



Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

**Regulation 19 Screening
July 2026**

Tamworth Local Plan

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1. Introduction and Background

Purpose of this Report

1.1 This Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) report has been produced to accompany the review and publication of the Pre-Submission Tamworth Local Plan.

1.2 In May 2026 the Tamworth Local Plan underwent significant engagement to underpin the development of a new and revised Local Plan. Policy Directions indicating the likely content of future Local Plan policies were published and consulted on. This formed part of the Reg.18 consultation on the plan and provided the opportunity for consultees to comment and support how the Pre-Submission Plan (Reg.19 plan) and policies will manage change over the long term within the Borough.

1.3 The initial screening report aimed to identify and collect information in relation to designated European Nature Conservation sites, which could be affected by proposals promoted through the Local Plan Review process. The report also provided an initial overview of the potential effects of the Local Plan Review's policies and growth options on European sites. It offers early insight into which elements are likely to require Appropriate Assessment.

1.4 The screening report details several European Sites which it is considered have a potential relationship with the plan area. This list was refined to take account of the known pressures influencing these sites and the degree to which such pressures could be influenced by policies and proposals within the emerging Local Plan.

1.5 The screening report concluded that a number of the European sites should be discounted from future consideration and that attention should be focussed on the following sites:

- **Cannock Chase SAC**
- **The River Mease SAC**

1.6 A number of the policy directions/themes within the Issues and Options (Reg.18) plan were concerned with identifying future development, and it was recommended that these aspects of the plan should be the prime focus of further screening assessment and potentially an Appropriate Assessment of likely effects as the plan proceeds through the various stages of plan preparation.

1.7 This iteration of the HRA will continue the process of policy evaluation to examine what effect the preferred development strategy and policy choices may have on European sites both alone and in combination with the plans and programmes of other agencies and authorities.

The Local Plan Review

1.8 The Pre-Submission Tamworth Local Plan is the planning policy framework for delivering growth and managing change within the Borough. The Pre-Submission Local Plan contains a set of overarching strategic policies that set out broad principles for guiding development supplemented and supported by detailed policies which will address specific development issues. To deliver the Plan, strategic development site allocations are made in the Local Plan supported by policies which will bring forward other development sites.

1.9 Once adopted this plan will replace the Tamworth Local Plan 2006 - 2031 which was adopted in February 2016.

1.10 The Pre-Submission Plan will set out the preferred option for a growth strategy and the policies that will support it. Both the Pre-Submission Plan and this HRA report will be subject to public consultation from the end of August 2026 – to the beginning of October 2026.

1.11 This updated Screening report includes the screening of all policies and strategic sites set out in the Pre-Submission Local Plan consultation document. The screening process has been iterative and has informed the preparation of the Pre-Submission Local Plan. The conclusion sets out the change made to Policy FL3: Sustainable drainage systems, watercourses and water quality.

1.12 There were no comments from Natural England at the Reg.18 plan stage.

2. Habitats Regulations Assessment

Legislation, policy and guidance

2.1 The EC Habitats Directive is a European law from 1992 that requires EU countries to protect Europe's most valuable wildlife and natural habitats. Its purpose is to make sure threatened species, and important habitats are kept healthy and don't disappear. It does this by creating protected areas which form part of the wider Natura 2000 network — the largest network of protected sites in the world.

2.2 After Brexit, the UK amended the Habitats Regulations mainly to ensure they operate independently of EU institutions. The underlying protections and the HRA process remain the same, but governance has shifted from the EU to UK authorities. Key changes include establishing a National Site Network, transferring functions to UK ministers, and adjusting reporting and designation processes.

2.3 The following sites form part of the National Network of Sites (previously the EU Natura 2000 network) and are protected because of their rare habitats, species, and ecological value:

- **Special Areas of Conservation (SACs):** A Special Area of Conservation is a protected natural site chosen because it contains rare, threatened, or important habitats and species.
- **Special Protection Areas (SPAs):** Special Protection Areas are protected sites to safeguard rare, vulnerable, and migratory bird species and the habitats they rely on.
- **Ramsar sites:** Ramsar sites are wetlands that have been recognised as internationally important under the Ramsar Convention,

The National Site Network also includes all future designations such as:

- **cSACs (candidate SACs)**
- **pSACs (possible SACs)**
- **pSPAs (potential SPAs)**
- **proposed Ramsar sites**

2.4 Government guidance and HRA practice treat potential and candidate sites as if they are already designated because they have been identified as ecologically

important and are likely to become protected sites. This precaution ensures that development cannot undermine the site's value before it receives full legal status.

2.5 **A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)** is a legally required process used to determine whether a plan or project—such as a development proposal, local plan, or infrastructure scheme—could have significant effects on internationally important nature conservation sites.

2.6 HRAs help ensure that development, and land-use decision-making, respects internationally important ecosystems. They protect vulnerable species and habitats by:

- Preventing harmful environmental impacts;
- Guiding mitigation measures, and;
- Ensuring long-term ecological resilience.

2.7 The Local Plan review is not a plan directly connected with or necessary to the conservation management of a European site and therefore a Habitats Regulation Assessment will be required.

2.8 The 2024 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning policies and decisions must reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements. This includes the legal duty to undertake HRA where a plan or project may affect a protected European site. The methodology and process of undertaking a HRA is governed by the Habitats Regulations and not by the NPPF. If a proposal triggers HRA requirements, the decision-maker must apply the Habitats Regulations directly.

Methodology

2.9 The screening appraisal is required to both inform and assess each stage of the Plan process. This is the second screening report prepared as part of the Local Plan Review.

2.10 The UK HRA methodology, as set out in national guidance, follows a structured three-stage process: **Screening** to determine whether likely significant effects may occur; **Appropriate Assessment** to evaluate impacts and mitigation in detail; and, if harm cannot be avoided, a final **Derogation Stage** requiring proof of no alternatives, overriding public interest, and compensatory measures. This methodology ensures that plans and projects can only proceed where they will not negatively affect the ecological integrity of protected European sites.

Stage 1. Screening for Likely Significant Effects (LSE):

2.11 Determines whether the proposal, alone or in combination with other plans/projects, is likely to have significant impacts on a designated site.

Key tasks typically include:

1. Identifying relevant European sites.
2. Reviewing site conservation objectives and qualifying features.
3. Identifying impact pathways (for example recreation, air quality, water quality, hydrology, habitat loss, disturbance).
4. Assessing potential effects alone and in combination.
5. Making a screening conclusion.

If likely significant effects can be ruled out, the HRA concludes at this stage. If they cannot be ruled out, the assessment proceeds to Appropriate Assessment.

Stage 2. Appropriate Assessment (AA):

2.12 Where likely significant effects cannot be excluded, the competent authority must undertake an Appropriate Assessment. This considers the implications of the proposal in view of the site's conservation objectives.

The AA normally:

- Examines the nature and magnitude of impacts.
- Considers mitigation measures.
- Assesses the proposal against conservation objectives.
- Determines whether there would be an adverse effect on site integrity (AEI).

The authority can only approve the plan or project if it can ascertain, beyond reasonable scientific doubt, that there will be no adverse effect on site integrity. This reflects the precautionary principle.

Stage 3. Assessment of Alternatives

2.13 If an adverse effect on integrity cannot be ruled out, the authority must consider whether there are alternative solutions that would avoid the harm. This may include:

- Alternative locations.
- Alternative routes.
- Alternative designs.

- Alternative scales or methods of development.

Stage 4: Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI)

2.14 If no alternatives exist, a proposal may only proceed where there are Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI). These may relate to:

- Human health.
- Public safety.
- Important environmental benefits.
- Other overriding social or economic reasons (subject to additional tests for priority habitats and species).

Stage 5: Compensatory Measures

2.15 Where a project is approved under the IROPI provisions, compensatory measures must be secured to maintain the overall coherence of the National Site Network.

Examples include:

- Habitat creation.
- Habitat restoration.
- Species mitigation and management programmes.
- Long-term monitoring and management arrangements.

2.16 The aim of this second screening stage is to determine whether the Local Plan, either alone or in combination with other relevant plans and projects, is likely to result in any likely significant adverse effects upon the integrity of any European site. The likely significance effect 'test' serves to identify any plans or projects which can be screened out, based on the conclusions that they will be unlikely to result in any significant effects on qualifying features. Where this is the case, no further appropriate assessment work is required.

2.17 It should be noted that Local Plan adoption can only proceed where it does not affect the integrity of any European sites. If Stage 1 concludes that the Plan would have no likely significant effect, the need for Stage 2 is redundant. Alternatively, if the likely effects are deemed worthy of an Appropriate Assessment, Stage 2 can be used to identify suitable mitigation, often through adaptation of elements of the Local Plan. In the exceptional event where a plan which is deemed to have a negative effect is progressed, it must be demonstrated that this is for 'imperative reasons of overriding public interest'.

Identifying the European sites that could be affected:

2.18 The first task of the screening assessment is the identification of European sites within or adjacent to Tamworth with the potential to be affected by the Local Plan.

2.19 There is no statutory distance, buffer or radius, or mapped zone set out in law for how far a competent authority must look when identifying European sites during HRA screening. This is because effects can occur over very different distances:

- **Air quality** effects can occur many kilometres away.
- **Hydrological** connections can affect sites far downstream.
- **Recreational** pressure tends to be local -but can extend across regions.
- **Mobile species** (e.g., birds, bats) travel large distances.

2.20 The law therefore avoids rigid buffers and instead requires a precautionary, evidence-based assessment. Whilst screening thresholds are not present in legislation, there are common screening thresholds derived from Natural England guidance and common Habitats Regulations Assessment practice:

- **10–15 km** for recreational pressure (usually for large SACs with public access)
- **Up to 200m** from the roadside for pollution deposition, but could be **10–20 km** for air quality impacts from road traffic
- **Hydrological systems:** no fixed distance, but depends on the hydrological catchment
- **Species specific sites:** often very small, localised zones, sometimes <1 km

2.21 The following potential impact pathways are considered to be within the scope of influence of the Local Plan.

Air pollution: Land use planning has the potential to increase atmospheric emissions of pollutants to the air. These can result in adverse effects at European sites such as eutrophication (nitrogen), acidification (nitrogen and sulphur) and direct toxicity (ozone, ammonia and nitrogen oxides). Air quality screening distances are typically to road side, heathland, or nitrogen-sensitive habitats. In combination, impacts can be over larger distance.

Water resources and water levels: Urban development can change run off rates from urbanised areas to European sites or watercourses which run through them. An increase in housing provision can also influence supply and demand for water within the region which may impact water levels.

Water quality: Surface water run-off from urban areas has the potential to reduce the quality of water entering a catchment. Water quality may also be reduced through point source effluent discharges from new development at Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTWs) and other controlled discharge sources. Changes in water quality also has

the potential to affect functionally linked land (land or watercourses outside a designated site boundary).

Recreational pressure: New development has the potential to increase recreational pressure upon European sites which are accessible to the public.

Urbanisation: New residential development close to European sites have the potential to impact on those sites in the following ways – cat predation, fire risk, fly-tipping, trampling, lighting and noise.

2.22 The following sites have been identified within close proximity to Tamworth. Whilst there are no European sites within the Tamworth boundary, there are 5 sites with possible impact pathways set out on Map 1.

They are:

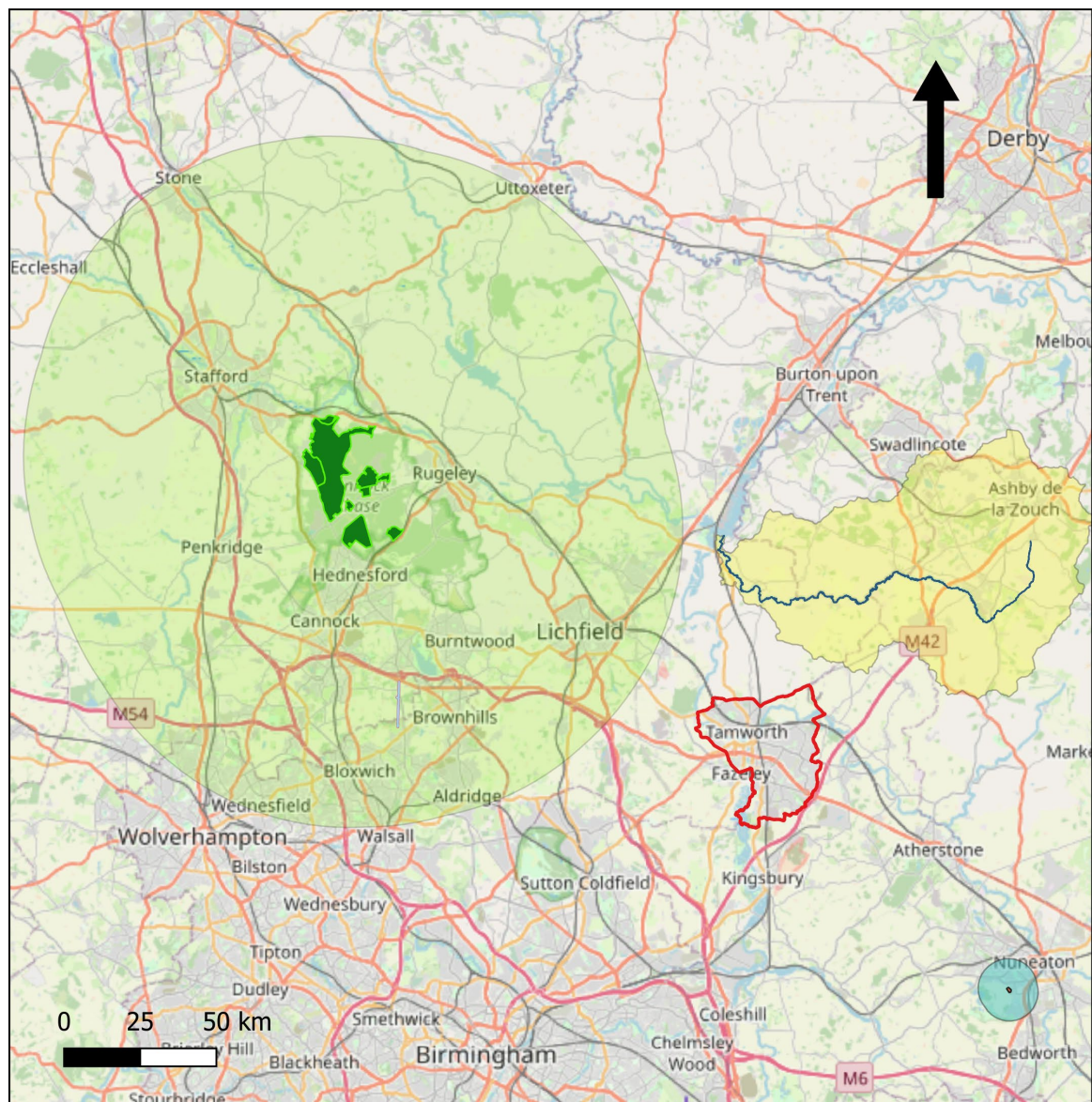
- **Cannock Canal Extension (SAC)**
- **Cannock Chase (SAC)**
- **Ensor's Pool (SAC)**
- **River Mease (SAC)**
- **Humber Estuary (SAC/SPA/RAMSAR)**

2.23 Spatial data relating to Special Areas of Conservation were sourced from Natural England Open Data (2025), and cross-checked against the Joint Nature Conservation Committee UK Protected Area datasets.

2.24 The Humber River Basin District (RBD) is a large area covering the river systems that drain into the Humber Estuary. For Tamworth, the key shared hydrology with the Humber RBD is through the:

- **Rivers Tame/Anker/Mease and Trent system**

Map 1. Relationship between Tamworth and the National Network of Sites.



- | | |
|---|---|
| Cannock Chase SAC | Ensors Pool SAC Zone of Influence |
| Cannock Chase Canal Extension SAC | Mease Catchment |
| Ensors Pool SAC | Tamworth Borough Council Boundary |
| River Mease | OpenStreetMap UK Base Map |
| Cannock Chase Zone of Influence | |
| Cannock Chase Canal Extension Zone of Influence | |

ONS open geography portal for local authority boundaries.

Information has been collated from the Joint Nature Conservancy Council SAC webpages for each designated site concerning the rationale for the designation.

Appendix 1 provides a description of each European Site used to inform the screening assessment, with particular regard to conservation objectives, vulnerabilities and risks.

Drawing on the relative sensitivities of the European sites we can identify the European sites and possible impact pathways that could be relevant in the screening. These are set out in Table 1 and Appendix 1.

Table 1: Summary of European sites with potentially relevant impact pathways for those sites and those that can be eliminated from further consideration (grey shading).

European Site	Approx. distance from Borough	Potential Plan Influence				Notes and for grey shaded rows, reasons for elimination from rest of plan
		Air Quality	Water Issues	Recreation	Urbanisation	
Cannock Canal Extension SAC	27km	-	-	-	-	Air: The distance from the SAC means that emissions from growth in Tamworth would disperse before reaching the SAC. The habitat is not nitrogen sensitive. No impact pathway. Water: The SAC's ecological importance is linked to its water quality, which supports floating water-plantain and diverse aquatic flora. The SAC relies on local hydrology connected to the Wyrley and Essington Canal system. There are no shared waterways or hydrological pathways between Tamworth and this canal. No impact pathway. Recreation: There is no published recreation impact zone for the SAC. The canal is specialist, low traffic and a linear site which is not a major visitor destination. No impact pathway. Urbanisation: This site is located some distance from Tamworth's Borough boundary. It is considered that there is no impact pathway.
Cannock Chase SAC	17-18km	X	-	X	-	Air: Cannock chase is sensitive to nitrogen deposition and experiences deposition above the critical load for both dry and wet heath habitats. The main source of nitrogen affecting the SAC is road traffic. Road's crossing and surrounding the Chase are used by commuters, and additional development in the wider area leads to additional vehicle trips and increased emissions. Potential impact pathway. Water: Tamworth is located on the River Tame, which forms part of the Trent River Basin, whereas the Cannock Chase SAC consists of dry heath habitats with a small number of inland water bodies. There is no hydrological relationship. No impact pathway.

						Recreation: Cannock Chase SAC has a 15 km recreation zone of influence and visitor survey information shows that 75% of visitors live within approximately 15km of the SAC. Tamworth is not within that zone and does not contribute through planning obligations money to mitigate measures. There is clear evidence that new residential development within the ZOI leads to higher levels of recreation activity, which in turn damages the sensitive heathland habitats. Potential impact pathway. Urbanisation: This site is located some distance from Tamworth's Borough boundary. It is considered that there is no impact pathway.
Ensor's Pool SAC	19km	-	-	-	-	Air: Airbourne pollutants are not a specific vulnerability for Ensor's Pool SAC. No impact pathway. Water: Water quality and water levels are both important to support the large population of white-clawed crayfish. The SAC is a small, 3.86 ha, site which is a closed, self-contained waterbody with no other hydrological pathways to other water bodies. Impacts to the site which could compromise water quality are described by Natural England as site-specific rather than catchment wide. No impact pathway. Recreation: Ensor's Pool is not identified as a site vulnerable to increased recreational pressure. No impact pathway. Urbanisation: This site is located some distance from Tamworth's Borough boundary. It is considered that there is no impact pathway.
River Mease SAC	1-2km	-	X	-	-	Air: There is no direct evidence tying River Mease water quality or ecology to Tamworth's air quality. Vehicle emissions associated with urbanisation and growth can contribute to airbourne pollutants that later deposit onto land and water surface, eventually entering river systems through runoff. Diffuse pollution is a catchment wide issue. No impact pathway. Water: The River Mease flows westwards and joins the River Trent near Croxall in Staffordshire whereas the River Tame flows through the West Midlands and joins the River Trent at Alrewas, which is a few miles upstream of where the Mease joins. Both rivers are part of the Tame-Anker-Mease catchment, a connected network of rivers that share environmental

						pressures such as urban runoff and sewage inputs in the Tame's upper catchment (Birmingham, Solihull, Walsall) and agricultural nutrient pressures in the rural areas surrounding the Mease. Both rivers flow into the Trent a few miles apart but do not directly meet each other and they are both part of the same catchment and hydrological system. Potential impact pathway. Recreation: Tamworth is a large population in close proximity to the River Mease. The river will be used for angling, walking and paddling, and these recreational activities will create localised disturbance where access is available. The River Mease is not a visitor attraction in the same way as Cannock Chase and as such activity associated with the river system is of a lower intensity. No impact pathway. Urbanisation: This site is located close to Tamworth's Borough boundary but not adjacent to it. The closest distance is 2-3 km therefore the impacts associated with urbanisation is limited. No impact pathway.
Humber Estuary SAC/SPA/RAMSAR	158km	-	-	-	-	Air: Distance to site too great to consider impact further. No impact pathway. Water: The rivers Tame, Anker and Mease form part of the Humber Estuary catchment area, which is a European site. Whilst the three rivers have a hydrological connection with the Humber, at such a distance, the only possible impact is provided by wastewater discharges. However, given the dilution effect provided by the distance, river volume and that wastewater treatment plants must meet strict water quality standards by law, it is considered reasonable to discount effects that will arise from the Tamworth Local Plan. Consequently, the Humber RAMSAR is eliminated from any further consideration in this HRA. No impact pathway. Recreation: Distance to site too great to consider impact further. No impact pathway. Urbanisation: Part of the Humber estuary catchment is within Tamworth's Borough boundary. However, the key pathway for this European site is water quality rather than impacts associated with urbanisation, given the distance from the Estuary. No impact pathway.

Table 1 eliminates three sites from further consideration in the HRA due to the assessments identifying that there is no impact pathways associated with the delivery of the Local Plan. The two key sites to focus the HRA on are the Cannock Chase SAC and River Mease SAC. Further information on the plan influences to support the assessment in Table 1 are set out below.

Air pollution

2.25 Vehicle emissions have significant and well-documented impacts on the environment, primarily because they release pollutants and greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change, air pollution, and ecosystem harm.

2.26 Development is typically associated with increased traffic and emissions which can increase the airborne concentration of nitrogen oxides (NO_x), particulate matter (pm_{2.5}), and volatile organic compounds (VOC's).

2.27 Pollutant deposition, when Airbourne pollutants settle on surfaces, can contribute to nutrient enrichment and acidification of soils. Such changes may encourage more tolerant plant species that thrive in disturbed environments because they are fast growing, hardy and adaptable, at the expense of sensitive plant types, simpler plant and invertebrate communities. In high concentrations, ammonia, NH₄, can result in direct toxic effects on vegetation. Furthermore, these pollutants can contribute to climate change which will raise temperatures and change rainfall levels and frequency that could threaten species survival, disrupt biodiversity and alter habitats.

2.28 In contrast, larger animals, such as small mammals and birds are considered immune to direct effects but can be vulnerable to change in their supporting habitats.

2.29 However, levels of nitrogen deposition fall quickly in the first few metres from the roadside before gradually levelling out; beyond 200m, they become difficult to distinguish from background levels. Typically impacts at 10m, 50m or 200m can be very different from those at the roadside. It can be seen, therefore, that the additional contributions that might arise from increased traffic are only likely to be significant where a European site lies within 200m of a road which is expected to experience an increase of traffic, and where a feature is known to be sensitive to such effects.

2.30 Such relatively simple tests essentially represent the scope of a screening assessment leaving more detailed analysis and its relationship to the ecological characteristics of the European sites at risk to the appropriate assessment, should any European sites fall into the above categories.

2.31 European sites where there are roads within 200m and where increased traffic could result in risks are: Cannock Chase SAC and the River Mease SAC, however there is no evidence of air quality having an impact on the River Mease SAC whereas the Cannock Chase SAC is a nitrogen sensitive habitat, is promoted as a visitor destination, is criss-crossed by roads, albeit the site is located further away. ***The impact pathway for the Local Plan is the Cannock Chase SAC.*** Of particular importance is the assessment of air pollution in-combination with plans and projects in neighbouring authorities and further afield for the Cannock Chase SAC.

Water Issues

2.32 Water issues include water quality and water quantity (i.e. water availability), and flood management. Run-off, outflow from sewage treatments and overflow from septic tanks can result in increased nutrient loads and contamination of water courses. Abstraction and land management can influence water flow and quantity, resulting in reduced water availability at certain periods or changes in the flow. Such impacts particularly relate to aquatic and wetland habitats. The local utility companies (Severn Trent Water and South Staffs Water) have legal duties to provide drinking water and wastewater treatment for most new dwellings.

2.33 The Environment Agency regulates such activities including private solutions such as septic tanks and abstraction licences. Development that is carried out without the necessary infrastructure in place or that fails to meet established standards could compromise the conservation objectives of European sites. Assessment of water related issues are primarily a check that the overall quantum of growth can be accommodated without compromising the ecological integrity of hydrologically sensitive European sites. There are no issues in relation to water quantity within the Tamworth area.

2.34 Tamworth Borough Council's Capacity Study, 2025, identifies that the sewage treatment works on Coton Lane have scope for expansion to cater for increased demand in the future. In addition, the sewage treatment works located in Polesworth has additional capacity. There was however caution regarding the River Mease catchment where there are ongoing issues with nutrient neutrality. Nutrient neutrality is a planning requirement that ensures that new development does not increase nutrient pollution, especially phosphorus and nitrogen, entering the River Mease.

2.35 Development north of Tamworth would require mitigation including directing sewerage to treatment works outside the River Mease catchment area and ensuring that no issues are caused due to surface water run-off or filtration.

2.36 The catchment for the River Mease is north of Tamworth's boundary and so the nutrient neutrality requirement does not apply. That said, development to the north needs to be mindful of its location and where sewage is processed.

2.37 Water issues relating to water quality which could pose a risk are: River Mease SAC. This is the key threat to this SAC. ***The impact pathway for the Local Plan is the River Mease SAC.***

Recreation

2.38 Harmful ecological effects from recreational pressure relate to increased numbers of people living nearby and using sites for recreation. Issues relate to a range of activities including dog walking and mountain biking and impacts include trampling, vegetation wear, erosion, increased fire risk (barbeques etc), dog fouling and litter. The most popular destinations can draw in visitors in greater numbers from considerable distances. Less popular sites or those with fewer facilities, have a smaller catchment, fewer visitors and the issue is typically less problematic. Alternatively, some sites managed specifically to encourage large numbers of visitors may be able to tolerate these pressures without experiencing significant harm.

2.39 Importantly, whilst individual allocations, unless large and in close proximity to a fragile European site, rarely result in likely significant effects alone from recreation, a number may have a cumulative effect that can result in likely significant effects in-combination.

2.40 Cannock Chase has numerous nature trails and waymarked paths, family friendly routes and scenic walks. It also has cycling and mountain biking trails and downhill runs, bridleways and a trekking centre. There is also excellent infrastructure for visitors such as a visitor centre, a forest centre, car parks, picnic spots, cafes, playgrounds, and cycle hire.

2.41 The issues from recreation pressure at Cannock Chase SAC have long been recognised and are set out in a range of studies.

2.42 A strategic mitigation scheme has been established and has applied a zone of 15km used to identify where cumulative effects from housing growth are relevant. Tamworth is beyond the 15km boundary but only just and the in-combination impact with plans and projects in neighbouring authorities and further afield should be tested.

2.43 In contrast the River Mease, because of the sensitivity of the European site, is not promoted as a tourist attraction. The focus for this site is on conservation rather than recreation. There are no formal visitor centres, car parks, toilets, or recreational infrastructure directly associated with the Mease itself. The river flows through private land, agricultural areas and environmentally sensitive areas where public access is limited. The surrounding countryside has general rights of way only, but these are not branded or maintained as River Mease trails.

2.44 Recreation issues, to differing degrees, could pose a risk to the River Mease SAC and Cannock Chase SAC. However, the River Mease has very limited access and no

facilities and so ***the impact pathway for the Local Plan will be the Cannock Chase SAC due to the scale of the attraction.***

Urbanisation

2.45 New residential development close to European sites have the potential to impact on those sites in the following ways – cat predation on ground nesting birds, fire risk, fly-tipping, dumping of garden waste, trampling, lighting and noise spill, anti-social behaviour.

2.46 Individual residential allocations, unless large and near a fragile European site, will rarely result in likely significant effects alone from urbanisation.

2.47 Whilst the Tamworth boundary is within a couple of kilometres of the nearest section of the River Mease it is not adjacent to it, where everyday interactions with the site can be undertaken. To get to the River Mease at the closest point to the Tamworth boundary it would take a car journey and a walk to reach the water environment. It is therefore considered that due to the distance between Tamworth and the European sites there is no opportunity for them to have an urbanisation impact.

Urbanisation issues because of the Local Plan are not considered to be a risk. There is no impact pathway.

Identification of relevant plans and projects

2.48 There may be certain aspects of the Local Plan that, in isolation, would have no likely significant effect on European sites. However, when considered in combination with other plans and projects, these issues could have a more significant effect. Regulation 102 of the Amended Habitats Regulations 2010 requires an Appropriate Assessment where “a land use plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) and is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site”.

2.49 It is a requirement of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive that appropriate assessment work examines the potential for plans and programmes to have a significant effect either individually or ‘in combination’ with other plans and programmes. This must therefore be considered as part of the screening process.

2.50 Undertaking a screening approach that includes an assessment of other plans and programmes requires a pragmatic approach in light of the significant range of plans, programmes and projects locally and in the wider area. Of relevance, Government guidance states that *“the assessment of significant effects of a given option needs to take account of the option’s impact in combination with other plans and projects. Only other key plans and projects which the LPA consider most relevant*

should be collected for the ‘in combination’ test. An exhaustive list could render the assessment exercise unworkable.”

2.51 In line with the guidance cited above, the approach taken to the screening assessment focused on those plans that could lead to significant development and change that may relate to the Local Plan either geographically or more strategically and provide sufficient information to help consider potential environmental impacts. These plans are listed below and a review of the potential cumulative effects of each plan is provided in Appendix 2.

Derbyshire:

- South Derbyshire District

Staffordshire:

- Cannock Chase District
- Lichfield District
- South Staffordshire District
- Stafford Borough
- Staffordshire Local Transport Plan

Warwickshire:

- North Warwickshire District

Leicestershire:

- Northwest Leicestershire District Council

2.52 This collection of authorities as well as being near Tamworth Borough, are also near the two European sites at Cannock Chase and the River Mease, which this HRA have identified as potentially being impacted on by the Tamworth Local Plan.

3. HRA Review of Spatial Growth Strategy and Policies

3.1 At the Regulation 18 screening stage it was difficult to assess the Local Plan policies and spatial strategy because the policies and strategy only provided a general direction of travel rather than setting out in detail the exact or final contents of each.

3.2 Following Reg.18 consultation, the following changes have been made when preparing the Pre-Submission Local Plan (Reg.19):

- Detail added to the policies
- Fixing the Spatial Strategy and sites required to deliver it
- Incorporating responses from consultees so that policy/strategy better respond to and reflect statutory consultee concerns, developers or those from the general public/businesses etc
- Incorporating responses from consultees on the Sustainability Appraisal so that policy/strategy better respond to and reflect consultees.

Natural England had no specific comments to make on the Reg.18 HRA.

3.3 This appraisal provides an assessment of those aspects of the plan which it is considered have the potential to affect designated European sites. This review will also highlight those aspects of the plan where it is considered such impacts are less likely to occur. This HRA will provide a full screening assessment of the likely impacts of the Local Plan and will also include an in-combination assessment to ensure that the potential impacts of the plan are considered alongside the policies and proposals of the other authorities and agencies. Appendix 3 provides the screening matrix, criteria, impacts and significance assessment.

High-level overview of emerging Local Plan

3.4 Tamworth is not unique with the issues that it faces when considering where to put growth to meet future needs. Tamworth has one constraint in particular which is that the Borough 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 either Green Belt designation and/or are constrained by flood risk and highways capacity.

3.5 The previous adopted Local Plan allocated the remaining deliverable greenfield land and worked with neighbouring authorities Lichfield District and North Warwickshire Borough to deliver housing growth adjacent to the Borough boundary and within those local authority areas. This time round the availability of land to accommodate Tamworth's growth is extremely scarce.

3.6 What the Borough Council is left with is limited opportunity to grow and a large housing requirement arising from the standard methodology introduced by the Government in December 2024.

3.7 The spatial strategy therefore reflects some difficult decisions that the authority has had to make to accommodate as much as it can, recognising that existing or new infrastructure, needs to be able to accommodate growth and communities have the space to breathe and not feel cramped in.

3.8 The Spatial strategy in the emerging Local Plan has been informed by consultation responses to the Reg.18 plan but also informed by neighbouring authorities and the housing market areas deciding not to accommodate any of Tamworth's growth.

3.9 There is therefore a large unmet need of approximately 4,500 dwellings, which cannot be currently reflected in the Pre-Submission Local Plan. As such the impact of the Pre-Submission Local Plan reflects what can be delivered. The unmet quantum that remains will be for discussion at examination and ultimately will need to be picked up by either neighbouring authorities or the wider housing market area. A further HRA will be required to assess the impact when the location of the unmet need is identified.

3.10 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.

3.11 The authority is ambitious to deliver change where it is able, 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 the greatest area of change as part of this strategy.

3.12 In residential areas, the strategy also provides a place-based approach to a deprived area of Tamworth, the recipient of Pride in Place funding: designed to deliver long lasting change to reverse deprivation. The remainder of Tamworth will also see the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods which bring multiple benefits by delivering modest growth, alongside improvements to the green infrastructure network, making better use of resources and creating high-quality places and habitats.

The Pre-Submission Local Plan includes the following policies.

Table 2 Local Plan policies subject to HRA assessment

Policy Ref.	Description
SP1	Spatial Strategy
SP2	Climate change
SP3	Green Belt
SP4	Housing allocations
HO1	Housing mix
HO2	Housing density
HO3	Affordable housing
HO4	Older persons and other specialist forms of accommodation
HO5	Gypsies, travellers and travelling show people
SP5	Employment allocation
EM1	Existing employment sites
EM2	Employment uses outside of existing employment areas
EM3	Non-employment uses in employment areas
EM4	Strengthening the Visitor Economy
SP6	Retail, Centres and Regeneration
TC1	The Hierarchy of Centres
TC2	Development in the Town Centre
TC3	Gungate Regeneration Opportunity
TC4	Ankerside Regeneration Opportunity
TC5	Main Town Centre Uses Outside Centres
TC6	Development in Neighbourhood Centres
HC1	Development affecting existing community facilities and public service infrastructure
HC2	Community facilities, public service infrastructure associated with new development
HC3	New and improved community facilities and public service infrastructure
HC4	Glascote Heath and Stonydelph (Pride in Place)
HC5	Existing open space, sport and recreation facilities
HC6	Open space, sport and recreation provision in new development
HC7	New and improved open space, sport and recreation provision
HC8	Tamworth Leisure Quarter
HC9	Public Realm
HC10	Safeguarding burial space
HC11	Hot food takeaways
SP7	Securing the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets
HE1	Proposals affecting designated heritage assets (nationally listed buildings and Scheduled Monuments)
HE2	Proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets (locally listed buildings)
HE3	Conservation areas
SP8	Design, Placemaking and the Built Environment

DE1	Delivering High-Quality Design and Respecting Local Distinctiveness
DE2	Masterplanning and Design Codes
DE3	Design Standards for New Housing, including conversions and subdivisions (reference HMOs, self-contained flats)
DE4	Residential infill / Backland development
DE5	Existing buildings - extensions and alterations
DE6	Non-Residential and Employment Development
DE7	Shopfront Design and Security
DE8	Advertisements, Signs and Illumination
FL1	The sequential test and exception test
FL2	Ensuring development is safe from flooding
FL3	Sustainable drainage systems, watercourses and water quality
FL4	Flood mitigation infrastructure
NE1	Blue and Green infrastructure and connectivity
NE2	National and Local Sites of importance for biodiversity
NE3	Geodiversity
NE4	Biodiversity Net Gain
NE5	Biodiversity No Net Loss for development not subject to mandatory BNG
NE6	Trees
EP1	Safeguarding amenity and managing the impacts of development
EP2	Pollution, ground conditions and contamination
EP3	Safeguarding minerals and soils
SP9	Sustainable Transport and Active Travel
TA1	Managing Car Use
TA2	Impact on the Transport Network and Highways Safety
TA3	Freight, Servicing and Logistics
IO1	Infrastructure delivery
IO2	Developer Contributions

3.13 An assessment of the Pre-Submission Local Plan strategic sites has also been undertaken.

3.14 For the purposes of the Habitats Regulations Assessment a strategic housing site is defined as 100+ dwellings. Most of the housing that the Borough Council can deliver within its boundaries are reflected in Table 3. In addition to the strategic sites, there are many smaller known and unknown (windfall) sites that will come forwards over the lifetime of the plan, but these are so small and are hard to be quantified. The entire housing spatial strategy is assessed as part of the Habitats Regulations Assessment process.

3.15 There are two regeneration opportunities and one allocated employment site which is listed in Table 3.

Table 3 Local Plan strategic sites subject to HRA assessment

SHLAA Ref	Site Description	Yield
Housing allocations		
18/013	Ashlands Farm, Ashby Road	172
23/515	Tamworth College Site	123
23/585	Land West of Dunstall Lane	166
22/094	Land South of Ashby Road	200
20/090	Land at Gorsy Bank Road	245
18/007	Land off Tamworth Road/Wigford Road	611
Regeneration opportunity sites		
	Gungate Regeneration Opportunity	150
	Ankerside Regeneration Opportunity	250
Employment allocation		
	Land South of the A5 (Classes Ei/Eii/B2/B8)	9.8 ha

Appropriate Assessment Screening Matrix

3.16 This screening matrix has been produced to enable the recording of the screening assessments of each element of the Local Plan against the conservation objectives of each relevant European Site, to support the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Local Plan. The assessment places particular importance on features contributing to the integrity of European sites.

3.17 As part of the methodology, a set of screening criteria was adopted as shown in the Significance Key, Table 3, to provide a consistent guide to the determination of the nature of the effect within the following categories:

Category A: No negative effect Category

Category B: No significant effect Category

Category C: Likely significant effect alone Category

Category D: Likely cumulative significant effect

3.18 Within this, each categorisation is divided down to provide a more specific assessment, Table 4. This screening report relates only to the assessment of policies in the Pre-Submission Local Plan. Please refer to the April 2026 for the Reg.18 assessment.

Table 4: Significance Key

Key		
Unlikely significant effect	-	No Further Appropriate Assessment work required
Significant Effect Uncertain	?	Precautionary approach to be taken and mitigation, further research or appropriate assessment work required
Likely Significant Effect	x	Precautionary approach to be taken and mitigation, further research or appropriate assessment work required

Table 5: Screening Criteria

Category	Sub Category	Rationale
Category A: No negative effect	A1	Policies that will not themselves lead to development e.g. because they relate to design or other qualitative criteria for development, or they are not a land use policy.
	A2	Policies intend to protect the natural environment, including biodiversity.
	A3	Policies intend to conserve or enhance the natural, built or historic environment, where enhancement measures will not be likely to have any negative effect on a European site.
	A4	Policies that positively steer development away from European sites.
Category B: No significant effect	B1	Effects are trivial or 'de minimis', even if combined with other effects.
Category C: Likely significant effect alone	C1	The policy could directly affect a European site because it provides for, or steers, a quantity or type of development adjacent to a European site.
	C2	The policy could indirectly affect a European site e.g. because it provides for, or steers, a quantity or type of development that may be very close to it, or ecologically, hydrologically or physically connected to it or it may increase disturbance as a result of increased recreational pressure.
	C3	Proposals for a magnitude of development that, no matter where it was located, the development would be likely to have a significant effect on a European site.
	C4	Policies for developments or infrastructure projects that could block options or alternatives for the provision of other development or projects in the future, which will be required in the

		public interest, that may lead to adverse effects on European sites, which would otherwise be avoided.
	C5	Any other policies that would be vulnerable to failure under the Habitats Regulations at project assessment stage; to include them in the plan would be regarded as faulty planning.
	C6	Any other proposals that may have an adverse effect on a European site, which might try to pass the tests of the Habitats Regulation at project assessment stage by arguing that the plan provides the imperative reasons of overriding public interest to justify its consent despite a negative assessment.
Category D: Likely cumulative significant effect	D1	The policy alone would not be likely to have significant effects but if their effects are combined with the effects of other policies or proposals provided for or coordinated by the Local Plan (internally) the cumulative effects would be likely to be significant.
	D2	Policies that alone would not be likely to have significant effects but if their effects are combined with the effects of other plans or projects , and possible the effects of other developments provided for in the Local Plans as well, the combined effects would be likely to be significant.
	D3	Proposals that are, or could be, part of a programme or sequence of development delivered over a period, where the implementation of the early stages would not have a significant effect on European sites, but which would dictate the nature, scale, duration, location, timing of the whole project, the later stage of which could have an adverse effect on such sites.

Table 6: Impacts Key

Potential Impact	Indicators
Water Quantity	Water abstraction, change in drainage, availability
Water Quality	Water pollution: • Agricultural run off • Domestic • Industrial
Recreational Pressure	Increase population Distance from site
Urbanisation	Increase in population Distance from site
Non-physical Disturbance	Noise and/or visual presence: • Recreational, • Industrial, • Transport and • Light spillage
Physical loss or fragmentation	Percentage loss

Impact on Protected Species within or surrounding European Site	Evidence of protected species, proximity to the site
Air Quality	Traffic, proximity to the site, likelihood of light spillage, likelihood of noise impact
Risk of invasive/non-native species	Likelihood of new species within proximity to the site

Updated Screening Appraisal and Cumulative Effects

3.19 This updated screening appraisal has assessed all the policies and strategic sites set out in the Pre-Submission Local Plan 2026. Appendix 3 provides the screening matrix, criteria, impacts and significance assessment.

3.20 As a result of this screening process there have been amendments to the pre-submission policies. Overall, it is concluded that none of the policies or strategic sites individually would result in any significant effects to the qualifying ecological features of interest of the National network of sites referred to.

3.21 Other plans, programmes and projects that are being prepared and implemented in the areas surrounding Tamworth Borough Council have the potential to have significant effects on European sites. Effects from different plans may act in combination with Tamworth's Local Plan leading to a potential cumulative, significant effect overall on European sites.

3.22 It is a requirement of the Habitats Regulations that effects identified through the plan screening process are considered for their potential cumulative effects. Guidance suggests that the in-combination assessment is undertaken in a targeted way to ensure that the assessment is most effective but focusing on those plans most likely to interact with the plan under consideration. A review of other plans and programmes is contained in Appendix 2. When screening the policies and strategic sites, consideration was given to potential cumulative impacts identified through the review of other plans when concluding the likelihood of an impact.

3.23 It is acknowledged that the level of growth within the Tamworth boundary is modest given the constrained nature of the Borough. Most sites are small and concentrated in the town centre or on the edge of the urban area, specifically to the south of Tamworth on former Green Belt land in the Dosthill area.

3.24 The assessment identifies that the following policies and strategic sites may have in combination effects with other plans, but it is uncertain given the geographical relationship with the European sites. It was, however, considered that the Plan would make a minor impact in proportion to other growth areas located closer to the European Sites and would not therefore create a significant impact requiring further AA work. In addition, the proposed mitigation by the Cannock Chase Partnership which the

Borough Council is not required to be a partner in, also eliminates the potential cumulative effect.

Table 7 Cumulative Effects

Tamworth Pre-Submission Local Plan	Cumulative effect	Conclusion
Policies		
SP1: Spatial Strategy	This policy provides an overall direction for the quantum of growth the Borough needs to accommodate.	Cannock Chase SAC: Air quality and recreation: The site is not within or adjacent to the Tamworth Borough boundary. The Borough is not within the Zone of Influence. Whilst a population increase because of additional residential development will have an impact on the site, the modest level of growth, distance from the site and existing mitigations in place from the Cannock Chase Partnership, do not require any further amendments to the Local Plan. River Mease SAC: The catchment for the River Mease is north of Tamworth. However, a precautionary approach has led to an addition to policy FL3, to ensure that water quality within the Tamworth boundary is appropriately managed. It is sensible to ensure that Tamworth can meet its
SP4: Housing allocations	This policy proposes residential development in the Borough, which will significantly contribute to meeting the housing target.	
SP6: Retail Centres and Regeneration	This policy provides an overall direction for the town centre chapter including the encouragement of generated new development in the town centre.	
TC3: Gungate Regeneration Opportunity	These two policies propose residential development in the town centre, which will significantly deliver the spatial strategy.	
TC4: Ankerside Regeneration Opportunity		
DE4: Residential infill/Backland development	This policy has a significant role in the delivery of housing by allowing for small sites to emerge within the tight urban fabric of the town. Although small in size, their contribution to meeting the housing target is significant for the Borough.	

IO1: Infrastructure Delivery	This policy will support the housing delivery with necessary infrastructure including car-based travel.	needs should development north of the borough require Tamworth infrastructure outside of the Mease catchment to mitigate impacts.
All Strategic Sites	These sites comprise the most significant sites within the spatial strategy. They are housing regeneration opportunity and an employment site.	

4. Conclusion

4.1 There are no National Network of Sites (former Natura 2000) sites within Tamworth Borough boundary, however in line with the requirement to undertake a precautionary approach, this screening assessment has considered a few European sites near the Borough boundary.

4.2 Based on the screening process documented in this HRA report it is the Council's opinion that the Pre-Submission Local Plan:

- a. Is not directly related with or necessary to the management of the site, or
- b. Is not likely to have a significant effect on each of the following sites, either alone or in combination with either plans and projects:

- **Cannock Canal Extension (SAC)**
- **Cannock Chase (SAC)**
- **Ensor's Pool (SAC)**
- **River Mease (SAC)**
- **Humber Estuary (SAC/SPA/RAMSAR)**

4.3 The principle potential effects identified and reviewed are related to additional households and population growth and how this may increase traffic to the Cannock Chase SAC or result in additional recreational pressure. It has been concluded that the Local Plan Pre-Submission would not result in any significant effects to the qualifying ecological features of interest of the Cannock Chase SAC.

4.4 It is, however, acknowledged that the Plan may have a minor impact on cumulative effects to the Cannock Chase SAC, because of in-combination impacts with neighbouring plans. Tamworth is not within the Cannock Chase SAC Zone of Influence and is not required to mitigate the impacts of population growth in the same way as those authorities with a direct geographical relationship.

4.5 As a precautionary approach, and because there is no evidence to demonstrate a direct impact from Tamworth's growth on the Cannock Chase SAC, the assessment identifies an uncertain likely significant effect that the Tamworth Local Plan has in-combination. It is acknowledged that Tamworth is under 20km from the edge of the Cannock Chase SAC, but the distance from the site, along with modest growth and existing mitigations in place as a result of the Cannock Chase Partnership, **do not require any further amendments to the Tamworth Pre-Submission Plan.**

4.6 In relation to the River Mease SAC and the water quality/nutrient neutrality issues that exist, Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Warwickshire authorities including Tamworth's neighbour Lichfield District (directly north of Tamworth), received advice

from Natural England in relation to nutrient neutrality for developments in the River Mease catchment.

4.7 Tamworth Borough Council did not receive the advice, nor is it required to make decisions in relation to nutrient neutrality due to the River Mease being in a different, albeit related hydrological catchment.

4.8 Severn Trent in Tamworth's Capacity Study 2025 makes comment relating to development north of Tamworth requiring mitigation, including directing sewerage to treatment works outside the River Mease catchment area and ensuring that no issues are caused due to surface water run-off or filtration.

4.9 Whilst the catchment for the River Mease is north of Tamworth's boundary and so the nutrient neutrality requirement does not apply, Severn Trent have commented that development to the north needs to be mindful of its location and where sewage is processed.

4.10 Following the precautionary approach the Borough Council have added additional text to emerging policy FL3 Sustainable Drainage Systems, Watercourses and Water quality, to specifically refer to water quality issues. These amendments are not designed to mitigate impacts relating to Tamworth growth in the Local Plan but to ensure that within the Borough, water quality is managed appropriately, should development require the processing of sewage outside of the River Mease catchment and in Tamworth wastewater facilities.

Water Quality

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 demonstrate that:

- Adequate arrangements are made for the disposal of foul sewage, trade effluent and surface water to prevent a risk from pollution.
- There is sufficient wate and foul drainage infrastructure capacity to meet the additional requirements arising from a development should be in place.
- Measures to reduce demand such as the use of grey water recycling and rainwater harvesting are incorporated into the development.
- Foul and surface water run-off are separated.

There is no evidence of a direct impact on the River Mease and as such **there are no changes to the Local Plan in respect of the River Mease SAC.**

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Screening Assessment Baseline evidence: The European Sites

The table provides a description of each European site and were used to inform the screening assessment, with particular regard to conservation objectives and vulnerabilities and risks.

Site	Cannock Canal Extension
Characteristics	Designation: SAC Grid Reference: SK020058 Size: 5.47 ha Distance from Tamworth boundary: 27km
Reason for designation	• A cul-de-sac canal. Is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom for <i>Luronium natans</i>. Primary Annex II species • Floating water-plantain <i>Luronium natans</i> Cannock Extension Canal is an example of anthropogenic, lowland habitat supporting floating water plantain <i>Luronium natans</i> at the eastern limit of the plant's natural distribution in England. A very large population of the species occurs in the Canal, which has a diverse aquatic flora and rich dragonfly fauna, indicative of good water quality. The low volume of boat traffic on this terminal branch of the Wyrley and Essington Canal has allowed open-water plants, including floating water-plantain, to flourish, while depressing the growth of emergents.

Vulnerability and risks	• The population of Luronium natans in this cul-de-sac canal is dependent upon a balanced level of boat traffic. If the canal is not used, the abundant growth of other aquatic macrophytes may shade-out the Luronium natans unless routinely controlled by cutting. • An increase in recreational activity would be to the detriment of Luronium natans. • Existing discharges of surface water run-off, principally from roads, cause some reduction in water quality.
Conservation objectives	Ensure favourable conditions for floating water plantain are maintained. Cutting of emergent plants may be required if disturbance occurs.

Site	Cannock Chase SAC
Characteristics	Designation: SAC Grid Reference: SJ982188 Size: 1,236.93 ha Distance from Tamworth boundary: 17-18km
Reason for designation	• Supports a significant presence of Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix. • Area is considered to be one of the best areas in the UK for European dry heaths. Primary Annex I habitats • European dry heaths - The area of lowland heathland at Cannock Chase is the most extensive in the Midlands, although there have been losses due to fragmentation and scrub/woodland encroachment. The character of the vegetation is intermediate between the upland or northern heaths of England and Wales and those of southern counties. • Dry heathland communities belong to NVC types H8 Calluna vulgaris – Ulex gallii and H9 Calluna vulgaris – Deschampsia flexuosa heaths. Within the heathland, species of northern latitudes occur, such as cowberry Vaccinium vitis-idaea and crowberry Empetrum nigrum. Cannock Chase has the main British population of the hybrid bilberry Vaccinium intermedium, a plant of restricted occurrence. There are important populations of butterflies and beetles, as well as European nightjar Caprimulgus europaeus and five species of bats.

	<i>Non-Primary Annex I habitats</i> Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>
Vulnerability and risks	- Much of Cannock Chase falls within a popular and well-used Country Park. Visitor pressures include dog walking, horse riding, mountain biking and off-track activities such as orienteering, all of which cause disturbance and result in erosion, new track creation and vegetation damage. - Bracken invasion is significant but is being controlled. Birch and pine scrub - much of the latter from surrounding commercial plantations, is continually invading the site and has to be controlled. High visitor usage and the fact that a significant proportion of the site is Common Land, requiring Secretary of State approval before fencing can take place, means that the reintroduction of sustainable management in the form of livestock grazing has many problems. - Cannock Chase overlies coal measures which have been deep mined. Mining fissures continue to appear across the site even though mining has ceased and this is thought to detrimentally affect site hydrology. - Furthermore, the underlying Sherwood Sandstone is a major aquifer with water abstracted for public and industrial uses and the effects of this on the wetland features of the Chase are not fully understood.
Conservation objectives	The Conservation Objectives for this site are to maintain the following habitats and geological features in favourable condition, with particular reference to any development component special interest features for which the land is designated as individually listed: - Dwarf shrub heath - Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland On this site favourable condition requires the maintenance of the extent of each designated habitat type. Maintenance implies restoration if evidence from condition assessment suggests a reduction in extent.

Site	Ensor's Pool SAC
Characteristics	Designation: SAC Grid Reference: SP348903 Size: 3.86 ha Distance from Tamworth boundary: 19km
Reason for designation	• Inland water body • Humid grassland Annex 11 species that are a primary reason for selection of this site: S1092. Austropotamobius pallipes; White-clawed (or Atlantic stream) Crayfish. This lowland site holds a very large population of white-clawed crayfish. This water body is isolated from river systems and is a good example of a 'refuge' site in an important part of the species' former range.
Vulnerability and risks	• Introduction of non-native species of crayfish, which have been farmed in Britain since the late 1970s • Crayfish plague which can be introduced into a waterbody not only by entry of non-native species but also by water, fish or equipment that has been in contact with non-native species. Water quality and the pristine ecosystem is therefore important. • White-clawed crayfish are a species sensitive to changes in water condition, for example surface water pollution and changes in water levels.
Conservation objectives	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring: • The extent and distribution of the habitats of qualifying species; • The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species; • The supporting processes on which the habitats of qualifying species rely; • The populations of qualifying species; and • The distribution of qualifying species within the site.

Site	River Mease (SAC)
Characteristics	Designation: SAC Grid Reference: SK260114 Size: 21.86 ha Distance from Tamworth boundary: 1-2km
Reason for designation	<i>Non-primary Annex I habitats</i> • Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation Primary Annex II species • The River Mease is a good example of a riverine population of spined loach Cobitis taenia. It is a small tributary of the River Trent and has retained a reasonable degree of channel diversity compared to other similar rivers containing spined loach populations. It has extensive beds of submerged plants along much of its length which, together with its relatively sandy sediments (as opposed to cohesive mud) provides good habitat opportunities for the species. • The Mease is an example of bullhead Cottus gobio populations in the rivers of central England. Bed sediments are generally not as coarse as other sites selected for the species, reflecting the nature of many rivers in this geographical area, but are suitable in patches due to the river's retained sinuosity. The patchy cover from submerged macrophytes is also important for the species. <i>Non-primary Annex II species</i> • White-clawed (or Atlantic stream) crayfish Austropotamobius pallipes • • Otter Lutra lutra
Vulnerability and risks	• The River Mease is an unusually semi-natural system in a largely rural landscape, dominated by intensive agriculture. Water quality and quantity are vital to the European interests, whilst competition for water resources is high. Diffuse pollution and excessive sedimentation are catchment-wide issues which have the potential to affect the site.

	The River Mease is currently in an unfavourable condition due to nutrient pressures and eutrophication. Any additional loading from development could further harm protected species and habitats.
Conservation objectives	- The key conservation objective that is relevant for this site is the objective which relates to levels of Orthophosphates. The figure for Orthophosphates set out in the Conservation Objectives for the site is 0.06 mg/l. - Management should maintain the natural flow regime of the river or stream, including natural erosion and sedimentation processes, in order to meet the requirements of the full range of flora and fauna it supports. Abstraction levels should be managed to protect the characteristic flow regime of the river, including seasonal base flows and flushing flows. Compensation flows are generally not an acceptable alternative to reducing abstraction, and river transfers may also have an undesirable effect on river ecology. Ensure the river is maintained at a favourable status for floating formations of water crowfoot species (Ranunculus spp), populations of bullhead, spined loach and white-clawed crayfish. Maintain the river and the surrounding lands to provide suitable habitat for populations of otter.

Site	Humber Estuary
Characteristics	Designation: SAC/SPA/RAMSAR Grid Reference: TA331456 Size: 37,000 hectares Distance from Tamworth boundary: 158km
Reason for designation	Ramsar sites do not have the Conservation Objectives in the same way as SPAs and SACs. Information regarding the designation of Ramsar sites is contained in JNCC Ramsar Information Sheets. Ramsar Criteria are the criteria for identifying Wetlands of International Importance. The relevant criteria and ways in which this site meets the criteria are presented below. The site is a representative example of a near-natural estuary with the following component habitats: dune systems and humid dune slacks, estuarine waters, intertidal mud and sand flats, saltmarshes, and coastal

	brackish/saline lagoons. It is a large macro-tidal coastal plain estuary with high suspended sediment loads, which feed a dynamic and rapidly changing system of accreting and eroding intertidal and subtidal mudflats, sandflats, saltmarsh and reedbeds. Examples of both strandline, foredune, mobile, semi-fixed dunes, fixed dunes and dune grassland occur on both banks of the estuary and along the coast. The estuary supports a full range of saline conditions from the open coast to the limit of saline intrusion on the tidal rivers of the Ouse and Trent. Wave exposed sandy shores are found in the outer/open coast areas of the estuary. These change to the more moderately exposed sandy shores and then to sheltered muddy shores within the main body of the estuary and up into the tidal rivers. The lower saltmarsh of the Humber is dominated by common cordgrass <i>Spartina anglica</i> and annual Glasswort <i>Salicornia</i> communities. Low to mid marsh communities are mostly represented by Sea Aster (<i>Aster tripolium</i>), Common Saltmarsh Grass (<i>Puccinellia maritima</i>) and Sea Purslane (<i>Atriplex portulacoides</i>) communities. The upper portion of the saltmarsh community is atypical, dominated by Sea Couch (<i>Elytrigia atherica</i>) (<i>Elymus pycnanthus</i>) saltmarsh community. In the upper reaches of the estuary, the tidal marsh community is dominated by the Common Reed (<i>Phragmites australis</i>) fen and Sea Club Rush (<i>Bolboschoenus maritimus</i>) swamp with the Couch Grass (<i>Elytrigia repens</i>) (<i>Elymus repens</i>) saltmarsh community. Within the Humber Estuary Ramsar site there are good examples of four of the five physiographic types of saline lagoon.
Vulnerability and risks	Threats and Pressures at the European site which may be affected by the Local Plan: • Water pollution (domestic sewage). • Public access and disturbance. • Air quality.
Important populations	• The Humber Estuary Ramsar site supports a breeding colony of Grey Seals (<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>) at Donna Nook. It is the second largest Grey Seal colony in England and the furthest south regular breeding site on the east coast. The dune slacks at Saltfleet-by-Theddlethorpe on the southern extremity of the Ramsar site are the most north-easterly breeding site in Great Britain of the Natterjack Toad (<i>Bufo calamita</i>). • Assemblages of international importance: 153,934 waterfowl, non-breeding season (5-year peak mean 1996/97-2000/2001) • Species/populations occurring at levels of international importance.

SAC Conservation Objectives	The SAC objective is to keep the Humber Estuary's internationally important habitats and species in good ecological health by: • Protecting its mudflats, saltmarsh, dunes, and estuarine systems • Ensuring the species the site hosts can thrive • Preventing damage or disturbance from human activities • Restoring any degraded features where necessary
SPA Conservation objectives	The SPA conservation objectives for the Humber Estuary are to: • Keep the bird populations healthy • Protect and restore the habitats they depend on • Prevent damage or disturbance from human activity • Maintain the natural processes that shape the estuary • All plans or projects must be assessed to ensure they do not harm the integrity of the SPA.

Appendix 2: Plans and Programmes, review of potential cumulative effects

South Derbyshire District Council

Document Title	The adopted Local Plan (2011-2028) is prepared in two parts: - Local Plan Part 1 (adopted 13 June 2016) – the strategic plan - Local Plan Part 2 (adopted 2 November 2017) – non-strategic housing allocations and development management policies. Emerging Plan (2022–2039)
Plan Type	Statutory Development Plan
Plan Owner/Competent Authority	South Derbyshire District Council
Timescales	The 2022-2039 emerging plan was published for consultation in 2022
Geographical Coverage	South Derbyshire
Related Documents (e.g. evidence base, SA/SEA, HRA,AA)	The South Derbyshire Habitats Regulations Assessment confirms that - The River Mease SAC is within the plan’s zone of influence. - Policies and allocations were screened to ensure no significant adverse effects on the river’s water quality. - Most development was directed outside the Mease catchment to avoid impacts. The emerging plan includes Policy SD3(a)(iv) which relates specifically to River Mease protection.
Document Details	Potential for Impacts that could cause cumulative effects
Housing Growth The adopted Local Plan Part 1 sets out a requirement for at least 12,618 dwellings to be	Potential cumulative effects will be dependent on the preferred option and growth strategy that is taken forward in the emerging Local Plan. However,

delivered between 2011 and 2028. This total is composed of: • 9,605 dwellings to meet South Derbyshire's own Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) • 3,013 dwellings to contribute to unmet housing needs arising from Derby City Employment Land The plan identifies a requirement for 47.27 hectares of industrial and business land (outside the Derby Urban Area) over the plan period 2011–2028. Broad Spatial Strategy: • Sustainable, infrastructure supported growth • Development focused on strategic locations: Swadlincote, Derby fringes, sustainable villages • Balanced use of brownfield/greenfield land • Protection of environmental, heritage, and landscape assets • Part of wider Derby Housing Market Area strategy. Total housing requirement: 14,483 dwellings 8,874 dwellings – South Derbyshire's own need 5,609 dwellings – meeting Derby City's unmet need	it is known that the Plan will allocate a large quantum of housing growth, any generic effects related to development and growth scenarios include: • Increased demand for water resources/abstraction/hydrological impacts; • Increased traffic movements, contributions to atmospheric pollution and impacts on air quality; • Increased recreational pressure from existing and new populations; and • Growth in requirements for waste management facilities, increased demand for minerals. Depending on the scale and location of growth allocations, there may be a potential for a cumulative impact on European Sites within neighbouring authorities. However, effects are not considered significant. The HRA Screening Opinion for the adopted Local Plan concludes that there will be no significant effect on European sites because of implementing the Local Plan, alone or in combination.
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The key changes are an overall increase in housing requirement and the authority taking a greater share of the Derby unmet need. Continued focus on strategic extensions to Derby urban area and growth around Swadlincote.	
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Lichfield District

Document Title	Adopted Local Plan (2008-2029) - Local Plan Strategy 2008–2029 (Appendix B: Housing Trajectory) - Local Plan Allocations Document (EMP1 tables) Emerging Local Plan (up to 2043) - Issues and Options Consultation completed (Oct – Dec 2024) It is understood that Lichfield District will not be progressing their emerging Local Plan through the legacy system. The Adopted Local Plan will be the key focus for delivering growth.
Plan Type	Statutory Development Plan
Plan Owner/Competent Authority	Lichfield District Council
Timescales	Emerging plan establishes new framework to 2043.
Geographical Coverage	Lichfield District
Related Documents (e.g. evidence base, SA/SEA, HRA,AA)	The HRA Screening for the plan identifies the River Meas SAC and concludes that no development within policy L1 fell within areas draining to the River Mease, eliminating hydrological pathways.

It is unknown what the emerging growth strategy will deliver. However, it is known that the Plan will allocate a large quantum of housing growth, any generic effects related to development and growth scenarios include:

- Increased demand for water resources/abstraction/hydrological impacts;
- Increased traffic movements, contributions to atmospheric pollution and impacts on air quality;
- Increased recreational pressure from existing and new populations; and
- Growth in requirements for waste management facilities, increased demand for minerals.

That said, the adopted Local Plan has a specific policy, NR7 on the Cannock Chase SAC acknowledging that the plan impacts upon the European site. Visitor pressure and recreation disturbance, habitat degradation and urbanisation effects are impacts. Similarly, policy NR8 deals with the River Mease SAC.

The HRA – emerging plan at Regulation 18 (2024) screens the Issues and Options document and identifies the following European sites requiring assessment:

- Cannock Chase SAC – risks from recreation pressure and air quality
- Cannock Extension Canal SAC – potential water-related impacts
- River Mease SAC – potential impacts from water quality (nutrient neutrality required).

Document Details	Potential for Impacts that could cause cumulative effects
The adopted Local Plan sets out a district-wide spatial approach structured around Core Policy 1: The Spatial Strategy, which: • Directs growth to the most sustainable settlements including Lichfield City, Burntwood, and strategic development areas (SDAs) such as Fradley, Streethay, and areas East of Rugeley. The Local Plan Strategy set the housing requirement to be delivered within Lichfield District by 2029 of 10,030 dwellings (including 500 dwellings to meet the needs arising in Rugeley and 500 dwellings to meet the needs arising within Tamworth Borough). The Local Plan Strategy set the strategic direction for the location of housing growth within the district, with this being focused on a number of key 'sustainable' settlements, including land North of Tamworth. The Lichfield District Local Plan seeks to enhance the district's diverse local economy through the allocation of land for employment uses and providing support for the modernisation of existing employment sites as well as supporting new and more sustainable working practises. Core Policy 7: Employment & Economic Development set the	The Plan provides positive policies to protect and conserve European Sites. The Plan therefore has the potential for a positive cumulative effect on European Sites for the environmental protection it affords. The Cannock Chase SAC Planning Evidence Base records that the SAC Partnership includes: • Lichfield District Council

strategic policy in relation to the creation of between 7,310 and 9,000 additional jobs within the district to achieve a job balance ratio of 85% by the end of the plan period (2029). This is to be achieved through a number of measures including the allocation of 79.1 hectares of land for employment uses drawn from the existing portfolio of employment land and the allocation of a further 10 hectares to ensure flexibility of provision.	
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Cannock Chase District

Document Title	Cannock Chase Local Plan 2018-40 Adopted March 2026
Plan Type	Statutory Development Plan
Plan Owner/Competent Authority	Cannock Chase District Council
Timescales	2018-30
Geographical Coverage	Cannock Chase District Council
Related Documents (e.g. evidence base, SA/SEA, HRA, AA)	The HRA identifies likely significant effects on the SAC The HRA notes that at screening stage, potentially significant effects were identified for: • Air pollution from vehicle traffic (NOx, ammonia, nitrogen deposition) • Recreation pressure and urban effects • Physical habitat loss

	• Water quality/quantity The HRA concluded further assessment was needed for the Cannock Chase SAC Recreation pressure on Cannock Chase SAC is a major concern The HRA states that: • Recreation pressure, urban effects, and air pollution from Local Plan development are likely to affect the SAC. • The plan must include mitigation mechanisms, and the HRA required an update to relevant Local Plan policy wording.
Document Details	Potential for Impacts that could cause cumulative effects
Total housing requirement (2018–2040): • 6,308 new homes over 15 years • Annual housing requirement: • 264 homes per year until 2030 • 314 homes per year from 2030–2040 Includes 500 dwellings delivered to help meet unmet need from the wider housing market area. Cannock, Hednesford and Heath Hayes will be the main priority area for new residential and commercial development.	The Plan provides positive intend to protect and conserve European Sites. The Plan therefore has the potential for a positive cumulative effect on European Sites for the environmental protection it affords. The Cannock Chase SAC Planning Evidence Base records that the SAC Partnership includes: • Cannock Chase District Council

Total employment land allocated: - Up to 74 hectares (182.9 acres) Key strategic employment allocation: 10 hectares at the West Midlands Interchange, west of the M6.	
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South Staffordshire District

Document Title	South Staffordshire Local Plan Adopted - Core Strategy (2012) - Site Allocations Document (2018) Emerging 2023-2041 Submission to Secretary of State (Dec 2024)
Plan Type	Statutory Development Plan
Plan Owner/Competent Authority	South Staffordshire District Council
Timescales	2023 - 41
Geographical Coverage	South Staffordshire District Council
Related Documents (e.g. evidence base, SA/SEA, HRA, AA)	The South Staffordshire HRA Screening Report identifies Likely Significant Effects (LSE) on multiple European sites including Cannock Chase SAC.

	The report states that LSEs were found from: • Recreation pressure • Air quality impacts • Urbanisation The HRA states: Adverse effects on the integrity of Cannock Chase SAC could occur without mitigation due to visitor pressure and air quality impacts. Further assessment and mitigation are required as part of plan-making.
Document Details	Potential for Impacts that could cause cumulative effects
Housing is directed to: • Codsall / Bilbrook • Wombourne • Penkridge • Cheslyn Hay / Great Wyrley • Kinver Employment sites are focused on the West Midlands Interchange	The emerging South Staffordshire Local Plan has a dedicated policy to impact mitigation at the Cannock Chase SAC. The Plan therefore provides positive intent to protect and conserve European Sites. The Plan therefore has the potential for a positive cumulative effect on European Sites for the environmental protection it affords. The Cannock Chase SAC Planning Evidence Base records that the SAC Partnership includes: • South Staffordshire District Council

Stafford Borough

Document Title	Adopted Local Plan for Stafford Borough 2011–2031 Emerging Local Plan Work on the Local Plan 2020–2040 was halted on 6 March 2025 following a Cabinet decision. The council has now begun preparing a new Local Plan (2025–2045) instead. Although discontinued, the following documents were published: • Preferred Options (2022) Plan under preparation 2025 – 2045. At the evidence base stage.
Plan Type	Statutory Development Plan
Plan Owner/Competent Authority	Stafford Borough Council
Timescales	See above
Geographical Coverage	Stafford Borough
Related Documents (e.g. evidence base, SA/SEA, HRA, AA)	The main risks associated with HRA for the Stafford Local Plan Recreation pressure (especially on Cannock Chase SAC) • Growth within 15 km of Cannock Chase SAC risks increased visitor pressure. • Evidence indicates development within 0–8 km poses the greatest risk. Air quality / traffic emissions • Impacts from increased vehicle emissions may affect:

	○ Cannock Chase SAC • Stafford produced dedicated evidence: ○ Assessment of Air Quality Impacts on European Sites ○ Traffic Modelling to Inform Assessment of Air Quality Impacts Stafford Borough Council's HRA work concludes that without mitigation, development in Stafford Borough would have an adverse effect on Cannock Chase SAC due to: • recreation pressure • air quality impacts • Stafford Borough Council's Local Plan policy contains a specific policy that governs how development must address impacts on Cannock Chase SAC: Policy N6 states that Development will not be permitted if it would directly or indirectly harm the Cannock Chase SAC and the effect cannot be mitigated. Any development resulting in a net increase in dwellings within 15km of the SAC must take all necessary steps to avoid or mitigate adverse effects on the SAC's integrity.
Document Details	Potential for Impacts that could cause cumulative effects
The abandoned 2020-40 preferred options set out that; • 6,200 homes already approved • 4,500 homes to be allocated on new sites • 90 hectares of new employment land	The Cannock Chase SAC Planning Evidence Base records that the SAC Partnership includes: • Stafford Borough Council

Locations for housing to directed to: • A new Meecebrook garden community • Stafford station gateway • Existing settlements across the borough	
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Staffordshire Local Transport Plan

Document Title	Staffordshire Local Transport Plan Adopted 2025
Plan Type	Statutory Transport Plan
Plan Owner/Competent Authority	Staffordshire County Council
Timescales	2025
Geographical Coverage	The County of Staffordshire
Related Documents (e.g. evidence base, SA/SEA, HRA, AA)	The HRA Screening Report for Staffordshire's Local Transport Plan (LTP 2026) examined whether the strategic transport policies and proposals could have Likely Significant Effects (LSE) on European Sites (SACs, SPAs, Ramsar sites). It assessed both direct and indirect impacts from highways, traffic, and transport-related activity. The HRA identified three key impact pathways from policies or actions in the Local Transport Plan that could impact the Cannock Chase SAC: 1) Air pollution from roads and vehicle emissions Many European sites are sensitive to nitrogen deposition, NOx, and ammonia.

	2) Disturbance from increased access or recreation Although the LTP is strategic (not allocating development), some policies could affect visitor pressures indirectly. 3) Land take or habitat fragmentation The LTP contains strategic themes, not spatial development—but construction of transport schemes may create risks. Overall HRA Outcome for the Staffordshire LTP The Local Transport Plan (LTP 2026): • Does not itself cause any likely significant effects on European sites • Does not require Appropriate Assessment • Must ensure project-level HRA at later stages • Recognises key risks for Cannock Chase SAC and other sensitive sites • Commits to avoidance and mitigation principles in future scheme
Document Details	Potential for Impacts that could cause cumulative effects
The Staffordshire LTP is a strategic, high-level document, so it does not allocate: • New roads • Specific highway junction schemes • Named bypasses • Any spatially defined infrastructure	There are transport schemes in Staffordshire that could potentially impact the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC), but importantly: • The Staffordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP 2026) does not specify named schemes, and • The HRA Screening Report found no likely significant effects at plan level because the LTP is strategic and non-spatial.

Because of this, no individual scheme is assessed in the HRA. However, the HRA confirms that the types of transport interventions typically included in LTP delivery programmes could impact the Cannock Chase SAC via: • Air pollution from vehicles (NOx, ammonia, nitrogen deposition) • Visitor access/transport enabling increased recreational pressure • Construction disturbance or land take if routes pass near the SAC	However, the HRA does identify the types of transport schemes that, if brought forward later under the LTP, could affect the Cannock Chase SAC. These are the schemes that would need project level HRA screening.
Types of Transport Schemes That Could Impact Cannock Chase SAC Based on the HRA screening (and Cannock Chase SAC evidence base), the following transport scheme categories are those that could pose risks:	
Road network improvements that increase traffic near Cannock Chase SAC The HRA stresses that European sites sensitive to air pollution — particularly Cannock Chase SAC — could be affected by: • Capacity increases to A34, A5190, A460, A5(T) corridors	

• Junction upgrades that induce additional vehicle flows • Highway improvements near Hednesford, Cannock, Rugeley (all within close proximity to SAC) These roads sit directly adjacent to or feed into the SAC recreation catchment.	
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North Warwickshire District

Document Title	North Warwickshire District Council Adopted (2011-2033) Emerging Local Plan The emerging Local Plan retains a sustainable development-led spatial strategy, building on the adopted 2021 Plan but reassessing how and where growth should be distributed to meet longer-term housing and employment needs.
Plan Type	Statutory Development Plan
Plan Owner/Competent Authority	North Warwick District Council
Timescales	2011-2033
Geographical Coverage	North Warwickshire Borough

Related Documents (e.g. evidence base, SA/SEA, HRA, AA)	Because North Warwickshire contains no SACs within its boundary, the HRA assesses cross boundary impacts on nearby SACs that could be affected by: • Traffic emissions • Increased recreation • Hydrology or water quality changes • Urbanisation and development pressure The SACs relevant to the assessment (based on proximity and ecological risk pathways) and relevant to the Tamworth Local Plan include: • River Mease SAC (Leicestershire/Staffordshire) • Cannock Chase SAC (Staffordshire) – only for in combination effects The screening concluded that none of the Local Plan housing or employment allocations lie within an SAC or would directly affect an SAC. Possible Indirect / In Combination Effects Air Quality (Road Traffic Emissions): The HRA found possible pathways for increased traffic to affect SACs located along key routes: • River Mease SAC (via A5 corridor interactions with HIF improvements)
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	Transport related NOx and deposition risk required further consideration, but modelling concluded no adverse effect on integrity, subject to monitoring. Hydrology / Water Quality: • River Mease SAC required assessment due to strict phosphate constraints. North Warwickshire lies outside the hydrological catchment, so no likely significant effect was concluded. No hydrological linkage was found. Recreation Pressure: The HRA considered whether growth in North Warwickshire could increase visitor impacts on: • Cannock Chase SAC – but the Borough lies well outside the 15 km Zone of Influence used by the Cannock Chase SAC Partnership. Therefore: no likely significant effect from recreation.
Document Details	Potential for Impacts that could cause cumulative effects
Provides the housing requirement of 9,598 dwellings for the plan period. The adopted Local Plan identifies an employment need of a minimum 100 hectares, and this is set out in policy.	There are no significant effects identified. The Local Plan has not need to mitigate impacts and a Local Plan has not been necessary to include in the Local Plan.

Housing growth is directed to: • Polesworth and Dordon • Atherstone and Mancetter • Hartshill & Ansley Corner Kingsbury, Piccadilly, Wood End, Hurley • Grendon, Baddesley Ensor, Shustoke, Old/New Arley • Coleshill, Water Orton, Curdworth, Whitacre Heath, Hams Hall Employment growth is directed to: • Birch Coppice / Core 42 (near Dordon) One of the largest employment hubs in North Warwickshire Hams Hall (near Coleshill) • Regionally significant logistics and industrial area Kingsbury Link • Industrial and commercial development site Alvecote / Polesworth area	
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North West Leicestershire

Document Title	North West Leicestershire Local Plan Adopted (2011-2031) partially reviewed in 2021 Emerging (2020-2040) • Reg.18 2024 • Additional proposed housing and employment allocation 2025
Plan Type	Statutory Development Plan
Plan Owner/Competent Authority	North West Leicestershire District Council
Timescales	2020-2040
Geographical Coverage	North West Leicestershire
Related Documents (e.g. evidence base, SA/SEA, HRA,AA)	
Document Details	Potential for Impacts that could cause cumulative effects
• The adopted Local Plan has a housing requirement of 9,620 dwellings (2011-31_ or 431 per year. The plan directs the most growth to the • Coalville Urban Area • Ashby de la Zouch • Castle Donington • Local Service Centres • The Local Plan identifies a need for 66 hectares of employment land (B1, B2 and B*) spread across the district, with a focus on Coalville and Ashby. Strategic distribution hubs are located at • the East Midlands airport,	Based on the Local Plan's evidence base and cross authority documents, the relevant SACs include: SACs within possible impact range: • River Mease SAC – partly downstream of the district • Cannock Chase SAC – possible in combination effects only No allocated sites lie within or directly adjacent to a European site. Therefore, the Local Plan does not directly affect SAC habitats. Potential indirect effects required further analysis, including: • Water quality / hydrology impacts (especially relevant for the River Mease SAC) • Air quality impacts (traffic growth on strategic corridors)

• East Midlands Gateway Strategic Rail Freight Interchange and • sites near the M1, A42 and A50. Emerging Local Plan Housing requirement: 686 dwellings per year = 13,720 dwellings over the plan period 2020–2040 The standard method gives a minimum Local Housing Need = 372 dwellings per year. NW Leicestershire proposes a higher figure to reflect: • Growth strategy • Strategic infrastructure improvements • Unmet need from Leicester City • A potential shortfall of general needs employment land to 2042. Housing is directed to: • Coalville urban area • Castle Donington/Kegworth/Disworth Cluster • Ashby de la Zouch	• Recreation pressure (Cannock Chase SAC—ruled low risk due to distance) • Urbanisation effects (light, noise, population growth) <i>Water Quality – River Mease SAC</i> The River Mease SAC lies partly downstream but is not hydrologically linked to NW Leicestershire’s main allocation areas. The Appropriate Assessment concluded no adverse effect where sewage treatment upgrades and water-cycle strategy requirements are followed. <i>Recreation Pressure – Cannock Chase SAC</i> • NWL <i>is far</i> outside the 15 km Zone of Influence used by the Cannock Chase SAC Partnership. • The AA therefore concluded no significant recreational effect.
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• Ibstock, Measham and surrounding settlements Employment is directed to: • Land around East Midlands Airport • M1 corridor • A42 corridor • Existing logistics hubs	
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Appendix 3 Pre-Submission Policies – Screening Matrix

Pre-Submission Policy	Relevant European Sites	Category	Potential Impact		Comment	Likely Significant Impact on a European site (s)		Policy change recommended to enable screen out	Requirement for AA
			Impact	Indicator		Alone	In combination		
Climate change	N/A	A2	N/A	N/A	Policy intends to protect the natural environment. There is no impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Spatial Strategy	River Mease	D2	Water Quality	Water quality	Increased development will increase the population of Tamworth which could lead to recreational pressures air quality, and water quality issues.	-	-	N/A	No
	Cannock Chase		Recreational pressure	Population increase & visitor numbers		-	?		
			Air quality	Emissions		-	?		
Green Belt	N/A	A2/A3	N/A	N/A	This policy does not propose development but guides the protection	-	-	N/A	No

					and enhancement of the West Midlands Green Belt. There is no impact pathway.				
Housing allocations	River Mease Cannock Chase	D1	Water Quality Recreational pressure Air quality	Water Quality Population increase Emissions	This policy increases development which will increase the population of Tamworth. This could lead to recreational pressures air quality, and water quality issues. Likely significant effect is uncertain owing to location of Tamworth; quantum of development proposed in the Local Plan and lack of evidence to support quantifiable impacts.	- - -	- ? ?	N/A	No
Housing mix	N/A	A1	N/A	N/A	This policy directs the type of housing within the borough and not the quantum or distribution. No direct impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Housing density	N/A	B1	N/A	N/A	This policy directs higher densities on sites in the town centre. This is a small quantum of growth within a small	-	-	N/A	No

					geographical area. No direct impact pathway.				
Affordable housing	N/A	A1	N/A	N/A	This policy directs the type of housing within the borough and not the quantum or distribution. No direct impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Older persons and other specialist forms of accommodation	N/A	A1	N/A	N/A	This policy directs the type of housing within the borough and not the quantum or distribution. No direct impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Gypsies, travellers and travelling show people	N/A	A4	N/A	N/A	This policy positively steers development away from European sites. No direct impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Employment allocation	Cannock Chase	B1	N/A	N/A	Whilst increased development will potentially lead to additional commuting the opportunity to serve the new allocation by the population of Tamworth is high.	-	-	N/A	No
Existing employment sites	River Mease Cannock Chase	B1	N/A	N/A	Development will generate vehicle emissions however effects will be small given the scale of growth. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No

Employment uses outside of existing employment areas	River Mease Cannock Chase	B1	N/A	N/A	Development will generate vehicle emissions however effects will be small given the scale of growth. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Non-employment uses in employment areas	River Mease Cannock Chase	B1	N/A	N/A	Development will generate vehicle emissions however effects will be small given the scale of growth. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Strengthening the Visitor Economy	River Mease Cannock Chase	B1	N/A	N/A	Provision and enhancement of the visitor economy, especially with new cultural and leisure options, could alleviate visitor pressures on European sites, however there may be a different audience. Development will generate vehicle emissions however effects will be small given the scale of growth. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Retail, Centres and Regeneration	River Mease	D1	Water Quality	Water Quality	Increased development will increase the population of Tamworth	-	-	N/A	No

	Cannock Chase		Recreational pressures Air Quality	Visitor numbers Emissions	which could lead to recreational pressures air quality, and water quality issues. Likely significant effect is uncertain owing to location of Tamworth; quantum of development proposed in the Local Plan and lack of evidence to support quantifiable impacts.	- -	? ?		
The Hierarchy of Centres	N/A	B1	N/A	N/A	This is a small quantum of growth within a small geographical area. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Development in the Town Centre	N/A	B1	N/A	N/A	This is a small quantum of growth within a small geographical area. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Gungate Regeneration Opportunity	River Mease Cannock Chase	B1	Water Quality Recreational pressures Air Quality	Water Quality Visitor numbers Emissions	This is a small quantum of growth within a small geographical area. No impact pathway.	-	?	N/A	No

Ankerside Regeneration Opportunity	River Mease Cannock Chase	B1	Water Quality Recreational pressures Air Quality	Water Quality Visitor numbers Emissions	This is a small quantum of growth within a small geographical area. No impact pathway.	- - -	- ? ?	N/A	No
Main Town Centre Uses Outside Centres	N/A	B1	N/A	N/A	Increased development will increase the population of Tamworth which could lead to recreational pressures air quality, and water quality issues. However, this is a small quantum of growth within a small geographical area.	-	-	N/A	No
Development in Neighbourhood Centres	N/A	B1	N/A	N/A	This policy seeks to ensure that new development delivers new or improved facilities to meet the needs of the new population. However, there is no relationship between local centre needs and European sites.	-	-	N/A	No
Development affecting existing community	N/A	B1	N/A	N/A	This policy seeks to ensure that new development delivers	-	-	N/A	No

facilities and public service infrastructure					new or improved facilities to meet the needs of the new population. However, there is no relationship between local centre needs and European sites.				
Community facilities, public service infrastructure associated with new development	N/A	B1	N/A	N/A	This policy seeks to ensure that new development delivers new or improved facilities to meet the needs of the new population. However, there is no relationship between this policy and European sites.	-	-	N/A	No
New and improved community facilities and public service infrastructure	N/A	B1	N/A	N/A	This policy seeks to ensure that new development delivers new or improved facilities to meet the needs of the new population. However, there is no relationship between this policy and European sites.	-	-	N/A	No

Glascote Heath and Stonydelph (Pride in Place)	N/A	B1	N/A	N/A	This policy seeks to ensure that new development delivers new or improved facilities to meet the needs of the new population. However, there is no relationship between this regeneration site and European sites.	-	-	N/A	No
Existing open space, sport and recreation facilities	N/A	A1 and B1	N/A	N/A	This policy seeks to protect facilities and enhance them.	-	-	N/A	No
Open space, sport and recreation provision in new development	N/A	B1	N/A	N/A	This policy seeks to ensure that new development delivers new or improved facilities to meet the needs of the new population. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
New and improved open space, sport and recreation provision	N/A	B1	N/A	N/A	This policy seeks to ensure that new development delivers new or improved facilities to meet the needs of the new population. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No

Tamworth Leisure Quarter	N/A	B1	N/A	N/A	This policy seeks to ensure that new development delivers new or improved facilities. The policy seeks a coordinated approach to facilities in close proximity to one another. The leisure quarter fulfils a different role to Cannock Chase or the River Mease	-	-	N/A	N/A
Public Realm	N/A	A1	N/A	N/A	This policy relates to the way in which public realm is delivered and not the quantum or distribution. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Safeguarding burial space	N/A	A1	N/A	N/A	This policy seeks to Safeguard burial space within the Borough. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Hot food takeaways	N/A	A1	N/A	N/A	This policy seeks to manage fast food takeaways. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Securing the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets	N/A	A3	N/A	N/A	This policy will conserve and enhance heritage assets. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No

Proposals affecting designated heritage assets (nationally listed buildings and Scheduled Monuments)	N/A	A3	N/A	N/A	This policy will conserve and enhance heritage assets. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets (locally listed buildings)	N/A	A3	N/A	N/A	This policy will conserve and enhance heritage assets. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Conservation areas	N/A	A3	N/A	N/A	This policy will conserve and enhance heritage assets. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Design, Placemaking and the Built Environment	N/A	A1	N/A	N/A	The policy does not lead to development but provides development criteria. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Delivering High Quality Design and Respecting Local Distinctiveness	N/A	A1	N/A	N/A	The policy does not lead to development but provides development criteria. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Masterplanning and Design Codes	N/A	A1	N/A	N/A	The policy does not lead to development but provides development criteria. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No

Design Standards for New Housing, including conversions and subdivisions	N/A	A1	N/A	N/A	The policy does not lead to development but provides development criteria. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Residential infill / Backland development	River Mease Cannock Chase	D1	Water Quality Recreational pressures Air Quality	Water Quality Visitor numbers Emissions	However, increased development will increase the population of Tamworth which could lead to recreational pressures air quality, and water quality issues. Likely significant effect is uncertain owing to location of Tamworth; quantum of development proposed in the Local Plan and lack of evidence to support quantifiable impacts.	- - -	- ? ?	N/A	No
Existing buildings - extensions and alterations	N/A	A1	N/A	N/A	The policy provides development criteria. No impact pathways	-	-	N/A	No
Non-Residential and Employment Development	N/A	A1	N/A	N/A	The policy provides development criteria. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Shopfront Design and Security	N/A	A1	N/A	N/A	The policy does not lead to development but provides development	-	-	N/A	No

					criteria. No impact pathway.				
Advertisements, Signs and Illumination	N/A	A1	N/A	N/A	The policy does not lead to development but provides development criteria. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
The sequential test and exception test	N/A	A2	N/A	N/A	This policy seeks to prevent unacceptable harm to the protection and storage capacity of the flood plains, the characteristics of surface water run-off and the drainage function of the natural watercourse system. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Ensuring development is safe from flooding	N/A	A2	N/A	N/A	This policy seeks to prevent unacceptable harm to the protection and storage capacity of the flood plains, the characteristics of surface water run-off and the drainage function of the natural watercourse system. No impact pathway	-	-	N/A	No
Sustainable drainage systems,	N/A	A1 /A2 and A3	N/A	N/A	This policy seeks appropriate design in the delivery of sustainable urban drainage systems	-	-	N/A	No

watercourses and water quality					to prevent unacceptable harm to the protection and storage capacity of the flood plains, the characteristics of surface water run-off and the drainage function of the natural watercourse system. No impact pathway.				
Flood mitigation infrastructure	N/A	A2, A3 and B1	N/A	N/A	This policy seeks to ensure that infrastructure is provided in line with requirements in a timely way. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Blue and Green infrastructure and connectivity	N/A	A3	N/A	N/A	This policy seeks the creation and enhancement of blue and green infrastructure. It will provide opportunities to mitigate recreational pressures on European sites. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
National and Local Sites of importance for biodiversity	N/A	A2	N/A	N/A	This policy protects the environment. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Geodiversity	N/A	A2	N/A	N/A	This policy protects the environment. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No

Biodiversity Net Gain	N/A	A3	N/A	N/A	This policy requires biodiversity enhanced to development sites. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Biodiversity No Net Loss for development not subject to mandatory BNG	N/A	A3	N/A	N/A	This policy requires biodiversity enhancement to development sites. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Trees	N/A	A3	N/A	N/A	This policy requires biodiversity enhanced to development sites. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Safeguarding amenity and managing the impacts of development	N/A	A2	N/A	N/A	The policy does not lead to development but provides development criteria. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Pollution, ground conditions and contamination	N/A	A1	N/A	N/A	The policy does not lead to development but provides development criteria to ensure that appropriate development controls are in place. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Safeguarding minerals and soils	N/A	A2 and B1	N/A	N/A	This policy seeks to safeguard and protect natural resources. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Sustainable Transport and Active Travel	Cannock Chase	A1, A2 and A3	N/A	N/A	This policy promotes a shift to more sustainable modes of transport, thereby encouraging a	-	-	N/A	No

					decrease in vehicle related emissions. No impact pathway.				
Managing Car Use	Cannock Chase	A1 and A2	N/A	N/A	This policy promotes a shift to more sustainable modes of transport, thereby encouraging a decrease in vehicle related emissions. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Impact on the Transport Network and Highways Safety	N/A	A1	N/A	N/A	This policy addresses highway impact and safety. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Freight, Servicing and Logistics	N/A	A1 and A2	N/A	N/A	This policy seeks to minimise vehicular impacts on the highway. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
Infrastructure delivery	River Mease Cannock Chase	D1	Water Quality Recreational pressures Air Quality	Water Quality Visitor numbers Emissions	This policy seeks the delivery of infrastructure required to support growth which will lead to an increase in population. Likely significant effect is uncertain owing to location of Tamworth; quantum of development proposed in the Local Plan and lack of evidence to support quantifiable impacts.	- - -	- ? ?	N/A	No

Developer Contributions	N/A	A1	N/A	N/A	This policy provides the mechanisms to ensure that developers support infrastructure delivery. No impact pathway.	-	-	N/A	No
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Appendix 4 Pre-Submission Strategic Sites – Screening Matrix

Pre-Submission Sites	Relevant European Sites	Category	Potential Impact		Comment	Likely Significant Impact on a European site (s)		Policy change recommended to enable screen out	Requirement for AA
			Impact	Indicator		Alone	In combination		
Ashlands Farm, Ashby Road	River Mease Cannock Chase	B1	Water Quality	Water Quality	It is not within the River Mease catchment area.	-	-	No	No
			Recreational pressures	Visitor numbers	Small site to the north of Tamworth. Site is of a sufficient distance away from Cannock Chase to avoid the likelihood of a significant effect.		?		
			Air Quality	Emissions			?		
Tamworth College Site	River Mease Cannock Chase	B1	Water Quality	Water Quality	It is not within the River Mease catchment area.	-	-	No	No
			Recreational pressures	Visitor numbers	Small site to the north of Tamworth tow centre. Site is of a sufficient distance away from Cannock Chase to avoid the likelihood of a significant effect.		?		
			Air Quality	Emissions			?		
Land West of Dunstall Lane	River Mease	B1	Water Quality	Water Quality	It is not within the River Mease catchment area.	-	-	No	No

	Cannock Chase		Recreational pressures	Visitor numbers	Small site to the west of Tamworth.		?		
			Air Quality	Emissions	Site is of a sufficient distance away from Cannock Chase to avoid the likelihood of a significant effect.		?		
Land South of Ashby Road	River Mease Cannock Chase	B1	Water Quality	Water Quality	It is not within the River Mease catchment area.	-	-	No	No
			Recreational pressures	Visitor numbers	Small site to the north of Tamworth. Site is of a sufficient distance away from Cannock Chase to avoid the likelihood of a significant effect.		?		
			Air Quality	Emissions			?		
Land at Gorsey Bank Road	River Mease Cannock Chase	B1	Water Quality	Water Quality	It is not within the River Mease catchment area.	-	-	No	No
			Recreational pressures	Visitor numbers	Small site to the south of Tamworth. Site is of a sufficient distance away from Cannock Chase to avoid the likelihood of a significant effect.		?		
			Air Quality	Emissions			?		
Land off Tamworth Road/Wigford Road	River Mease Cannock Chase	B1	Water Quality	Water Quality	It is not within the River Mease catchment area.	-	-	No	No
			Recreational pressures	Visitor numbers	Medium site to the south of Tamworth. Site is of a		?		

			Air Quality	Emissions	sufficient distance away from Cannock Chase to avoid the likelihood of a significant effect. Site will have green infrastructure to support delivery.		?		
Gungate Regeneration Opportunity	River Mease Cannock Chase	B1	Water Quality	Water Quality	It is not within the River Mease catchment area.	-	-	No	No
			Recreational pressures	Visitor numbers	Small site in the town centre. Site is of a sufficient distance away from		?		
			Air Quality	Emissions	Cannock Chase to avoid the likelihood of a significant effect.		?		
Ankerside Regeneration Opportunity	River Mease Cannock Chase	B1	Water Quality	Water Quality	It is not within the River Mease catchment area.	-	-	No	No
			Recreational pressures	Visitor numbers	Small site in the town centre. Site is of a sufficient distance away from		?		
			Air Quality	Emissions	Cannock Chase to avoid the likelihood of a significant effect.		?		
Land South of the A5 (Classes Ei/Eii/B2/B8)	River Mease Cannock Chase	B1	Water Quality	Water Quality	It is not within the River Mease catchment area.	-	-	No	
			Recreational pressures	Visitor numbers	Employment site to the south of the A5. Site is of a sufficient distance away from		?		
			Air Quality	Emissions	from Cannock Chase to		?		

					avoid the likelihood of a significant effect.				
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