recognises that Tamworth is not just about its centre, but the estates that often feel forgotten. The management of change within the residential and employment areas is important and will reflect quality, character and good design. Delivering strong communities with access to facilities and amenities that contribute to the sense of place, health and wellbeing is vital to ensure that we continue to provide for all ages.

This local plan will ensure that decisions about the future of Tamworth are made here in the town and not by others. A place where you can get on regardless of your background and where you are always treated fairly and are supported to achieve your full potential.

Most of all, we want you to love living in Tamworth and be proud of the town.

1. Introduction

What is the local plan and what does it do?

- 1.1. A local plan is a legally required document created by local planning authorities in consultation with the community that sets out the vision, policies, and framework for how land in a specific area will be used and developed. It guides decisions on planning applications and determines what gets built, where, and what areas are protected.
- 1.2. The local plan is a 'statutory' or legally required document that forms part of the council's strategy to deliver sustainable development, tackle climate change and to deliver new homes, jobs and infrastructure for current and future generations. This plan covers the period from 2022 to 2043 and will guide new development so that it takes place in a co-ordinated manner, making the best and most appropriate use of land to meet the needs of the community.
- 1.3. It helps meet housing needs, making sure communities have somewhere to live, and that the right types of homes are built in the right places to meet the needs of our residents. It is key to ensuring land is allocated for different types of businesses, supporting their ambitions and enabling job creation.

- 1.4. A local plan also plays a crucial role in ensuring communities have the right facilities available in the right places, such as shops, public services and leisure uses. Whilst facilitating the management of development the local plan protects and enhances what is good and special about Tamworth including its heritage, neighbourhood character, sense of community and our valued natural environment.

Preparation of the local plan and stakeholder engagement

- 1.5. When a local plan is being prepared, it goes through several stages from its inception, pulling together evidence to support decision-making, through to adoption, at which point the policies can be applied to manage change in the town effectively. Throughout these stages it is important that the views of residents, the development industry, infrastructure providers, and other stakeholders that have an interest in the area are taken into account. As a result, there have been a number of stages of engagement and statutory consultation during the development of this plan.
- 1.6. The requirement to collaborate on strategic and cross-boundary issues with neighbouring councils and other relevant bodies has been an important component in the preparation of this plan.

2. Important supporting documents

Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment)

- 2.1. Legislation requires plans to be assessed against both Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA). These two requirements, although slightly different, overlap considerably and have been carried out together in the preparation of the plan. Sustainability Appraisal aims to promote sustainable development by assessing the extent to which the plan will help to achieve: social, economic and environmental objectives, and show how these have informed the plan's contents.
- 2.2. The importance of the processes, in addition to meeting statutory requirements, is in ensuring that the decisions that are made explicitly consider the principles of sustainable development and that any potential adverse impacts are minimised, and beneficial impacts maximised.
- 2.3. The SA process (incorporating the SEA) has been fully integrated into the plan making process, informing the choices of sites and policies within this document. This is shown in the SA Report which is published as a separate document alongside the plan.

Appropriate Assessment

- 2.4. There is also a requirement introduced by the EU Habitats Directive for an Appropriate Assessment (AA) of the potential significant adverse effects of a plan on European Sites designated for their nature conservation importance.
- 2.5. These include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), and International Ramsar sites. The council has to undertake a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) to ensure that the policies in the plan do not harm sites designated as being of European importance for their biodiversity interest. The HRA is published as a separate document alongside the plan.

Monitoring the local plan

- 2.6. Monitoring of the local plan is important to determine the effectiveness of planning policies and whether they impact on development management decisions and contribute towards achieving the council's objectives and targets. The local plan will be monitored to ensure that the policies are being successfully implemented and that the overall strategy is being achieved. An annual Authority Monitoring Report is published which shows how the plan is delivering against the objectives.

National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.7. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is the national tier of planning policy and sets out the Government's policies on planning in the UK. National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) sits alongside the NPPF and provides further guidance on the implementation of the policies set out in the NPPF.
- 2.8. Local plans must be consistent with the NPPF and be prepared with regard to the PPG. This plan has been prepared in accordance with the December 2024 version of the NPPF and carries forward the objectives and policies of that version where relevant. The plan does not aim to duplicate national planning policy, or deviate from the general approach set out in the NPPF. Instead, it aims to put a Tamworth specific spin on those policies, to make sure that it reflects our local circumstances and what makes Tamworth unique.

3. A brief portrait of Tamworth

Strategic Location

- 3.1. Tamworth is a historic market town and borough located in Staffordshire. Positioned approximately 13 miles (21 km) northeast of Birmingham city centre and 6 miles (9.7 km) from Lichfield city centre. It lies on the southeastern edge of Staffordshire, making it a strategic and accessible town within the region. The town is just 3 miles (4.8 km) west of the Warwickshire border, while the boundaries of Derbyshire and Leicestershire are situated around 6 miles (9.7 km) to the northeast, placing Tamworth at the meeting point of several counties. The town is well-connected to nearby urban centres, including Nuneaton, Walsall, and Lichfield, with larger urban areas such as Wolverhampton, Dudley, and Coventry lying further afield. Tamworth's location at the crossroads of multiple counties and its proximity to major cities and towns contribute to its importance as both a local and regional centre.

Wider Context

- 3.2. The town has good transport connectivity, Tamworth's railway station is uniquely designed with two levels, serving two major railway lines: the West Coast Main Line and the Cross Country Route. This provides frequent and direct services to major cities

and regions across the country. In addition, Tamworth's strategic position between two key motorways, the M42 and the M6 Toll, makes it an ideal location for road commuters, ensuring easy travel to and from the town. In the wider Midlands context, Tamworth plays a significant economic and cultural role. The town is home to popular leisure attractions, including Drayton Manor Theme Park, the Ventura Retail Park and the Snowdome, all of which contribute to the regional economy by drawing visitors from across the UK. Furthermore, Tamworth is an active part of the Midlands Engine initiative, which aims to drive economic growth, innovation, and development in the region. While the town faces challenges such as town centre regeneration and environmental sustainability, its strong community identity, historical significance, and strategic location ensure it remains a key player in shaping the future of the Midlands and its place within the UK

Town Centre

- 3.3. Tamworth Town Centre is a compact area with rich historic charm and at its heart the historic core of Market Street, which today functions as a key retail thoroughfare. Outdoor markets are regularly held in and around St Editha's Square, adding vibrancy and activity to this central area. The town centre's urban form is characterised by buildings that are predominantly 2-3 storeys in height, featuring a mix of uses. These include local

shops, takeaways, retail outlets, pubs, banks, and residences, with many flats situated above active frontages. However, several large car parks interrupt the urban fabric, creating breaks in the continuity of the built environment.

Historical Significance, character and Tamworth's evolution

- 3.4. Tamworth's rich history spans over a thousand years, with its name derived from the River Tame, which remains a defining feature of the town. First settled during the Anglo-Saxon period, Tamworth rose to prominence as the capital of the powerful Kingdom of Mercia between the 7th and 9th centuries. Following the Norman Conquest, Tamworth Castle was constructed around 1070, serving initially as a defensive stronghold and later as a noble residence. The castle remains a central landmark in the town centre, linking Tamworth's heritage to its modern identity. During the medieval period, Tamworth thrived as a market centre due to its strategic location near key trade routes.
- 3.5. The town's early defensive wall, historic road network and movement routes formed key avenues for transport, residences, and commercial activity, laying the foundation for much of the town's present-day layout.
- 3.6. Tamworth experienced significant growth during the Industrial Revolution, becoming a hub for manufacturing, textiles, brewing,

and engineering. Local industrialists modernised the town, driving residential and commercial development. Post-World War II, Tamworth rapidly expanded to accommodate overspill housing from Birmingham, leading to new planned estates and substantial urban growth including the iconic six high-rise tower blocks near Lichfield Street, which remain a prominent feature of Tamworth's skyline. The separate villages of Amington, Wilnecote and Dosthill were incorporated into the expanding urban area.

- 3.7. Today, Tamworth's town centre reflects its historical evolution, with Anglo-Saxon roots, medieval market heritage, and industrial growth shaping the fabric of the town. Historic landmarks like Tamworth Castle and its road networks continue to define the town centre's identity and provide a foundation for future development.

4. Sustainable Development

- 4.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines sustainable development as:

meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

- 4.2. Plans and decisions should actively promote sustainable solutions, reflect local context, character, and needs while ensuring that all three sustainability objectives are pursued. The three overarching objectives are economic, environmental and social. They are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways:
- 4.3. **An economic objective:** to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time, to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.
- 4.4. **A social objective:** to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.

- 4.5. **An environmental objective:** to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land; helping to improve biodiversity; using natural resources prudently; minimising waste and pollution; and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low-carbon economy.
- 4.6. The Local Plan will weave the three overarching NPPF objectives through the plan to ensure that local decision making is always incorporating sustainability. How will the Borough Council know that it has been successful in achieving this?
- 4.7. The following paragraphs seek to define some of the key economic, social and environmental objective challenges which will characterise the scale and breath of the need to incorporate sustainability into the plan.

Key sustainability challenges for Tamworth

Tamworth's economy and the key sustainability challenges

- Tamworth benefits from strong connectivity to Birmingham, Lichfield and North Warwickshire, supporting access to a wide labour market and a broad range of employment opportunities.
- The town centre accommodates a mix of retail, leisure, cultural, community and other key uses within a central and

accessible location. Retail provision is also supported by out-of-centre destinations such as Ventura Retail Park.

- The role and vitality of the historic town centre has changed, with increasing vacancy rates and a shift away from comparison retail influenced in part by the dominance of Ventura Retail Park.
- Tamworth town centre has undergone extensive change through the Future High Streets programme, delivering significant physical and public realm improvements. Continued investment will be important to support the town centre's ongoing evolution and resilience, including through the regeneration of key sites like Ankerside and Gungate.
- Tamworth has a diverse tourism offer centred on heritage and leisure assets such as Tamworth Castle, the Castle Grounds and the Snowdome. However, the borough captures a relatively small share of Staffordshire's visitor economy, with most visits being day trips.
- A large proportion of residents commute out of the borough for work, indicating strong regional labour market links and highlighting the opportunity to increase local employment aligned with local skills.
- The borough relies on a relatively narrow economy base with low wages. There is need for Tamworth's economy to

become more diverse and resilient and attract higher wage industries into the borough.

- Skills and qualification levels are comparatively low, with fewer professional occupations and less than a quarter of the workforce qualified to Level 4+.
- Workforce pressures are emerging due to unemployment, a projected decline in young and working-age residents and a growing ageing population.
- There is a need for additional good quality employment space that reflects the profile and requirements of local businesses, including start-up units, office space, industrial premises and large-scale warehousing and manufacturing space.
- Employment land supply is constrained, meaning future growth is likely to focus on redevelopment of existing sites and maintaining good digital connectivity for businesses and remote working.

Tamworth's society and the key sustainability challenges

- Tamworth is a compact and densely populated borough with limited land availability for new homes, services, green space and social infrastructure.

- The population is becoming increasingly unbalanced, with fewer young and working-age residents and a growing older population, increasing dependency and shaping future service needs.
- Tamworth ranks 126th out of 317 local authorities for overall deprivation, and different aspects of deprivation are felt unevenly across the borough.
- Life expectancy is below county and national averages and is lower still in the most deprived parts of the borough.
- Housing affordability pressures are increasing, with house prices rising faster than local earnings.
- Tamworth's housing stock is unbalanced, dominated by semi-detached homes.
- Community cohesion is a challenge, with the 2024 unrest revealing underlying tensions and highlighting the importance of inclusive, well-designed places that support social interaction and belonging.
- Health and wellbeing pressures are significant, with high levels of obesity, physical inactivity, poor mental health and rising demand for care.

Tamworth's environment and the key sustainability challenges

- Tamworth's compact urban form limits opportunities to create new open space, and remaining greenfield land faces increasing pressure from future development.
- A high reliance on private car use contributes to congestion, particularly in the north of the borough, and additional growth may increase pressure on already constrained corridors.
- Public transport and active travel networks need improvement, with better accessibility, connectivity and safety required.
- Air, light and noise pollution pressures may increase through new development and construction.
- Flood risk remains a significant challenge, with fluvial and surface-water flooding affecting parts of the borough and some neighbourhoods more vulnerable than others.
- Climate change impacts are unevenly felt, including rising temperatures, extreme weather and heat vulnerability, requiring stronger resilience and adaptation.
- The River Anker and River Tame, along with the Coventry Canal, are the key waterways which run through the

borough, although parts of the catchment are in poor ecological status.

- The borough contains a range of open spaces, although their value and quality vary across different areas.
- The number of heritage assets protected in the borough as nationally and locally listed buildings make an important contribution towards the character of Tamworth.

Draft for consultation

5. Vision for Tamworth

- 5.1. In 2043 Tamworth will be a place where people can stay and grow with jobs and amenities to meet their needs. The town will have grown in a sustainable way that balances economic, social, and environmental needs.
- 5.2. New house building will have created more affordable, well-designed and locally distinctive homes in the right locations to meet the needs of the whole community both now, and into the future. These homes will be adaptable to accommodate the changing ways people use them over their lifetime, including into old age.
- 5.3. The borough will be an attractive location for new business investment to help diversify Tamworth's economy, whilst also supporting existing local businesses to stay and grow. Opportunities will also have been taken where possible to support the education sector in increasing educational attainment levels for residents.
- 5.4. A vibrant, regenerated town centre will have a mix of retail, leisure, and other uses (including residential) to ensure its long-term vitality and viability whilst also being flexible enough to adapt to the changing needs of residents, businesses, and visitors. The town's tourist attractions will have been protected and enhanced where possible.
- 5.5. The town's heritage assets are key to its unique identity and sense of place, and a tangible reminder of its rich and significant past. These assets will have been protected and, where possible, enhanced for future generations.
- 5.6. Tamworth will have adapted to and mitigated as far as possible the effects of climate change through encouraging sustainably located, climate resilient development for both new buildings and the modification of existing buildings, and by working with partners to reduce the risk and impact of flooding.
- 5.7. A balance between growth and the protection of the natural environment will have been achieved with opportunities taken to improve biodiversity and aid in nature's recovery. Access to good quality open space, blue, and green infrastructure will also have been maintained and, where appropriate, improved. This, coupled with opportunities for formal and informal leisure activities and opportunities for sustainable travel will allow residents to live more active, healthier lives.
- 5.8. All new development within Tamworth will be well designed and complement the distinctive local character of its immediate surroundings. Through working with partners, all new development will also be supported by appropriate infrastructure including appropriate digital infrastructure.
- 5.9. Healthy, sustainable, safe, and inclusive communities will foster community cohesion, a sense of civic pride, and provide residents with easy access to local facilities such as shops and

services, open spaces, and community facilities, to meet everyday needs.

- 5.10. The need to travel by private vehicle will be reduced, as opportunities will exist to encourage more active travel (such as walking and cycling) that makes the most of Tamworth's compact size. Through working with partners, improved public transport links will exist to the town centre, employment areas, and train and bus links to destinations outside of Tamworth.

6. Strategic Objectives

6.1. To deliver the council's vision and drive delivery of the spatial strategy and implementation of policies, the local plan has a number of strategic objectives.

- 1. Make the most efficient and sustainable use of the borough's limited supply of land.**
- 2. Provide a supply of high quality and affordable homes to meet the diverse needs of our community.**
- 3. Support the existing local economy whilst being flexible enough to respond positively to new economic opportunities.**
- 4. Regenerate and diversify the town centre to create a thriving destination and vibrant evening economy.**
- 5. Protect and enhance the borough's heritage including through facilitating appropriate and sustainable reuse of heritage assets.**
- 6. Tackle the causes and adapt to the effects of climate change.**
- 7. Protect and enhance ecological and biodiversity assets.**
- 8. Deliver sustainable neighbourhoods through the provision, protection, and enhancement of local services and facilities.**
- 9. Foster a more inclusive and connected community where individuals from all backgrounds feel valued, heard and supported.**
- 10. Encourage active and healthier lifestyles including by providing accessible and better connected green and blue linkages and open spaces, as well as formal indoor and outdoor recreation facilities.**
- 11. Promote sustainable transport modes for all journeys through improving walking, cycling, public transport, and electric vehicle facilities.**
- 12. Ensure that appropriate infrastructure is in place to support development across the borough including digital infrastructure.**

7. A spatial strategy for Tamworth

- 7.1. The spatial strategy is central to the local plan. It sets out the context for shaping the future of Tamworth and how the vision and objectives will be achieved. It sets out the amount of development required over the plan period and explains the approach chosen for delivering that growth.
- 7.2. Tamworth is not unique with the issues that it faces when considering where to put growth to meet future needs. All local authorities have constraints that impact upon their ability to both strategically locate growth and to deliver it. However, Tamworth has one particular constraint that creates a problem. The borough is only 12 square miles and the boundary is drawn tightly around the urban area leaving very little opportunity to expand outwards with sustainable urban extensions. Those areas that could be expanded into have Green Belt designation, or are constrained by flood risk or highways capacity.
- 7.3. The previous adopted local plan allocated much of the remaining deliverable undeveloped land and worked with the neighbouring authorities of Lichfield District and North Warwickshire Borough to deliver housing growth outside of the borough boundary. This means that for this plan, the availability of land to accommodate Tamworth's future growth is extremely limited.
- 7.4. The spatial strategy therefore reflects some difficult decisions that the council has had to make to accommodate as much growth as it can, recognising that existing or new infrastructure needs to be able to accommodate growth in order for it to be sustainable in the long-term.
- 7.5. Brownfield development will continue to be important but not at the expense of communities losing their ability to access open space and garden space. Design is going to be important to Tamworth to ensure that development in the urban areas is well designed and sympathetic to its surroundings.
- 7.6. Only a few greenfield opportunities exist therefore the spatial strategy requires some Green Belt release to accommodate the development of new homes. However, even releasing of land from the Green belt will not provide space for enough new homes to meet the housing target. The council will therefore work with our neighbouring local authorities, and those within the wider housing market area (HMA) to help deliver the shortfall.
- 7.7. As with the housing target, the lack of available land also makes it difficult to deliver significant amounts of employment development within the borough. A single site has been allocated for employment development, and additional growth will be targeted at the borough's existing network of employment areas. However there will again be an unmet need requiring the council to work with immediate neighbours and those in the wider HMA to address.

- 7.8. The council is ambitious to deliver change where it can and the spatial strategy seeks to put the beating heart back into Tamworth town centre to continue the regeneration journey started by the Future High Streets Funding. Several regeneration opportunities exist which have the potential to transform the town centre and deliver growth. The town centre therefore will be a significant area of change over the plan period.

Spatial strategy

Strategic Policy SP1: A Spatial Strategy for Tamworth

1. From 2022 to 2043 a minimum of 3,945 new homes and 39,200sqm of employment floorspace will be delivered within the borough along with supporting infrastructure and facilities. Proposals for new development that demonstrate that they will contribute towards the local plan's economic, social and environmental objectives will be approved without delay, in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
2. The town centre will be the preferred location for retail development and other main town centre uses in line with national planning policy. 2,700 sqm of new comparison goods floorspace will be delivered within the borough by 2034, with a further 800 sqm being delivered by 2043, subject to an updated assessment being undertaken. Whilst there is no identified need for convenience retail floorspace over the plan period, this will also be kept under review.

Strategy for meeting housing needs

3. Over the plan period, a minimum of 1,920 new homes will be built on allocated sites in Tamworth towards an overall target of 8,608 as identified by the National Planning Policy Framework. Delivery on these sites will be maximised as far as is sustainably possible to ensure that the land identified for housing is being used in the most efficient and effective way.

4. 42.1Ha of land will be removed from the Green Belt to help deliver 856 of those new homes. Development within the Green Belt will be required to comply with the 'golden rules' set out in national planning policy.
5. Another 595 new homes are also expected to be built on additional sites that have not been specifically allocated for housing around the borough before 2043. These developments will form an important part of housing delivery and will be approved where they comply with the policies set out in the plan.
6. The council will continue to work with the neighbouring councils and those within the wider Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area to try to identify ways in which they can help to deliver some of Tamworth's remaining 4,663 unmet housing need over the plan period.

Strategy for meeting employment needs

7. The existing network of employment sites within the borough will be protected and a flexible approach will be taken to their future development to secure their long-term future and allow for new economic opportunities.
8. At least 39,200sqm of new employment floorspace will be delivered over the plan period. This development will be focussed on the allocated employment site, with any additional development focussed within the existing employment areas.

Strategy for meeting retail needs

9. A minimum of 2,700 sqm of new comparison retail floor space will be delivered between 2022 and 2043. The town centre will be the primary focus for new retail leisure and tourism development complimented by appropriate residential development to create a vibrant town centre community. Regeneration of the town centre will be focused on the two regeneration opportunity sites at the former Gungate Precinct and the Ankerside Shopping Centre.

Setting a housing target

- 7.9. To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, the housing target for the plan has been set based on the requirements of the standard method set out in the December 2024 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 7.10. The requirement based on the latest standard method is 445 new dwellings per year. However, the plan period runs from the year 2022 and the revised standard method did not take effect until December 2024. It would therefore be reasonable to adjust the overall target based on the requirements in place at the time.
- 7.11. For the period from April 2022 to December 2024, the extant local plan set a minimum housing target of 177 new dwellings per year, and the standard method set a target of between 123 and 141 new homes per year (depending on which version of the NPPF was in place at the time). Taking the local plan target figure of 177 for the period April 2022 to December 2024 and the standard method figure of 445 dwellings per year from January 2025 onwards gives a total housing need for the plan period of 8,608 new homes.

Housing delivery

- 7.12. The total number of new homes delivered over the plan period will come from a number of different sources.

Existing delivery since the start of the plan period

- 7.13. The plan covers the period from April 2022 and new homes have been built every year since then. A total of 1,030 new homes have already been delivered towards the total housing need for the plan period as follows:

2022/23 - 369

2023/24 - 290

2024/25 - 235

2025/26 - 136

Sites allocated specifically for housing

- 7.14. The sites set out in policy SP4 (Housing Allocations) and shown on the proposals map will deliver a minimum of 1,920 new homes over the plan period. This includes sites allocated within land released from the Green Belt.

Housing delivery on mixed use regeneration sites

- 7.15. The town centre will also be expected to deliver at least 400 new homes as part of the regeneration of the opportunity sites identified in policies TC3 and TC4.

Windfall sites

- 7.16. Windfall developments are those that take place on sites that are not identified in the plan. In Tamworth there are on average

around 35 new homes per year built on windfall sites across the borough. This adds up to around 595 additional homes between April 2026 and March 2043.

Total delivery

Existing delivery – 1,030

Allocated sites – 1,920

Regeneration sites – 400

Windfall development – 595

Total – 3,945

Unmet need – 4,663

Setting an employment target

- 7.17. The NPPF requires planning policies and decisions to help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand, and adapt by setting out a strategy that positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth. This includes establishing the amount of land needed for employment growth over the plan period and a strategy for delivering it.
- 7.18. The employment land need for the borough is informed by the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment 2025 (HEDNA). The HEDNA considered the requirement for land and

floorspace over the period 2022 – 2043 for office and Industrial uses correlating to Use Class E(g)(i) offices, E(g)(ii) R&D, E(g)(iii) industrial (light), B2 Industrial, and B8 Warehousing. In line with Planning Practice Guidance, the HEDNA considered:

- sectoral and employment forecasts and projections (labour demand);
- demographically derived assessments of future employment needs (labour supply techniques); and
- analysis based on the past take-up of employment land and property and/or future property market requirements.

- 7.19. Based on these approaches, the HEDNA suggests an office need of between 0 and 4.2Ha, and an industrial need of between 3.6 and 34Ha with a recommendation to plan for 1Ha of office development and 24Ha of industrial development.
- 7.20. Taking into account existing permissions and developments already underway, the HEDNA established that there would not be a requirement for further office-based development over the plan period. A similar assessment of industrial need suggested a remaining requirement of 11.3Ha, however this includes a reduction for two allocated sites included in the old local plan, one of which has been allocated again in this plan. The remaining need is therefore considered to be 21.8Ha.
- 7.21. Similar to the housing target, delivery of new employment land within the borough is challenging due to the lack of suitable

available land. This means that not all new employment development will be able to come forward on new sites that are solely for employment use. A significant amount of the employment growth is likely to be on smaller scale developments or through extensions to existing uses. The employment target has therefore also been expressed as a floorspace requirement as that is considered to be the most effective way to monitor delivery of those smaller sites.

Industrial requirement

21.8Ha site requirement = 87,200sqm floorspace requirement

Employment delivery

- 7.22. Delivery over the plan period will come from a number of sources.

Existing delivery since the start of the plan period

- 7.23. Although some development has taken place since the start of the plan period, the HEDNA took place during that timeframe and so it is assumed that most of that development is already accounted for in the need figure set out above.

Sites allocated for employment development

- 7.24. A single site set out in policy SP5 (Employment allocation) and shown on the proposals map is expected to deliver around 39,200sqm (9.8Ha) of employment development within the plan period.

Delivery in existing employment areas

- 7.25. It is anticipated that any other employment development during the plan period will likely be delivered through extensions to existing businesses and regeneration of existing employment sites. It is difficult to put an exact figure on how much development will be delivered in this way, but analysis of past delivery suggests that the amount of employment floorspace permitted per year has been generally declining and has been below 300sqm for three out of the last four year.

Total delivery

- 7.26. The total proposed delivery set out in the strategy is set at 39,200sqm to reflect the single allocated employment site. Due to the low levels of employment floorspace permitted in recent years, it was not considered to include additional floorspace within the expected delivery over the plan period and any additional floorspace delivered will instead be considered as windfall development.

Setting a retail target

- 7.27. The NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. The plan sets out a number of policies to help achieve this.

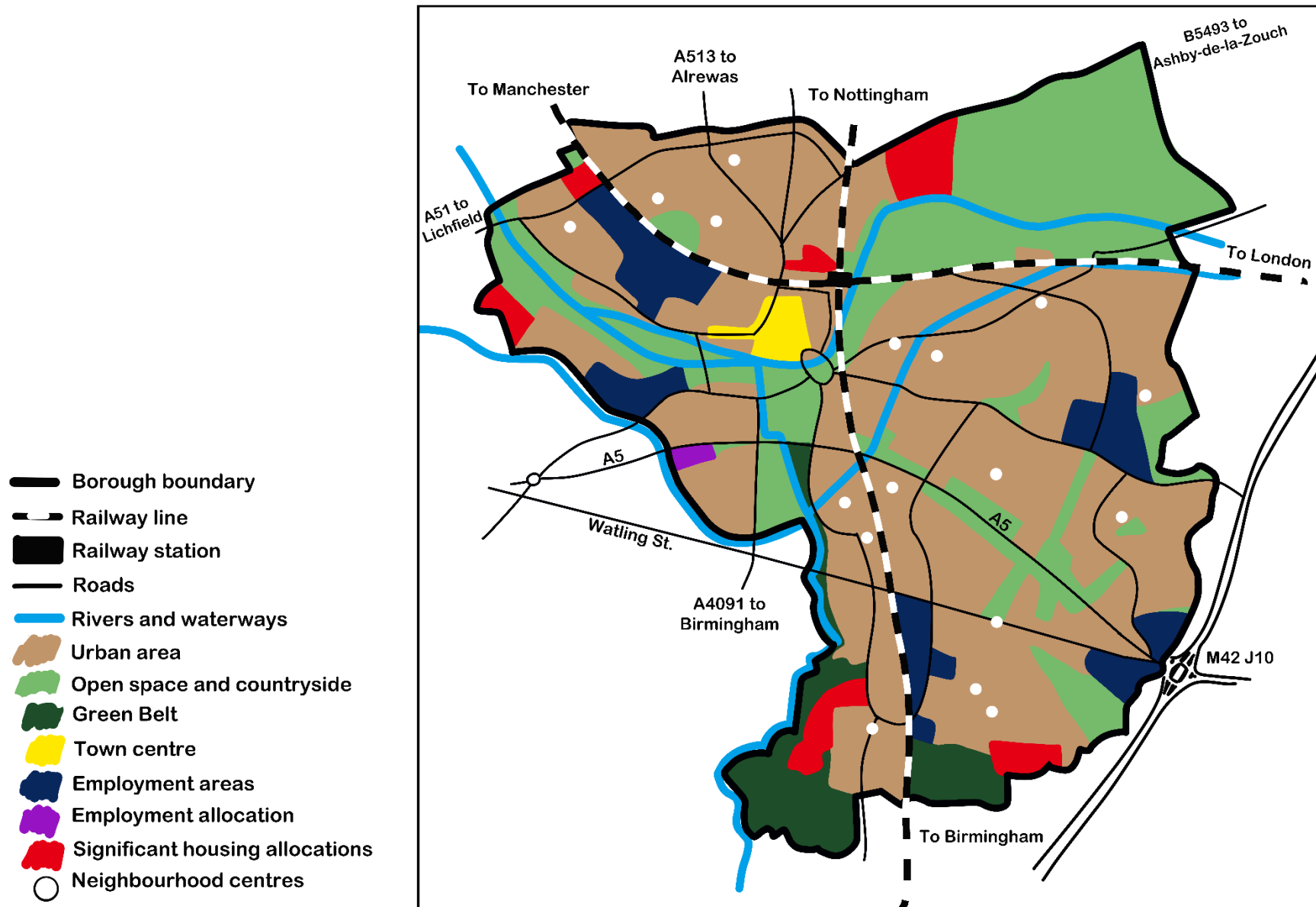
7.28. A Town Centre and Retail Study was undertaken to establish how much retail development would be required over the plan period. The calculation of need in the study was a technical exercise which considered three key factors:

- where residents of the area are currently shopping;
- how much population growth is expected to come forward in the survey area; and
- how much spending on convenience and comparison goods will increase, having regard to economic forecasts and other factors such as online shopping.

7.29. A more comprehensive explanation of the method used to calculate need is set out in the study.

7.30. Based on that assessment, the study recommended that there was no identified need for convenience goods retail, and a need for 2,700sqm of comparison goods retail by 2034. Due to the uncertainties of long-term forecasting, the study recommended a further study be carried out for the period from 2034 to 2043 nearer to that time.

Key diagram



Tackling the Climate Emergency in Tamworth

- 7.31. A wide variety of factors contribute towards achieving sustainable development, and one of the most important is mitigating and adapting to climate change.
- 7.32. The planet is facing a climate crisis. There is overwhelming scientific consensus that increased greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from human activities are causing global temperatures to rise, with serious knock-on effects for our atmosphere, land and oceans.
- 7.33. Through the Climate Change Act 2008 (as amended) the Government has legislated that the United Kingdom will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 100% by the year 2050. In 2019 Tamworth Borough Council declared a Climate Change Emergency and has prepared an action plan and adaptation plan to become net zero by 2050.
- 7.34. The local plan makes an important contribution towards achieving this target by guiding planning decisions to ensure they embrace and prioritise the principles of greener homes and buildings.
- 7.35. In 2023 the council made a Nature Recovery Declaration acknowledging that nature is in a crisis. The declaration embeds a structured approach to protect and regenerate nature in Tamworth, aligning environmental stewardship with public health, climate resilience, and community well-being benefits.

Tackling climate change is a key objective of this local plan.

- 7.36. As a local authority, the council is well placed to understand community needs and identify opportunities to mitigate the impact of climate change. The council can influence emissions in buildings, transport, and waste, through partnerships with other bodies and community organisations as well as through planning policies.
- 7.37. The National Planning Policy Framework requirement that *“the planning system should support the transition to net zero by 2050 and take full account of all climate impacts including overheating, water scarcity, storm and flood risks and coastal change”*.
- 7.38. Throughout this plan our aim is to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, by making effective use of land; improving biodiversity; using natural resources responsibly; minimising waste and pollution; and mitigating and adapting to climate change, supporting a low carbon, circular economy in Tamworth.

Strategic policy SP2: Climate change

1. Where appropriate, proportionate to the scale, nature and location of the development, proposals will be expected to demonstrate how climate change mitigation has been embedded into the design, construction and lifetime operations of the development. Proposals should also demonstrate how climate change adaptation has been addressed, including minimising risk of overheating, water scarcity and flooding. This can be done through:
 - a) Efficient use of land: development should promote the efficient and effective use of land, prioritising locations well served by local public transport services and infrastructure to minimise the need to travel and reduce emissions associated with car dependency.
 - b) Sustainable design and construction: development should incorporate appropriate sustainable design principles, including layout and orientation to maximise natural daylight, minimise overheating risk and reduce energy demand. Proposals should demonstrate the use of construction materials and methods that minimise embodied carbon where feasible, including the re-use of materials and low-carbon products.
 - c) Green infrastructure, landscaping and nature-based solutions: development should integrate high-quality green infrastructure, including landscaping and tree planting, to

provide shade, reduce temperatures, support biodiversity and contribute to carbon sequestration.

- d) Energy efficiency: development should maximise energy and water efficiency, with particular emphasis on fabric-first approaches that reduce energy demand at source. New development should meet or exceed the energy performance standards set out in Building Regulations Part L which require significant reductions in carbon emissions compared to previous standards.
- e) Water efficiency: proposals should demonstrate water efficiency measures, including low-flow fittings and, where appropriate, rainwater harvesting and greywater reuse, to reduce pressure on water resources.
- f) Renewable and low carbon energy generation: development should support and, where feasible, incorporate opportunities for on-site renewable and low carbon energy generation, such as solar photovoltaics, heat pumps and other appropriate technologies. Proposals that contribute to local energy resilience and reduce reliance on fossil fuels will be supported, provided that environmental, heritage and amenity impacts are appropriately addressed.
- g) Waste management and resource efficiency: all development should minimise waste generation and maximise reuse and recycling. Where appropriate, development proposals must be supported by Site Waste Management Plans and

incorporate suitably located on-site waste and recycling facilities. The Council will work collaboratively with neighbouring authorities across Staffordshire to support the provision, safeguarding and effective operation of waste management, treatment and disposal facilities, in accordance with the Staffordshire County Council Waste Local Plan.

- 7.39. Tamworth's geography and distance from the sea means our area experiences a greater range in annual temperatures compared to other areas of the country. Climate change is expected to increase average temperatures and rainfall which will impact on our communities, infrastructure and the natural environment.
- 7.40. Flooding in Tamworth is expected to become more frequent and more severe due to increased winter rainfall and increased frequency and severity of storms. Extreme heat events are also expected to become more frequent and severe over the coming decades, and this could lead to increased risk of fires and drought as summer rainfall reduces. As well as the increase in extreme heat events, the annual average temperature is expected to increase, leading to overall hotter summers and milder winters.
- 7.41. These long term changes will impact on health, the natural environment, and some sectors of the economy. Mitigating these

risks and adapting to these changes is therefore vital to the long-term future of the town, and so the plan contains a range of policies designed to ensure that developments minimise greenhouse gas emissions and safeguard important habitats to help minimise the risk and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

- 7.42. Our design policies encourage building in energy efficiency, efficient resource use and low carbon infrastructure. Features should provide optimal heating and cooling mechanisms that manage impacts of overheating whilst being sensitive to the local landscape and heritage. Policies on managing flood risk are aimed at minimising the risk of flooding and the associated impacts. Our tree policy encourages the retention of tree and planting the right native species in the right location, which will help reduce the impact of extreme weather.

8. Green Belt

- 8.1. The Green Belt within Tamworth forms part of the wider West Midlands Green Belt, which helps to maintain the separation between Tamworth and the wider West Midlands conurbation, protects the surrounding countryside and the borough's setting. In doing so, it makes an important contribution to the character and identity of the borough and remains a key consideration in planning for future growth.
- 8.2. National policy provides the framework for the protection and management of the Green Belt and requires Green Belt boundaries to endure beyond the plan period unless altered through the plan-making process. Strategic policy SP1 sets out the plan's approach to delivering development in the borough up to 2043. The policy sets out that 41.4Ha has been removed from the Green Belt in order to accommodate additional homes towards the borough's housing target. The remaining Green Belt will be protected in line with national planning policy.
- 8.3. The council's approach has been informed by the Southern Staffordshire Strategic Green Belt Assessment and other supporting evidence prepared alongside neighbouring authorities, reflecting the cross-boundary nature of the West Midlands Green Belt.

Strategic Policy SP3: Protecting and Enhancing the Green Belt

1. Development proposals within the Green Belt will be determined in accordance with national planning policy on Green Belt. Proposals for development will generally not be supported unless they meet the exceptions set out in national policy.
- 8.4. The Green Belt has a long-established role in managing the pattern of growth around Tamworth and forms part of the wider West Midlands Green Belt. The policy seeks to ensure that this role continues throughout the plan period by providing a basis for the assessment of development proposals.
 - 8.5. National planning policy is clear that great importance should be given to the protection of Green Belts, and that changes should not be made other than in exceptional circumstances. Given that national planning policy is comprehensive on the topic of Green Belt, there is little scope for the local plan to say anything beyond what is in national policy. Proposals in the Green Belt will therefore be determined in line with the most up-to-date national policy at the time an application is made.
 - 8.6. For the avoidance of doubt, the exceptions referred to in the policy include references to 'very special circumstances' as included in national planning policy at the time of writing.

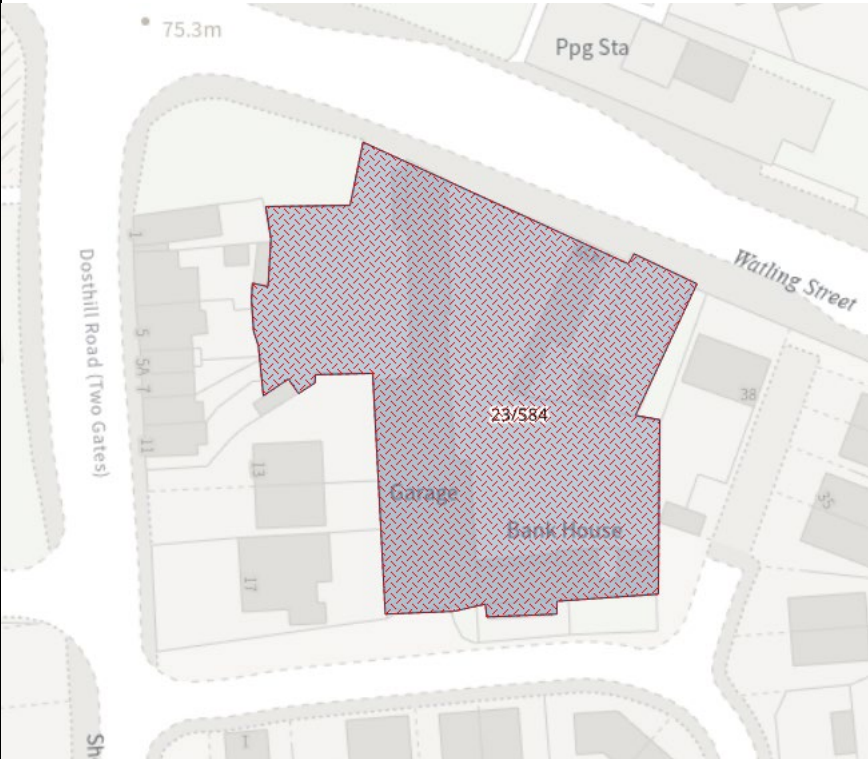
9. Housing

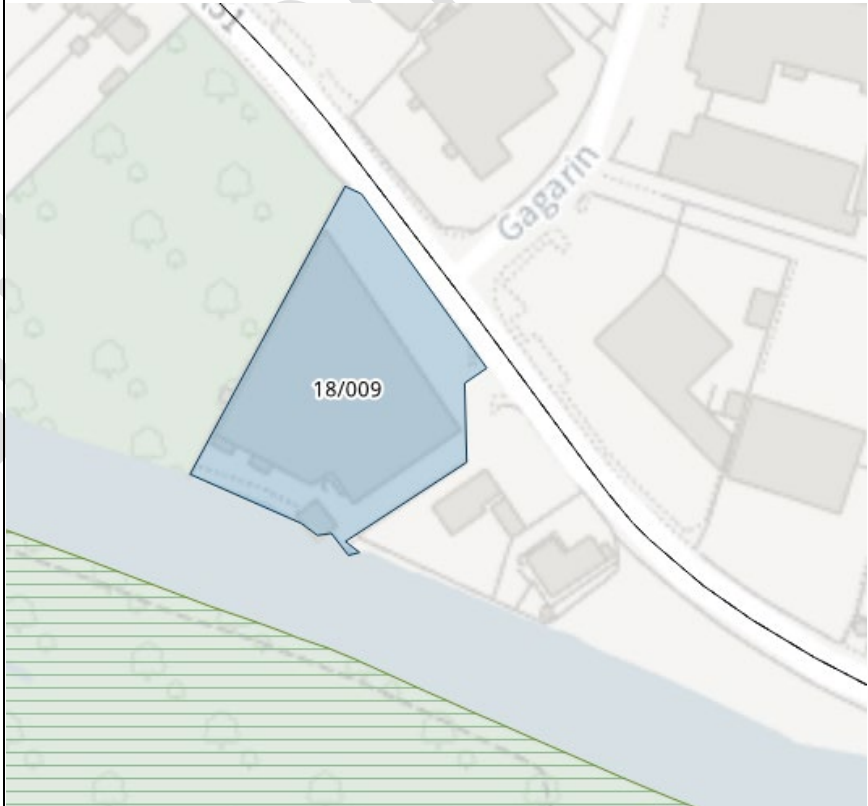
- 9.1. Delivering new homes of the right type, and in the right locations, to meet the needs of Tamworth's residents is a key part of the local plan. The borough's population is growing and generally getting older, whilst house prices continue to rise, causing issues with affordability.
- 9.2. A Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) was undertaken that considered what types of homes are needed in the borough, as well as considering the amount of affordable housing required. The policies in this section also take into account the viability assessment of the plan, and the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment.
- 9.3. The spatial strategy sets out the target for the number of new homes to be delivered in the borough over the plan period, and the number of homes that the plan intends to deliver. The policies in this section address the challenges of delivering housing growth within the context of a small borough with a number of natural and man-made constraints. They also set the level of affordable housing required, and seek to provide appropriate housing to meet the needs of the aging population.
- 9.4. This section contains the following policies:
- Strategic policy SP4: Housing allocations
 - Policy HO1: Housing mix
 - Policy HO2: Housing density

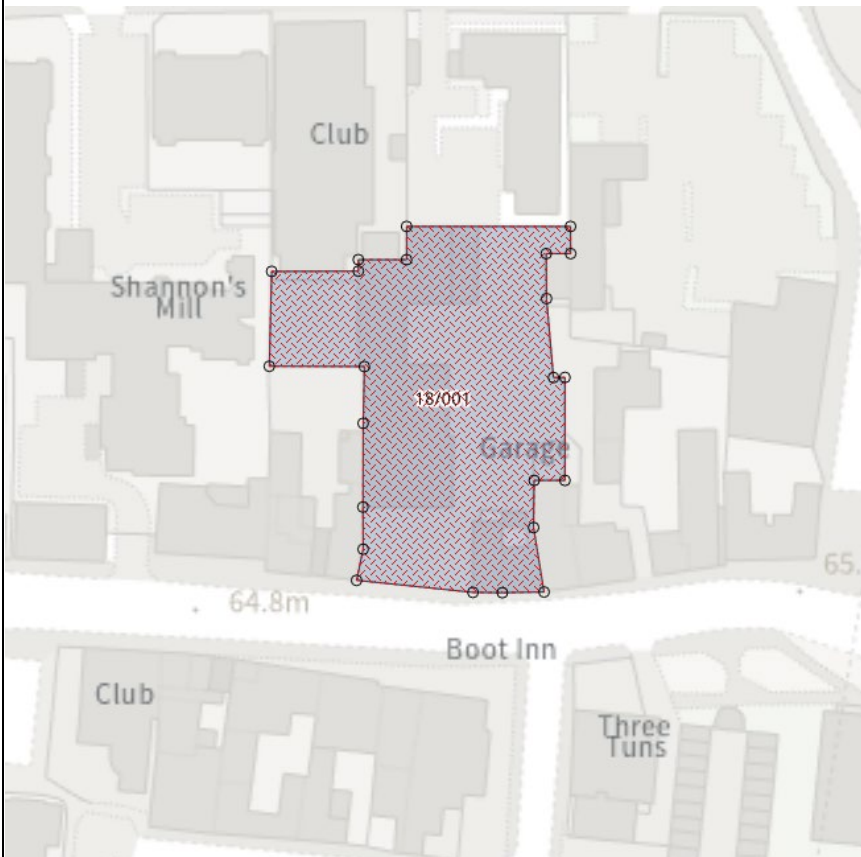
- Policy HO3: Affordable housing
- Policy HO4: Older persons and other specialist forms of accommodation
- HO5 Gypsies and Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople

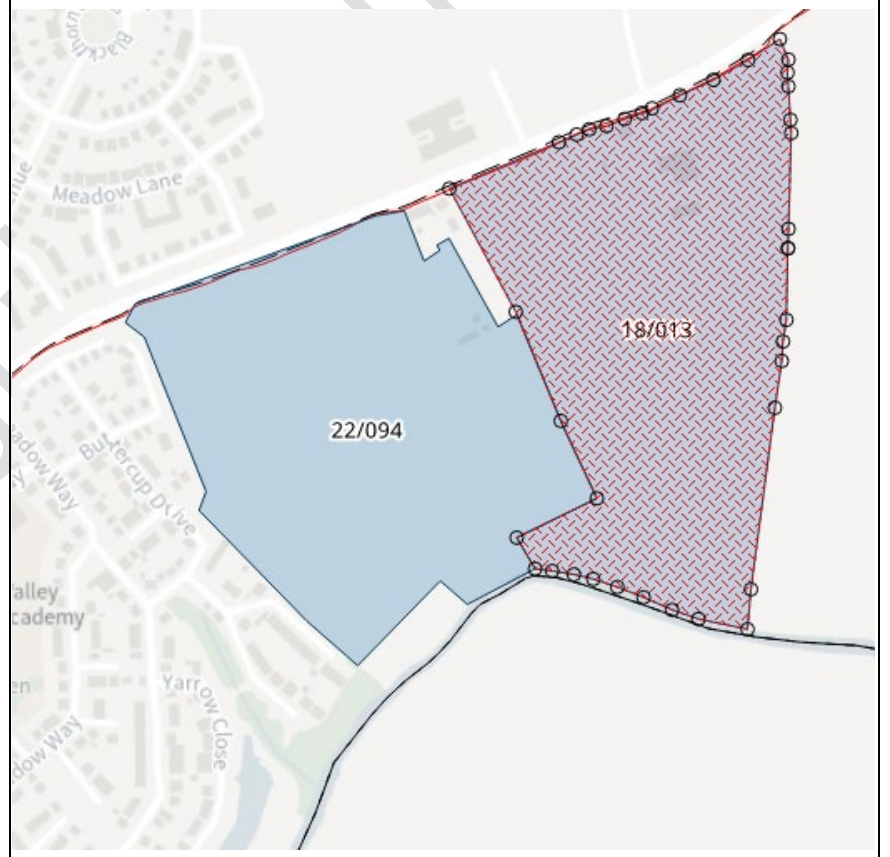
Strategic policy SP4: Housing allocations

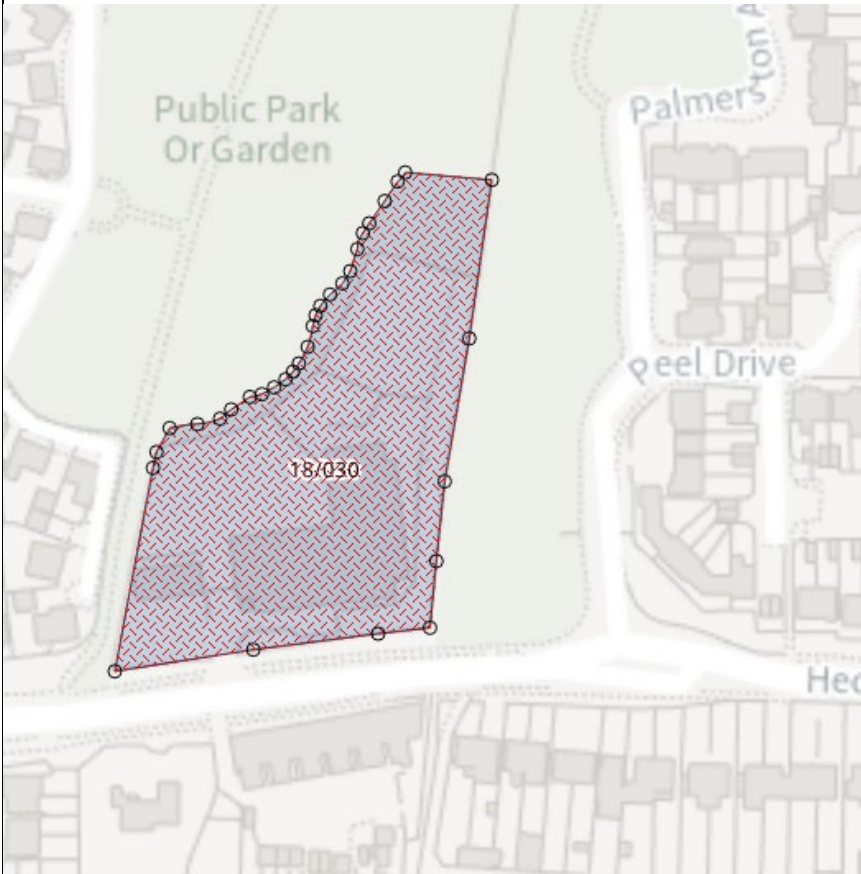
9.5. The following sites, shown on the policies map, are allocated for housing.

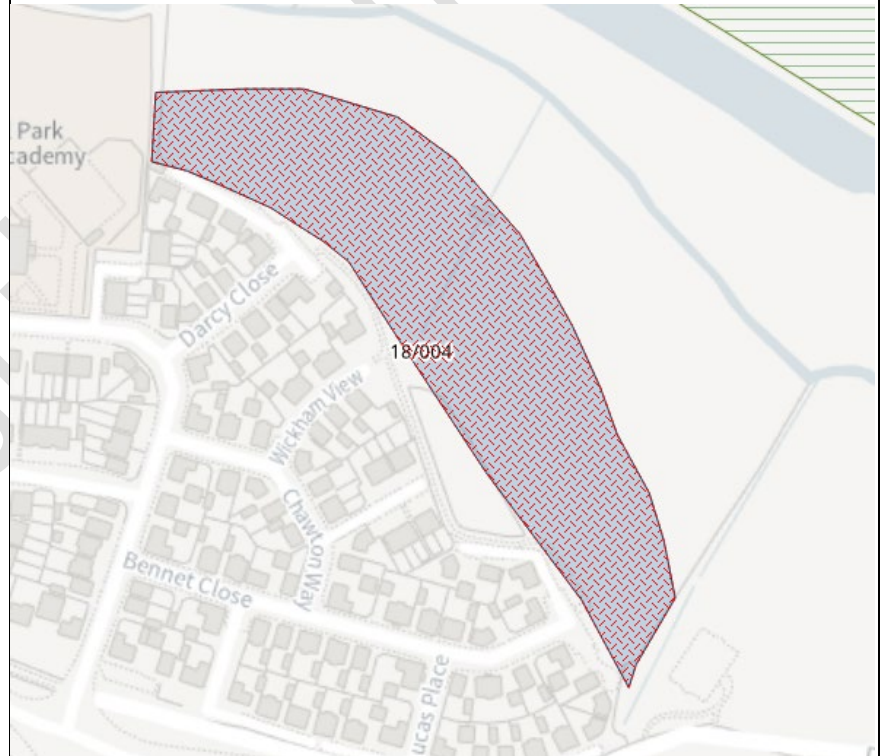
Site ref	Site name and details
23/584	459 Watling Street and adjacent land, Two Gates  Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770 Previously developed land to the south of Watling Street, the site is adjacent to a recent housing development and includes land that was allocated for housing in the previous local plan.

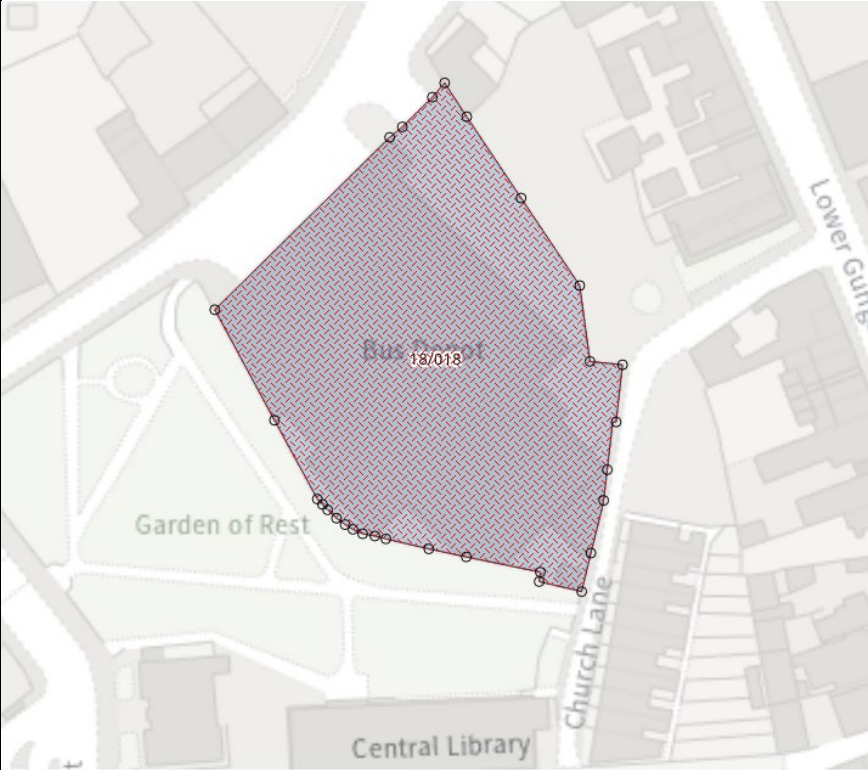
18/009	Millfield House, Lichfield Road  Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770 Previously developed land to the south of Lichfield Road, the site includes an existing building in industrial use adjacent to an area of open space.
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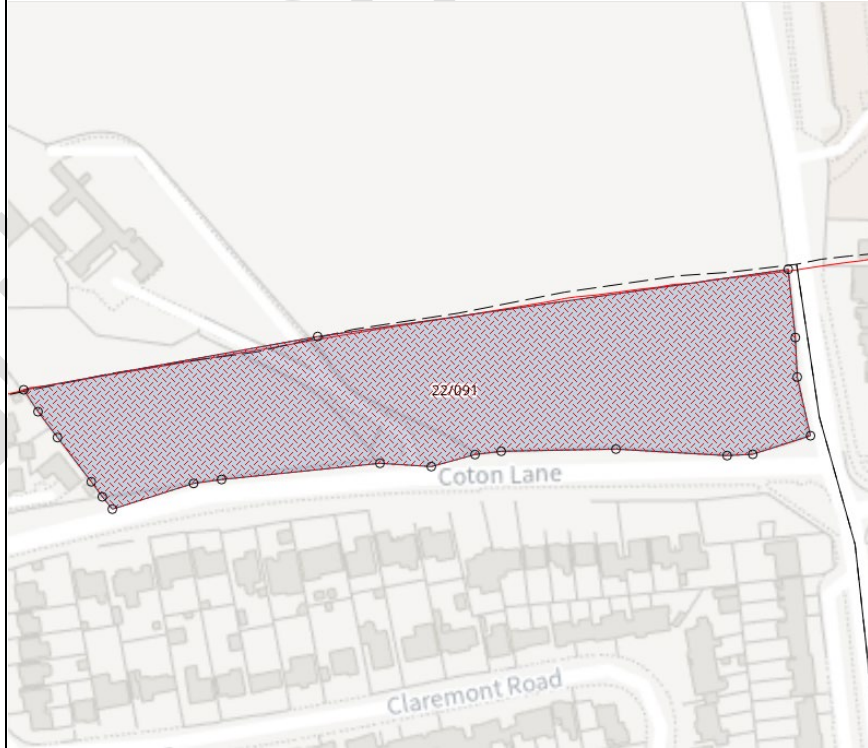
18/001	Norris Bros garage, Lichfield Street
	 A map showing a red-hatched rectangular area labeled '18/001' and 'Garage' on Lichfield Street. The area is situated between 'Shannon's Mill' and 'Club' to the north and 'Boot Inn' and 'Three Tuns' to the south. A dimension line indicates a width of 64.8m. The map is overlaid with a large 'Draft' watermark.
	Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770
	Previously developed land on the northern side of Lichfield Street. The site is close to the town centre and currently contains a car sales and repair garage.

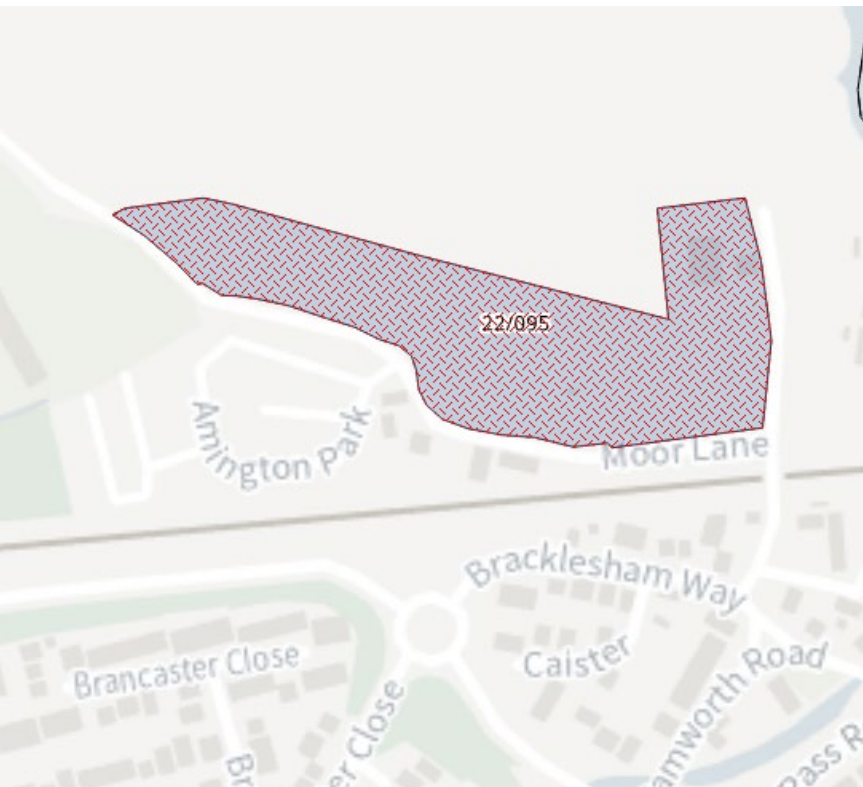
18/013	Ashlands Farm, Ashby Road
	 A map showing a red-hatched area labeled '18/013' and a blue area labeled '22/094' on Ashby Road. The area is situated between 'Meadow Lane' and 'Buttercup Drive' to the north and 'Yarrow Close' to the south. The map is overlaid with a large 'Draft' watermark.
	Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770
	A greenfield site to the south of Ashby Road currently part of a wider agricultural use. The site contains a barn and farmhouse.

18/030	Land north of Hedging Lane (Central Hydraulic Loaders)
	 Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770
	Previously developed land most recently in industrial use. The site is close to established residential development.

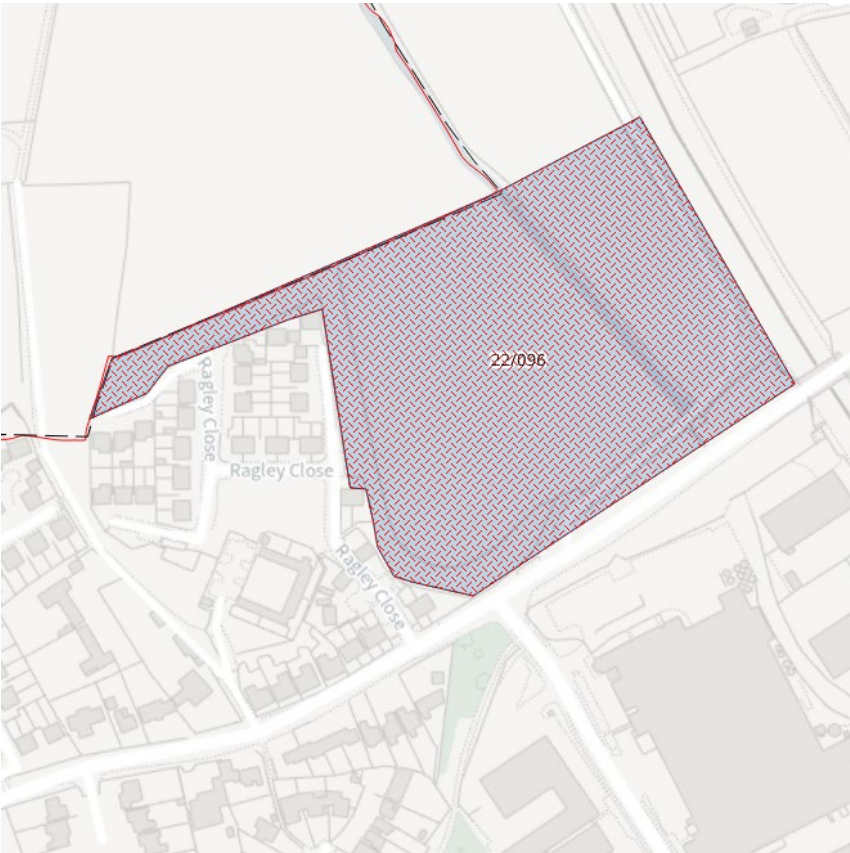
18/004	Land east of Dunstall Park Primary School
	 Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770
	Greenfield land which would form an extension to the recently developed residential area.

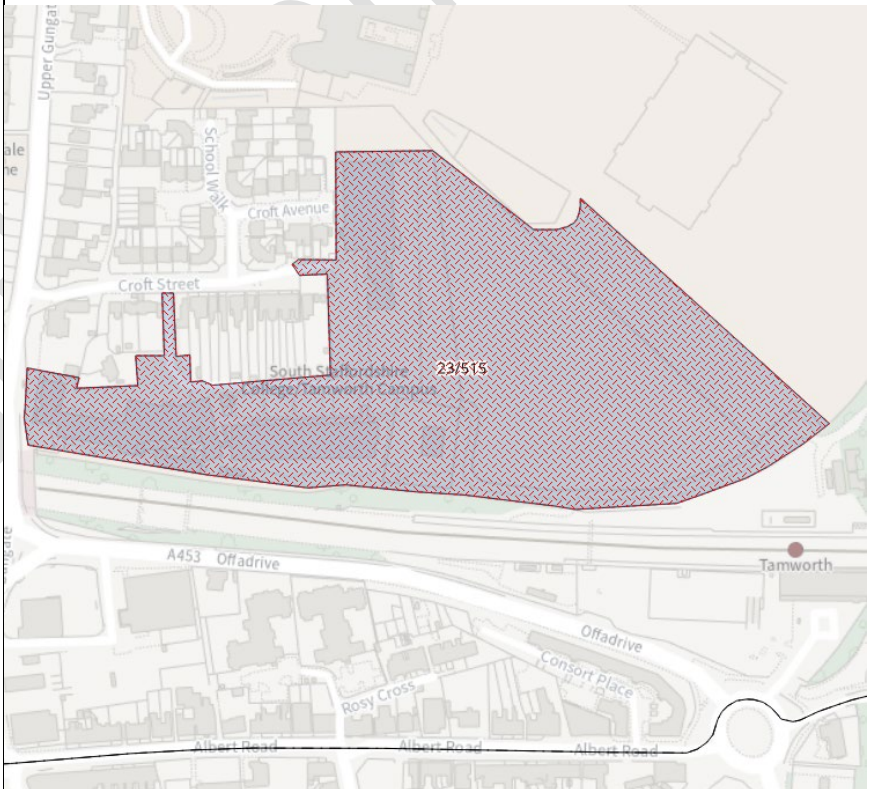
18/018	Arriva Bus Depot, Aldergate
	
Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770	
	Town centre site currently occupied by the Arriva bus depot.

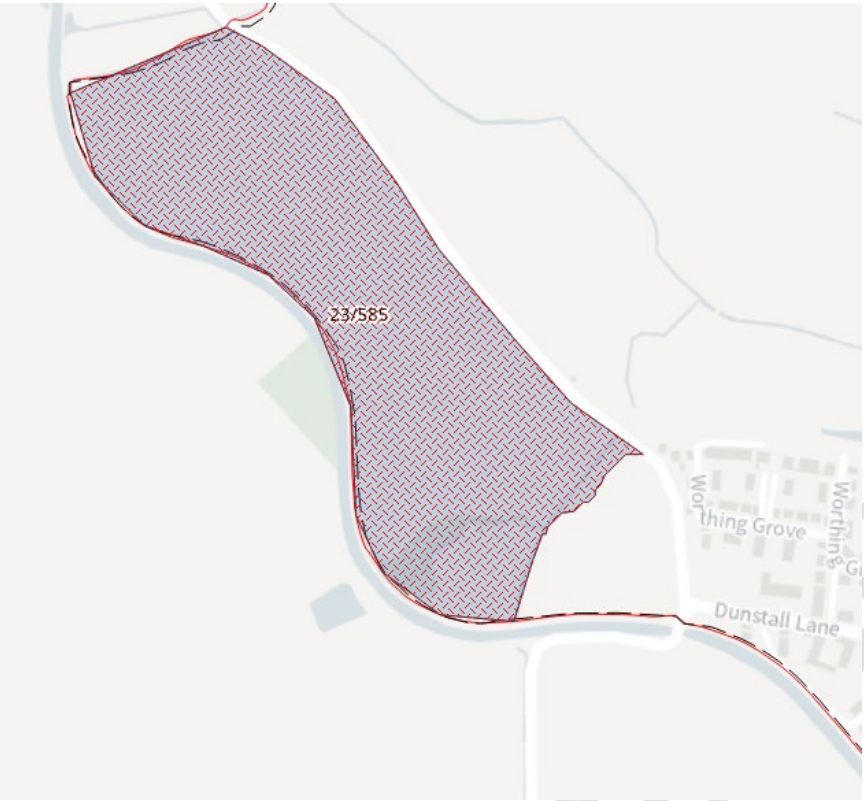
22/091	Land fronting Windmill Farm, Coton Lane
	
Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770	
	Greenfield site at the urban edge of the borough to the north of Coton Lane. The land currently forms part of the wider Windmill Farm.

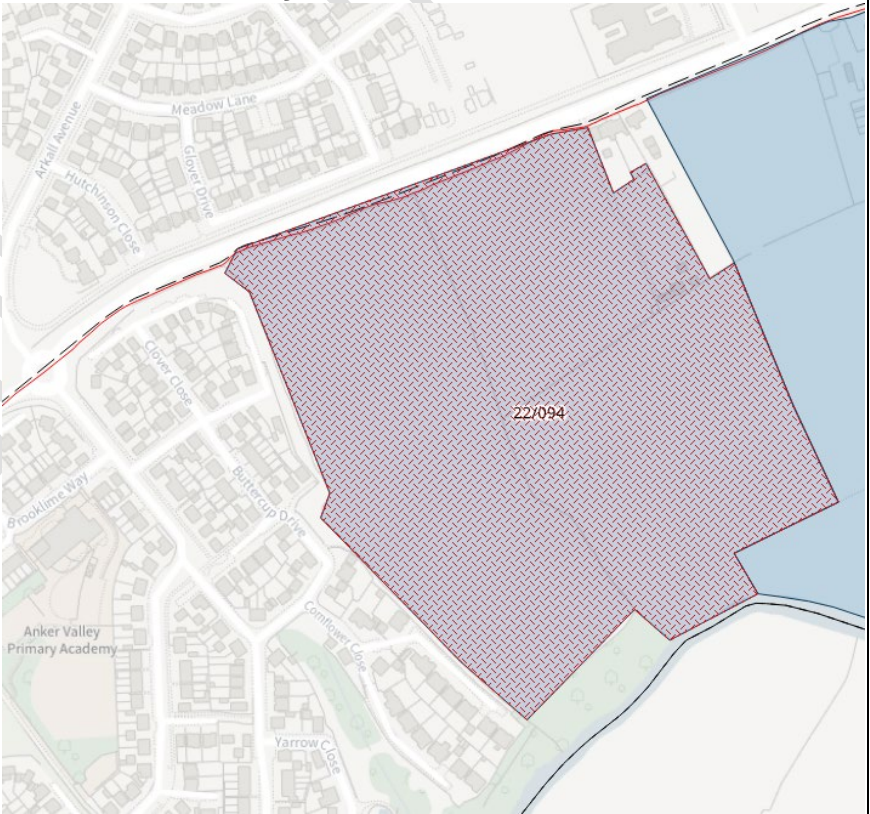
22/095	Land North of Moor Lane
	
	Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770
	Greenfield site to the north of the borough adjacent to existing residential development and playing fields.

23/573	Marmion House, Lichfield Street
	
	Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770
	Town centre site on the north side of Lichfield Street currently occupied by an eight-storey office block in use as the Tamworth Borough Council headquarters.

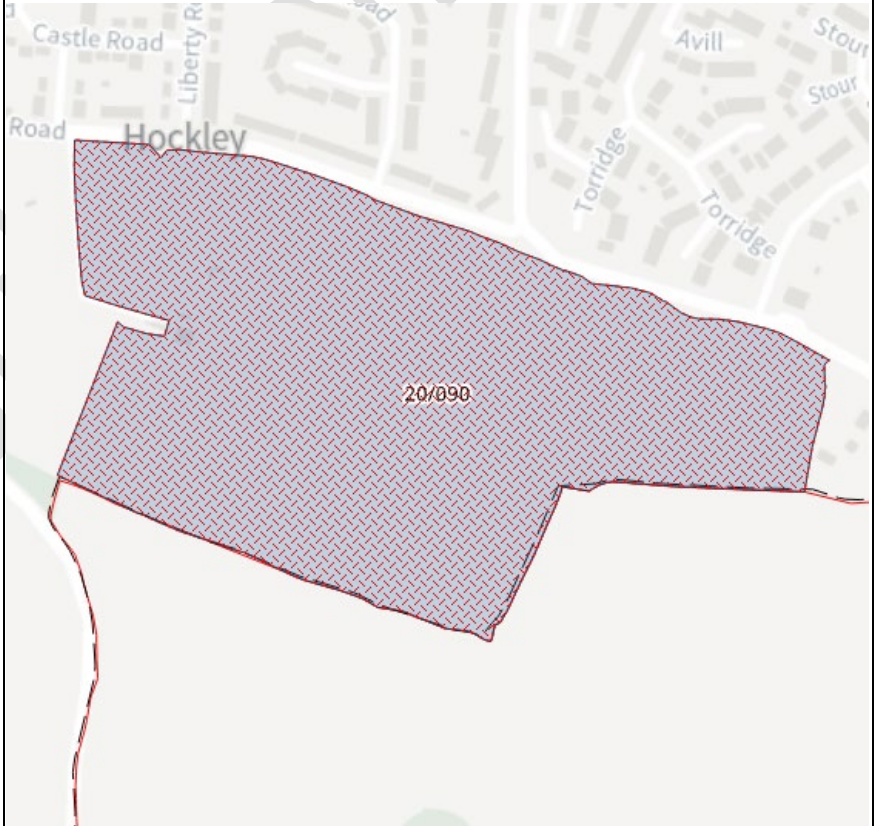
22/096	Land opposite Mariner, Coton Lane  Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770 Semi-natural greenfield site adjacent to the railway and on the edge of the built up area to the north of Coton Lane.
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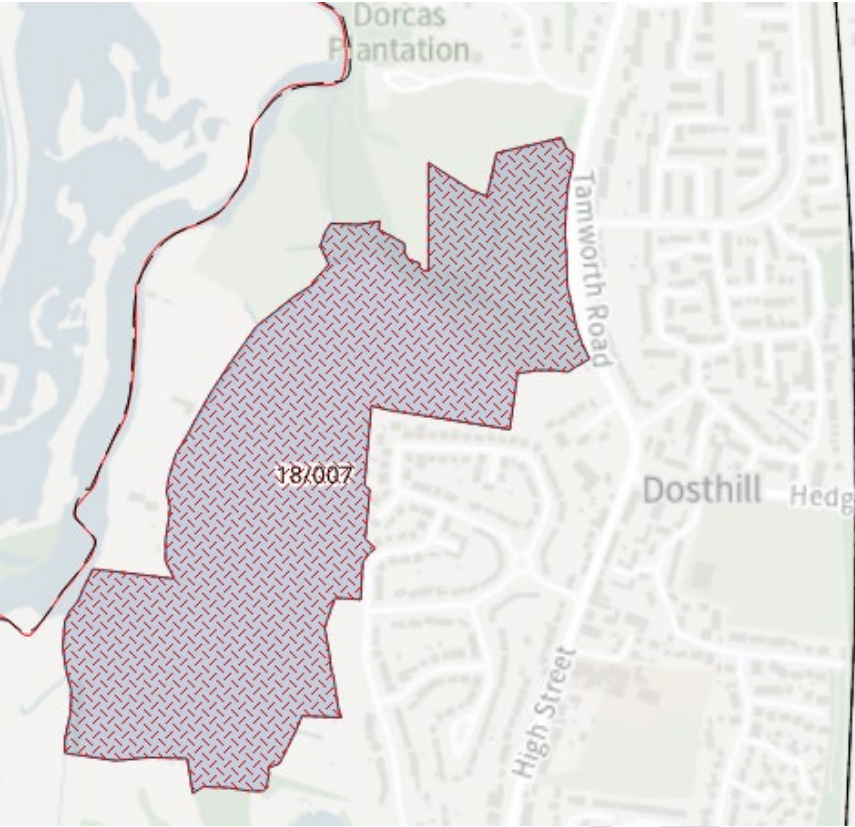
23/515	Former Tamworth College Site, Croft Street  Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770 Previously developed land previously in use as part of South Staffordshire College. The site has been vacant since the relocation of the college campus to the town centre.
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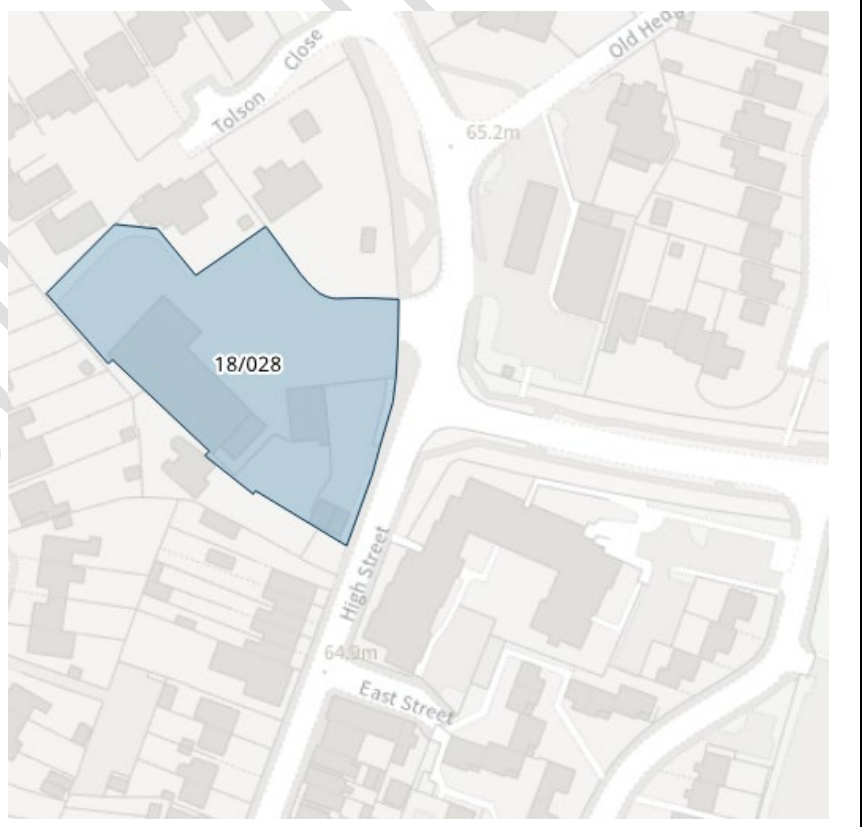
23/585	Land between Dunstall Lane and Coventry Canal  A map showing a greenfield site (23/585) outlined in red with a cross-hatch pattern. The site is located between Dunstall Lane to the south and the Coventry Canal to the west. To the east of the site is a residential area with streets including Worthing Grove and Dunstall Lane.
Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770	
Greenfield site adjacent to the borough boundary and the recent residential development	

22/094	Land South of Ashby Road  A map showing a large greenfield site (22/094) outlined in red with a cross-hatch pattern. The site is located south of Ashby Road. To the north and west of the site is a residential area with streets including Arkell Avenue, Meadow Lane, Hutchinson Close, Clover Drive, Brookline Way, Buttercup Drive, and Yarrow Close. Anker Valley Primary Academy is also visible to the west.
Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770	
Greenfield site to the south of Ashby Road adjacent to recent residential development.	

18/033	Former Co-op filling station, Bonehill Road  Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770 Former filling station, adjacent to recent residential development. Previously granted planning permission for residential development.
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20/090	Land at Gorsy Bank Road  Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770 Greenfield site adjacent to the borough boundary and in the Green Belt. Currently in multiple ownership.
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18/007	Land off Wigford Road  Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770
	Greenfield site in the Green belt.

18/028	Treetops Garage Dosthill  Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770
	Brownfield site currently in industrial use and adjacent to existing residential area.

9.6. The sites listed above have been allocated for housing to help deliver the housing target set out in the spatial strategy (Strategic Policy SP1). The basic information provided for each site is

intended to provide some context to help identify the site and any requirements listed are for information only. Any housing proposals brought forward on these sites will still be required to comply with the wider policies of the plan, and national planning policy where appropriate.

Draft for consultation

Housing mix

Policy HO1: Housing mix

1. All residential development of 10 or more new dwellings (gross) will be required to provide a mix of different sized homes to meet local need. The mix should be informed by the latest Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment or other more up to date information where available.
2. Developments of 3 to 9 dwellings should provide a mix of sizes where possible. Where it would not be appropriate to provide a mix of sizes, the focus should be on 2 or 3-bed homes to meet need, unless an alternative mix can be justified with reference to appropriate evidence.
3. Where a mix of sizes would not be possible or appropriate, such as where housing is provided through a conversion or change of use of an existing building, proposals will be supported where the mix is appropriately justified with reference to the specific circumstances and market conditions.

- 9.7. The Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment 2025 (HEDNA) considered the need for different sizes of homes across the borough. It looked at a range of statistics in relation to families (usually households with dependent children) before moving on to look at how the number of households in different age groups is expected to change over the plan period. More

information on the methodology used to establish an appropriate housing mix can be found in the HEDNA report.

- 9.8. The policy does not contain a strict housing mix requirement because, due to the size of housing developments that often come forward within the borough, an overly specific mix would likely be difficult to achieve on most development. The policy instead sets a broader requirement to provide a mix of sizes to meet local need, based on the most up to date evidence.
- 9.9. At the time of publication of the plan, the 2025 HEDNA is the most up-to-date assessment of housing need available, and the policy refers to that document on this basis. It is however acknowledged that the specific needs of the borough will likely change over time and therefore, if more up-to-date evidence becomes available, this will be considered when assessing applications against this policy.
- 9.10. In some instances, where housing is proposed through a conversion or change of use of an existing building, the specific circumstances might mean that a mix of sizes is not possible or appropriate. In these circumstances applicants will need to demonstrate that the proposed mix is appropriate for the specific site in the circumstances, or that it is meeting a need for a particular type of housing.

Housing density

Policy HO2: Housing density

1. Residential developments should look to optimise the density of sites through a design-led approach, taking account of the context and sustainability of a site.
2. Generally, where viable and appropriate to the local context and character:
 - a) Development within the town centre boundary should achieve a density of at least 40 dwellings per hectare
 - b) Development outside the town centre boundary should achieve a density of at least 30 dwellings per hectare
3. Development not achieving these densities will need to be justified with reference to appropriate evidence and/or the specific local character and context of the site.
4. Mixed use developments incorporating a residential element will be expected to optimise the density of the housing element recognising that the density requirement wouldn't always apply to the whole of the development site.

- 9.12. In line with the NPPF, this policy seeks to ensure that development makes efficient use of the borough's limited land whilst still respecting the character of the town. With the exception of some smaller pockets of development, such as the

tower blocks on the edge of the town centre, the majority of existing housing development within the borough is relatively low density.

- 9.13. The policy sets a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare for most areas of the borough, which acknowledges the existing density whilst attempting to ensure that the remaining available land is used effectively. A minimum density of 40 dwellings per hectare is required in the town centre due to the proximity to existing services and sustainable transport options, meaning that a higher density would be more appropriate than in the rest of the borough.
- 9.14. A lot of the housing development that takes place in the borough happens on small sites that are often on land around existing buildings. This means that these sites can sometimes be awkward shapes, or have other constraints that mean not all of the site can be used effectively. The policy acknowledges that in these circumstances the density of the overall development can be affected and contains a provision for allowing this as long as it can be demonstrated that the achievable density is the most appropriate for the site.
- 9.15. Similarly, with mixed use developments, a pragmatic approach will be taken to assessing housing density when the overall development site also contains other uses that could affect the density of the site.

Policy links

Policy DE1: Delivering high quality design and local distinctiveness

Draft for consultation

Affordable housing

Policy HO3: Affordable housing

1. Unless demonstrated to be unviable through an independent assessment by a suitably qualified person, residential development of 10 or more new dwellings (gross) will be required to provide a minimum percentage of the dwelling as affordable homes as follows:
 - a) All brownfield sites – Nil
 - b) Greenfield sites in the Lower Value Zone – Nil
 - c) Greenfield sites in the Medium Value Zone – 10%
 - d) Greenfield sites in the High Value Zone – 25%
2. Developments of 10 or more new dwellings (gross) within the Green Belt or allocated sites 18/007 and 20/090 will be required to deliver a minimum of 25% of the dwellings as affordable housing.
3. Developments will be required to provide a mix of affordable housing tenures where possible, including a minimum of 75% as homes for affordable rent.
4. The affordable homes will be expected to be delivered on-site. Off-site delivery or a financial contribution in lieu of actual provision will only be considered in exceptional circumstances where it can be robustly demonstrated that on-site provision would not be feasible or appropriate.

5. Affordable housing is to be fully integrated in the development and to be designed and built to the same standard as market housing.
6. Developments that are 100% affordable housing will be supported where they comply with the wider policies of the plan and would not result in an unacceptable impact on other infrastructure that can't be appropriately mitigated.

9.16. The 2025 HEDNA indicates that there is a notable need for affordable housing in the borough, suggesting that affordable housing should be maximised as far as possible. However the total amount of affordable housing that can be delivered is limited to what can viably be provided whilst still delivering other requirements that make a development sustainable. The minimum percentage of affordable housing has therefore been set based on an assessment of the overall viability impacts of the policies in the plan carried out in the Whole Plan Viability Assessment. Developments will be encouraged to provide a rate of affordable housing above the minimum required where it is viable and appropriate to do so.

9.17. The Lower, Mid, and Higher Value Zones are defined as follows, and are shown on the Affordable Housing Value Zones Map:

- Lower Value Zone: Glascote, Belgrave, and Bolehall wards

- Medium Value Zone: Mercian, Castle, Trinity, Wilnecote, and Stonydelph wards
- High Value Zone: Amington and Spital wards

9.18. The majority of affordable housing need is from households who are unable to buy or rent in the housing market and therefore points towards a particular need for rented affordable housing rather than affordable home ownership. On this basis, the policy requires at least 75% of new affordable homes to be for affordable rent.

9.19. The NPPF sets out that sites released from the Green Belt to deliver new homes are required to provide a higher proportion of affordable housing than non Green Belt sites, requiring a rate that is 15% higher than would otherwise be expected if the site were not previously within the Green Belt. Both sites released from the Green Belt are within the Medium Value Zone and so would otherwise be subject to a minimum 10% affordable housing. The same rule also applies to any housing development that takes place on land that is still within the Green Belt. For the avoidance of doubt, this also includes land that could be considered grey belt.

Older persons and specialist forms of accommodation

Policy HO4: Older persons and other specialist forms of accommodation

1. Proposals for new or expanded specialist care and supported living accommodation will be supported where it meets an identified need.
2. Where appropriate to the type of accommodation, proposals will be required to:
 - a) be located with good access to local facilities and services including public transport, shops, and healthcare facilities;
 - b) be located so that it will contribute positively to the creation and/or maintenance of mixed and balanced communities;
 - c) be appropriate for the location in terms of form, scale and design;
 - d) be designed, including the design of any individual units of accommodation, to be capable of meeting the specialist accommodation support and care needs of the occupier;
 - e) Include the provision of suitable open space/grounds that can be used by residents;
 - f) include pick-up and drop off facilities close to the principal entrance, that are able to accommodate specialist transport vehicles, including emergency vehicles; and

- g) provide space for the storage of mobility scooters to aid mobility.

3. Proposals that would result in the loss of existing residential accommodation that provides specialist care and supported living will be resisted unless:
 - a) It can be demonstrated that there is no longer an identified need for the facility;
 - b) The needs will be met elsewhere in the borough, close to the existing building or in a more suitable location for the type of accommodation; or
 - c) The proposal would result in replacement provision of equal or better quantity or quality.

9.20. The borough has an ageing population and so it is important to make sure that appropriate housing is provided to meet the needs of the population into the future. Policy DE3 (Design standards for new housing) includes provisions for ensuring that new homes are adaptable for future needs. This policy looks more specifically at specialist forms of accommodation to meet the needs of an ageing population and people with additional needs.

9.21. Specialist care and supported living accommodation includes the following forms of housing:

- 9.22. *Age-restricted general market housing*: This type of housing is generally for people aged 55 and over and the active elderly. It may include some shared amenities such as communal gardens, but does not include support or care services.
- 9.23. *Retirement living or sheltered housing*: This usually consists of purpose-built flats or bungalows with limited communal facilities such as a lounge, laundry room and guest room. It does not generally provide care services, but provides some support to enable residents to live independently. This can include 24 hour on site assistance (alarm) and a warden or house manager.
- 9.24. *Extra care housing or housing-with-care*: This usually consists of purpose-built or adapted flats or bungalows with a medium to high level of care available if required, through an onsite care agency registered through the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Residents are able to live independently with 24 hour access to support services and staff, and meals are also available. There are often extensive communal areas, such as space to socialise or a wellbeing centre. In some cases, these developments are known as retirement communities or villages – the intention is for residents to benefit from varying levels of care as time progresses.
- 9.25. *Residential care homes and nursing homes*: These have individual rooms within a residential building and provide a high level of care meeting all activities of daily living. They do not

usually include support services for independent living. This type of housing can also include dementia care homes.

Gypsies and Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople

Policy HO5: Gypsies and Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople

1. Proposals for development to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople will be permitted where they comply with up-to-date national policy and guidance (including the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites), and where:
 - a) The intended occupants of the site comply with the definition of Gypsies and Travellers or Travelling Showpeople;
 - b) The site would have a safe and suitable access to the public highway, and provide adequate space for parking and for turning of vehicles within the site;
 - c) The development of the site minimises the potential impact on the surrounding land uses, landscape, environment, heritage assets and biodiversity;
 - d) The site is well designed and provides suitable landscaping, boundary treatments and amenity space;
 - e) Measures for the adequate storage and disposal of waste and foul effluent would be provided on site.

9.26. For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply, unless superseded by updated national policy and guidance.

9.27. “*Gypsies and Travellers*” means persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a caravan, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.

9.28. “*Travelling Showpeople*” means members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family’s or dependants’ more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above.

9.29. The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) that forms part of the evidence base to support the plan considered the need for accommodation within the borough over the plan period for Gypsies and Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople. The assessment concluded that there was no identified need for permanent pitches for those groups over the timeframe of the plan, and so no sites have been allocated. Permanent pitches are those that provide a long-term residential base where households usually live whilst not travelling. These are different to transit sites, which provide temporary accommodation of usually not more than three months.

9.30. Whilst no sites have been allocated for permanent pitches at this time, that doesn't mean that a need won't arise over the plan period, or that a proposal for a transit site may come forward. It is therefore important to have a framework in place to assess any applications that come in. This policy aims to address the key issues that will need to be considered when assessing a proposal for either a permanent or transit site.

Draft for consultation

10. Economy and Employment

10.1. According to the 2025 Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) for the area, in 2023 there were approximately 30,000 jobs in Tamworth, down around 1,000 (-3.2%) since 2015. The key employment sector in the borough is wholesale and retail, which made up around 26.5% of all jobs in 2023. Other key sectors include manufacturing (13.3%) and admin and support (9.9%). These are all higher than the average for the West Midlands.

10.2. The majority of businesses (86.5%) within the borough fall into the micro business category of less than nine employees. Large business (over 250 employees) make up only 0.5% of businesses in Tamworth, although this is in line with the West Midlands average.

10.3. Valuation Office Agency data suggests that Tamworth has approximately 688,000 sqm of existing industrial floorspace, and this has grown a modest amount (2%) since 2019. Vacancy rates are very low at around 1.1%, however this is not reflective of a healthy market, and indicates that it is potentially constrained. A vacancy rate of around 4% is required to allow scope for businesses to upsize or downsize or for new businesses to enter the market.

10.4. There is an existing network of employment sites across the town as follows:

- E1 Lichfield Road Employment
- E2 Tame Valley Employment Area (Hedging Lane, Two Gates, Tame Valley Industrial Estate)
- E3 Amington Employment Area
- E4 Centurion Park Employment Area
- E5 Relay Park Employment Area
- E6 Bitterscote (Bonehill Road, Cardinal Point, Bitterscote South)

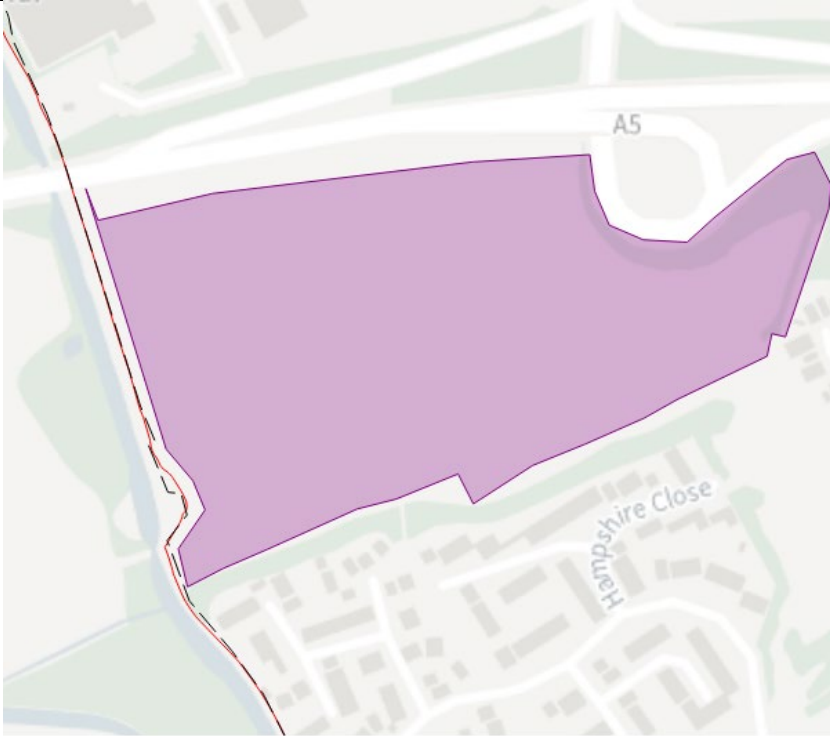
10.5. These sites are identified on the policies map.

10.6. This section contains the following policies:

- Strategic policy SP5: Employment allocations
- Policy EM1: Existing employment areas
- Policy EM2: Employment uses outside of existing employment areas
- Policy EM3: Non-employment uses in employment areas
- Policy EM4 Strengthening the visitor economy

Policy SP5: Employment allocation

10.7. The following site, shown on the policies map, is allocated for employment development.

Site ref	Site name and details
	Land south of the A5
	 Map data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS AC0000810770
	Greenfield land adjacent to the A5 junction at Ventura Retail Park

Existing employment areas

Policy EM1: Existing employment areas

1. The existing network of employment areas, as outlined on the policies map, will be the preferred location for employment development and will be protected for that purpose.
2. Proposals for employment development within the existing employment areas will be supported where they contribute to the identified need for employment floorspace. Opportunities for existing businesses to expand and grow will be supported where they are appropriate and in accordance with the wider policies of the plan.
3. Proposals that would result in a net loss of employment floorspace will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that it would not undermine the importance and vitality of the employment area, or it can be demonstrated that the alternative use would benefit the economy of the town or other strategic objectives of the plan.
4. Opportunities to improve the employment offer within the borough through regeneration/renewal of existing employment areas will be supported where they would provide an equal or increased employment floorspace, or would provide for an employment need that is not currently provided for within the borough.

- 10.8. The existing employment areas play an important role in the local economy by providing dedicated space for local businesses to operate away from conflict with other uses. Given the general lack of available land within the borough, there is limited scope for sites for new employment development and so protecting the existing sites for the future is vital.
- 10.9. For the purposes of this policy, employment development means any of the following use classes as set out in the Use Classes Order:
 - E(g)(ii) Research and development
 - E(g)(iii) Industrial processes
 - B2 General industrial
 - B8 Storage or distribution
- 10.10. Where any subsequent changes are made to the classifications in the Use Classes Order, employment development will be taken to mean the corresponding new class for the uses listed above.
- 10.11. Office development will be expected to be delivered in the town centre in line with policy TC1 (Hierarchy of centres) unless a sequential test demonstrates that a suitable town centre site is not available, or policy EM3 (Non-employment uses in employment areas) applies.

Employment uses outside of existing employment areas

Policy EM2: Employment uses outside of existing employment areas

1. Proposals for new employment development outside of allocated employment sites or existing employment areas will be supported where the proposal demonstrates it would be:
 - a) Accessible to public transport;
 - b) Compatible with surrounding uses;
 - c) Unlikely to have an adverse impact on amenity and character of surrounding area;
 - d) Supported by necessary infrastructure; and
 - e) Able to meet the requirements of all other policies where applicable.

10.14. This means making sure that they are accessible by a choice of different modes of transport wherever possible, and that they aren't located in places that would have a negative impact on the amenity of existing uses, especially where the existing use is residential.

10.12. Whilst the existing employment areas and allocated employment site (as shown on the Policies Map) are considered to be the most appropriate location for most employment development, it is acknowledged that these are not the only areas where this type of development will take place.

10.13. These other employment developments are important to the overall economy of the town, but it is vital that they are able to be accommodated in the most sustainable way possible.

Non-employment uses in employment areas

Policy EM3: Non-employment uses in employment areas

1. Proposals for a non-employment use within an existing employment area will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and will only be supported where:
 - a) They support the wider use of the employment area for that purpose, such as a café that serves people working in the area;
 - b) They are ancillary to an existing appropriate use, such as office space or trade counters where they remain ancillary to a storage use; or
 - c) They are an alternative use (for example a gym) where it can be justified that there is no suitable alternative location within the borough, that it would not undermine the employment area, and the safety of users would be maintained.

businesses to be able to diversify and grow without needing to move out of the area. It also recognises that there may be times when other uses may support the long-term prosperity of the employment areas, or where an employment area may be the most suitable location for another type of use. Applications for these types of uses will be judged on their individual merits and will need to demonstrate that they fit into one or more of the categories set out in the policy.

10.15. The employment areas' primary function should be to encourage sustainable economic growth, and so activity on those sites is generally expected to be related to the types of employment uses as set out in policy EM1 (Existing employment areas).

10.16. However, this policy is intended to provide a level of flexibility to the use of employment areas that recognises the need for

Strengthening the visitor economy

Policy EM4: Strengthening the visitor economy

1. The town centre will be the primary focus for new cultural, leisure and visitor-related development. Proposals that strengthen the role of the town centre as a vibrant, mixed-use destination will be supported including:
 - a) the reuse of vacant and underutilised buildings for cultural, creative or experiential uses;
 - b) development that strengthens the evening and family-friendly economy, increases visitor dwell time, local expenditure or year-round activity;
 - c) improvements to the public realm, wayfinding and accessibility between key destinations, including the Castle, Assembly Rooms, Castle Grounds, St Editha's Church and Ventura; and
 - d) high-quality food, drink and leisure uses where they make a positive contribution to vitality and viability.
2. Proposals for new or enhanced visitor attractions, cultural venues and leisure facilities will be supported where they:
 - a) demonstrate a clearly identified need or market opportunity;
 - b) provide high-quality design and inclusive access; and

- c) do not give rise to unacceptable impacts on residential amenity or town centre vitality and viability.

Heritage-led Tourism and Place-making

3. Development affecting heritage assets must conserve and, where appropriate, enhance their significance, while supporting their contribution to the visitor economy. The council will support:
 - a) heritage-based tourism initiatives, including trails, interpretation and digital engagement;
 - b) sensitive development that enhances the setting of Tamworth Castle, the historic town centre and conservation areas; and
 - c) proposals that secure the viable long-term use of heritage assets.
4. Development that would harm the significance of heritage assets or undermine their role in the visitor economy will not be supported.

Waterside and Nature-based Tourism

5. Proposals for recreation and tourism associated with water environments, including Tamworth's rivers and canals, or with nature-based tourism, will be supported where:
 - a) they do not give rise to unacceptable impacts on water quality, the carrying capacity of the watercourse, amenity,

landscape character, navigation, biodiversity value or the surrounding environment; and

- b) they are integrated with the existing footpath, cycleway and public transport network, and any highway access or parking issues are satisfactorily addressed.

10.17. The visitor economy encompasses the businesses, services and experiences that support people travelling to a place, from attractions and hospitality, to transport, retail and cultural venues.

10.18. In Staffordshire, the visitor economy in 2024 was valued at £2.7billion and supported 26,000 jobs across the county. At the local level Tamworth contributes an estimated 6-7% of Staffordshire's total visitor economy. This equates to £162-£189 million and an estimated 1,660 jobs in direct roles in hospitality, attractions, retail and events, and a further 1,150 indirect roles linked to supply chains, transport and local services.

10.19. Tamworth's visitor economy is primarily driven by day trips rather than overnight stays. Key contributors include Drayton Manor, a major seasonal employer located just outside the borough, the Snow Dome which offers year-round indoor leisure, Tamworth Castle and Castle Grounds (reflecting Tamworth heritage and events programme), and the retail offer at Ventura Park and the town centre.

10.20. With the ongoing regeneration of the town centre (including a broader mix of uses, improved public realm and a refreshed market), the visitor economy is forecast to grow to around £210m by 2030, highlighting the scale of opportunity for Tamworth.

10.21. Tamworth's visitor economy is a significant driver of local prosperity, supporting employment, investment and the vitality of the town centre. This policy aims to ensure that new development enhances the visitor offer while protecting local character and community wellbeing.

11. Town Centre and Retail

- 11.1. Town centres and neighbourhood centres play an important role in supporting sustainable communities, economic activity and access to services across Tamworth. They provide places for shopping, leisure, culture, community activity and everyday services, and contribute to the identity and function of neighbourhoods.
- 11.2. Tamworth town centre is the borough's principal centre and the primary focus for retail, leisure, cultural and civic activity. It is supported by a network of neighbourhood centres which provide accessible day-to-day services for surrounding communities. Together, these centres promote sustainable patterns of movement and reduce the need to travel for everyday needs.
- 11.3. National policy requires planning positively for the long-term vitality and viability of centres, promoting a diverse mix of uses and directing main town centre uses to the most accessible and sustainable locations. This is particularly important in Tamworth given the Borough's compact urban form and the important role centres play in meeting local needs.
- 11.4. The council's approach is informed by the Tamworth Town Centre and Retail Study (2024), which assesses retail performance, shopping patterns and future needs across the borough. The study identifies significant changes within the retail sector, including the continued growth of online shopping, changing consumer behaviour and reduced demand for traditional retail floorspace.
- 11.5. Like many centres nationally, Tamworth town centre has experienced declining footfall, increased vacancy rates and strong competition from out-of-centre retail provision, particularly Ventura Retail Park and surrounding retail warehousing. The Retail Study identifies limited need for additional retail floorspace over the plan period, but highlights opportunities to improve the quality and diversity of the town centre offer, including additional convenience provision to encourage linked trips and footfall.
- 11.6. In addition to national trends Covid 19 accelerated existing problems due to the growth of online shopping, which reduced reliance on physical stores. These changing consumer habits in addition to more people working from home has had a negative impact on the town centre but a positive impact on the increased demand for local services as people are at home more often.
- 11.7. Covid has acted as a positive catalyst for change. The council successfully bid for and were awarded £21.65m Future High Streets Funding in 2020. This fund enabled the council to take action to address issues around vacancy rates and the lack of diversity of uses in the town centre.
- 11.8. A programme of works supported the delivery of a college, an enterprise centre, entrepreneurial retail space, public realm

works that linked key heritage sites together, and refurbishment of the towns heritage buildings that have created a pride in the town once again.

11.9. Building on this success the council prepared a Town Centre Retail study in 2024 and a Regeneration Masterplan in 2025. The purpose of which is to inform policy and to recognise that the town centre needs to diversify and encourage nonretail uses as well as improve its public realm, to re-engage users for its future. Co-ordinating other town centre opportunities is a key priority for the council to keep the town moving forwards and to put the beating heart back into the borough.

11.10. In response to this evidence base the plan adopts a positive and flexible approach to maintain a resilient and adaptable network of centres. The plan is based on the following principles:

- **Town centres first** – directing main town centre uses to the town centre and, where appropriate, edge-of-centre locations;
- **A clear hierarchy of centres** – with the town centre as the primary focus, supported by a network of neighbourhood centres providing accessible services;
- **Diversification of the town centre** – encouraging a broader mix of uses to increase activity throughout the day and evening;

- **Supporting neighbourhood centres** – maintaining their role as accessible hubs for everyday needs; and
- **Managing out-of-centre development** – ensuring proposals do not undermine the vitality and viability of designated centres.

11.11. This approach reflects national policy and local evidence, ensuring that centres can continue to adapt while meeting the needs of communities across the borough.

11.12. The plan also supports the regeneration of key town centre sites to strengthen Tamworth town centre's attractiveness, accessibility and overall function. In particular, Gungate is identified as an opportunity for housing-led mixed-use development and improved connectivity, while Ankerside provides a longer-term opportunity to modernise the retail, leisure and wider town centre offer, creating a destination, and also the opportunity to link the Pleasure Grounds with the town centre more successfully. This would create the ability to spend time in the town whilst also being able to access the many leisure facilities around the town including the blue and green infrastructure which is plentiful.

11.13. Together, these opportunities, alongside public investment including funding secured through the Future High Streets Fund, will contribute to a more attractive, accessible and resilient network of centres across the borough.

This section contains the following policies:

- Strategic Policy SP6: Retail, Centres and Regeneration
- Policy TC1: The hierarchy of centres
- Policy TC2: Development in the Town Centre
- Policy TC3: Gungate Regeneration Opportunity Area
- Policy TC4: Ankerside Regeneration Opportunity Area
- Policy TC5: Main town centre uses outside designated centres
- Policy TC6: Development in Neighbourhood Centres

Strategic Policy SP6: Retail, centres and regeneration

1. Tamworth's network of centres, as defined on the Policies Map, will be supported and strengthened as the focus for retail, leisure, cultural, commercial and community activity. Development proposals must contribute positively to the vitality, viability, resilience and regeneration of centres across Tamworth.
2. Where relevant, development proposals will be expected to:
 - a) support and reinforce the borough's hierarchy of centres and direct main town centre uses to the most accessible and sustainable locations;
 - b) prioritise investment, regeneration and growth within Tamworth Town Centre and designated Neighbourhood Centres;
 - c) support the vitality and viability of centres through the provision of a diverse range of retail, leisure, employment, residential, cultural and community uses;
 - d) promote the regeneration, redevelopment and reuse of underutilised land and buildings, particularly within regeneration opportunity areas and previously developed land;
 - e) enhance the quality, accessibility, connectivity and attractiveness of centres, including the public realm and movement between centres and surrounding neighbourhoods;

- f) support mixed-use development that contributes towards the long-term resilience and adaptability of centres;
 - g) resist inappropriate out-of-centre retail and leisure development where it would undermine the vitality and viability of existing centres;
 - h) support community-led regeneration initiatives that improve local identity, social wellbeing and access to services, and
 - i) contribute positively towards sustainable patterns of development consistent with the spatial strategy of the local plan.
3. Development proposals should demonstrate how they have responded positively to the role, function and character of the relevant centre or regeneration opportunity area.
4. The council will support proposals that diversify and modernise centres where they contribute positively towards economic resilience, regeneration, placemaking and community wellbeing.
5. Development proposals should be designed so as not to prejudice the comprehensive regeneration, redevelopment or future growth opportunities of adjoining land, centres or wider regeneration opportunity areas.

11.14. This policy provides the overarching framework for the support, management and regeneration of Tamworth's network of centres

and should be read alongside the more detailed retail, town centre and regeneration policies in this plan.

- 11.15. The policy seeks to maintain and strengthen the vitality, viability and resilience of centres in response to changing retail patterns, evolving consumer behaviour and the increasing need for centres to provide a diverse range of uses beyond traditional retailing. This approach is informed by the Tamworth Town Centre and Retail Study (2024), which identifies the need to support diversification, regeneration and investment within the borough's centres.
- 11.16. The policy promotes a coordinated approach to the regeneration of Tamworth Town Centre and designated Neighbourhood Centres, whilst ensuring that retail, leisure and other main town centre uses are directed towards the most accessible and sustainable locations. It also seeks to ensure that development proposals are considered in the context of their potential effects on the vitality and viability of existing centres and wider regeneration objectives.
- 11.17. The strategic policy is intended to provide a positive framework for decision-making and should be read alongside other local plan policies relating to economic development, transport, design, public realm, healthy communities and place-making. Together, these policies will support the delivery of a resilient, attractive and adaptable network of centres across the borough.

Hierarchy of centres

Policy TC1: The Hierarchy of centres

1. The Town Centre, as defined on the Policies Map, will be the primary focus for retail, leisure and other main town centre uses.
2. Neighbourhood Centres, as defined on the Policies Map, will be supported as accessible locations for shops, services and other uses that meet the day-to-day needs of local communities.
3. Development proposals for main town centre uses will be directed to the most appropriate locations in accordance with a town centre first approach.
4. Development within centres will be supported where proposals:
 - a) are appropriate in scale and function to the role of the centre; and
 - b) support the vitality and viability of that centre.
5. The Primary Shopping Area for Tamworth Town Centre is defined on the Policies Map and will be the primary focus for retail development, as set out in Policy TC2.

11.18. In accordance with national policy, this local plan defines a hierarchy of centres to support their long-term vitality and viability and to direct retail, leisure and other main town centre uses to the most accessible and sustainable locations.

11.19. The hierarchy identifies Tamworth town centre as the borough's primary centre and focus for retail, leisure, cultural and civic activity, serving both the borough and its wider catchment. The Town Centre will continue to be the principal location for investment, regeneration and major town centre uses.

11.20. The town centre is supported by a network of Neighbourhood Centres which provide accessible shops, services and community facilities that meet the day-to-day needs of surrounding neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood Centres play an important role in supporting sustainable communities by providing opportunities to access essential services locally and reducing the need to travel.

11.21. The hierarchy provides a clear framework for managing growth and investment within centres and for applying the town centre first approach. Development proposals will be expected to reflect the scale, role and function of the relevant centre and support its vitality and viability.

11.22. The hierarchy has been reviewed through the preparation of this local plan to ensure it reflects the current role and function of centres across the borough. Some previously designated neighbourhood centres are no longer identified within the hierarchy where they no longer function as defined centres. Where local shops and community facilities continue to serve an important neighbourhood role, they will continue to be supported through other relevant local plan policies.

11.23. The hierarchy of centres is as follows:

Town Centre		Tamworth
Neighbourhood Centres	NC1	Chartwell
	NC2	Fontenay Road, Coton Green
	NC3	Masefield Drive, Leyfields
	NC4	Cedar Drive
	NC5	Amington Road, Bolehall
	NC6	Glascote Road
	NC7	Glascote Road
	NC8	Scott Road
	NC9	Tamworth Road, Amington
	NC10	Amington Fields
	NC11	Caledonian Centre, Glascote
	NC12	Ellerbeck, Stoneydelph
	NC13	Exley, Field Farm Road
	NC14	Farm Park Road
	NC15	Tamworth Road, Two Gates
	NC16a	North of Watling Street, Wilnecote
	NC16b	South of Watling Street, Wilnecote
	NC17	Hockley Road
	NC18	Beauchamp Road
	NC19	High Street, Dosthill

Policy links:

Policy TC2: Development in the town centre

Policy TC5: Main town centre uses outside centres

Policy TC6: Development in neighbourhood centres

Tamworth Town Centre

Policy TC2: Development in the Town Centre

1. Development within Tamworth Town Centre will be supported where it contributes to a diverse, active and well-functioning centre.
2. Proposals will be supported where they:
 - a) enhance the vitality, viability and attractiveness of the Town Centre;
 - b) contribute to a mix of uses, including retail, leisure, food and drink, cultural, community, employment and residential uses;
 - c) contribute to increased activity and footfall;
 - d) create active frontages and high-quality public realm; or
 - e) improve connectivity, accessibility and movement within the Town Centre and between key destinations.
3. The Primary Shopping Area, as defined on the Policies Map, will be the focus for retail development within the Town Centre.
4. Proposals for non-retail uses within the Primary Shopping Area will be supported where they:
 - a) support the vitality and function of the Town Centre; and
 - b) do not result in an over-concentration of non-retail uses that would undermine the retail function of the area

5. Development proposals should make effective use of land and support the continued regeneration and diversification of the Town Centre in response to changing retail and leisure patterns.

11.24. Tamworth Town Centre is the borough's principal centre and the focus for retail, leisure, cultural, civic and commercial activity. It also provides an important opportunity to accommodate new homes, employment and investment in one of the borough's most accessible and sustainable locations. Supporting its continued vitality, viability and attractiveness is fundamental to the delivery of the local plan's wider economic, regeneration and placemaking objectives.

11.25. The council's evidence base, including the Tamworth Town Centre and Retail Study (2024), identifies the need for the town centre to continue adapting to changing retail patterns, evolving consumer behaviour and reduced demand for traditional retail floorspace. Future success will depend upon providing a broader mix of complementary uses, increasing activity throughout the day and evening, improving the quality of the public realm and strengthening connections between key destinations.

11.26. This policy supports a positive and flexible approach to development by encouraging proposals that reinforce the Town Centre's role as the borough's principal destination while promoting regeneration, diversification and the efficient use of land. It also seeks to ensure that retail development remains

focused within the Primary Shopping Area, whilst allowing an appropriate range of complementary town centre uses where these support the overall vitality and function of the centre.

11.27. The policy should be read alongside the Town Centre Strategy Framework (or any future masterplan or strategy for the town centre), which provides a spatial expression of the council's long-term vision for the Town Centre by identifying the key regeneration opportunities, movement corridors and public realm improvements that will help make it more connected, attractive and resilient.

Policy links:

Policy TC5: Main town centre uses Outside Centres

Policy TC3: Gungate Regeneration Opportunity Area

Policy TC4: Ankerside Regeneration Opportunity Area

Policy DE1: Delivering high quality design and respecting local distinctiveness

Policy HC9: Public realm

Policy SP9: Sustainable transport and active travel

Regeneration Opportunity Areas

11.28. The area around the former Gungate shopping precinct and the Ankerside shopping centre are identified as key regeneration opportunity areas within the town. The extent of these areas is shown on the Policies Map, and the below policies set out a broad framework to guide their development.

Gungate

Policy TC3: Gungate Regeneration Opportunity Area

1. The Gungate Regeneration Opportunity Area, as identified on the Policies Map, is allocated as a key mixed-use regeneration opportunity within the town centre.
2. Development proposals should be supported by a masterplan and/or design code prepared in accordance with policy DE2 (Masterplanning and design codes), demonstrating how the requirements of this policy will be delivered.
3. Development proposals will be supported where they deliver a comprehensive and coordinated regeneration scheme that:
 - a) contributes positively to the vitality, viability and function of the town centre;
 - b) supports the diversification of the town centre through a mix of complementary uses;
 - c) improves connectivity, accessibility and movement within the town centre and between surrounding destinations; and

- d) makes efficient use of a prominent and underutilised site.
4. A broad mix of uses will be supported within the Gungate area, including:
 - a) at least 150 dwellings, with specialist accommodation for older people particularly encouraged;
 - b) convenience retail provision;
 - c) leisure, food and drink, community and cultural uses;
 - d) employment and flexible commercial uses; and
 - e) other town centre uses appropriate to the role and location of the site.
5. Development proposals should not comprise predominantly retail-led development and should demonstrate how the proposed mix of uses contributes to a diverse and resilient town centre offer.
6. Proposals should:
 - a) create active frontages and high-quality public realm;
 - b) enhance permeability and legibility through the site;
 - c) strengthen connections with the Primary Shopping Area, Ankerside and surrounding parts of the Town Centre; and
 - d) respond positively to the setting of nearby heritage assets and the character of the surrounding area.

- e) Development within the Gungate Regeneration Opportunity Area should be coordinated with the regeneration of Ankerside and wider town centre investment priorities to support the long-term regeneration of Tamworth town centre.

11.29. The Gungate area represents a major opportunity to support the ongoing diversification of Tamworth town centre. The site occupies a prominent and highly accessible location but is currently underutilised.

11.30. The council's evidence base, including the Tamworth Town Centre and Retail Study (2024), identifies the need for broader and more flexible town centre offer, reflecting changing retail patterns and reduced demand for traditional retail floorspace. The evidence also identifies a qualitative opportunity for additional convenience retail provision within the Town Centre to support linked trips and footfall.

11.31. Given its location outside the Primary Shopping Area, the Gungate area is not expected to accommodate significant retail-led development. Instead, the site is expected to deliver a mixed-use scheme that complements the wider role and function of the town centre, through a mix of residential, leisure, commercial and community uses.

11.32. The highly accessible town centre location makes the Gungate area particularly suitable for specialist and older persons

housing, including retirement living, where this supports independent living and access to services and facilities.

11.33. Development proposals should also support improved movement and connectivity across the town centre, particularly in strengthening links with Ankerside and surrounding areas, and should demonstrate a comprehensive approach to place-making and delivery. Where required, a masterplan and/or design code prepared in accordance with policy DE2 (Masterplanning and design codes) will provide the framework for coordinating land uses, movement, public realm, design quality, infrastructure and phasing across the site.

11.34. Given the site's availability, scale and relationship to wider town centre investment priorities, Gungate is expected to provide an early to medium-term opportunity to support the diversification of the town centre through mixed-use development.

Policy links:

Strategic Policy SP9: Sustainable transport and active travel

Policy HC9: Public realm

Policy DE1: Delivering high quality design and respecting local distinctiveness

Policy TC4: Ankerside Regeneration Opportunity Area

Ankerside

Policy TC4: Ankerside Regeneration Opportunity Area

1. The Ankerside Regeneration Opportunity Area, as identified on the Policies Map, is allocated as a key mixed-use regeneration opportunity within Tamworth Town Centre.
2. Development proposals should be supported by a masterplan and/or design code prepared in accordance with policy DE2 (Masterplanning and design codes), demonstrating how the requirements of this policy will be delivered.
3. Development proposals will be supported where they deliver a comprehensive and coordinated regeneration scheme that:
 - a) enhances the vitality, viability and attractiveness of the town centre;
 - b) supports the long-term diversification and modernisation of the town centre offer;
 - c) strengthens the role of the town centre as a destination for retail, leisure, food and drink, cultural and community activity;
 - d) creates a more active, outward-facing and accessible environment.
4. Development proposals should provide a broad mix of uses, including:
 - a) at least 250 dwellings as part of a mixed use scheme;
 - b) the re-provision and modernisation of retail floorspace where appropriate;
 - c) food and drink, leisure and entertainment uses;
 - d) employment, commercial and flexible town centre uses; and
 - e) other complementary uses appropriate to the role and function of the town centre.
5. Development proposals should:
 - a) improve permeability, legibility and accessibility within the site and between the site and surrounding areas;
 - b) strengthen connections between the Town Centre, Ventura Retail Park, Castle Grounds, the railway station and surrounding leisure destinations;
 - c) create active frontages and high-quality public realm;
 - d) make positive use of the site's riverside setting; and
 - e) enhance the relationship between the town centre and Tamworth Castle as a key heritage and visitor destination.
6. Proposals should demonstrate how the redevelopment of the site will be delivered in a coordinated manner, including consideration of:
 - a) phasing and continuity of trading;
 - b) engagement with existing occupiers and businesses; and

- c) opportunities for relocation within the Town Centre where appropriate.
- d) Development proposals should support the delivery of the Town Centre Strategy Framework and be coordinated with the regeneration of the Gungate Regeneration Opportunity Area and wider town centre investment priorities.

11.35. The Ankerside area represents a significant opportunity to support the long-term regeneration and diversification of the town centre. The site occupies a highly prominent location at the heart of the town centre and has an important role in supporting its future vitality, attractiveness and function.

11.36. The council's evidence base, including the Tamworth Town Centre and Retail Study (2024), identifies the need to strengthen and modernise the town centre offer in response to changing retail patterns and declining demand for traditional retail floorspace. The redevelopment of Ankerside provides an opportunity to deliver a more flexible mix of uses capable of supporting activity throughout the day and evening.

11.37. Given the presence of existing businesses and occupiers, redevelopment is expected to come forward on a phased basis. Development proposals should therefore demonstrate a coordinated approach to delivery, including engagement with occupiers and consideration of continuity of trading and

relocation opportunities within the Town Centre where appropriate. Where required, a masterplan and/or design code prepared in accordance with policy DE2 (Masterplanning and design codes) will provide the framework for coordinating land uses, movement, public realm, design quality, infrastructure and phasing across the site.

11.38. The site also provides an important opportunity to improve movement and connections across the Town Centre. In particular, redevelopment should support stronger links between the Town Centre, Ventura Retail Park, Castle Grounds, the Snow Dome, the cinema and the wider leisure offer. Development should create a more outward-facing and accessible environment, improving permeability and making better use of the site's riverside location.

11.39. Development within the Ankerside area should complement the role of the Gungate Regeneration Opportunity Area and support the wider objectives of the Town Centre Strategy Framework.

11.40. Given the scale, complexity and presence of existing occupiers, redevelopment of Ankerside is expected to come forward progressively over the plan period and is likely to represent a longer-term opportunity for comprehensive town centre renewal.

Policy links:

Policy SP9: Sustainable transport and active travel

Policy HC9: Public realm

Policy DE1: Delivering high quality design and respecting local distinctiveness

Policy TC3: Gungate Regeneration Opportunity Area

Draft for consultation

Managing out of centre development

Policy TC5: Main town centre uses outside centres

Sequential approach

1. Proposals for main town centre uses located outside defined centres will be required to demonstrate compliance with the sequential approach, giving preference first to sites within the Town Centre, then to edge-of-centre locations, and only then to out-of-centre locations where suitable and available sites are not identified in more central locations.
2. The scope and application of the sequential test should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposal.
3. Small-scale development intended to serve a local or operational need may not be required to demonstrate compliance with the sequential approach where it is clearly ancillary in function and would not undermine the role of designated centres.

Impact on centres

4. Development proposals for main town centre uses outside defined centres involving more than 250 sq.m gross floorspace will be required to submit a proportionate retail impact assessment demonstrating that the proposal would not result in a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the Town Centre or Neighbourhood Centres

Out-of-Centre Retail Areas

5. Proposals within existing out-of-centre retail areas (as marked on the Policies Map), including retail parks, will be supported where they:

- a) are appropriate in scale and function, and
- b) do not undermine the vitality and viability of the Town Centre or Neighbourhood Centres

6. Development should support improved connectivity between out-of-centre retail areas, the Town Centre and surrounding neighbourhoods, including walking, cycling and public realm links where necessary.

Small-scale development to meet local need

7. Proposals for retail or service units outside designated centres will be considered on their merits and will be supported where they:
 - a) are small in scale, having regard to their role, function and location, and will normally comprise no more than 250 sq.m gross floorspace
 - b) serve a local or operational need, and
 - c) do not undermine the role and function of the Town Centre or Neighbourhood Centres, taking into account surrounding context and existing provision

Trade counters

8. Proposals for trade counter uses within employment areas will be considered in accordance with the relevant employment policies. Where ancillary retail elements are proposed, regard will be had to their impact on the vitality and viability of designated centres.

11.41. National policy requires a town centre first approach to the location of retail, leisure and other main town centre uses. In Tamworth, this is particularly important given the scale and concentration of out-of-centre retail and leisure development relative to the size of the borough, as identified within the council's retail study.

11.42. The policy applies the sequential approach to proposals for main town centre uses (as defined in national planning policy) outside designated centres. In accordance with national policy, proposals will be expected to demonstrate why suitable and available sites within the Town Centre or edge-of-centre locations could not accommodate the proposed development, having regard to the scale and nature of the proposal. The scope and application of the sequential test will be applied proportionately, recognising that some small-scale or operationally related development may not be appropriate or reasonably capable of being accommodated within designated centres.

11.43. The policy recognises that Tamworth contains established out-of-centre retail and leisure areas, including Ventura Retail Park and other retail parks and commercial areas, which continue to form part of the borough's wider retail and leisure offer. The policy therefore seeks to provide a balanced approach which recognises the role of these areas whilst ensuring that additional development does not undermine the vitality and viability of designated centres.

11.44. The locally defined threshold for retail impact assessments is set at 250 sq.m gross floorspace for proposals involving main town centre uses outside the Town Centre boundary. This is lower than the default national threshold and reflects local circumstances in Tamworth, including the potential cumulative impact of smaller-scale retail and leisure proposals outside designated centres. The council's retail study recommended a locally defined threshold in recognition of the scale and concentration of out-of-centre retail and leisure provision within the borough.

11.45. Impact assessments should consider matters including effects on vitality and viability, planned public and private investment, trade diversion and cumulative impacts. Particular regard will be had to the potential impact of proposals on the Town Centre, Neighbourhood Centres and planned regeneration and investment opportunities.

11.46. The policy also supports improved connectivity between out-of-centre retail and leisure areas, the Town Centre and surrounding neighbourhoods in order to encourage linked trips and improve accessibility. This reflects the findings of the retail study and wider town centre regeneration objectives.

11.47. The policy also recognises that there are circumstances where small-scale retail and service uses located outside designated centres can support the day-to-day needs of local communities or the functioning of employment areas without undermining the borough's hierarchy of centres. Such proposals may include small convenience stores, pharmacies, cafés or other facilities serving local neighbourhoods or employment areas.

11.48. To provide greater certainty, the policy identifies that proposals will normally be expected to comprise no more than 250 sq.m gross floorspace, whilst demonstrating that they are intended to meet a local or operational need. Whilst proposals of this scale are unlikely to give rise to significant impacts individually, the council will also consider their location, the surrounding context and the presence of existing retail or service uses to ensure that, either individually or cumulatively, they do not undermine the role and function of the Town Centre or Neighbourhood Centres. Proposals that provide or improve local services should also be considered alongside policy HC3 (New and improved community facilities and public service infrastructure), where relevant, recognising the important role that small-scale local

facilities can play in supporting sustainable communities and reducing the need to travel.

11.49. Trade counter uses often perform an important operational and employment function and are typically located within employment areas. Similarly, small-scale retail and service facilities that primarily serve employees or businesses, such as small cafés, sandwich shops or mobile food vendors operating within employment areas, can support the day-to-day functioning of those areas. Such uses are generally distinct from traditional town centre uses where they remain ancillary in nature, serve a local or operational need and do not become destinations that would undermine the vitality and viability of designated centres.

Policy links:

Policy TC1: The Hierarchy of centres

Policy HC3: New and improved community facilities and public service infrastructure

Policy SP9: Sustainable transport and active travel

Policy HC9: Public realm

Policy DE1: Delivering high quality design and respecting local distinctiveness

Development in Neighbourhood Centres

Policy TC6: Development in Neighbourhood Centres

1. Development within Neighbourhood Centres, as defined on the Policies Map, will be supported where it reinforces their role as accessible hubs for shops and services serving local communities.
2. Proposals will be supported where they:
 - a) maintain or enhance the vitality and viability of the Neighbourhood Centre;
 - b) provide or retain convenience retail and supporting services that meet day-to-day needs; and
 - c) are of a scale and function appropriate to the role of the centre.
3. The loss of shops and services will only be supported where:
 - a) the proposal would not undermine the overall function of the centre; and
 - b) the use provides an alternative service that meets local needs or supports the role of the centre.
4. Development should support accessibility by walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport and contribute to the continued use of Neighbourhood Centres.

11.50. Neighbourhood Centres perform an important role in serving surrounding neighbourhoods and supporting sustainable access to everyday services. The policy supports a flexible mix of uses within centres where proposals continue to contribute positively to their vitality, viability and overall function.

Policy links:

Policy TC1: The Hierarchy of centres

Policy SP9: Sustainable transport and active travel

Policy HC9: Public realm

Policy DE1: Delivering high quality design and respecting local distinctiveness

12. Healthy communities

- 12.1. Creating healthy and safe communities is a central ambition of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which places strong emphasis on planning as a tool for improving social wellbeing, supporting active lifestyles, and strengthening community cohesion. The NPPF clearly sets out that the planning system should enable and encourage environments where people can thrive physically, socially and mentally, by ensuring that the right social infrastructure, services, facilities and environments are available to support healthy, inclusive and sustainable communities. The council will support the creation of environments that encourage physical activity as part of everyday life, having regard where appropriate to Sport England's Active Design principles.
- 12.2. Healthy communities rely on a wide range of physical and social infrastructure. This includes community facilities and public service infrastructure, open space, sport and recreation provision, high-quality public realm and other supporting infrastructure that enables people to access services, participate in community life and enjoy healthy lifestyles. Ensuring that this infrastructure is protected, enhanced and planned alongside growth is fundamental to delivering sustainable development and meeting the needs of existing and future communities.

- 12.3. The policies in this section seek to safeguard valued community assets, support the delivery of new and improved infrastructure where needed, ensure that development contributes appropriately towards meeting future needs, and promote high-quality, inclusive environments that support health, wellbeing and quality of life.

- 12.4. This section contains the following policies:

Community Facilities and Public Service Infrastructure

- Policy HC1: Development affecting existing community facilities and public service infrastructure
- Policy HC2: Community facilities, public service infrastructure and new development
- Policy HC3: New and improved community facilities and public service infrastructure
- Policy HC4: Glascote Heath and Stonydelph (Pride in Place)

Open Space, Sport, Leisure and Recreational Facilities

- Policy HC5: Existing open space, sport and recreation facilities
- Policy HC6: Open space, sport and recreation provision in new development
- Policy HC7: New and improved open space, sport and recreation provision

Other Community Infrastructure

- Policy HC9: Public realm
- Policy HC10: Safeguarding burial space
- Policy HC11: Hot food takeaways

Draft for consultation

Community facilities and public service infrastructure

- 12.5. Community facilities and public service infrastructure play an important role in supporting healthy, inclusive and sustainable communities. Local facilities such as community centres, health services, libraries and sports venues play a critical role in supporting day-to-day needs, reducing the need to travel and promoting sustainable patterns of development. Community facilities such as halls, places of worship and social clubs often act as focal points for neighbourhoods.
- 12.6. Tamworth has a mix of urban neighbourhoods with varying levels of access to community infrastructure. There are known health inequalities and varying socio-economic conditions across wards, so access to local services is particularly essential. As the borough continues to grow, it is important that existing community facilities are protected from unnecessary loss whilst ensuring that new development contributes towards the provision of community facilities and public service infrastructure where required.
- 12.7. Protecting accessible community facilities is particularly important for people who may have fewer opportunities to travel to alternative services, including older people, children and young people, and lower-income households. Retaining local provision supports physical and mental wellbeing, social

inclusion and community cohesion, whilst helping to reduce pressure on wider public services.

Definitions

- 12.8. For the purposes of this section, community facilities and public service infrastructure are defined as follows:

Community facilities

- 12.9. Buildings and spaces that support community interaction, social cohesion and recreational activity. This includes (but is not limited to):
- Meeting halls and community centres
 - Public houses
 - Places of worship
 - Cultural and arts venues
 - Allotments and community growing spaces
 - Small-scale convenience stores meeting local day-to-day needs (see also policy TC5: Main town centre uses outside centres).

Public service infrastructure

12.10. Facilities that provide essential public services to meet the health, education, safety and welfare needs of the community.

This includes:

- Education facilities (e.g. nurseries, schools, further and higher education establishments)
- Healthcare facilities (e.g. GP surgeries, hospitals, clinics)
- Emergency (“blue light”) services (police, fire and rescue, ambulance)
- Social care facilities
- Libraries
- Criminal justice facilities (e.g. courts, probation services, custodial institutions).

Development affecting existing community facilities and public service infrastructure

Policy HC1: Development affecting existing community facilities and public service infrastructure

1. Proposals that would result in the loss of an existing community facility or public service infrastructure will be refused unless one or more of the following exceptions apply:

- a) evidence can be provided that there is an existing facility of the same type within a reasonable distance of the one to be lost which can accommodate any additional demand;
- b) it can be clearly demonstrated that there is no longer a need or demand for the facility to remain;
- c) evidence can be provided that the facility is no longer viable and that all reasonable steps have been taken to retain it;
- d) the loss would be replaced by an equal or better provision of the same type; or
- e) the loss would be replaced by an alternative community facility or public service infrastructure to meet an identified local need.

12.11. This policy seeks to protect existing community facilities and public service infrastructure from unnecessary loss by ensuring that facilities are retained unless there is clear evidence that it is

no longer needed or viable, suitable alternative provision exists, or equivalent or improved replacement facilities are secured.

12.12. Applicants will be expected to provide robust and proportionate evidence to demonstrate that one or more of the policy exceptions apply.

12.13. In relation to criterion (a), what constitutes a *reasonable distance* will depend on the type, role and catchment of the facility concerned, having regard to the needs of the community it serves and the availability of sustainable travel options. Applicants should demonstrate that any alternative facility is readily accessible to existing users and has sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional demand without resulting in an unacceptable reduction in the quality or availability of the service provided.

12.14. In relation to criterion (c), evidence that a facility is no longer viable should demonstrate that all reasonable steps have been taken to retain the existing use. This may include, where appropriate, evidence of declining membership or patronage, financial information demonstrating that the facility is no longer financially viable, details of the marketing undertaken to retain or dispose of the facility for an appropriate community use, and consideration of whether alternative management or operational arrangements could enable the facility to continue. The level of evidence provided should be proportionate to the nature and scale of the facility.

12.15. In relation to criterion (d), replacement provision should be of an equal or better standard than the facility it replaces, having regard to its quality, capacity, accessibility and suitability to meet the needs of the community it serves. Replacement facilities may be provided on-site or at an alternative location, provided they are appropriately located, accessible to existing users and available at an appropriate time to avoid an unacceptable loss of provision.

12.16. Where a facility is designated as an Asset of Community Value, this will be a material consideration in the assessment of proposals. Designation does not prevent development or loss of a facility but may provide additional evidence of its value to the local community when considering whether the policy tests have been satisfied.

Community facilities and public service infrastructure

Policy HC2: Community facilities, public service infrastructure and new development

1. Proposed development for housing, employment, or other uses that would result in significant numbers of people living, working, or visiting the area should ensure that appropriate community facilities and public service infrastructure are available to meet the needs arising from the development.
2. Infrastructure needs should be identified through up to date evidence, including the Infrastructure Delivery Plan or relevant strategies.
3. Where existing community facilities and public service infrastructure are insufficient to meet the needs arising from development, provision to meet the needs should be made either:
 - a) on-site; or
 - b) through proportionate contributions towards off-site provision or improvements to existing facilities.
4. The nature and extent of provision or contributions will be proportionate to the scale, nature and viability of the development, where appropriate.

5. Planning conditions and/or obligations will be used to ensure that the right community facilities and public service infrastructure are delivered at the appropriate point in time.

- 12.17. The NPPF requires development to be supported by adequate infrastructure, including community facilities and public service infrastructure, to ensure that sustainable communities are created and maintained.
- 12.18. As Tamworth continues to accommodate new housing, employment and other forms of development, it is important that community facilities and public services are planned alongside growth. This policy seeks to ensure that the facilities and services required to support new development are identified and delivered in a timely and coordinated way.
- 12.19. Infrastructure requirements should be informed by up-to-date evidence, including the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and relevant service provider strategies, to ensure that provision reflects local needs and planned growth. This approach will ensure that development is both sustainable and inclusive.
- 12.20. Where existing provision is insufficient to meet the needs arising from development, new facilities / services or contributions towards their provision will be sought in accordance with

relevant planning obligations and infrastructure funding mechanisms.

12.21. Where existing community facilities and public service infrastructure have sufficient capacity, additional provision may not be necessary. However, proportionate financial contributions may still be sought where justified, to improve or enhance existing facilities and services to ensure they continue to meet the needs of residents.

Policy Links:

Policy IO1: Infrastructure delivery

Policy IO2: Developer contributions

New and improved community facilities and public service infrastructure

Policy HC3: New and improved community facilities and public service infrastructure

1. Proposals for new, extended, or improved community facilities and public service infrastructure will be supported where they:
 - a) respond to an identified need, supported by robust and proportionate evidence; and
 - b) are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.
2. Proposals involving the construction of, or change of use to, a shop or service that would normally constitute a 'main town centre use' will be considered in accordance with policy TC5. Where it can be demonstrated that the proposal is intended to meet a local need, the sequential test will not normally be required.

12.22. New and improved community facilities and public service infrastructure should be well integrated into the communities they serve and be accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. They should also contribute positively to the quality, safety and accessibility of the surrounding environment, helping to create welcoming and inclusive places that encourage community use and social interaction. Proposals should therefore be considered alongside policy HC9 (Public realm),

which sets out the council's requirements for high-quality, safe and accessible public spaces.

12.23. Opportunities to co-locate complementary facilities, or enable shared use of facilities, should be explored where this would improve accessibility, encourage linked trips and make efficient use of land and infrastructure. The NPPF recognises the important role that small-scale, local services play in meeting day-to-day needs and supporting sustainable communities. The NPPF allows flexibility in applying the town centre sequential test, particularly for development intended to serve a neighbourhood-level function.

12.24. Small-scale services outside designated centres will not normally be required to demonstrate compliance with the sequential test, provided they are intended to meet a clearly evidenced local need. These units typically operate as small-scale neighbourhood facilities or services, such as:

- Pharmacies
- Local service providers (e.g. hairdressers)
- Small-scale convenience stores meeting local day-to-day needs

12.25. These uses primarily serve walk-in, local catchments, rather than attracting trade from a wide area. As such, they do not

perform the same role as town centre uses and do not generate comparable levels of footfall or economic activity.

12.26. This policy should be read alongside policy TC5 (Main town centre uses outside centres), which sets out the borough's approach to retail and service uses outside designated centres. Together these policies provide a positive framework for the delivery of appropriately scales community facilities and services that meet local needs whilst maintaining the borough's hierarchy of centres.

Policy Links:

Policy TC5: Main town centre uses outside centres

Policy HC9: Public realm

Glascote Heath and Stonydelph (Pride in Place)

Policy HC4: Glascote Heath and Stonydelph (Pride in Place)

1. Development proposals within the Glascote Heath and Stonydelph Pride in Place area (as defined on the Policies Map) will be supported where they contribute positively to community-led regeneration and the long-term improvement of the area. Proposals that seek to link the Pride in Place area to adjacent residential areas, will also be supported, to ensure that the regenerative benefits of the Pride in Place funding is cohesive.
2. Where appropriate, proposals should:
 - a) support neighbourhood centres and improve access to local services;
 - b) improve the quality, safety and attractiveness of the local environment;
 - c) support local businesses, community facilities and public service infrastructure;
 - d) improve connectivity and accessibility, including walking, wheeling, cycling and public realm improvements where appropriate;
 - e) contribute positively to community wellbeing and social inclusion.
3. Development proposals should have regard to locally identified priorities and investment programmes, including those identified

through the Pride in Place programme and associated regeneration initiatives, where relevant.

4. Development proposals should demonstrate how they have responded to local context and engaged with the community, where proportionate to the scale and nature of development.

12.27. Glascote Heath and Stonydelph have been identified as priority areas for community-led regeneration through the Pride in Place programme. The policy is intended to provide a supportive framework for regeneration and investment proposals that come forward within these wards.

12.28. This may include proposals relating to improvements to local centres and shopping parades, public realm, active travel and accessibility, community facilities, neighbourhood services and environmental quality. Support will also be given to proposals that strengthen local businesses and services, improve perceptions of safety and accessibility, and contribute positively to community wellbeing and social inclusion.

12.29. The Pride in Place programme places particular emphasis on community engagement and locally identified priorities. Development proposals should therefore demonstrate how they have responded to local context and community views, where proportionate to the scale and nature of development.

12.30. Proposals that seek to deliver community and regeneration benefits beyond the Pride in Place boundary, such as a well-lit path that links communities together, will also be supported.

12.31. The Pride in Place community regeneration area is marked on the Policies Map.

Policy links:

Policy HC1: Development affecting existing community facilities and public service infrastructure

Policy HC2: Community facilities, public service infrastructure and new development

Policy HC3: New and improved community facilities and public service infrastructure

Policy SP8: Design, placemaking and the built environment

Policy HC9: Public realm

Policy SP9: Sustainable transport and active travel

Policy TA1: Managing car use

Open space, sport, and recreational facilities

- 12.32. Open space, sport, and recreational facilities play an important role in supporting healthy, active and inclusive communities. Together they provide opportunities for formal and informal recreation, play, sport and physical activity, whilst contributing to physical and mental wellbeing, environmental quality and the overall attractiveness of the borough.
- 12.33. The council has identified a network of existing open spaces on the Policies Map, and together with a range of sport and recreation facilities, these make an important contribution to the health, wellbeing and quality of life of Tamworth's communities.
- 12.34. For the purposes of this section, references to open space generally mean those sites identified on the Policies Map as open space. References to sport, and recreation facilities include formal and informal sport and recreation facilities, together with associated land, buildings, and infrastructure. This includes, but is not limited to, children's play spaces, outdoor sports facilities, playing fields, leisure centres, sports halls, pavilions, changing facilities, multi-use games areas (MUGAs), tennis courts and similar facilities.
- 12.35. The policies in this section seek to protect existing open space, sport and recreation provision, ensure that new development contributes appropriately towards meeting future needs, support the delivery of new and improved provision, and secure

high-quality, accessible and well-designed spaces and facilities for existing and future communities.

Existing open space sport, and recreation facilities

Policy HC5: Existing open space, sport, and recreation facilities

1. Existing open space, sport, leisure and recreation facilities will be protected and enhanced to support healthy, inclusive, and active communities.
2. Proposals to improve, modernise or enhance existing open space, sport, leisure and recreation facilities will be supported where they accord with the wider objectives and policies in this plan.
3. Development proposals that would result in the loss, reduction or deterioration of existing open space, sport, leisure or recreation facilities will only be supported where one of more of the following apply:
 - a) a robust and up to date assessment demonstrates that the facility or open space is surplus to current and future requirements;
 - b) equivalent or better replacement provision, in terms of quantity, quality, and accessibility is secured in a suitable and convenient location for the community it serves;
 - c) the proposal would deliver greater overall community benefits that outweigh the loss;

d) it has been demonstrated that the facility or open space is no longer capable of serving its intended purpose, and there is no realistic prospect of it continuing in its current use.

4. Where proposals affect existing open space, applicants must also demonstrate that they would not result in unacceptable harm to the wider network of open spaces and green infrastructure.

is secured, the proposals would deliver greater overall community benefit, or there is no realistic prospect of the existing use continuing.

12.36. Access to high-quality open space, sport, leisure and recreation facilities is essential for promoting physical activity, improving mental wellbeing and reducing health inequalities. These facilities help address key public health challenges such as obesity, inactivity and social isolation. Their loss or deterioration can reduce opportunities for participation, diminish local environmental quality and place increased pressure on the remaining network. The loss of sport, leisure and recreation facilities in particular, can have disproportionate impacts on vulnerable groups, including young people, older residents, and those without access to private transport.

12.37. The council's evidence base informs the approach to protecting existing open space, sport, leisure and recreation provision, addressing deficiencies and planning for future needs. This policy therefore seeks to ensure that these assets are not lost unless there is clear and robust evidence that they are surplus to current and future requirements, suitable replacement provision

Open space, sport and recreation provision in new development

Policy HC6: Open space, sport and recreation provision in new development

1. All new minor residential development will be expected to be within 480 metres walking distance of existing open space as defined on the Policies Map. Developments that do not achieve this will need to demonstrate that sufficient alternative provision exists, or can be created as part of the development.
2. Major residential development will be expected to provide open space to meet the additional demand generated by the development. Open space should normally be provided at a rate of 2.43Ha per 1,000 population. The anticipated population arising from development should be submitted as part of the application. Where this information is not provided, the council will assume an occupancy rate of 1.5 persons per bedroom.
3. New open space provision will normally be delivered on-site so that spaces are meaningful, functional and accessible. Off-site provision or a financial contribution to off-site provision will only be supported where on-site provision can be demonstrated not to be feasible and off-site provision would deliver greater benefit to the community.
4. Major residential development will be required to contribute towards meeting additional demand for sport and recreation facilities generated by the development. This will normally be

secured through financial contributions towards the provision, enhancement or expansion of existing facilities, unless the scale, nature or location of the development justifies on-site provision. The type and level of provision or contribution will be informed by the council's evidence base.

- 12.38. New residential development generates additional demand for open space, sport and recreation provision. The policy seeks to ensure that this demand is appropriately addressed, so that development does not place unacceptable pressure on existing provision.
- 12.39. For the purposes of this policy, minor residential development means development resulting in a net increase of up to 10 dwellings. Major residential development means development resulting in a net increase of 10 or more dwellings.
- 12.40. Open space should be provided on-site to ensure that it is accessible, functional and well-integrated with new development. Where on-site provision is not feasible, off-site provision or financial contributions may provide a more effective means of meeting identified local needs.
- 12.41. The requirement for 2.43 hectares of open space per 1,000 population has been informed by national policy and best practice. Where the anticipated population arising from development is not submitted as part of the application, the

council will assume an occupancy rate of 1.5 persons per bedroom by default.

12.42. Financial contributions may also be sought towards the provision, enhancement or expansion of sport and recreation facilities to meet the additional demand generated by development. The type and level of contribution will be informed by the Council's evidence base and will normally be secured through planning obligations, unless the scale, nature or location of the development justifies on-site provision.

New and improved open space, sport and recreation provision

Policy HC7: New and improved open space, sport and recreation provision

1. Proposals for new or improved open space, sport and recreation provision will be supported where they:
 - a) are informed by the council's evidence base (including the Playing Pitch Strategy and Infrastructure Delivery Plan) and other relevant evidence, where appropriate; or
 - b) respond to an identified current or future need, particularly where access to existing provision is limited.
2. New or improved open space, sport and recreation provision, whether provided as a standalone development or as part of a wider development proposal should, where appropriate:
 - a) be safe, inclusive and accessible to people of all ages and abilities;
 - b) be integrated into the surrounding development and public realm;
 - c) support multifunctional use, including recreation, biodiversity and climate resilience;
 - d) be well connected to walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport networks; and

- e) be supported by appropriate arrangements for long-term management and maintenance that do not place unreasonable or disproportionate costs on residents.

12.43. The policy seeks to ensure that proposals for new and improved open space, sport and recreation provision are informed by identified needs, including the council's evidence base. This will help ensure that investment is directed towards locations and types of provision where it is most needed and complements the existing network across the Borough.

12.44. The policy also seeks to ensure that new provision, whether delivered as a standalone proposal or as part of a wider development, is designed to a high standard. High quality, accessible and well-connected spaces and facilities that are integrated with their surroundings, support biodiversity and climate resilience, and are supported by appropriate long-term management arrangements are more likely to remain functional, attractive and capable of meeting the needs of the communities they serve over the long term.

12.45. For significant new public open spaces and recreation provision, consideration should also be given to how spaces can support activity and community use over time, including opportunities for informal recreation, events and other appropriate temporary or flexible uses.

Tamworth leisure quarter

Policy HC8: Tamworth Leisure Quarter

1. Tamworth Leisure Quarter, comprising Tamworth Football Club, the Snowdome, Namco Funscape and part of the Castle Grounds, is identified on the Policies Map as a destination for sport, leisure and culture in the Borough.
2. Development proposals within the Leisure Quarter will be supported where they contribute to its co-ordinated growth, including the improvement, expansion or intensification of existing sport and leisure facilities. Proposals should show how they relate to the wider Leisure Quarter and should not prejudice neighbouring sites improving or expanding in the future.
3. Complementary uses within the Leisure Quarter, including food and drink, will be determined in accordance with other relevant policies of this Plan. In particular, proposals for main town centre uses will be directed in accordance with Policy TC5 and the wider hierarchy of centres set out in Policy TC1.
4. Development proposals should:
 - a) prioritise walking, cycling and public transport over the car, and strengthen links between the Leisure Quarter, the Town Centre and the railway station;
 - b) conserve and enhance the setting of Tamworth Castle and the Castle Grounds;

- c) protect and enhance the area's ecology and manage flood risk and drainage, including at Borrowpit Lakes and along the River Anker corridor; and
- d) strengthen the relationship between the Leisure Quarter and the Town Centre, supporting linked trips and the Town Centre's role as the Borough's principal focus for retail, leisure and visitor activity.

12.46. Tamworth Football Club, the Snowdome, Namco Funscape and the Castle Grounds sit within a single, compact part of the borough but have historically come forward in isolation from one another. This policy sets a positive vision for the area as a joined-up Leisure Quarter, recognising its combined importance to the borough's sport, leisure and cultural offer. The council wants the Leisure Quarter to grow into a thriving, high quality and well-connected part of the borough. This means allowing its sport and leisure facilities to adapt and grow over time, rather than considering future proposals on a purely site by site basis, and strengthening its relationship with the Town Centre, including through improved connections to the railway station and the riverside.

12.47. The Quarter is in multiple ownerships and requiring a jointly prepared masterplan risked creating a delivery expectation the council could not guarantee, as well as slowing down individual proposals that are otherwise acceptable. Applicants

are instead simply expected to show how their proposal relates to the wider area and does not prejudice the ability of neighbouring sites to come forward.

12.48. Given the volume of match-day and event-related travel the area already generates on a highway network that experiences congestion at peak times, the policy expects growth to prioritise walking, cycling and public transport over the car and to avoid making that congestion worse, consistent with the Plan's wider approach to sustainable and active travel.

12.49. Part of the Leisure Quarter also lies within the setting of Tamworth Castle, a Grade I listed building and Scheduled Monument, and adjoins Borrowpit Lakes, an area identified in the Council's evidence base for its nature recovery potential. The policy therefore also expects development to conserve and enhance the Castle's setting and the area's ecology, including flood risk and drainage along the River Anker corridor.

12.50. Borrowpit Lakes originated as mineral workings and part of the Leisure Quarter may therefore be affected by legacy ground conditions. The policy expects development in this part of the Quarter to demonstrate that the land is suitable for its proposed use, consistent with Policy EP2: Pollution, Ground Conditions and Contamination.

12.51. Policy EM4: Strengthening the Visitor Economy already sets out the tests against which growth in Tamworth's visitor economy, including new or enhanced visitor attractions and leisure

facilities, will be judged. This policy does not repeat those tests. Instead, it gives spatial expression to how the Leisure Quarter should grow in a coordinated way and addresses matters that are specific to this location, namely movement, heritage, ecology and ground conditions. Where a proposal within the Leisure Quarter is also a visitor attraction in its own right, it should be read alongside Policy EM4.

12.52. The Leisure Quarter is not intended to compete with the Town Centre as a visitor destination in its own right. This policy is deliberately framed around sport, leisure and culture, with wider tourism and visitor growth continuing to be directed towards the Town Centre through Policy EM4 and the Plan's hierarchy of centres. Clause 4(d) requires development to strengthen the relationship between the Leisure Quarter and the Town Centre, supporting linked trips between the two areas so that growth in the Leisure Quarter reinforces the Town Centre rather than drawing activity away from it. To strengthen the town centre relationship the expectation would be to improve existing or create new opportunities to facilitate visitor movements between the leisure quarter and the town centre. This could include lighting, cycle ways or pedestrian crossings.

12.53. This policy does not set its own test for food and drink or other complementary uses within the Leisure Quarter. Proposals of this kind should instead be considered against the Plan's existing hierarchy of centres and its approach to main town centre uses

outside designated centres, set out in Policy TC1 and Policy TC5. This avoids creating a second, competing route for assessing the same type of development, and keeps the Town Centre's protection consistent across the whole Plan rather than only within the Leisure Quarter.

Policy Links:

Policy TC1: The Hierarchy of centres

Policy TC5: Main town centre uses outside centres

Strategic Policy SP9: Sustainable transport and active travel

Policy TA1: Managing car use

Strategic Policy SP7: Securing the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets

Policy NE2: National and local sites of importance for biodiversity

Policy FL1: The sequential test and exception test

Policy FL2: Ensuring development is safe from flooding

Policy FL3: Sustainable drainage systems, watercourses and water quality

Policy EP2: Pollution, ground conditions and contamination

Policy HC7: New and improved open space, sport and recreation provision

Policy EM4: Strengthening the visitor economy

Other community infrastructure

Public Realm

Policy HC9: Public realm

1. Development proposals must ensure that public spaces and routes are designed to be inclusive, accessible and easy to use for people of all ages and abilities and that they are safe, secure and comfortable to use at all times of day, helping to prevent crime and disorder and reduce the fear of crime and promote healthy, active and inclusive communities.
2. Where appropriate, development proposals must create high quality, attractive, inclusive and human-scale public spaces that contribute positively to the character, identity, functionality, accessibility and safety of the area.
3. Development proposals should ensure that, where appropriate, streets and public spaces:
 - a) **movement and legibility** – are legible, well-connected and easy to navigate, providing coherent routes that prioritise pedestrians, wheeling and cycling;
 - b) **inclusive access** – provide safe, convenient and accessible environments for people of all ages and abilities, including children, older people and other vulnerable users;

- c) **active frontages** – include active frontages and positive building interfaces that support activity, natural surveillance and public safety;
 - d) **social interaction** – provide opportunities for social interaction, recreation, play and informal activity that support healthy communities;
 - e) **landscaping and greening** – incorporate high quality hard and soft landscaping, including street trees where appropriate;
 - f) **sustainable drainage and green infrastructure** – integrate sustainable drainage and green infrastructure where feasible;
 - g) **street furniture and lighting** – include seating, lighting, wayfinding and other street furniture where appropriate; and
 - h) **safety and surveillance** – avoid concealed, inactive or poorly overlooked spaces that could contribute to crime, anti-social behaviour or fear of crime.
4. Development proposals should be informed by recognised principles of crime prevention and community safety, including Secured by Design or equivalent standards where appropriate.
 5. Public spaces should be durable, easy to maintain and capable of adapting to changing needs over time, including accommodating temporary or flexible uses where appropriate.
 6. Development proposals must ensure that parking, servicing, plant and other operational areas do not dominate streets or

public spaces or detract from the quality and character of the public realm.

- 12.54. The quality of the public realm has an important influence on health and wellbeing, how places function, how they are experienced and how successfully they support movement, accessibility and community safety. Streets, spaces and routes that are poorly designed can discourage walking, wheeling and cycling, weaken connectivity, reduce perceptions of safety and detract from the character and attractiveness of an area.
- 12.55. In Tamworth, there are opportunities to improve connections between neighbourhoods, community facilities/services, the town centre, Castle Grounds, river corridors, transport facilities and regeneration areas through the enhancement of streets and public spaces. High quality public realm can also support wider regeneration objectives, strengthen local identity and improve the attractiveness, vitality and usability of neighbourhoods and centres across the borough.
- 12.56. The relationship between buildings and public spaces is also important in creating safe and attractive environments. Active frontages, natural surveillance and clear, legible routes, can help to reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour whilst improving the usability and attractiveness of streets and public spaces.

- 12.57. The policy also seeks to ensure that public realm is durable, adaptable and capable of accommodating changing patterns of use over time. Development proposals should therefore contribute positively to the long-term quality, functionality and maintenance of streets and public spaces and avoid the visual dominance of parking, servicing or other operational infrastructure.

Policy links:

Policy DE1: Delivering high quality design and respecting local distinctiveness

Strategic Policy SP7: Securing the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets

Policy HE1: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets (nationally listed buildings and Scheduled Monuments)

Policy HE2: Proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets (locally listed buildings)

Policy HE3: Conservation areas

Policy HC3: New and improved community facilities and public service infrastructure

HC7: New and improved open space, sport and recreation provision

Strategic Policy SP9: Sustainable transport and active travel

Policy TA1: Managing car use

Policy NE1: Blue and green infrastructure

Draft for consultation

Safeguarding burial space

Policy HC10: Safeguarding burial space

1. Existing municipal burial grounds and cemeteries, and the land marked as safeguarded for burial space on the Policies Map will be protected to ensure that sufficient land is available to meet the long-term burial and cremation needs of Tamworth's communities. Development that would result in the loss of existing burial space, compromise its future use, or prejudice the delivery of identified future burial provision will not be supported unless equivalent or better provision is made.
2. Development proposals must:
 - a) safeguard existing burial grounds to avoid loss, reduction or fragmentation, including associated facilities; and
 - b) protect the setting of existing and proposed burial grounds, ensuring that development does not adversely impact their tranquillity, function, landscape character, biodiversity value, heritage significance or future operation.
3. New burial provision should be accessible, inclusive and designed to meet the needs of all faiths and communities.
4. New burial space will need to be designed to incorporate appropriate buffers, landscaping and design measures to safeguard privacy and quiet reflection.
5. Where development is expected to generate additional demand for burial and cremation services, proportionate contributions

towards meeting future needs may be sought through land provision or financial contributions, where justified and in accordance with Policy IO2.

- 12.58. Burial grounds and cemeteries form an essential part of the borough's social infrastructure. They provide a vital service to communities, supporting cultural, religious and personal needs at significant moments in people's lives. The NPPF requires planning policies to plan positively for community facilities, safeguard existing provision, and ensure that sufficient land is available to meet identified needs. Burial space is explicitly recognised as a form of community infrastructure that must be protected and planned for.
- 12.59. Tamworth Borough Council manages burial services in the borough, operating and maintaining five municipal cemeteries across the borough at Amington, Glascote, Wigginton Road, Wilnecote New and Wilnecote Old.
- 12.60. As the borough grows, demand for burial space will increase, particularly given the needs of different faith groups and communities who require specific forms of provision. Tamworth has a finite supply of land suitable for burial and cremation purposes. Without proactive planning, the Borough risks running short of suitable burial land, placing pressure on families, faith groups and neighbouring authorities. Safeguarding existing burial

grounds and identifying land for future provision is therefore essential to ensuring sufficient long-term capacity.

- 12.61. Existing burial grounds also have significant cultural, historic, landscape and ecological value. Many cemeteries contain mature trees, wildlife habitats, heritage assets and areas of quiet reflection that contribute to local character and biodiversity. Development that encroaches on these spaces, harms their setting, or reduces their tranquillity would undermine their function and community value. Protecting these qualities is consistent with the NPPF's emphasis on safeguarding valued landscapes, heritage significance and green spaces.
- 12.62. The sensitive nature of burial grounds means that development in their vicinity must be carefully managed. Inappropriate development can affect privacy, quiet reflection, ceremonial activities and the dignity of the space. The policy therefore requires proposals to respect the setting, character and sensitive function of burial grounds, including through appropriate buffers, landscaping and design measures.
- 12.63. Land identified for future burial provision must also be safeguarded. Once lost to other forms of development, such land is extremely difficult to replace due to constraints such as ground conditions, access, drainage, and the need for peaceful surroundings. Protecting such land ensures that the borough can meet long-term burial and cremation needs in a planned and sustainable way.

Hot food takeaways

Policy HC11: Hot food takeaways

1. Development proposals for hot food takeaways or fast-food outlets will not be supported where they:
 - a) are in close proximity to a school or other facility regularly used by children and young people, unless located within the Town Centre or within a Neighbourhood Centre; or
 - b) would result in an over-concentration of such uses particularly where this would have an unacceptable impact on local health, pollution, or anti-social behaviour.

12.64. This policy manages the location of hot food takeaways in Tamworth, in with national planning policy to support healthier communities. Public health data shows that Tamworth experiences higher-than-average rates of;

- Adult and child obesity
- Type 2 diabetes
- Cardiovascular disease
- Lower life expectancy in certain wards.

12.65. For example, in Tamworth, during the academic year 2022-23 around 1 in 4 reception age children were living with excess weight and around 1 in 10 reception children were living with

obesity. This is an increasing trend when compared with data from 2006/7.

12.66. Health issues are particularly pronounced in areas such as Belgrave, Glascote, and Amington where deprivation levels are higher.

12.67. National research indicates that the density and proximity of hot food takeaways can influence unhealthy eating patterns, especially among children. It is more likely that children will purchase unhealthy food when takeaways are located close to schools and other places they regularly visit.

12.68. This policy therefore restricts new takeaways within close proximity of schools to support healthier eating habits, reduce exposure to unhealthy food choices and to align with Staffordshire's public health priorities. For the purposes of this policy, "close proximity" is defined as **within 400 metres walking distance** of the boundary of a school or other facility regularly used by children and young people.

12.69. Tamworth's compact urban geography means that opportunity can lead to a cluster of takeaways that can dominate a small area and its evening activity, often leading to increased noise, litter, and anti-social behaviour. Whether an over-concentration exists will be assessed on a case-by-case basis having regard to the number, proximity and distribution of existing hot food takeaways, together with their cumulative impact on local health, amenity, community safety and the character of the area.

POLICY LINKS

- Policy EP1: Safeguarding amenity and managing the impacts of development

Draft for consultation

13. Heritage

- 13.1. The historic environment is a finite and irreplaceable resource that contributes significantly to the borough's identity, sense of place, and economic vitality. Heritage assets, including designated and non-designated assets and their settings, provide significant cultural, social, and environmental value.
- 13.2. Although Tamworth has expanded significantly during the 20th century, elements of the town's historic medieval core still survive including the castle, marketplace, and the line of the Anglo-Saxon and medieval street pattern. Many of these monuments are designated as being of national importance and much of the town centre has been designated as conservation areas. Outside the town centre there are conservation areas based on the historic village cores of Wilnecote, Dosthill and Amington and the Amington Hall Estate parkland.
- 13.3. The borough is experiencing growth and regeneration pressures, particularly within the town centre. Without a clear and robust heritage policy framework, there is a risk that incremental change could erode the significance of heritage assets and their settings, undermining the qualities that make Tamworth unique. The heritage policy framework ensures that Tamworth's historic environment is not only protected, but actively used as a driver of high-quality growth, regeneration, and place-making.

13.4. This section contains the following policies:

- Strategic Policy SP7: Securing the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets
- Policy HE1: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets (nationally listed buildings and Scheduled Monuments)
- Policy HE2: Proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets (locally listed buildings)
- Policy HE3: Conservation areas

Strategic Policy SP7: Securing the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets

1. Development proposals should look to take opportunities to enhance the setting and understanding of the historic environment. Applications that have the potential to affect a heritage asset should ensure that the asset, including its setting, are conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance.
2. Flexibility will be applied in how heritage assets can be used, ensuring that any appropriate use is not restricted unnecessarily.
3. Proposals that would bring back into use vacant historic buildings or better utilise under-used historic buildings will be supported. Proposals which help to secure the conservation and safeguard the significance of assets on the heritage at risk register will also be supported.
4. Heritage assets should be actively integrated within the urban environment where possible, and serve the most effective purpose for the community whilst retaining their historic character.
5. Where a development proposal would result in the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset (whether designated or not):

- a) the development won't be supported without steps being taken to make sure that the new development will go ahead after the loss has occurred; and
 - b) the applicant will be required to make an appropriate record of the asset before it is lost.
6. Proposals for development that has the potential to impact heritage assets will be required to provide a statement that describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

13.5. This policy establishes a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. It requires development proposals to take opportunities to enhance the significance and setting of heritage assets, ensures that proposals contribute to the quality of places and can be understood and appreciated.

13.6. It is recognised that securing the optimum viable use of heritage assets is often key to their long-term conservation, and so the policy supports flexible and appropriate uses, particularly where these bring vacant or under-used buildings back into beneficial use. This approach helps to reduce the risk of neglect and decay and supports wider regeneration objectives.

- 13.7. Heritage renewal has played an important role in the council's ambitious Future High Street Fund regeneration. Revitalising the town's high streets and public realm through refurbishments and sensitive design has had a lasting positive impact on place making for the area.
- 13.8. The policy emphasises that heritage assets should be put to viable uses consistent with their conservation, allowing them to remain an active and valued part of communities. Development proposals are therefore expected to demonstrate how heritage assets will be retained, reused and incorporated in a way that sustains their significance. Adaptation whilst ensuring that the special interest in an asset is not compromised is important to support the placemaking agenda. Tamworth's heritage is important to its residents who are proud of the history of the town. Historic buildings and spaces play a key role in defining public realm quality and it supports the visitor economy, leisure and cultural activity.
- 13.9. Proposals that may result in harm or loss, given the irreplaceable nature of heritage assets, must be carefully controlled, justified, and minimised, and that opportunities for recording and understanding must be secured where change is unavoidable.

Designated heritage assets (listed buildings and Scheduled Monuments)

Policy HE1: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets

1. When considering the potential effect of a development proposal on a designated heritage asset, substantial weight will be given to the asset's conservation.
2. Development proposals that would have a positive effect on designated heritage assets will be supported.
3. Where a development proposal has the potential to harm a designated heritage asset or its setting, the impact of the effect will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Important public benefits can include such things as securing the long-term re-use of a vacant or underused listed building, and enabling energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures to be employed.
4. Development proposals that would cause substantial harm to (or the total loss of the significance of) a designated heritage asset will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the development is needed to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss, or if all of the following apply:
 - a) the nature of the heritage asset would otherwise prevent all reasonable uses of the site;
 - b) no suitable use can be found that will enable its conservation;

- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is not possible; and
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the asset back into use.

13.10. Designated heritage assets include conservation areas, listed buildings and scheduled monuments, and these types of assets are usually offered protection by law through things like the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act and associated regulations. These assets are of the highest significance and are an irreplaceable part of the borough's historic environment. Their conservation is fundamental to maintaining local distinctiveness, supporting place-making, and contributing to sustainable development.

13.11. There are approximately 175 listed buildings across the borough with Tamworth Castle and St Editha's Church achieving Grade 1 status, and the Town Hall achieving Grade 2* status. This reflects their significance and these three buildings in particular act as visual and cultural anchors in the townscape and define key public spaces and views.

13.12. There is a strong concentration of designated assets in the town centre reflecting the historic commercial and civic core of the town. There are secondary clusters in historic settlements such

as Dosthill, Wilnecote and Amington reflecting Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian terraces and villas in planned suburbs.

- 13.13. There are three Scheduled Monuments consist primarily of below-ground archaeological remains. Only two include standing structural elements, mainly surviving wall section, and one of those is the fully preserved Tamworth Castle.
- 13.14. The policy establishes a clear and consistent framework for decision-making on proposals affecting these important assets. This ensures that proposals are assessed proportionately, with harm weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 13.15. Public benefits can take a wide range of forms, including the delivery of housing, economic growth, and environmental improvements. The optimum viable use of a heritage asset, particularly where it is vacant or underused, is also a key consideration. Enabling such uses is often essential to securing the long-term conservation of heritage assets.
- 13.16. The policy also acknowledges the role that heritage assets can play in addressing climate change, provided that measures such as energy efficiency improvements and low carbon technologies are sensitively designed and do not undermine the significance of the asset.

Non-designated heritage assets (including locally listed buildings)

Policy HE2: Proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets

1. Development proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets will be supported where they would have a positive impact, or would not have a negative impact on the heritage asset.
2. Where a development proposal has the potential to cause harm to (or the total loss of the significance of) a non-designated heritage asset, it will only be supported where the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefits of the proposal, having regard to the scale of the harm or loss and the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.

conservation areas, and established residential areas. Without a clear policy framework, these assets are more vulnerable to incremental change or loss, which can gradually erode the character and historic continuity of the borough.

- 13.19. The policy provides an appropriate balance between conserving the borough's locally important heritage assets and enabling sustainable growth. It recognises the value of non-designated heritage assets to local character and identity.

13.17. Non-designated assets are the buildings and sites that are not considered to be important in a national context but are historically and locally important to Tamworth. These assets may include locally listed buildings, and buildings or features that contribute to the character and appearance of an area, including assets of archaeological interest. Whilst they do not meet the criteria for statutory designation, they are often valued by communities and make a meaningful contribution to local identity, sense of place, and the quality of the built environment.

13.18. These assets contribute significantly to the quality of the townscape, especially within and around the town centre,

Conservation areas

Policy HE3: Conservation areas

1. Development in or affecting a conservation area will be supported where it would contribute to the preservation, enhancement, or help reveal the significance of the area or its setting.
2. Development proposals should:
 - a) take account of the area's special architectural or historic interest (as identified as part of the relevant conservation area appraisal and management plan) in the design and use of development; and
 - b) retain and, where possible, restore buildings and other features which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.
3. Where a proposal would result in substantial harm to the significance of a conservation area or its setting, permission will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that there would be substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm.
4. Where a development proposal would result in the loss of a building or other element which contributes to the character or appearance of a conservation area, its importance to the conservation area will be taken into account in determining whether the loss would result in substantial harm to the conservation area as a whole.

13.20. Conservation areas are designated to recognise places of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. They are a key component of the borough's historic environment and play an important role in reinforcing local identity.

13.21. Tamworth currently contains seven designated conservation areas, reflecting the Borough's historic development. These are:

- Tamworth Town Centre
- Albert Road / Victoria Road
- Amington Green
- Amington Hall Estate
- Dosthill
- Hospital Street
- Wilnecote

13.22. These areas collectively represent a wide range of heritage typologies, including the medieval and historic core of the town, planned residential areas, former industrial settlements, and historic village environments. For example, the Town Centre Conservation Area contains a high concentration of heritage assets, including around 90 listed buildings, reflecting its significance as the historic heart of Tamworth.

13.23. The policy provides a clear framework for managing development within and affecting conservation areas. It emphasises the importance of understanding each area's special interest, as set out in adopted conservation area appraisals and management plans, and requires this to inform the design, scale, materials, and use of development proposals. This ensures that new development responds sensitively to its context and contributes positively to local character.

13.24. The policy outlines the requirement to retain and, where possible, restore buildings and features that make a positive contribution to conservation areas. In Tamworth, much of the value of conservation areas lies not only in landmark buildings,

but in the cumulative contribution of historic streets, traditional materials, boundary treatments, shopfronts, townscape features, and natural environment (such as trees and hedges). The loss of such elements, even on a small scale, can lead to gradual erosion of character, which the policy seeks to prevent.

13.25. The policy also provides a robust mechanism for assessing harm which is particularly important in Tamworth, where conservation areas are subject to development and regeneration pressures, especially within the town centre and older residential areas. Without a strong policy framework, incremental change, such as unsympathetic alterations, demolition, or poor-quality design, could undermine the qualities that underpin designation.

14. Design, placemaking and the built environment

- 14.1. High quality design is fundamental to creating sustainable, attractive and successful places. The following policies set out the council's approach to securing well-designed development and ensuring that new development contributes positively to the character, function and environmental quality of the borough, with particular attention to the enhancement of the town centre, conservation areas and identified Regeneration Opportunity Areas.
- 14.2. Design is not solely about the appearance of development, but also how places function, respond to local context and meet the needs of users over time. In accordance with national policy, the council will take a proactive approach to securing high quality design through effective placemaking and place-shaping. Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they contribute to the creation of well-functioning, beautiful and sustainable places, consistent with the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Design Guide.
- 14.3. Tamworth faces a number of significant physical, environmental and spatial constraints which have informed the approach to design and development. The borough is tightly constrained by administrative boundaries, Green Belt and existing patterns of

development, leaving limited opportunities for outward expansion. Much of the borough's future growth will therefore need to be accommodated through regeneration, redevelopment and the efficient use of previously developed and underutilised land, often within sensitive or highly visible locations.

- 14.4. At the same time, Tamworth contains a rich historic environment, including its market town core, conservation areas, listed buildings and the setting of Tamworth Castle, alongside a network of river corridors, open spaces and established residential neighbourhoods with distinct characteristics. Parts of the borough are also affected by flood risk, severance created by strategic transport infrastructure and varying levels of accessibility, health inequality and environmental quality. These factors require development to respond carefully to its surroundings and contribute positively to the wider functioning and resilience of the borough.
- 14.5. Where appropriate, the council will utilise local and sub-regional design review processes to provide independent and objective design advice and to support the delivery of high-quality development
- 14.6. This section contains the following policies:
- Strategic Policy SP8: Design, Placemaking and the Built Environment

Achieving High Quality Design:

Policy DE1: Delivering high quality design and respecting local distinctiveness

Policy DE2: Masterplanning and design codes

Residential Design Standards:

Policy DE3: Design Standards for New Housing, including conversions and subdivisions (reference HMOs, self-contained flats)

Policy DE4: Residential infill / Backland development

Policy DE5: Existing buildings - extensions and alterations

Non-Residential, Commercial and Employment Design Standards

Policy DE6: Non-Residential and Employment Development

Policy DE7: Shopfront Design and Security

Policy DE8: Advertisements, Signs and Illumination

- 14.7. The policies within this chapter are supported by a number of annexes which provide additional detail on design expectations, assessment criteria and implementation requirements. These should be read alongside the relevant policies where applicable. The supporting annexes include:

Annexe B – Residential Design Standards

Annexe C – Shopfronts, Advertisements and Signage

Annexe D – Non-Residential and Employment Design Standards

- 14.8. The policies in this chapter should be read alongside policy EP1 (Safeguarding amenity and managing the impacts of development) and the accompanying Amenity Standards Annexe, where relevant. Whilst this chapter focuses on design quality, character and placemaking, the assessment of amenity and environmental impacts, including matters such as privacy, outlook, daylight, sunlight, noise, disturbance, lighting and pollution, is addressed through that policy framework.

Strategic Policy SP8: Design, placemaking and the built environment

1. Development proposals must contribute positively to the creation of high quality, sustainable and distinctive places across Tamworth.
2. Development proposals will be expected, where appropriate, to:
 - a) respond positively to the character, identity and distinctiveness of the borough and its different places;
 - b) reinforce local character and create a strong sense of place through high quality, context-led and design-led development;

- c) support the regeneration and enhancement of the Town Centre, Neighbourhood Centres, Regeneration Opportunity Areas, and previously developed land;
 - d) make efficient and effective use of land while protecting the character, amenity and environmental quality of surrounding areas;
 - e) create safe, inclusive and accessible environments that promote health, wellbeing and social interaction, support natural surveillance and help reduce opportunities for crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime;
 - f) improve connectivity within and between neighbourhoods, centres, green spaces and transport facilities;
 - g) integrate blue and green infrastructure and support climate-resilient development;
 - h) protect and enhance the Borough's historic environment and landscape character; and
 - i) contribute positively to the quality, functionality and long-term resilience of the public realm and built environment.
3. Development proposals should demonstrate how site context, constraints and opportunities have informed the evolution of the design.
4. The council will support innovative and contemporary design approaches where they are well considered, respond positively

to local context and contribute towards high quality and sustainable placemaking.

5. Development proposals should be designed so as not to prejudice the comprehensive development or regeneration of adjoining land or wider areas.

Achieving high quality design

Policy DE1: Delivering high quality design and respecting local distinctiveness

1. Development proposals must demonstrate a clear understanding of the site and its surroundings and show how this has informed the evolution of the design.
2. Development proposals must demonstrate how the relevant national policy, local plan policies and relevant Annexes have informed the proposal.
3. Development proposals should incorporate high quality design which contributes positively to local distinctiveness by demonstrating a clear understanding of:
 - a) **history and heritage** – the history and evolution of the place;
 - b) **views and context** – significant views to and from the site and the surrounding context;
 - c) **character and features** – prevailing character and built and natural features of interest; and
 - d) **landscape and topography** – landscape setting, landform and topography.
4. Innovative design approaches, including the use of modern materials and construction techniques, will be supported where they reinforce or enhance local character.

5. Development proposals are expected to demonstrate high quality design from the earliest stages of the design process and throughout the evolution of the scheme, including the following aspects of design:
 - a) **layout** – making effective use of land, including the arrangement of streets, routes, spaces and buildings, urban grain, plot sizes, building lines and rhythms, whilst ensuring that the layout does not prejudice future development opportunities on neighbouring sites;
 - b) **form and scale** – the height, bulk, massing, proportions, profile and roofscapes of buildings and spaces;
 - c) **appearance** – façade composition, materials, windows and colour;
 - d) **landscape** – topography and hard and soft landscaping;
 - e) **detailing** – architectural detailing and material junctions that contribute to craftsmanship and visual quality;
 - f) **inclusive access** – ensuring buildings, spaces and routes are accessible and usable for people of all ages and abilities; and
 - g) **sustainable and climate-responsive design** – consideration of layout, orientation, landscaping and materials to support environmental performance, climate resilience and adaptation.
6. The design quality of approved schemes should be maintained through to completion. Amendments that would reduce the

quality of the approved design will not normally be supported, including through material or non-material amendment submissions.

7. Development proposals should achieve appropriate residential densities, in accordance with policy HO2, through a design-led approach that takes into account:

- a) the site size, characteristics and location;
- b) the urban grain of the area and appropriate building forms, heights and sizes for the site; and
- c) the context and local character of the area

14.9. The quality of design has a significant influence on how places function, how they are experienced and how successfully they adapt over time. In Tamworth, where much new development will take place on constrained, previously developed or regeneration sites, achieving high quality design is particularly important to ensuring growth contributes positively to local character, environmental quality and quality of life.

14.10. Tamworth contains a diverse built environment, ranging from its historic town centre and heritage assets to established suburban neighbourhoods, employment areas and regeneration locations. New development should respond positively to these differing contexts rather than relying on standardised or poorly integrated forms of development. The council's approach seeks to ensure

that development reinforces local distinctiveness, respects the defining characteristics of an area and contributes to a strong sense of place.

14.11. The policy also recognises that successful design is not limited to architectural appearance. The arrangement of buildings and spaces, movement and accessibility, landscaping, detailing and material quality all contribute to the overall quality and functionality of development. High quality design should therefore be embedded throughout the design process, from the earliest stages of site analysis through to construction and delivery. Early engagement through the pre-application process, including the use of design review where appropriate, can assist in achieving well-designed outcomes.

14.12. At the same time, the efficient use of land remains important given the borough's constrained land supply. Achieving appropriate densities will require a design-led approach that responds positively to local character, urban grain, amenity and accessibility considerations. Contemporary and innovative design approaches, including the use of modern materials and construction techniques, will be supported where they are well considered and enhance the character of the area.

14.13. Inclusive design principles should be incorporated from the outset to ensure that buildings, spaces and routes are safe, accessible and usable for people of all ages and abilities. Layout, orientation, landscaping and material choices can also

contribute to environmental performance, climate resilience and user comfort. Development proposals should therefore incorporate passive design measures, urban greening and other climate-responsive design principles where appropriate. The policy should be read alongside the Council's Climate and Energy policies, which set out detailed requirements relating to energy efficiency, carbon reduction and sustainable construction.

- 14.14. The information submitted in support of development proposals should be proportionate to the scale and complexity of the scheme. All development, including smaller scale proposals and extensions, will nevertheless be expected to demonstrate a high standard of design and respond positively to its context.

POLICY LINKS

Policy HO2: Housing density

Policy NE6: Trees

Policy HE1: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets (nationally listed buildings and Scheduled Monuments)

Policy HE2: Proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets (locally listed buildings)

Policy HE3: Conservation Areas

Policy SP9: Sustainable transport and active travel

Policy TA1: Managing car use

Policy TA2: Impact on the transport networks and highways safety

Masterplanning

Policy DE2: Masterplanning and design codes

1. Development proposals for large scale major applications and Regeneration Opportunity Areas must be supported by a masterplan and/or design code to secure a coordinated, comprehensive and high-quality approach to development.
2. Masterplans and design codes should establish clear design principles and spatial frameworks for the development of a site or area, including, where appropriate:
 - a) movement and connectivity;
 - b) land use and spatial structure;
 - c) public realm and landscape;
 - d) building form, scale and design principles;
 - e) blue and green infrastructure;
 - f) sustainability and climate resilience measures;
 - g) infrastructure delivery and phasing; and
 - h) integration with surrounding development and neighbouring areas.
3. The level of detail and scope of any masterplan or design code should be proportionate to the scale, complexity and significance of the site or area concerned.

4. Where required, masterplans and design codes should be prepared and agreed prior to, or alongside, the submission of relevant planning applications.
5. Development proposals, including reserved matters applications and subsequent phases of development, will be expected to demonstrate compliance with any approved masterplan or design code.

14.15. Tamworth's key development and regeneration opportunities are limited in number and strategically important to delivering the overall growth and regeneration objectives of the plan. Given the borough's constrained nature and limited opportunities for outward expansion, it is important that major development sites are planned comprehensively and make an effective contribution towards housing delivery, economic growth, connectivity and placemaking objectives.

14.16. Masterplans and design codes can help ensure that development is coordinated, design-led and integrated successfully with surrounding areas. This is particularly important on larger, complex or phased sites, where a clear framework is needed to coordinate movement, land use, public realm, landscape, infrastructure and development phasing. A coordinated approach can also help avoid piecemeal forms of development which may prejudice wider regeneration

objectives, connectivity or the comprehensive development of adjoining sites and surrounding areas.

- 14.17. Design codes can provide additional clarity and certainty by establishing site-specific design principles and parameters while still allowing for flexibility and innovation in architectural response.
- 14.18. The council will apply a proportionate approach to the preparation and use of masterplans and design codes, taking account of the scale, complexity and significance of the site or area concerned. Specific requirements relating to Regeneration Opportunity Areas are set out in their respective policies.
- 14.19. **Large-scale Major Development:** For the purposes of this plan, a large-scale major development is defined in accordance with the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) statistical reporting frameworks as meeting any of the below criteria, or any subsequent update to the criteria:
- 14.20. **Residential Dwellings:** Schemes where the number of residential units to be constructed is **200 or more**.
- 14.21. **Residential Site Area:** Where the exact number of units is not specified (such as in an outline planning application), a total site area of **4 hectares or more**.
- 14.22. **Non-Residential Floorspace:** Development creating **10,000 square metres or more** of new internal floorspace.

- 14.23. **Non-Residential Site Area:** Total site area measuring **2 hectares or more**.

Policy links:

Policy DE1: Delivering High Quality Design and Respecting Local Distinctiveness

Policy TC3: Gungate Regeneration Opportunity Area

Policy TC4: Ankerside Regeneration Opportunity Area

Policy SP9: Sustainable transport and active travel

Policy TA1: Managing car use

Policy TA2: Impact on the transport networks and highways safety

Policy NE1: Blue and green infrastructure

Strategic Policy SP2: Climate change

Residential Design Standards

Design standards for new housing

Policy DE3: Design standards for new housing (including conversions and subdivision)

1. New residential development, including new build housing, conversions and subdivisions, must deliver high quality, functional and accessible homes that provide a good standard of residential amenity for future occupiers.
2. All new residential development must meet the following requirements:
 - a) internal space - compliance with the most up-to-date nationally described space standard, having regard to Annexe B: Residential Design Standards;
 - b) living conditions – provision of high-quality living conditions for future occupiers, having regard to policy EP1, the Amenity Standards Annexe and Annexe B: Residential Design Standards;
 - c) amenity space – provision of high quality private and/or communal amenity space for future occupiers, in accordance with Annexe B: Residential Design Standards;
 - d) housing mix – provision of an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, having regard to Policy HO1 (Housing Mix);
 - e) energy efficiency – achieve high standards of energy efficiency and contribute to the achievement of net zero carbon emissions, in accordance with Policy SP2;
 - f) accessibility - development must provide a high standard of accessibility, as follows:
 - i. all new dwellings must meet Building Regulations requirement M4(2) (accessible and adaptable dwellings), unless provided in accordance with M4(3)
 - ii. on developments of 20 or more dwellings, at least 5% of dwellings must meet Building Regulations requirement M4(3) (wheelchair user dwellings). Where provided as market housing, these should be wheelchair adaptable dwellings. Where the Council is responsible for nomination or allocation, dwellings should be wheelchair accessible; and
 - g) parking and servicing – provision of appropriate and well-integrated parking, servicing, refuse and recycling arrangements.
3. Proposals involving the conversion or subdivision of existing buildings will only be supported where:
 - a) character and appearance - the proposal respects the form, structure, character and setting of the existing building;

- b) alterations and extension – any extensions or external alterations respond positively to the character and appearance of the building and surrounding area; and
- c) intensification – the proposal would not result in the over-intensification of the site or harm the character, function or amenity of the surrounding area.

14.24. The quality of housing design has a significant influence on the health, wellbeing and quality of life of residents, as well as the long-term attractiveness and sustainability of neighbourhoods across Tamworth. New homes should provide functional, adaptable and accessible living environments capable of meeting modern living needs over the long term.

14.25. As opportunities for new housing increasingly come forward on smaller, constrained or previously developed sites, it is important that development continues to provide a high standard of accommodation and does not result in cramped layouts, inadequate amenity space or poor quality living conditions. Particular care is also required in relation to conversions and subdivision schemes, which can place pressure on parking, servicing and residential amenity if not carefully designed.

14.26. The council considers that the nationally described space standards provide a clear, consistent and nationally recognised

benchmark for ensuring that new homes provide adequate internal living space and are capable of meeting the day-to-day needs of occupants over the long term. The standards are evidence-based, widely applied across the planning system and provide an established framework for assessing the quality and functionality of residential accommodation.

14.27. Their application is particularly important in Tamworth, where new housing development is increasingly coming forward on smaller, constrained or previously developed sites, and where there can be pressure to maximise site capacity. The standards will help ensure that development delivers functional and adaptable homes with sufficient space for day-to-day living, storage, home working and changing household needs over time, while supporting wider health, wellbeing and accessibility objectives.

14.28. The policy seeks to ensure that residential development delivers high quality living environments for future occupiers while supporting the efficient use of land and the delivery of accessible and adaptable homes. Further guidance relating to residential amenity is provided through policy EP1 (Safeguarding amenity and managing the impacts of development) and the accompanying Amenity Standards Annex. Guidance relating to internal space standards and residential design is provided in Annex B: Residential Design Standards.

14.29. The council recognises that exceptional site-specific circumstances may arise where full compliance with certain requirements of this policy may not be achievable. In such cases, applicants will be expected to provide robust evidence demonstrating why a departure from policy requirements is necessary and how an acceptable standard of accommodation and residential amenity would nevertheless be achieved.

Policy links:

Policy DE1: Delivering high quality design and respecting local distinctiveness

Policy EP1: Safeguarding amenity and managing the impacts of development

Policy HO1: Housing mix

Policy HO2: Housing density

Strategic Policy SP2: Climate change

Policy TA1: Managing car use

Policy TA2: Impact on the transport networks and highways safety

Policy NE1: Blue and green infrastructure

Residential infill and backland development

Policy DE4: Residential infill and backland development

1. Residential infill and backland development will be supported where proposals can be accommodated without harm to the character, appearance or amenity of the surrounding area.
2. Proposals must demonstrate that:
 - a) character and layout – the development responds positively to the character, grain and pattern of development in the surrounding area;
 - b) scale and appearance – the form, scale, massing and appearance of the development are appropriate to the site and its context;
 - c) site capacity – the site is capable of accommodating the proposed development without resulting in unacceptable intensification of the site, including in relation to layout, spacing, access, parking, servicing and the provision of private or communal amenity space;
 - d) amenity – the development is designed to provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers through appropriate levels of privacy, outlook, daylight and separation, having regard to policy EP1 and the Amenity Standards Annex;

- e) access and movement – safe and suitable access, servicing and circulation arrangements can be achieved without harm to highway safety, residential amenity or the character of the area. Backland development proposals should provide safe, legible and well-designed access arrangements that avoid long, narrow or poorly overlooked access routes; and
- f) landscape and boundaries – appropriate landscaping and boundary treatments are incorporated to ensure that development integrates positively with its surroundings and retains important gaps, spaces and landscape features that contribute to local character.

14.30. Residential infill and backland development can make an important contribution towards housing delivery and the efficient use of land in sustainable locations. In Tamworth, where opportunities for large-scale outward expansion are limited, smaller sites within existing residential areas are likely to continue to contribute towards meeting housing needs over the plan period.

14.31. However, infill and backland development can also place pressure on the character, layout and amenity of established residential areas if poorly designed or overly intensive. In parts of the borough, piecemeal forms of development have contributed to cramped layouts, inappropriate plot subdivision, poor access

arrangements, parking pressures, loss of garden character and harmful impacts on neighbouring amenity.

Policy TA2: Impact on the Transport Networks and highways Safety

14.32. The policy therefore seeks to ensure that infill and backland proposals make efficient use of land while responding positively to the established character, grain and pattern of development within the surrounding area. Development should integrate successfully with its surroundings and avoid overdevelopment, poor living conditions or unacceptable impacts on neighbouring occupiers.

14.33. Relevant guidance relating to privacy, outlook, daylight, separation distances and wider amenity considerations is provided in the Amenity Standards Annexe. Guidance relating to residential layout and design standards is provided in Annexe B: Residential Design Standards.

Policy links:

Policy DE1: Delivering high quality design and respecting local distinctiveness

Policy EP1: Safeguarding amenity and managing the impacts of development

Policy HO1: Housing mix

Policy HO2: Housing density

Policy TA1: Managing car use

Residential extensions and alterations

Policy DE5: Existing buildings – extensions and alterations

1. Proposals for the extension, alteration or addition to existing residential buildings will be supported where they are well-designed and would not result in harm to the character, appearance or amenity of the building, its surroundings or neighbouring occupiers.
2. Where appropriate, development proposals must demonstrate that:
 - a) design and character – the proposal responds positively to the scale, form, proportions, materials, detailing and architectural features of the existing building and surrounding area;
 - b) scale and massing – the proposal remains proportionate to and relates appropriately to the built form, in terms of scale and appearance of the property and surrounding area, taking account of previous extensions and alterations and having regard to Annex B: Residential Design Standards. Extensions should normally be designed to appear subordinate to the host building, including through appropriate set-backs, set-downs or other design measures, unless it can be demonstrated that an alternative approach would achieve a high quality design outcome;

- c) amenity – the development would not result in unacceptable impacts on the amenity of existing or future occupiers, including in relation to overlooking, loss of light, overbearing impacts or loss of privacy, having regard to Policy EP1 and the Amenity Standards Annex;
- d) garden space – the proposal would retain an appropriate level of private amenity space having regard to Annex B: Residential Design Standards; and
- e) street scene – the proposal would not result in harm to the character or appearance of the wider street scene or surrounding area.

14.34. Extensions and alterations to existing homes are among the most common forms of development within Tamworth and play an important role in allowing properties to adapt to changing household, accessibility and operational needs over time. Well-designed extensions can enhance the functionality, appearance and longevity of buildings while remaining sympathetic to their character and surroundings. However, poorly designed extensions and alterations can result in overdevelopment, loss of garden space, parking pressures, visual harm and unacceptable impacts on neighbouring occupiers. Incremental and poorly integrated additions can also, over time, erode the character and appearance of streets and established residential areas.

14.35. The policy therefore seeks to ensure that residential extensions and alterations are designed as an integral part of the building and site, having regard to scale, proportions, materials, detailing and relationships with surrounding development. Development should remain proportionate to the host building and avoid visually dominant, overbearing or poorly integrated forms of development.

14.36. Relevant guidance relating to overlooking, outlook, daylight, overbearing impacts and wider amenity considerations is provided in the Amenity Standards Annexe. Guidance relating to residential design standards is provided in Annexe B: Residential Design Standards.

Policy links:

Policy DE1: Delivering high quality design and respecting local distinctiveness

Policy EP1: Safeguarding amenity and managing the impacts of development

Policy HO1: Housing mix

Policy HO2: Housing density

Policy TA1: Managing car use

Policy TA2: Impact on the transport networks and highways safety.

Non-residential, commercial and employment design standards

14.37. Non-residential development, including employment, industrial, storage and distribution uses, alongside community, education, healthcare, leisure and other service uses, plays an important role in supporting the economy, providing jobs and meeting the day-to-day needs of residents across Tamworth.

14.38. In Tamworth, non-residential development is often located within or close to established residential areas, mixed-use environments, Neighbourhood Centres and key transport corridors. The borough also contains a number of established industrial and commercial areas where operational requirements, servicing activity and large-scale buildings can have a significant influence on the character, appearance and functionality of surrounding areas. It is therefore important that such development is carefully designed to balance operational and functional requirements with the need to achieve high quality design and protect the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

14.39. Poorly designed commercial and employment development can result in visual harm, poor quality environments, inactive frontages, excessive prominence of parking and servicing areas, and unacceptable impacts on the public realm and neighbouring uses. Shopfronts, advertisements and security measures can also have a significant influence on the appearance, vitality and

character of centres and commercial areas, particularly within the town centre and conservation areas.

14.40. The policies in this section establish a framework for assessing non-residential, commercial and employment development across the Borough. This includes:

Policy DE6: Non-Residential and Employment Development;

Policy DE7: Shopfront Design and Security; and

Policy DE8: Advertisements, Signs and Illumination.

14.41. Together, these policies seek to ensure that non-residential development responds positively to its surroundings, integrates successfully with the surrounding area and contributes towards the creation of attractive, functional and sustainable places.

Non-residential and employment development

Policy DE6: Non-residential and employment development

1. Non-residential and employment development should be designed to support operational requirements while contributing positively to the character, appearance, functionality and amenity of the surrounding area.
2. Development proposals for employment, industrial, storage and distribution uses, as well as community, education, healthcare, leisure and other non-residential uses, must be designed to ensure that their layout and operation reflect their functional requirements while protecting the character, appearance and amenity of the surrounding area.
3. Where appropriate, proposals must demonstrate the following:
 - a) site layout and movement – provision of a clear, legible and functional site layout that incorporates safe, efficient and inclusive access, servicing and internal circulation arrangements for all users;
 - b) buildings and external areas – buildings, parking, servicing, plant, storage and other operational areas are designed and located to minimise visual prominence and integrate positively with the surrounding area, including through the careful siting and screening of operational infrastructure;
 - c) landscaping and boundaries – incorporation of appropriate landscaping, boundary treatments and screening to mitigate

visual impacts and support the integration of development with its surroundings;

- d) amenity – external plant, lighting, storage, servicing and operational activities are designed and located to minimise impacts on neighbouring occupiers, having regard to Policy EP1 and the Amenity Standards Annex, including guidance relating to noise, disturbance, lighting, servicing and external operations
- e) external spaces – where appropriate to the nature and scale of the development, provision of usable, accessible and well-designed external spaces that support the function of the development and the wellbeing of users

14.42. Non-residential development often has operational and functional requirements that can influence the character, appearance and amenity of surrounding areas. Access arrangements, servicing, circulation, parking, plant, storage, lighting and external activity can all have a significant visual and environmental impact if not carefully integrated into the design and layout of development.

14.43. Amenity and environmental impacts arising from operational activities, including noise, lighting, servicing and external operations, are addressed through Policy EP1(Safeguarding

amenity and managing the impacts of development) and the accompanying Amenity Standards Annexe.

14.44. The policy seeks to ensure that employment, commercial, community and other non-residential development accommodates operational requirements in a way that supports high quality design, protects neighbouring amenity and contributes positively to the wider environment. Particular attention should be given to the organisation of sites, the relationship between buildings and public spaces, the treatment of boundaries and edges, and the visual impact of parking, servicing and external areas.

14.45. This is particularly important where non-residential development is located close to residential areas, public spaces or mixed-use environments, where poorly designed layouts and external operations can result in visual harm, poor quality environments and unacceptable impacts on neighbouring occupiers.

Policy links

Policy DE1: Delivering high quality design and respecting local distinctiveness

Policy EP1: Safeguarding amenity and managing the impacts of development

Policy TA1: Managing car use

Policy TA2: Impact on the transport networks and highways safety

Policy HC9: Public realm

Shopfront design and security

Policy DE7: Shopfront design and security

1. Shopfronts and associated security measures should contribute positively to the character, appearance and vitality of centres and streets.
2. New shopfronts and alterations to existing shopfronts must be designed to a high quality and respond positively to the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding street scene, preserving or enhancing heritage assets where relevant.
3. Development proposals must demonstrate how they respond to the principles set out in the Annexe C: Shopfront, Advertisements and Signage.
4. Existing shopfronts and architectural features that contribute positively to the character or historic interest of a building or street should be retained and restored where possible.
5. Security measures must be designed so that they do not harm the character or appearance of the building or street scene. Solid external shutters that obscure shopfronts will not normally be supported unless appropriately justified.

14.46. Shopfronts make an important contribution to the character, appearance and vitality of centres, shopping frontages and commercial areas across Tamworth. Well-designed shopfronts

can enhance the attractiveness and identity of streets and public spaces, support active frontages and contribute positively to the overall quality, accessibility and vitality of centres and local communities.

14.47. Across the borough, shopfronts form an important part of the street scene and can strongly influence the character and appearance of buildings and commercial areas. Poorly designed alterations, insensitive security measures and the loss of architectural detailing can erode local distinctiveness, create inactive frontages and harm the quality and appearance of centres and shopping streets.

14.48. The policy therefore seeks to ensure that shopfronts and associated security measures are designed as an integral part of the building and surrounding street scene, responding positively to the scale, proportions and character of the host building and wider area. Particular care will be required in relation to heritage assets, conservation areas and traditional shopping frontages where shopfront design forms an important part of local character and significance.

14.49. Detailed guidance relating to shopfront design, security measures and accessibility is provided in Annexe C: Shopfronts, Advertisements and Signage.

Policy links:

Policy DE1: Delivering high quality design and respecting local distinctiveness

Policy EP1: Safeguarding amenity and managing the impacts of development

Policy HC9: Public realm

Draft for consultation

Advertisements, signs and illumination

Policy DE8: Advertisements, signs and illumination

1. Advertisements, signs and illumination associated with all types of development should be designed and positioned so that they contribute positively to the character, appearance and functionality of buildings, streets and wider areas.
2. Advertisements, signs and other forms of commercial display, including those associated with retail, commercial and employment uses, must be designed and positioned so that they respond positively to the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area, and preserve or enhance heritage assets and their settings where relevant.
3. Proposals will be expected to:
 - a) be proportionate to the scale, function and architectural features of the host building, and not dominate or detract from the building or surrounding area;
 - b) be located on the principal frontage of the premises where appropriate, and positioned so as not to obscure architectural features or disrupt the composition of the building;
 - c) avoid excessive or poorly coordinated signage that would result in visual clutter, including the proliferation of multiple

signs of differing sizes, types or styles on a single building or site;

- d) ensure that illumination is discreet, energy efficient and appropriate to the character of the area, avoiding excessive brightness, glare or light pollution; and
 - e) ensure that hanging and projecting signs are appropriately scaled and positioned so that they respect the proportions of the building and do not impede pedestrian movement or create hazards.
4. In the Town Centre and conservation areas, advertisements should be of a high-quality design that reflects the character, scale and architectural detailing of the building and surrounding street scene.
 5. In employment areas, retail parks and other large-scale commercial developments, signage should be coordinated across the site and designed to minimise visual clutter, with particular regard to cumulative impacts and wider views.
 6. Internally illuminated box signs and other visually intrusive forms of advertisement will not normally be supported where they would harm the character or appearance of the building or surrounding area.
 7. Development proposals must demonstrate how they respond to the guidance set out in Annexe C: Shopfronts, Advertisements and Signage.

14.50. Advertisements, signage and illumination play an important role in supporting commercial activity, business visibility and wayfinding across the borough. They also make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of buildings, streets and wider townscapes.

14.51. In Tamworth, signage ranges from traditional fascia signs within the town centre and conservation areas to larger-scale commercial signage associated with retail parks, employment areas and industrial premises. While signage needs to support the operation and visibility of businesses, poorly designed, excessively prominent or poorly coordinated advertisements can result in visual clutter, harm the character and appearance of buildings and streets, and detract from the quality of the wider environment.

14.52. The policy therefore seeks to ensure that advertisements, signage and illumination associated with all types of development are appropriately designed, scaled and positioned having regard to the character of the building, the surrounding area and cumulative visual impacts.

14.53. Detailed guidance relating to advertisements, signage and illumination is provided in Annexe C: Shopfront, Advertisements and Signage Design.

Policy links:

Policy DE1: Delivering high quality design and respecting local distinctiveness

Policy EP1: Safeguarding amenity and managing the impacts of development

Policy HC9: Public realm

15. Flooding

- 15.1. Flood risk is not just about climate change, although this is a driving factor, it is also about what gets built and where. The flood policies in this section set out a clear approach to how the council will determine planning applications, relating to surface water flooding. They provide a logical and sequential approach to the assessment of applications, with the support of statutory partners, to determine if a development proposal is both suitable and appropriate in certain locations.

The sequential and exception tests

Policy FL1: The sequential test and exception test

1. The aim of the sequential test is to steer new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding. A sequential test will be required for all relevant proposed development, in accordance with National policy and guidance.
2. Proposed development will not be permitted if a sequential test shows that there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower risk of flooding.
3. If a sequential test shows it is not possible for the development to be located in areas with a lower risk of flooding, an exception test may need to be applied.

4. The exception test should be informed by a site-specific flood risk assessment and will need to demonstrate that:
 - a) The development would provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk; and
 - b) The development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall.
5. Proposed development requiring an exception test will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that both of the above criteria can be met.

- 15.2. The sequential test and exception test are important in managing surface water flood risk because they ensure development is located and designed in a way that minimises exposure to flooding and prevents new development from making flooding worse.

- 15.3. This policy is particularly important in Tamworth because:

- Large parts of Tamworth are shown to be at risk from surface water;
- Tamworth has drainage constraints typical of older urban area; and
- Tamworth is a constrained borough with tightly drawn boundaries.

15.4. The sequential test is critical for demonstrating that development is genuinely directed to the lowest-risk areas, and that higher risk areas are only used when unavoidable. Where no safer site exists the exception test ensures that development in higher risk areas is only approved if it can be made safe and delivers wider benefits.

Draft for consultation

Ensuring development is safe from flooding

Policy FL2: Ensuring development is safe from flooding

1. Development proposals within flood zones 2, 3a, or 3b will be refused if the proposed use is incompatible with the risk of flooding (as set out in national planning policy and guidance).
2. Proposed development in a location known to be at risk from any form of flooding, now or in the future, will be refused unless all of the following conditions are met:
 - a) the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk within the site, unless there are overriding reasons which justify a different arrangement;
 - b) the development will be safe throughout its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users;
 - c) any risk can be safely managed, and safe access and escape routes are included where appropriate, as part of an agreed emergency plan;
 - d) the development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient so that it could be quickly brought back into use without significant refurbishment in the event of a flood; and
 - e) it can be demonstrated that flood risk will not be increased elsewhere within the borough as a result of the development going ahead.

3. To inform the assessment of flood risk, development proposals in all flood zones will need to comply with national guidance on the scale of scope of the assessment required.

- 15.5. Development proposals should not present a risk from flooding to potential occupiers, users, or visitors, and should not increase flood risk elsewhere.
- 15.6. This policy sets out expectations to ensure that development proposed is safe from flooding and that it does not create risks for flooding in other parts of Tamworth. Flooding creates serious, long-term risks to people, property, infrastructure and the wider community.

Sustainable drainage systems, watercourses, and water quality

Policy FL3: Sustainable drainage systems, watercourses and water quality

1. Proposals affecting drainage on or near to the site should incorporate sustainable drainage systems to reduce runoff and flow rates of surface water.
2. The drainage system should be of a scale and nature proportionate to the development and be designed in accordance with relevant national standards and advice from the Lead Local Flood Authority where appropriate.
3. Proposals that take the opportunity to provide multifunctional benefits, such as facilitating improvements in water quality and biodiversity, or improving public amenity, will be supported.
4. Maintenance arrangements must be in place to ensure an acceptable standard of operation for the lifetime of the development.
5. Development proposals that would enclose an existing watercourse will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that there are exceptional circumstances to do so.

Water Quality

6. Proposals will be supported that seek opportunities for de-culverting, river restoration, naturalisation of watercourses, reconnection of rivers with their floodplains, natural flood

management and appropriate undeveloped buffer zones alongside rivers and watercourses.

7. Development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that it will not have an adverse impact on surface or ground water quality. This should include the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and Habitats Regulations. Development proposals should, where appropriate, demonstrate that:
 - a) adequate arrangements are made for the disposal of foul sewage, trade effluent and surface water to prevent a risk from pollution;
 - b) there is sufficient waste and foul drainage infrastructure capacity to meet the additional requirements arising from a development;
 - c) measures to reduce demand such as the use of grey water recycling and rainwater harvesting are incorporated into the development;
 - d) foul and surface water run-off are separated.

- 15.7. Sustainable urban drainage slows water down, stores it and lets it soak into the ground naturally. Features like swales, permeable paving, ponds and wetlands assist in holding back stormwater during intense rainfall thereby lowering the risk of surface water flooding which can impact communities and businesses. In

doing so the drainage systems also act as natural filters as water moves through vegetation and soil absorbing pollutants.

- 15.8. Whilst engineered to function and mitigate flooding from surface water, they can also be delivered in a way that supports habitat creation, such as a ponds, wetland or vegetated channels. They can be breeding grounds for amphibians, feeding areas for birds and they can also be planted to improve, for example, pollinator plants to support bees and insects.

Flood mitigation infrastructure

Policy FL4: Flood mitigation infrastructure

1. The delivery of engineering works to improve flood prevention will be supported.
2. Proposals will be required to:
 - a) Keep disruption to a minimum by planning works with other agencies and partners to ensure that impacts can be managed and co-ordinated; and
 - b) Prepare a detailed communications plan to ensure that communities are kept informed of progress
3. Proposals will need to consider and incorporate, where feasible, improvements to:
 - a) habitats and biodiversity;
 - b) recreation opportunities;
 - c) links to Tamworth's blue and green Infrastructure; and
 - d) connectivity to and within the flood plain for existing communities.
4. Development must not prejudice the operation, maintenance, repair, replacement or future improvement of flood risk management infrastructure.

5. Proposals that seek to use engineering works to artificially raise land levels within the flood plain will only be supported if they are also supported by the Environment Agency.
6. Financial contributions or other appropriate mitigation may be required where new off-site flood risk management infrastructure would be required to make new development acceptable or where development creates additional pressure on that infrastructure.

15.9. The council recognises that flooding is a problem in the town and supports any work by public agencies or developers that helps reduce flood risk, including where developers are looking to make new housing sites more resilient by including proactive flood mitigation measures that go above and beyond what is legally required.

15.10. Whilst the Environment Agency can deliver flood defences as a statutory undertaker under permitted development legislation, it is important to recognise that the significance of any works will have impacts elsewhere that might require consent.

16. Protecting the natural environment

- 16.1. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment is a core principle of sustainable development because it supports and ensures the long-term resilience of environmental wellbeing which is the overall health, stability, and resilience of the natural world.
- 16.2. Environmental wellbeing matters because it directly influences human health, economic development, and quality of life. Protecting environmental wellbeing supports sustainable development and helps create healthier, more resilient societies.
- 16.3. Tamworth's natural environment is one of its most valuable assets. The borough covers 3,084.5 hectares, within which a rich mosaic of designated and locally important sites which contribute to ecological resilience and community wellbeing. These include Sites of Biological Importance, SSSIs, Local Geological Sites, Local Nature Reserves, local wildlife sites, and a valuable network of ecological sites that already play a vital role in supporting biodiversity.
- 16.4. The council is committed to strengthening nature's recovery and ensuring that development within Tamworth helps to support this aim, and this section of the plan contains the policies that will help to achieve it.

16.5. This section contains the following policies:

- Policy NE1: Blue and green infrastructure
- Policy NE2: National and local sites of importance for biodiversity
- Policy NE3: Geodiversity
- Policy NE4: Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)
- Policy NE5: Biodiversity no net loss
- Policy NE6: Trees

Blue and green infrastructure

Policy NE1: Blue and green infrastructure

1. Major development proposals will be required to explore opportunities to:
 - a) integrate into the existing blue and green infrastructure network rather than treating green space as a residual land use;
 - b) maintain, enhance and, where possible, create new links between blue and green infrastructure features such as those set out below. Links should be created both on-site and, where possible, with nearby blue/green infrastructure features; and
 - c) utilise potential multifunctional benefits of blue/green infrastructure features.
2. The features referred to in 1 b) include:
 - a) International and nationally important sites for nature conservation;
 - b) Other sites of strategic/local importance for nature conservation;
 - c) Rivers, canals, and all other water bodies, such as streams, wetlands and ponds, their riparian corridors/floodplains and areas immediately adjacent to such features;
 - d) Individual trees, hedgerows and woodland, including areas of tree planting;

- e) Green/open recreational or amenity space, including parks, playing pitches, and cemeteries;
 - f) Community growing space, such as orchards and allotments;
 - g) Green features within the built environment, including street trees, verges, green roofs, landscape buffers and gardens;
 - h) Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs);
 - i) Flood alleviation schemes, including storage lagoons;
 - j) Wildlife corridors, including hedgerows, ditches, and verges;
 - k) Public rights of way and cycle ways; and
 - l) Disused quarries.
3. New green infrastructure should be in keeping with the existing landscape character of the development sites, including its habitat type and species selection.
4. Where practical and appropriate in design terms taking into account site context developments should incorporate innovative green infrastructure into the design of buildings such as green roofs and green walls.
5. All blue and green infrastructure delivered through development must be supported, where appropriate, by clear, secure and deliverable long-term management arrangements, secured through planning conditions or legal agreement.

16.6. National planning policy defines green infrastructure as, 'A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which

is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.’ Benefits can include enhanced wellbeing, outdoor recreation and access, enhanced biodiversity and landscapes, food and energy production, urban cooling, and the management of flood risk. The local plan refers to blue and green infrastructure, to clarify that water plays an important part in green infrastructure.

16.7. Tamworth’s identity and landscape are strongly shaped by its network of rivers, canals and open spaces. The confluence of the River Tame and River Anker lies at the heart of the historic town centre, with floodplains and green corridors extending through and beyond the urban area. The Coventry Canal forms a key blue corridor running north-east to south-west across the borough, while tributaries such as Kettle Brook contribute to local character, drainage and biodiversity.

16.8. Together, these features form a blue and green infrastructure network that performs multiple functions. It supports biodiversity and nature recovery, helps manage flood risk and climate impacts, provides opportunities for walking, cycling and recreation, and contributes to health, wellbeing and sense of place. In a compact and tightly constrained borough such as Tamworth, the quality, accessibility and connectivity of this network is critical.

16.9. Our aim is for Tamworth to be defined by a connected, resilient and inclusive network of green spaces and blue and green infrastructure that supports nature recovery, climate resilience, active travel and healthy communities.

Policy Links:

NE4: Biodiversity Net Gain

NE6: Trees

FL3: Sustainable drainage systems, watercourses and water quality

Strategic Policy SP2: Climate change

Strategic Policy SP8: Design, placemaking, and the built environment

EM4: Strengthening the visitor economy

Designated sites and geodiversity

Sites of importance for biodiversity

Policy NE2: National and local sites of importance for biodiversity

1. Development should follow the mitigation hierarchy to first avoid, then mitigate, and where necessary compensate for loss or harm to biodiversity.
2. Where loss or harm either directly or indirectly to a European site, national or locally designated site cannot be avoided, or adequately mitigated, as a last resort compensation for the loss/harm must be agreed.
3. Development will be refused if loss or significant harm cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated or compensated for.
4. For irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees); development that would cause the loss or deterioration of these habitats will be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy is in place.

National Sites

5. Proposals that are likely to have an adverse effect on a national site (alone or in combination) will not normally be permitted, except where the benefits of the development in that location

clearly outweigh both the impact on the site and any broader impacts on the wider network of national sites.

6. Proposals considered likely to have a significant effect on a nationally protected site will be required to assess the impact by means of an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Local Sites - including Local Nature Reserves and Local Wildlife Sites

7. Development resulting in the loss or significant harm to a local site, or habitats or species supported by local sites, whether directly or indirectly, will only be supported if it can be demonstrated that there is a need for development in that location and the benefit of the development outweighs the loss or harm.
8. Development proposals likely to have a significant impact on local sites will be required to assess the impact by means of an Ecological Impact Assessment.

- 16.10. Tamworth has a single nationally designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at Alvecote Pools. The site straddles the Tamworth and North Warwickshire borders and has a total area of 37.6 hectares. The site is also designated as a site of National Nature Conservation importance. Birds, dragonflies and orchids are key indicator species that highlight the ecological importance of this site.

16.11. At the local level the borough has six Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) plus one site recognised as locally important to nature and treated and managed as a LNR despite not having formal Natural England designation. These sites are managed through the “Wild About Tamworth” partnership, outlined in the table below and detailed on the proposals map.

16.12. When considering impacts on these sites in line with the policy, proposals should take into account adverse impacts such as recreational pressure, functionally linked land, air quality and water quality.

16.13. Development must protect and enhance biodiversity, delivering measurable improvements in the natural environment. The Council will take a hierarchical approach to assessing proposals, as set out in national guidance. Compensatory enhancements will only be considered when no other measures are demonstrated to be feasible.

List of Local Nature Reserves

Local Nature Reserve	Site area (ha)	Description
Broad Meadow Island between two river channels of the Tame, off Lichfield Road near Moor Street Island.	25	Floodplain meadow on the River Tame; a rare lowland grassland habitat and one of very few sites in

		Staffordshire supporting wild Snake's Head Fritillary.
Dosthill Park Dosthill area, adjoining River Tame and near Dosthill Quarry.	12	Mixed habitats include woodland, grassland, ditches and riverside corridors; popular park with walking routes and wildlife improvements since designation in 2010.
Hodge Lane Accessed from Chandler's Drive, Amington.	4.5	Small reserve with woodland paths, grassland, canal towpath and picnic areas; locally important accessible green space.
Kettlebrook Extends from Glascote to Wilnecote via Belgrave with multiple access points.	65.8	Linear reserve with lakes, watercourses and varied habitats; supports community conservation and recreational access along the brook corridor.
Tameside Fazeley Road between Tamworth and Fazeley.	4.55	Reserve centred on a man-made lake with islands supporting birdlife; includes diverse habitats and walking routes.

Warwickshire Moor Off Moor Lane, Bolehall.	25	Wetland site with pools, boardwalks, reeds and grassland; created with conservation funding and suitable for wildlife observation (e.g. small mammals and wetland plants).
Locally Important Site (not an LNR)	Site area (ha)	Description
Town Wall Off Hockley Road, Wilnecote	1	Informal green space with meadow, trees and deadwood habitats encouraging biodiversity and community use (e.g. play and informal recreation)

16.14. Local Wildlife Sites are a network of locally important sites that provide refuges for species, act as wildlife corridors and stepping stones that link habitats together in Tamworth's urban area and help to create a connected landscape, making it more resilient to pressures like development and climate change. Their designation is based on the most important distinctive and threatened species and habitats within a national, regional and local context, making them extremely valuable and an important part of helping nature's recovery.

16.15. Whilst Local Nature Reserves and Local Wildlife Sites do not have legal protection in the same way as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, they are material considerations in planning decisions, and will be taken into account when assessing development proposals.

16.16. The table below provides detail on the network of nature sites that Tamworth has, such as Local Wildlife Sites which includes Sites of County Biological Importance (SBI's), Biological Alert Sites (BAS) and Ecological Sites. Many of the sites are located alongside the waterways, railways or main transport routes through Tamworth and help to provide transport corridors for nature.

List of natural environment designations within Tamworth

Site	Ecological Sites	SBIs	SSSI	Sites of National nature conservation	LoGs	Natural England LNRS
Broad Meadow West	☑	☑	✗	✗	✗	☑
Eastern Border of Golf Course LWS	✗	☑	✗	✗	✗	✗
Wigginton Park	☑	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗

Warwickshire Moor LNR	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Area just below Warwickshire Moor LNR	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Tameside LNR	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Amington Hall	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Royals Farm	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Path of the Anker rear of Ashlands Farm	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
The Decoy, Amington Hall	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Alvecote Pools	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Hodge Lane LNR	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Brindley Drive LSW	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
The Egg	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Dosthill Quarry LoGs	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒

Kettlebrook LNR (this is not the whole area for all layers)	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Town Wall	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Dosthill Park	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Stonydelph Wet Woodland	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
South of the Brick Works / North of Rush Lane Hockley.	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Hockley West LWS (Balancing lake west of the brick works)	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
West of Hockley Clay Pit LWS	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Dosthill Quarries SBI	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒

Fazeley (canal adjacent Tameside nature reserve)	×	☒	×	×	×	×
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Geodiversity

Policy NE3: Geodiversity

1. Dosthill Church Quarry is a Local Geological Site (LoGS) containing key geological features that should be protected.
2. Any development that has the potential to negatively impact the geological features of the LoGS will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that suitable mitigation measures are in place.
3. Where harm cannot be avoided or mitigated, proposals will be refused unless strong justification can be provided that the public benefits of the proposal would outweigh the harm to, or loss of, the geological features.
4. Proposals that would provide opportunities to improve public access to, or understanding of, the geological interest of the LoGS will be supported.

16.17. Geodiversity refers to the variety of rocks, fossils and minerals and natural landscape forming processes on the earth. This is taken to include all geomorphological features and landscapes resulting from weathering and erosion and the transportation and deposition of soils and rocks.

16.18. At the local level the protection and conservation of geodiversity is delivered through a network of Local Geodiversity Action Plans

(LGAPs) to manage and safeguard an area's geodiversity into the future.

16.19. The regionally/locally important sites are designated as Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) also now known as Local Geodiversity Sites or LoGS. There are non-statutory sites and, Tamworth's one LoGS can be found on the Policies Map.

16.20. Once lost, a geological or geomorphological feature cannot be restored or re-introduced like some plants and animals, nor can the habitat it supported be recreated. These sites also provide valuable scientific and educational opportunities when deposits are exposed and not normally visible to observe. It is therefore very important that these sites are protected from unnecessary impacts of development.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity Net Gain

Policy NE4: Biodiversity Net Gain

1. In accordance with national legislation, development must deliver a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, measured using the most recent statutory biodiversity metric, unless an exemption applies.
2. The council will encourage higher BNG outcomes from development where the opportunity exists.
3. The delivery of BNG on-site will be preferred, unless it can be demonstrated that this is not feasible or would undermine site viability.
4. Where off-site units are proposed, they must be secured prior to commencement. The council would encourage consideration for off-site provision in the following ways:
 - a) Sites identified in the most up to date Local Nature Recovery Strategy or equivalent document;
 - b) Sites identified as part of the council's green infrastructure network (see policy NE2) including wildlife sites and nature reserves;
 - c) Habitat corridors such as rivers or canals;

- d) Council owned land safeguarded for future habitat creation to encourage BNG delivery and identified on the Policies Map.

5. Off-site BNG will be secured through a section 106 agreement or Conservation Covenant for a minimum of 30 years, with a requirement for periodic monitoring reports to demonstrate that habitat creation and enhancement measures are being delivered and maintained.

16.21. Biodiversity Net Gain is a way of creating and improving biodiversity by requiring development to have a positive impact (net gain) on biodiversity. The policy sets out the operation of BNG expectations within the borough, ensuring that development in Tamworth contributes meaningfully to nature's recovery, climate adaptation, and the creation of a greener, healthier, and more resilient borough.

16.22. The small, compact, and urban nature of Tamworth makes BNG essential to the borough. Onsite creation is important to give new communities access to green areas and nature, creating environments that support wildlife and provide opportunities to connect green networks across the town. Off-site provision will also support existing nature habitats, corridors and steppingstones by enhancing those environments for future generations.

Policy links:

Strategic Policy SP2: Climate change

NE1: Blue and green infrastructure

NE2: National and local sites of importance for biodiversity

FL3: Sustainable drainage systems, watercourses and water quality

Draft for consultation

No Net Loss for development not subject to mandatory BNG

Policy NE5: Biodiversity no net loss

1. Proposals that are not subject to statutory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements must demonstrate that there is no net loss of biodiversity as a result of the development. This will be assessed using a proportionate approach appropriate to the scale and nature of the development.
2. Proposals that are not able to demonstrate no net loss of biodiversity without an appropriate justification will be refused.

Proportionate Assessment

3. Applicants must provide evidence showing the existing biodiversity value of the site and how the proposal will avoid, minimise, and mitigate impacts. The biodiversity no net loss annexes on householder and non-householder development provide guidance on the application of this policy.

Minimum Requirements

4. All proposals must follow the standard mitigation hierarchy: avoid harm first, then minimise it, then mitigate it, and only compensate as a last resort.
5. Biodiversity outcomes should be delivered on-site unless it is demonstrated that this is not practicable.
6. Off-site measures or compensation will only be accepted where they secure equivalent biodiversity value and where avoidance of

harm and on-site mitigation have been demonstrated to be unachievable.

Management and monitoring

7. Where habitat creation or enhancement is proposed, applicants must provide a proportionate management plan to ensure the long-term success of biodiversity measures.

16.23. Tamworth, like the rest of the UK, is facing serious nature loss, and this affects everything from local wildlife to how well the borough can cope with climate change. Even in a compact, urban place like Tamworth, nature plays an essential role in cooling the town, reducing flood risk, improving air and water quality, and supporting pollinators. Residential gardens are especially important here by providing a large share of food for pollinating insects and acting as steppingstones for wildlife across the borough.

16.24. National policy now requires most developments to deliver at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, but many of the schemes that come forward in Tamworth are small and therefore fall outside of the scope of national BNG requirements. This creates a real risk that, without local action, nature could continue to decline even as national policy aims to reverse the trend.

16.25. For these reasons, the policy requires all built development falling outside the scope of national BNG rules, and where the

site has some biodiversity value (for example is not on a built or sealed surface), to achieve no net loss of biodiversity. This approach recognises Tamworth's unique urban pressures and ensures that even small changes to homes and neighbourhoods contribute positively to nature recovery.

16.26. Proposals under this policy should look to compensate for any loss of biodiversity in the following ways:

- a) retain existing habitats of value wherever feasible;
- b) replace any lost habitat on a like-for-like or better basis;
- c) incorporate on-site biodiversity enhancements, such as native planting, tree provision, wildlife friendly Suds, or habitat features for priority species as appropriate to the site size and setting unless strong reasons are submitted as to why this is not possible.

16.27. Further information on the application of this policy can be found in the relevant annexes.

Policy Links

NE4: Biodiversity Net Gain

Trees

Policy NE6: Trees

1. The council will require the retention and protection of existing trees, veteran trees, ancient trees, woodlands and important landscape features. Where appropriate, applications must show how trees, shrubs and other vegetation have been incorporated to deliver amenity, environmental and biodiversity benefits.
2. Development that would result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitat, including ancient woodland will be resisted.
3. Development that would damage or remove trees of amenity or townscape value, including veteran trees, will be refused unless it can be appropriately demonstrated that they are dead, dying, dangerous, causing significant structural damage, or are of very limited value and cannot reasonably be retained.
4. Where removal of trees can't be avoided, replacement planting will be required on-site. Where this is not possible, an off-site contribution may be required in line with CAVAT (Capital Asset Value for Amenity Trees).
5. When designing new development:
 - a) layouts should secure a suitable relationship between trees and new or existing development, avoiding pressure for future pruning or removal;

- b) tree planting to be incorporated from the outset, using species suited to the site and allowing sufficient space for mature growth. Native species will be encouraged where appropriate; and
 - c) existing trees must be protected during development in accordance with British Standard 5837.
6. The council will use Tree Preservation Orders or planning conditions where necessary to secure the retention of trees that contribute to local amenity or townscape.
7. Consent for works to protected trees, including those covered by Tree Preservation Orders or in Conservation Areas, will only be granted where pruning follows good arboriculture practice, felling is supported by appropriate arboriculture or structural evidence, and adequate replacement planting is proposed.

16.28. Trees, hedges, shrubs and other significant vegetation make an important contribution to the borough's townscape and the quality of life for residents. These elements provide visual and amenity enhancements to the built environment, while also providing much needed habitats for biodiversity. Trees, and in particular mature trees, can help improve air quality and contribute to tackling climate change by capturing and storing carbon dioxide. Trees will continue to play a significant role in adapting to climate change by having a positive impact on

reducing flood risk, helping to reduce urban heat and providing shade.

16.29. A tree-rich urban landscape continues to be recognised as a significant attraction for new businesses, fostering employment opportunities, contributing to increased property values and attracting more visitors. It is also recognised that the presence of trees in built-up areas can reduce anxiety, improve mental health, reduce stress and promote psychological restoration.

16.30. Urban trees form a critical component of Tamworth's green infrastructure. This policy establishes a clear framework for the protection, management, and expansion of Tamworth's tree resource, ensuring that environmental, social, and aesthetic benefits are embedded in future planning and land management decisions. This policy is supported by the councils Tree Policy and Framework which establishes principles around 'The Right Tree in the Right Place'.

Policy Links:

SP8: Design, placemaking and the built environment

DE1: Delivering high-quality design and respecting local distinctiveness

HC9: Public realm

17. Environmental Protection and Amenity

- 17.1. Protecting amenity and managing the impacts of development are fundamental to achieving high-quality, sustainable and healthy places. Development should contribute positively to the quality of life of existing and future occupiers, supporting health, wellbeing, privacy, safety and overall quality of life, whilst ensuring that neighbouring land uses and the wider environment are not adversely affected.
- 17.2. Ensuring that land is safe, stable and suitable for development is a fundamental requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF requires planning policies to prevent unacceptable risks from land instability, contamination and pollution, and to ensure that new development does not expose people or the environment to harm. It also requires that contaminated land is remediated to a standard appropriate for its intended use.
- 17.3. Minerals are essential for infrastructure, buildings, energy generation and manufactured goods. Because minerals can only be worked where they occur, the NPPF states that planning authorities should make best use of them and secure their long-term conservation. Tamworth's mineral history is centred on coal extraction and clay working. Whilst major extraction activities have ceased, mineral safeguarding remains an important planning consideration under Staffordshire's Minerals Local

Plan. There also remains an operational brick and tile works within the borough, reflecting the continued importance of clay resources. The Minerals Local Plan defines the Minerals Safeguarding Areas in Tamworth.

- 17.4. The NPPF also states that soils should be protected and enhanced recognising their wider natural capital, ecosystem services and economic benefits. Agricultural land is limited due to the borough's urban character. Nevertheless, there are areas of Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural land located around the borough's edges.

- 17.5. This section contains the following policies:

- Policy EP1: Safeguarding amenity and managing the impacts of development
- Policy EP2: Ground conditions and contamination
- Policy EP3: Safeguarding minerals and soils

Amenity and impacts of development

Policy EP1: Safeguarding amenity and managing the impacts of development

1. Development proposals must safeguard the amenity of existing and future occupiers and ensure that unacceptable environmental or operational impacts are avoided or appropriately mitigated.
2. Development proposals must avoid or minimise adverse impacts relating to:
 - a) privacy and overlooking;
 - b) daylight and sunlight;
 - c) enclosure and overbearing impacts;
 - d) noise, vibration and disturbance;
 - e) artificial light pollution;
 - f) odour, dust and fumes;
 - g) crime and fear of crime;
 - h) land contamination;
 - i) air quality; and
 - j) water quality.
3. Development proposals must assess the direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of development on the amenity of existing and future occupiers, neighbouring land uses and environmental

quality, and demonstrate how any adverse impacts will be avoided, minimised or appropriately mitigated.

4. Development proposals should be informed by the guidance set out in Annexe A: Amenity Standards. Where proposals depart from the guidance, applicants must demonstrate that a high standard of amenity will nevertheless be achieved and that no unacceptable impacts would arise.
5. Development proposals that would generate significant construction or operational impacts, including HGV movements, servicing activity, noise, vibration, dust, fumes or disturbance, must demonstrate how such impacts will be avoided, minimised or appropriately mitigated. Where appropriate, proposals should be supported by a Construction Management Plan addressing matters including noise, dust, traffic, waste management, hours of operation and site safety.
6. Development proposals that incorporate measures which reduce existing levels of pollution or deliver wider environmental improvements will be supported.
7. Development proposals that would result in unacceptable impacts on amenity or environmental quality that cannot be satisfactorily avoided, minimised or mitigated will be refused.

- 17.6. A high standard of amenity is an essential component of successful placemaking. The relationship between buildings and

spaces, together with the design, layout and operation of development, can have a significant influence on privacy, outlook, daylight, sunlight, environmental quality and perceptions of safety. Development should therefore be designed from the outset to avoid or minimise adverse impacts and create healthy, attractive and functional environments.

17.7. This policy applies to development of all scales, from householder proposals and infill development to larger residential, commercial and mixed-use schemes. Poorly designed or inadequately mitigated development can result in harmful impacts on living conditions and environmental quality, particularly where development is located close to existing homes and other sensitive uses. Applicants are therefore expected to consider not only the direct effects of development, but also any indirect or cumulative impacts on existing and future occupiers, neighbouring land uses and environmental quality.

17.8. Annexe A: Amenity Standards provides further guidance to support the implementation of this policy. The standards and assessment tools set out in the annexe will normally be expected to be met.

Policy links:

Policy FL3: Sustainable drainage systems, watercourses and water quality.

Policy SP9: Sustainable transport and active travel

Policy TA1: Managing car use

Policy DE1: Delivering high quality design and respecting local distinctiveness

Policy DE3: Design standards for new housing, including conversions and subdivisions

Policy DE4: Residential infill and backland development

Policy DE5: Existing buildings - extensions and alterations

Policy DE6: Non-residential and employment development

Policy DE7: Shopfront design and security

Policy DE8: Advertisements, signs and illumination

Land Quality, Minerals and Soils

Pollution, ground conditions and contamination

Policy EP2: Pollution, ground conditions and contamination

1. Development must ensure that land is suitable for its proposed use, taking account of ground conditions, land instability, contamination, and risks to human health, property, and the environment. Proposals that cannot demonstrate that the land is safe, stable and capable of supporting development will be refused.
2. Development proposals will be supported where they:
 - a) demonstrate that land is suitable for development by providing proportionate site investigations, risk assessments and remediation strategies where contamination, land instability or poor ground conditions are known or suspected;
 - b) ensure that development does not result in unacceptable risks to human health, controlled waters, property, or the natural environment;
 - c) secure appropriate remediation and mitigation measures that make the land safe and suitable for its intended use, and does not cause unacceptable impacts elsewhere;
 - d) ensure that remediation is completed before occupation where relevant, unless phased delivery is justified and agreed;

- e) avoid creating new contamination or instability risks and ensure construction practices minimise disturbance, pollution pathways and risks to neighbouring land;
- f) protect sensitive uses by avoiding placing vulnerable uses (such as housing, schools, hospitals or play areas) on or adjacent to land affected by contamination or instability unless risks can be fully mitigated; and
- g) consider cumulative and off-site impacts on surrounding land, groundwater, surface water, habitats and infrastructure.

17.9. Ground conditions vary significantly across the borough, and many sites, particularly brownfield land, may contain contamination. Without proper investigation and remediation, such land can pose risks to human health, controlled waters, buildings, and ecosystems. Addressing these risks early in the planning process ensures that development is deliverable, safe and sustainable.

17.10. Proportionate site investigations and risk assessments are essential to understanding the nature and extent of any contamination or instability, including the cumulative impacts. Where risks are identified, remediation strategies must be robust, evidence-based and secured through planning conditions or legal agreements. Ensuring that remediation is

completed before occupation protects future residents and users and avoids long-term liabilities.

17.11. Protecting sensitive uses is particularly important. Housing, schools, healthcare facilities and play areas must not be located on land where contamination or instability cannot be fully mitigated. This policy ensures that vulnerable groups are protected and that development contributes to a safe, healthy environment.

Draft for consultation

Safeguarding minerals and soils

Policy EP3: Safeguarding minerals and soils

Safeguarding Minerals

1. The council will ensure that development safeguards mineral resources, protects existing minerals infrastructure, and promotes the sustainable use of soils in accordance with the national policy and the Staffordshire Minerals Local Plan.
2. Development proposals will be supported where they:
 - a) do not adversely affect existing minerals extraction sites, processing facilities, transport infrastructure, or land allocated for future mineral use; and
 - b) demonstrate that proposals within or adjacent to Minerals Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) will not sterilise mineral resources of local or national importance.
3. Where non-mineral development is proposed within an MSA, applicants must assess the feasibility of prior extraction of the mineral resource and proposals will only be permitted where:
 - a) prior extraction has been carried out;
 - b) prior extraction is not viable or practicable; or
 - c) the need for the development outweighs the value of the mineral resource.

4. The council will consult the Minerals Planning Authority, on all applications likely to affect MSAs, mineral infrastructure, or mineral allocations.

Protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land

5. Development proposals should prioritise development on lower-quality agricultural land (Grades 3b, 4 and 5) over Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a).
6. Development on BMV land will only be supported where:
 - a) no reasonable alternative sites exist; and
 - b) the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the loss of high-quality soils.

Safeguarding soil quality and function

7. Development proposals should ensure that:
 - a) soils are conserved, reused and managed sustainably during construction and operation; and
 - b) green infrastructure, landscaping and sustainable drainage are incorporated in a way that protects soil health to avoid unnecessary soil sealing.

17.12. Minerals Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) identify where economically important mineral resources exist. Development within these areas must consider the feasibility of prior extraction to avoid sterilising resources that may be needed in the future. This

approach supports the long-term supply of minerals and reduces pressure on more sensitive or remote extraction sites. The Minerals Local Plan defines the Mineral Safeguarding Areas within the borough.

- 17.13. National planning policy also requires planning policies to protect Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land, recognising its importance for food production, soil health, carbon storage and landscape quality. Prioritising development on lower-grade land helps safeguard high-quality soils for future generations and supports national food security.
- 17.14. Soils are a vital natural asset. They support biodiversity, regulate water, store carbon and contribute to landscape character. Sustainable soil management during development helps maintain these functions and supports climate resilience.

18. Sustainable transport and active travel

18.1. The policies in this section are influenced by the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) and its associated transport and travel related data. This highlights several important travel patterns in Tamworth:

- **High reliance on cars**, with car ownership increasing between the 2011 and 2021 Census periods.
- **Short vehicular journeys** are common, suggesting strong local trip patterns but also potential for modal shift to active travel.
- **Traffic volumes and delays** remain a challenge on key strategic routes.
- **Bus reliability** and **bus stop accessibility** vary across the borough, with some areas experiencing lower service consistency.
- **Rail station footfall** shows stable usage, though service frequency and connectivity remain areas for improvement.
- **Cycling levels** indicate low but gradually increasing participation.

18.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that transport considerations should be embedded from the earliest

stages of plan-making and decision-taking, using a vision-led approach to create sustainable, well-designed places.

18.3. Sustainable transport and active travel are central to achieving sustainable development, supporting reductions in carbon emissions, improving health outcomes, and ensuring accessible and inclusive communities. This can be achieved by reducing reliance on private car travel and encouraging a shift towards more sustainable transport modes.

18.4. Active travel, including walking and cycling, is integral to this approach. Well-designed, safe, and attractive routes can support everyday journeys, improve public health outcomes, and enhance the vitality of neighbourhood centres.

18.5. Development should be located and designed to support a '20-minute neighbourhood' approach, where day-to-day services are accessible by walking, cycling, or wheeling. Generally a '20-minute neighbourhood' assumes a comfortable walking distance of about 1–1.5 miles (1.6–2.4 km) round-trip, depending on terrain, mobility, and local conditions. The emphasis is on *reasonable* walking or wheeling distance rather than a strict radius.

18.6. The council will work with partners and developers to deliver integrated transport networks that support sustainable growth and regeneration.

18.7. This section contains the following policies:

Strategic Policy SP9: Sustainable transport and active travel

Policy TA1: Managing car use

Policy TA2: Impact on the transport network and highways safety

Policy TA3: Freight, servicing and logistics

Draft for consultation

Sustainable transport and active travel

Strategic Policy SP9: Sustainable Transport and Active Travel

1. The council will promote sustainable transport and active travel as a central element of growth and place-making in Tamworth. Development, where possible, must contribute to a transport system that is safe, inclusive, low-carbon and supports healthy and well-connected communities.
2. Where appropriate proposals for new development will be expected to demonstrate that they:
 - a) are located in an accessible and sustainable location, supporting safe and convenient access to employment, education, services, public transport and supporting walkable neighbourhoods;
 - b) will reduce reliance on private vehicles by minimising car-based travel and designing layouts that discourage unnecessary car movements and prioritise active and sustainable modes of transport;
 - c) will provide direct, safe walking and cycling routes that are well-lit, accessible to all users and integrated into wider networks;
 - d) will improve access to reliable public transport by providing connections to travel hubs, bus stops and railway stations;

- e) will contribute to reduced carbon emissions and improve air quality by incorporating measures such as EV charging, modal shift, and green infrastructure into proposals;
- f) support well-connected, healthy neighbourhoods by designing places that encourage physical activity, social integration and independent mobility for all ages and ability in an environment that is safe, attractive and designed for people first;
- g) can protect and enhance existing Public Rights of Way wherever possible, and where diversions are unavoidable, provide enhanced, more direct or safer alternatives that improve connectivity and accessibility, integrating into green corridors and wider active travel networks where possible.

18.8. Sustainable transport refers to ways of moving people and goods that have minimal negative impact on the environment, society, and economy, both now and in the future. Sustainable transport includes public transport (buses, trains, trams), electric or low-emission vehicles, cycling and walking, car sharing or ride sharing and rail freight instead of road haulage.

18.9. Active travel is a type of sustainable transport that involves physical activity as part of the journey. It mainly includes walking, wheeling, and cycling but will also include things like running and scooting, especially for short trips.

18.10. Tamworth is a compact borough with good access to public transport, including the strategic rail network and established bus corridors. Despite this, there are high levels of car dependency which contributes to congestion. New development must therefore be planned and designed to support a shift towards walking, cycling and public transport, helping to reduce emissions and improve the health and wellbeing of residents. Proposals should align with relevant guidance such as Active Travel England design standards.

Managing car use

Policy TA1: Managing car use

1. Development will be supported where it is designed to minimise reliance on private car use and to ensure that streets and neighbourhoods prioritise people over vehicles.
2. Development proposals will be supported where they:
 - a) provide appropriate secure bicycle storage meeting or exceeding national design standards;
 - b) provide changing, shower and locker facilities in employment development to encourage active travel to work (where appropriate);
 - c) provide parking in accordance with the council's parking standards set out in the parking standards annex;
 - d) demonstrate that parking provision does not undermine sustainable transport objectives; and
 - e) integrate parking into the design of development so that:
 - i. car parking does not create car dominated environments;
 - ii. pedestrians and cycle movement, high-quality public realm and safe inclusive street design is considered;
 - iii. landscaping, boundary treatments and layout minimise the visual impact of parking; and

- iv. EV charging is incorporated into parking areas to support the move towards lower emissions vehicles.

- 18.11. This policy responds directly to the need to reduce travel by private car, supporting active and sustainable transport modes, and ensuring that development contributes to well-connected, walkable neighbourhoods.
- 18.12. Providing secure and convenient cycle storage is fundamental for enabling active travel. Supporting cycling through high-quality infrastructure and facilities, and the provision of secure cycle parking is important for encouraging more people to cycle.
- 18.13. Car parking provision must be carefully managed to avoid encouraging unnecessary car use. In Tamworth, the town centre benefits from excellent access to public transport, walking and cycling routes, and concentration of services and facilities. Maximum parking standards in this location will help to reduce congestion, support active travel, and reinforce the town centre's role as a sustainable, accessible destination.
- 18.14. In other parts of the borough, minimum parking standards will be applied to ensure that development does not result in unsafe or obstructive on-street parking. These standards will continue to be applied in a way that supports sustainable travel choices and avoids car-dominated environments.

Transport network and highway safety

Policy TA2: Impact on the transport network and highway safety

1. Development must ensure that safe and suitable access can be achieved for all users and that the transport impacts of development are appropriately assessed and mitigated. Proposals that would result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety or, after mitigation, a severe residual cumulative impact on the transport network will be refused.
2. All development that would generate significant amounts of vehicle movements relative to its location, scale or function will be required to:
 - a) submit a transport statement/assessment demonstrating how the development will avoid or mitigate adverse impacts on the transport network; and
 - b) include a travel plan, where appropriate, setting out measures to reduce car dependence and promote sustainable travel.
3. To ensure safe and suitable access for all, developments need to demonstrate that access arrangements are safe, inclusive and appropriate for pedestrians, wheelchair users, cyclists, public transport users and vehicles.
4. To avoid unacceptable impacts on highway safety developments will need to:

- a) demonstrate that they will not create or exacerbate safety risks for any road user; and
 - b) incorporate design measures that reduce vehicle speeds, improve visibility, and support safe movement within and around the site.
5. Developments should prevent severe residual cumulative impacts on the transport network by:
 - a) identifying the cumulative effect of the development in combination with committed schemes; and
 - b) provide mitigation that is deliverable, proportionate and effective in addressing impacts.

18.15. Tamworth is a compact borough with a constrained road network and several key junctions that already experience congestion at peak times. New development has the potential to increase traffic levels, place pressure on existing infrastructure, and affect the safety of all road users. It is essential that the transport impacts of development are properly understood, assessed and mitigated.

18.16. Transport assessments and transport statements provide evidence needed to evaluate the likely effects of development on the transport network. They allow the council and the local highway authority to understand trip generation, traffic

distribution, access arrangements, parking demand, and the implications for active travel and public transport.

18.17. Mitigation measures may include improvements to junctions, pedestrian and cycle facilities, public transport infrastructure, travel planning, or measures to reduce car dependency. Where such measures are necessary. They must be deliverable, effective, and secured through planning conditions or legal agreements. Mitigation cannot however be used to justify development that would still result in a severe cumulative residual impact or compromise highway safety.

18.18. The council will work closely with the highways authority to ensure that proposals are safe and appropriate.

Freight, servicing, and logistics

Policy TA3: Freight, Servicing and Logistics

1. Development must support the efficient, safe and sustainable movement of freight and servicing activity. Proposals should demonstrate how they minimise impacts on the highway network, reduce emissions, and avoid conflicts with residential areas and sensitive uses.
2. Proposals for freight, logistics, distribution and last-mile delivery facilities will be supported where they:
 - a) are located in areas with good access to the highway network; and
 - b) avoid unacceptable impacts on air quality, noise, vibration and residential amenity;
3. To reduce congestion and emissions, the Council will support parcel lockers/pick up and drop off points, cargo bike logistics facilities in town and local centres and low-emission last-mile delivery hubs.
4. Where development would require regular deliveries or servicing, those facilities will be required to be designed in a way that would not compromise safety, amenity or local character. This includes:
 - a) providing safe, unobtrusive loading areas;
 - b) reducing conflicts between delivery vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and public transport;

- c) providing off-street loading, turning and waiting areas; and
 - d) taking measures to reduce peak-hour deliveries.
5. Proposals for new or expanded distribution centres will be supported where they provide sufficient lorry parking to cater for their anticipated use.

18.19. Tamworth's location at the junction of the A5, M42, and close to the M6 Toll makes the borough a key node in the Midlands freight network. In addition to freight through traffic, the borough's economy includes distribution centers, last-mile delivery hubs, retail warehousing and construction supply chains and these sectors rely heavily on freight.

18.20. High levels of HGV movement, congestion at key junctions, and the proximity of residential areas to industrial estates mean that freight and servicing activity must be carefully managed to protect amenity, support economic growth, and reduce emissions. This policy ensures that safeguards are in place.

18.21. With the growth in e-commerce increasing, last-mile delivery including parcel vans, couriers, and same day delivery services is also increasing. This policy supports last-mile deliveries to help reduce freight pressure on the road network and town center.

19. Infrastructure and Obligations

Infrastructure

- 19.1. The provision of sufficient and appropriate infrastructure is required to support the growth and change set out in this local plan.
- 19.2. Infrastructure is provided by private and public bodies and includes:
- Social infrastructure: school, healthcare and community facilities for example.
 - Physical infrastructure: footpaths, cycleways flood prevention and drainage, utilities.
 - Green infrastructure: open spaces, recreation facilities, trees and wildlife sites and corridors.
- 19.3. The council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) provides more detail of the infrastructure required to support the plan. The IDP has been prepared alongside the local plan's spatial strategy to ensure that infrastructure is delivered to support the planned increases in housing, employment and town centre opportunities. The IDP identifies essential infrastructure and its importance in delivering the growth across the borough.

Infrastructure delivery

Policy IO1: Infrastructure delivery

1. Proposals should demonstrate a comprehensive and future-proofed approach to the delivery of development and infrastructure that mitigates the cumulative impact of development.
2. Where appropriate, development proposals should:
 - a) contribute appropriately and proportionately towards required infrastructure, having regard to the latest IDP, at a rate and scale sufficient to support the growth identified in the local plan;
 - b) connect to area-wide infrastructure and enable future connections; and
 - c) be appropriately designed so that it complements and does not unduly restrict development on adjacent or connected sites.
3. Developers will be expected to participate in early pre-application engagement with the council and infrastructure service providers to discuss their requirements.
4. Development contributions will be sought where needs arise, in line with the policy requirements of the plan.

5. Where necessary planning conditions will be used to ensure that development is not occupied ahead of the delivery of any necessary infrastructure upgrades.
6. Proposals for residential and employment uses should demonstrate that provision is made for high-speed internet infrastructure as part of the application.

- 19.4. New development in the borough needs to mitigate its impacts on existing communities to ensure that existing services, facilities and physical infrastructure are not overwhelmed and unable to accommodate addition growth.
- 19.5. Developers will be expected to engage early with the council and appropriate infrastructure service providers to discuss relevant requirements. Developers will need to take both a site-specific approach to infrastructure delivery as well and a wider approach, depending on advice from infrastructure providers. For example, this could be around highway impacts which, depending on the location and size of the site could have both a local and wider geographic impact requiring solutions that extend beyond the development site.
- 19.6. It is important that each development provides a fair contribution towards both site-specific and area-wide infrastructure. Alongside this, cumulative impacts arising from the development across the area will need to be coordinated

and adequately mitigated. Delivering infrastructure in a timely way will be important to ensure that development impacts are mitigated appropriately.

Draft for consultation

Development contributions

Policy IO2: Developer contributions

1. The council will secure the infrastructure necessary to support the growth outlined in this plan, ensure sustainable development, meet the needs of development and, where necessary, mitigate the impacts of development by:

- a) securing appropriate on-site enabling and development works;
- b) charging the Community Infrastructure Levy on developments as required by any charging schedules in operation for the area within which the development is located;
- c) securing planning obligations to provide affordable housing and mitigate the impacts of the development;
- d) securing off-site highway works, including provision for cycling and walking, where necessary; and
- e) working with relevant service providers to identify and secure infrastructure funding or financing mechanisms.

19.7. Where there are site specific requirements needed to make a development acceptable, these will be secured through s106 agreements where they are:

- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- directly related to the development;
- and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

19.8. This includes things like affordable housing, contributions towards education provision, or site-specific highway requirements.

19.9. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will apply to relevant development in line with the adopted charging schedule and the collected CIL contributions will be used to improve wider infrastructure across Tamworth to support the borough's growth.

19.10. Infrastructure delivery is not the only cost a developer has to accommodate. Other costs include the incorporation of sustainability standards, good design, public realm and affordable housing. In addition, development sites may have significant costs to bring development forwards such as contamination or poor ground conditions. Whilst these factors all contribute to a site's ability to contribute to infrastructure, the costs associated with bringing a site forward should be mitigated by the land value and not the site's ability to deliver appropriate infrastructure contributions.

19.11. The council does however recognise that occasionally development viability on a site will be challenging and, in these

circumstances, bringing the site forwards will need to be balanced with the contributions capable of being delivered.

Draft for consultation