TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL: STRATEGIC CAPACITY STUDY

October 2025

Tamworth Borough Council

Hyas planning to deliver

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1 Introduction & Background

Role & Purpose of the Study

1.1 Tamworth Borough Council are in the process of preparing a new Local Plan for Tamworth Borough, which will set the planning framework for growth and development up to 2043. The Council commissioned Hyas Associates supported by Steer, who are providing specific transport advice, to prepare this 'Strategic Capacity Study.' This study will help to understand the level of capacity within the Borough's existing infrastructure to accommodate housing growth. This is in the context of the housing need under the revised standard method increasing significantly to 445 dwellings per annum (dpa) compared to both the current local plan requirement of 177 dpa and the related overarching objectively assessed housing need of 250dpa at the time the Local Plan was produced.

1.2 Specifically, the study considers:

- A High-level review of Tamworth Borough's existing capacity taking into account approved consents and development pipeline.
- Potential locations for growth, using identified scenarios outlined in section 2 of this report.
- The key opportunities and constraints that will influence the location and capacity for growth.

1.3 This study does not focus on specific sites and nor is it the purpose of the study to consider the overall planning merits of any specific sites, it adopts a spatial approach to consider the potential contribution different scenarios could make to address the future growth of the Borough and the potential implications for infrastructure capacity. Albeit, as part of the baseline analysis, planning consents within and neighbouring the borough, alongside the development pipeline, have been taking into consideration when understanding the Boroughs infrastructure capacity.

1.4 As part of the spatial approach in the study, we have identified some potential development scenarios which have informed an assessment of current and future infrastructure capacity. These scenarios were formulated to form a basis for the engagement sessions with key stakeholders and infrastructure providers. This enabled commentary and a discussion on existing capacity, potential capacity and required mitigation within different areas of the Borough and its wider context. The scenarios have sought to apportion levels of growth within different geographical areas which have been based on key movement corridors. It has been assumed that growth will be accommodated within well-connected areas of the borough and in the most sustainable locations in line with local and national policy and guidance.

1.5 As discussed in section 2, the study has considered development occurring beyond Tamworth Borough Councils administrative boundary, within Lichfield District and North Warwickshire Borough. However, it is recognised that cross-boundary issues will be a matter for the duty to cooperate, and this study does not seek to pre-empt any such decisions. Tamworth Borough Council is committed to working with both Lichfield and North Warwickshire as part of the new Local Plan as Tamworth shares close linkages, housing market areas, and administrative boundaries.

1.6 This study will sit alongside a wider evidence base which is currently being prepared and will provide the foundation to further detailed work looking into specific sites and to support the overall Local Plan process.

1.7 As Tamworth Borough Council are at the relatively early stage in the overall planning process and given that the study is not assessing specific sites, the study adopts a high- level, proportionate approach, based upon the best available information, taking into consideration information and advice provided by key infrastructure providers and statutory bodies. This has been used to inform the study and the initial recommendations on immediate next steps as part of the conclusions of this report.

1.8 This capacity study is accompanied by a specific Transport Study (Appendix 1) which provides a more detailed assessment of transport related infrastructure which have been summarised within this report. It should be noted that there is some duplication between the reports which is deliberate so that the Transport Study can operate as an independent report, where appropriate.

National Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

1.9 The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental, and social planning policies as well as their requirements for the Planning System.

1.10 With regard to plan-making, Paragraph 11 states that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan-making this means that:

*All plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; **align growth and infrastructure**; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects.*

Strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:

I. *the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type, or distribution of development in the plan area; or*
II. *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.* (Emphasis added)

1.11 Paragraph 16 advises local authorities to "be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan-makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees". This study has been informed by engagement with infrastructure providers and neighbouring planning authorities.

1.12 Regarding effective planning cooperation across local authorities, Paragraph 24 states:

"Effective strategic planning across local planning authority boundaries will play a vital and increasing role in how sustainable growth is delivered, by addressing key spatial issues including meeting housing needs, ***delivering strategic infrastructure*** *and building economic and climate resilience. Local planning authorities and county councils (in two-tier areas) continue to be under a duty to cooperate with each other, and with other prescribed bodies, on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries"* (Emphasis added)

1.13 The NPPF (December 2024) highlights that strategic policy-making authorities must use the standard method to calculate their local housing need**.** Paragraph 60 states that the overall aim is to "meet as much of an area's identified housing need as possible," while paragraph 61 confirms the standard method is the baseline, allowing departures only in exceptional, evidence-led circumstances.

1.14 The current NPPF (December 2024) sets out that a strategic approach by Councils as part of preparing Local Plans is needed to make sufficient provision for new homes, employment, infrastructure, and community facilities whilst respecting the natural environment.

1.15 In addition, Paragraph 77 a) advises that local planning authorities should take into account the potential offered by existing or anticipated infrastructure investment, the broader economic prospects of the area, and the opportunity to secure net gains for the environment. Paragraph 72 b) reinforces that new development should aim to support self-contained and sustainable communities, offering access to services and employment either within the development or in nearby, well-connected towns.

National Planning Practice Guidance.

1.16 The Government Guidance on viability and plan-making provides information on how plan makers should set policy requirements for contributions from development, including the various levels and types of affordable housing provision required and the associate infrastructure including but not limited to education, health, transport, flood and water management, green and digital infrastructure. It states these policy requirements should be informed by evidence of infrastructure and affordable housing need and proportionate viability that takes into consideration national and local policies as well as material considerations, CIL and Section 106.

1.17 The New Local Plan will also need to align with the vision-led approach to transport set out at para. 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Government has pledged to update transport-related Planning Practice Guidance to guide how this approach should be applied; however, there will need to be a step change in how developments and transport networks are planned. Transport investment will increasingly need to prioritise active travel and public transport over expansion of highway capacity.

Local Context

1.18 The current development plan for Tamworth consists of the Local Plan Strategy 2006-2031 (adopted February 2016) which sets out a vision for the Borough, as well as site allocations for homes and employment to meet the needs of the local community and businesses up to 2031.

1.19 Tamworth is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan which will set out policies to guide the Borough's growth and support Tamworth's housing and employment needs in line with national and local guidance. As part of the Local Plan preparation, Tamworth is gathering a wide range of evidence to support and sit below the Local Plan to evidence policies, assumptions, and decisions.

1.20 Tamworth Borough Council held their first consultation on their 'Initial Issues and Options' in September 2022 which sought views on the key planning issues facing the borough over the proposed plan period (to 2043) and the potential options to address them. The consultation did not consider specific sites; it considered the following key topics and themes in relation to Tamworth's ambitions for the Borough:

- Vision & Objectives
- Climate Change & Biodiversity
- New and Affordable Homes
- Economy
- Retail, Town Centre, Local and Neighbourhood Centres
- Heritage
- Open Spaces and Green Infrastructure
- Infrastructure

1.21 As set out previously, the recently revised standard method has resulted in a significant increase in the level of housing Tamworth should be planning for, with an increase from 177 homes per year (based on the current Local Plan requirement) to 445 homes per year.

1.22 Tamworth Borough is one of the smallest Planning Authorities in England and is significantly constrained (see figure 1). A key constraint is the flood plain, particularly fluvial flooding along the Tame and Anker rivers and the Borough's susceptibility to surface water flooding impacting its overall capacity in conformity with the NPPF, paragraphs 170 to 172. The associated flood alleviation required to support development within the flood plain further reduces the available land within the Borough to accommodate growth. Additionally, Tamworth Borough is one of the smallest of any local authority district in England, and a significant proportion of the Borough has already been developed, which significantly constrains its ability to expand within the borough and accommodate the required level of growth. It should also be noted that parts of the South of the Borough are designated as Green Belt, which is a national policy constraint. However, this study has not considered the implications of Green Belt which will be subject to separate assessment.

1.23 Tamworth Borough adjoins North Warwickshire Borough and Lichfield District. Tamworth's current Local Plan identifies insufficient land within the borough to meet the full objectively assessed housing need (at that time) which resulted in a shortfall of 1,825 dwellings to be delivered elsewhere in the housing market area. As part of the current Local Plan (2006-2031), Policy SS1 confirms that Lichfield and North Warwickshire committed to deliver 500 homes each (1,000 homes in total) to meet Tamworth's housing needs.

1.24 Regarding the residual 825 dwelling unmet need, a subsequent Statement of Common Ground (September 2018) agreed an approach whereby should evidence suggest that either the Objectively Assessed Need for Tamworth be altered or delivery exceed the current Local Plan, the

residual figure would be updated accordingly. It then confirmed that subject to these two factors, North Warwickshire Borough Council will seek to deliver 413 dwellings and Lichfield District Council 412 dwellings with the housing delivered in line with Tamworth's current Local plan period to 2031.

1.25 In terms of specific provision in respective Local Plans, the 2021 adopted North Warwickshire Local Plan (2011 to 2033), makes provision for 914 homes to meet Tamworth's needs through general housing delivery rather than specific sites. The 2019 adopted Lichfield Local Plan Allocations (2008-2029) includes a commitment to provide 500 homes for Tamworth at Arkall Farm, North of Tamworth.

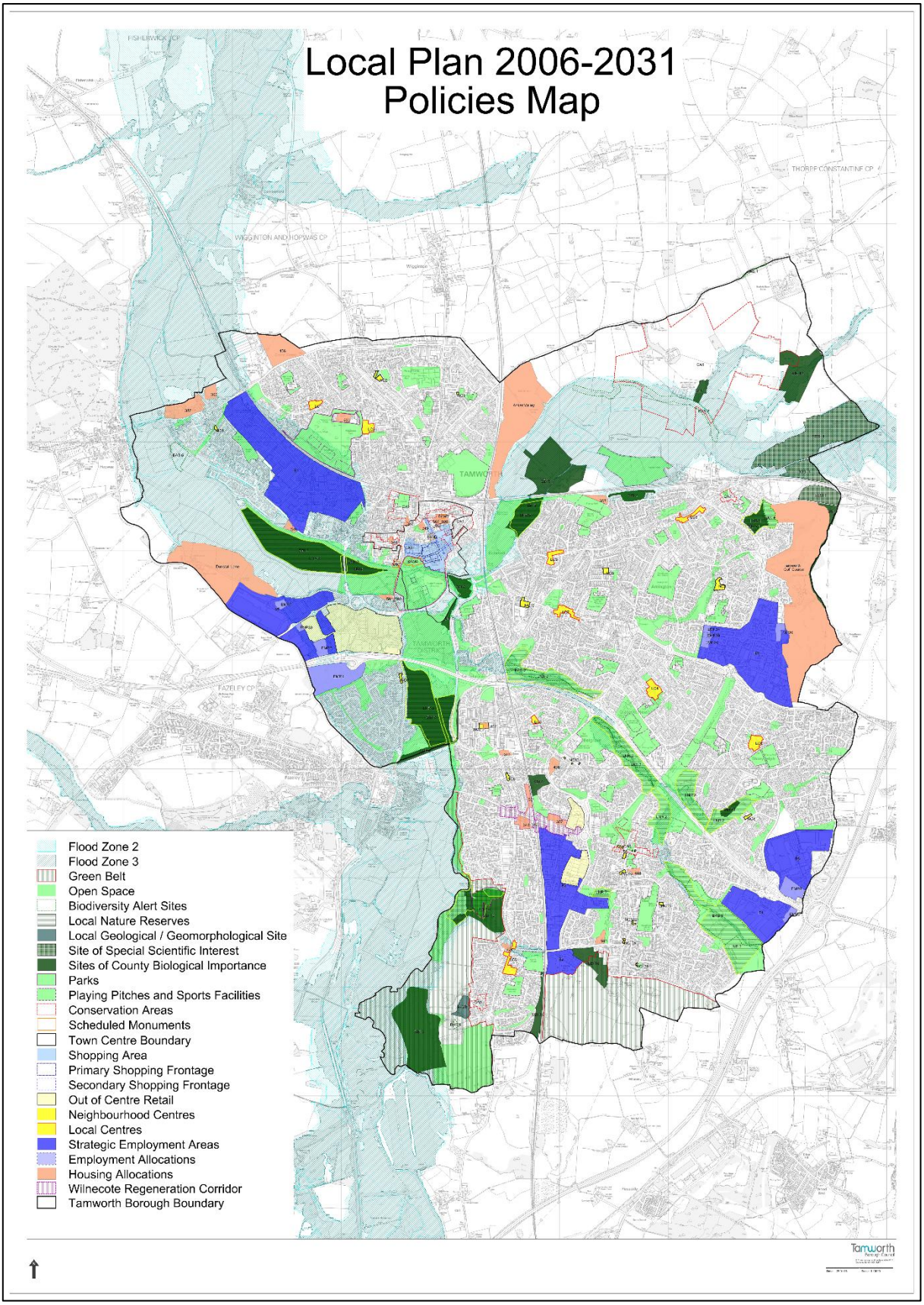


Figure 1 Tamworth Local Plan Policies Map

2 Growth Scenarios

2.1 To assist with the assessment of the capacity of the Boroughs infrastructure growth, growth scenarios were formulated which apportioned housing growth to different parts of the Borough in the form of different geographical zones.

2.2 These scenarios were established using a staged approach, explained below.

2.3 Geographical Zones within the Borough

2.4 To help provide a spatial understanding of the infrastructure capacity within the Borough, the scenarios have split the borough into four zones, as shown in figure 2 below. These have been formulated using key movement corridors and existing features, most notably the two railway lines that run East-West and North-South through the Borough.

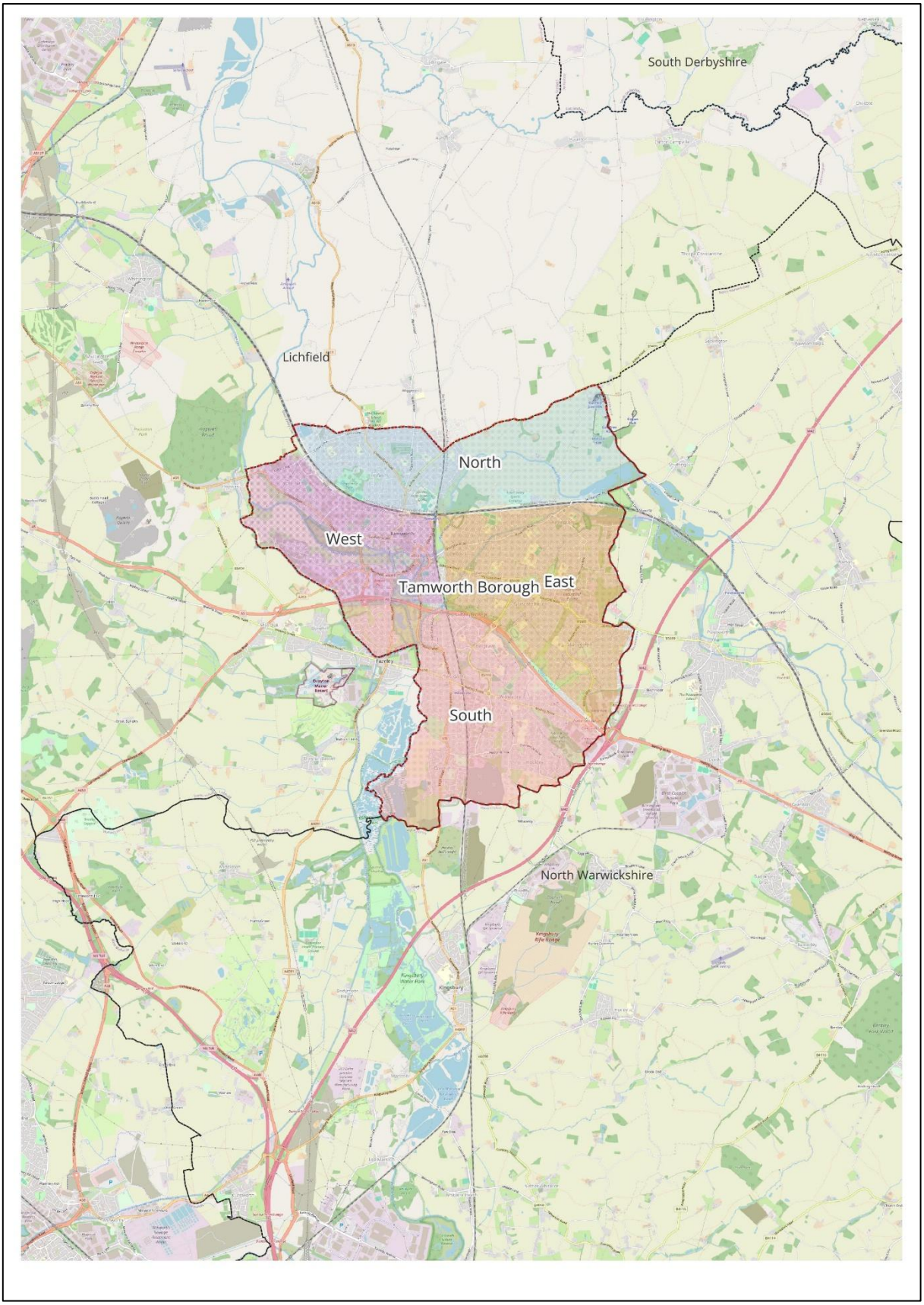


Figure 2 Geographical Zones within Tamworth Borough

Housing Need

2.5 Following the sub-division of the Borough into four zones, levels of growth needed to be apportioned to each zone. To do so the first step was to understand the total housing need that the new Local Plan will use as a starting point.

2.6 The Council have advised that using the Standard Method, the need figure for Tamworth Borough for the period December 2024 – March 2043 is 445 dpa which equates to 8,121 homes in total.

2.7 The Council have advised that the previous requirement for Tamworth Borough for the period April 2022 to December 2024 was 177 dpa, which equates to 487 in total. This leaves a total potential amount of housing of 8,608 homes (assuming that there are no unmet needs arising from other planning authorities).

Baseline Housing Supply - Completions and Commitments

2.8 Taking into account completions from 2022/23 to 2024/25 (1,143 homes), agreed residual supply under the duty to cooperate as identified in policy SS1 from adjoining authorities (Lichfield District and North Warwickshire)(832 homes[1]) and the total consented supply within Tamworth (520 homes as at 1st April 2025), the total supply since 2022 is 2,495 homes. Given this supply already benefits from planning permission or has been completed, it should be factored into the current baseline and does not need to form the basis of the scenarios to be tested.

2.9 Considering the supply above, the residual potential amount of housing to be provided is **6,113 homes** and this is the residual quantum of development to be tested through the scenarios.

Potential Housing Supply – SHLAA Sites

2.10 In order to understand likely supply that may come forward through the emerging Local Plan it is important to understand potential supply arising from the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. That study identifies supply based on three categories, Deliverable, Developable and Not Developable which accords with the National Planning Practice Guidance[2]. Whilst potential site allocations will need to be subject to further assessment work as part of the wider plan-making process, the Deliverable and Developable sites form an important starting point for identifying potential supply to be taken into account when testing the capacity of infrastructure.

2.11 Focusing firstly on Deliverable sites, the emerging SHLAA identifies a deliverable supply of approximately 1,762 dwellings[3] (based on circa 35dph). This is supply that is currently outside the planning process and therefore has not been taken into account in the supply identified above.

2.12 This supply was broken down into individual wards. However, as the Ward boundaries do not directly relate to the geographical zones in this study, we undertook a sensitivity test where the boundaries do not align. Table 1 below identifies the potential deliverable supply within each zone, also identifying the respective wards. A 10% buffer and rounding have also been added to consider

[1] This is comprised of 500 homes at Arkall Farm and 332 homes in North Warwickshire (based on the current Local Plan commitment of 41.54 homes per annum and the 8 years remaining of the NWBC Local Plan period to 2033)
[2] National Planning Practice Guidance - Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment
[3] Based on the emerging SHLAA at the time of writing and may be subject to change following its completion

potential additional supply, e.g. via windfalls and opportunities to deliver the sites at a higher density.

Zone	Wards	Potential Deliverable Supply	Potential deliverable supply +10% flexibility (rounded)
North	Mercian, Spital	178	200
East	Amington, Bolehall, Glascote, Stonydelph	417	450
South	Belgrave, Trinity, Wilnecote	890	1000
West	Castle	277	300
Total		1,762	**1950**

Table 1 Deliverable Supply within Tamworth by Zone

2.13 These figures have been used in each scenario to be tested.

Growth scenario 1

2.14 The first scenario for testing was meeting all of the potential housing need within the Borough. Further to the Deliverable supply identified in the emerging SHLAA, it is also appropriate to consider the Developable supply to understand potential levels of housing development within the different geographical zones of the Borough. The potential Developable supply identified through emerging SHLAA work equates to 5,636 dwellings[4], which when taking into account the potential deliverable supply (1,950 dwellings) would be 7,586 dwellings, which is more than the residual amount of 6,113 dwellings. Consequently, not all this supply would need to come forward to meet the total housing need.

2.15 We have therefore taken the proportions of the total developable supply available for each zone and applied it to the residual amount of 6,113 dwellings to proportionately distribute the supply amongst the zones. For example, 2,005 dwellings have been identified in the North zone, which is 36% of the total Developable supply. This is then applied against the residual amount of 6,113 dwellings which equates to 2,174 dwellings.

2.16 However, importantly with regards to the developable supply, it is acknowledged that all of this is unlikely to come forward. The SHLAA is an emerging document, and the sites have been assessed on an individual basis and no consideration has yet been given on the wider strategic implications of developing the sites. For example, a number of the developable sites are currently in use as different forms of open space, some of which are quite substantive areas, and therefore the wider implications of their loss would need to be properly understood and considered. It may be that some of these sites could be brought forward but it is unlikely that they all would through the Local Plan process.

2.17 Table 2 below identifies the total potential housing, based on the Deliverable supply (including a 10% margin and rounding) and proportions of Developable supply.

[4] Based on the emerging SHLAA at the time of writing and may be subject to change following its completion

Zone	Wards	Potential Deliverable Supply +10% flexibility (rounded)	Potential Total Developable Supply	Total with Developable Proportion
North	Mercian, Spital	200	1974	2174 (36%)
East	Amington, Bolehall, Glascote, Stonydelph	450	566	1016 (17%)
South	Belgrave, Trinity, Wilnecote	1000	801	1801 (29%)
West	Castle	300	822	1122 (18%)
Total		**1,950**	**5,636**	**6,113**

Table 2 Deliverable and Developable Supply within Tamworth Borough

2.18 This was the scenario for testing the infrastructure capacity within the Borough and to understand whether there are specific geographical variations within the Borough. This is known as Scenario 1.

Scenarios 2-6 – considering growth beyond the Borough boundary

2.19 Whilst the primary aim of the study is to look at the capacity of Tamworth's infrastructure, it should also be noted that infrastructure functions beyond a Local Planning Authorities boundary e.g. transport routes function irrespective of where an LPA boundary falls. Furthermore, development can occur beyond the boundaries of one planning authority which may have implications on infrastructure within another. Consequently, on this basis and in the context of a significant increase in housing numbers under the new standard method within the wider area (including Lichfield District and North Warwickshire Borough), it was considered appropriate to also look at development and infrastructure capacity beyond Tamworth's boundary.

2.20 For each scenario, the deliverable supply identified above has remained constant and therefore applied to each scenario as it a reasonable conclusion that this supply will come forward under any scenario. The specific quantum's that have been identified are not derived from specific sites, it is purely a mechanism to identify the implications for infrastructure of identifying substantial levels of growth within a particular zone.

On this basis it was considered appropriate to focus on a more limited number of scenarios with scope for a more fine-grained scenario assessment informed through more detailed understanding of specific sites. Scenarios 2-6 include growth outside the Borough; four of these distributing growth evenly to different areas with the final scenario (option 6) applying a 'balanced growth' approach. It should also be noted that whilst sites did not drive the specific quantum's, known sites in the planning process e.g. allocations, did inform the discussions with key stakeholders.

2.21 Therefore in scenarios 2 to 5, the potential deliverable supply has been used as a baseline with the residual amount (4,163 dwellings) being met in each of the four geographical zones.

2.22 For the final scenario of a balanced approach, the potential deliverable supply has been used as a baseline with the residual amount (4,163 dwellings) being split equally across the 4 geographical zones, i.e. an additional 1,040 dwellings in each.

2.23 Furthermore, whilst the scenario quantum's are solely based on Tamworth's needs, the discussions also took into account any areas of potential growth within neighbouring authorities which may

utilise infrastructure in Tamworth and also considered known sites identified in existing Local Plans and those being promoted.

2.24 As referred to in section 1, it should be noted that testing the infrastructure capacity beyond Tamworth Borough as part of this study does not pre-empt any commitment to accommodate unmet housing need arising from Tamworth by nearby Local Planning Authorities and should not be misinterpreted as suggesting any specific areas for growth. It is simply a means of informing infrastructure capacity within the wider areas beyond Tamworth's Boundary which may be of use for discussion on cross-boundary issues. Such decisions about the quantum and locations of development will be a matter for respective Local Plans and informed by cross-boundary working under the Duty to Cooperate.

2.25 Table 3 below summarises the options and the accompanying map (figure 3) identifies how they have been defined.

	North			East			South			West			
Scenario	IN	OUT	**Sub-Total**	IN	OUT	**Sub-Total**	IN	OUT	**Sub-Total**	IN	OUT	**Sub-Total**	**Total**
Option 1- Inside Borough	2174	0	**2174**	1016	0	**1016**	1801	0	**1801**	1122	0	**1122**	**6113**
Option 2- North focus	200	4163	**4363**	450	0	**450**	1000	0	**1000**	300	0	**300**	**6113**
Option 3 – East focus	200	0	**200**	450	4163	**4613**	1000	0	**1000**	300	0	**300**	**6113**
Option 4 – South focus	200	0	**200**	450	0	**450**	1000	4163	**5163**	300	0	**300**	**6113**
Option 5 – West focus	200	0	**200**	450	0	**450**	1000	0	**1000**	300	4163	**4463**	**6113**
Option 6 – Balanced	200	1041	**1241**	450	1041	**1491**	1000	1041	**2041**	300	1041	**1341**	**6114** (*due to rounding*)

Table 3 Options Overview

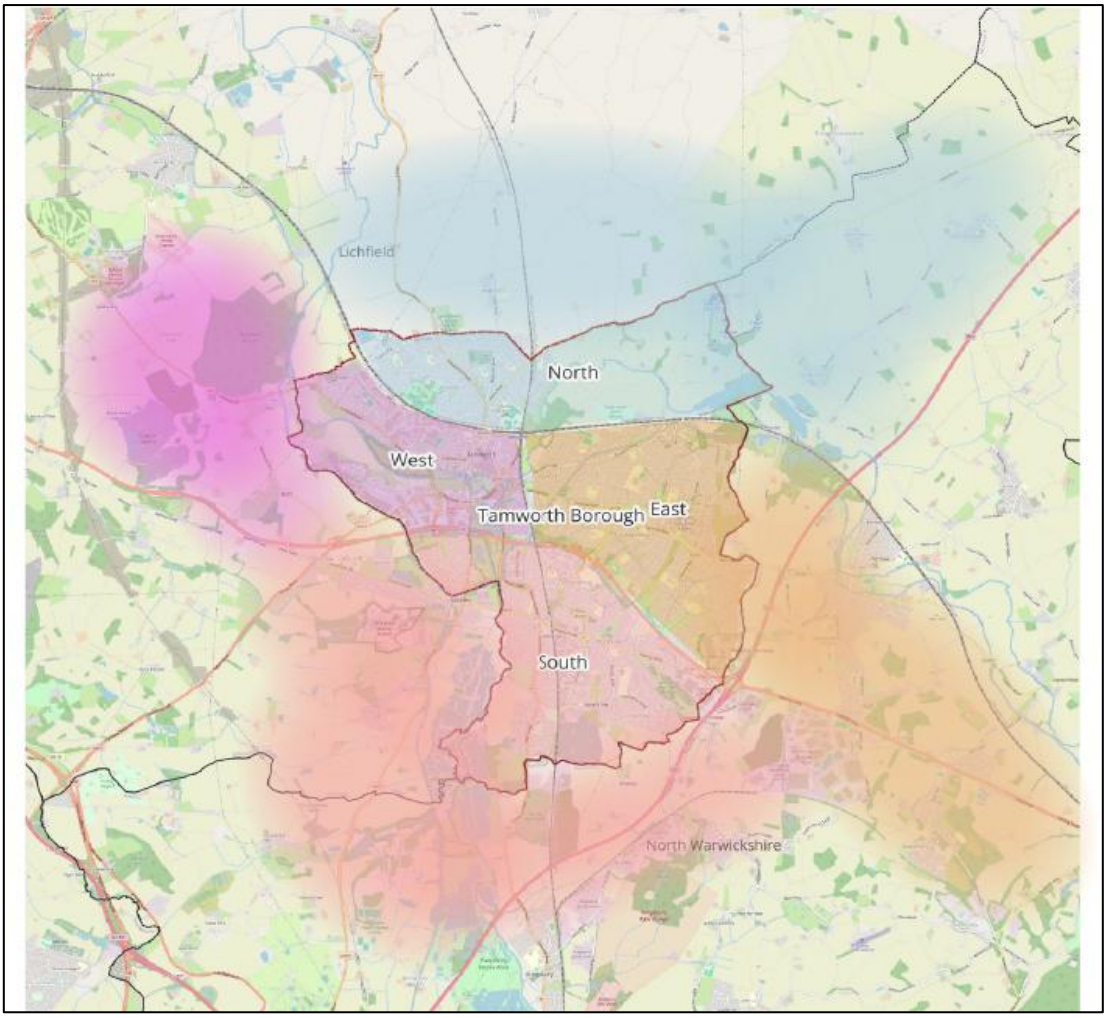


Figure 3 – Illustrative map showing geographical zones including adjacent authorities.

Engagement

2.26 This report has been informed by a comprehensive programme of engagement with key infrastructure providers and internal and external stakeholders in relation to the anticipated level of growth required to meet Tamworth's housing needs, focusing on potential growth scenarios and considering the infrastructure capacity and constraints for each specific infrastructure item.

2.27 To inform the discussion an infrastructure briefing note was shared prior to the meetings, with details on the required growth to meet the needs of Tamworth Borough, accompanied with the high-level growth scenarios, providing an illustrative direction and location for the housing.

2.28 The following infrastructure providers were engaged with to gather insights and understanding from their perspective, and to inform our understanding of the extent to which existing capacity and constraints and potential capacity and constraints will have on facilitating future growth in the borough and potential opportunities:

Infrastructure Provider/Key Stakeholders
Tamworth Borough Council Planning Policy
Tamworth Borough Council Development Management
Tamworth Borough Open Spaces
North Warwickshire Borough Council
Lichfield District Council
Staffordshire County Council Education
Staffordshire County Council Highways
National Grid
Cadent Gas
Severn Trent
Natural England
Staffordshire and Warwickshire Wildlife Trusts
National Highways
West Midlands Rail Executive
Midlands Connect
Warwickshire County Council Highways
Warwickshire County Council Education
Staffordshire and Stoke Integrated Care Board

2.29 There are a small number of outstanding discussions with infrastructure providers and key stakeholders, as a result of delayed responses from relevant stakeholders. Work is ongoing to secure the necessary inputs to inform this report, however some information and further detail will be addressed as part of the continuing Local Plan process.

3 Overall Infrastructure Capacity

3.1 This section of the report provides an overview of the infrastructure position, predominantly for Tamworth Borough but also takes into account areas beyond the boundary where relevant to the infrastructure. It is broken down based on the following types of infrastructure:

- Utilities
  - Wastewater
  - Gas
  - Electricity
- Education
  - Early Years
  - Primary Education
  - Secondary Education
- Green and Blue Infrastructure
  - Ecology
  - Open Space
  - Flood Risk
- Health – Primary Care
- Highways
  - Local Highways
  - Strategic Highways
- Sustainable Travel
  - Bus
  - Rail
  - Active Travel

3.2 The section focuses firstly on the current position and the level to which the infrastructure is a constraint to growth. It then focuses on the likely potential to deliver mitigation, if required. This is important because the potential for mitigation is a key aspect of understanding the extent that the infrastructure is a constraint to future development. It adopts a Red Amber Green (RAG) assessment which is based on the following criteria:

3.3 For the **current position** it assesses the degree to which the infrastructure is constrained:

	Highly constrained, would have a significant impact on the current situation and likely to significantly impact on growth levels
	A medium level of constraint that could affect growth but there is a potential solution to free up capacity
	A low level of constraint that is unlikely to affect the levels of growth

3.4 For the **potential to deliver mitigation**:

	A solution has been or could be identified that is likely to be deliverable to free up capacity and could be funded by amount of potential development
	There is likely to be a solution to mitigate impacts but this is not yet defined. **And / or** The solution is likely to require additional funding beyond that which the level of development could support.
	There is no clearly identified solution to address the infrastructure constraint and free up sufficient capacity to deliver growth at this point in time. **And / or** The likely solution is unlikely to be funded.

3.5 The RAG assessment is then applied to each of the infrastructure items and assessed on the basis of different geographical zones to give a full understanding of the constraint risk.

3.6 Following an assessment of the infrastructure position within each of the zones and the scope for mitigation, an overall RAG rating has been applied to each of the scenarios identified in section 2 (by infrastructure) to give an overall position for each scenario for each infrastructure item. This overall rating is based on the following:

	The growth scenario is not constrained by the infrastructure or the infrastructure capacity could be addressed through further mitigation which is of a level where it could reasonably be funded by the level of development.
	The growth scenario would require additional investment in infrastructure to be accommodated and such schemes have been identified. However, the schemes may require additional sources of funding beyond that which could be reasonably provided by development e.g. external government funding. Or The growth scenario would require additional investment in infrastructure to be accommodated and such schemes have not yet been identified but are likely to be technically feasible and fundable.
	The growth scenario would require significant intervention and investment however no such mitigation measures and / or possible funding sources have currently been identified or likely to be found to address these capacity issues.

Utilities

3.7 The utilities infrastructure is broken down into Wastewater, Gas and Electricity. Figure 4 identifies where the sewage treatment works and primary substations are located.

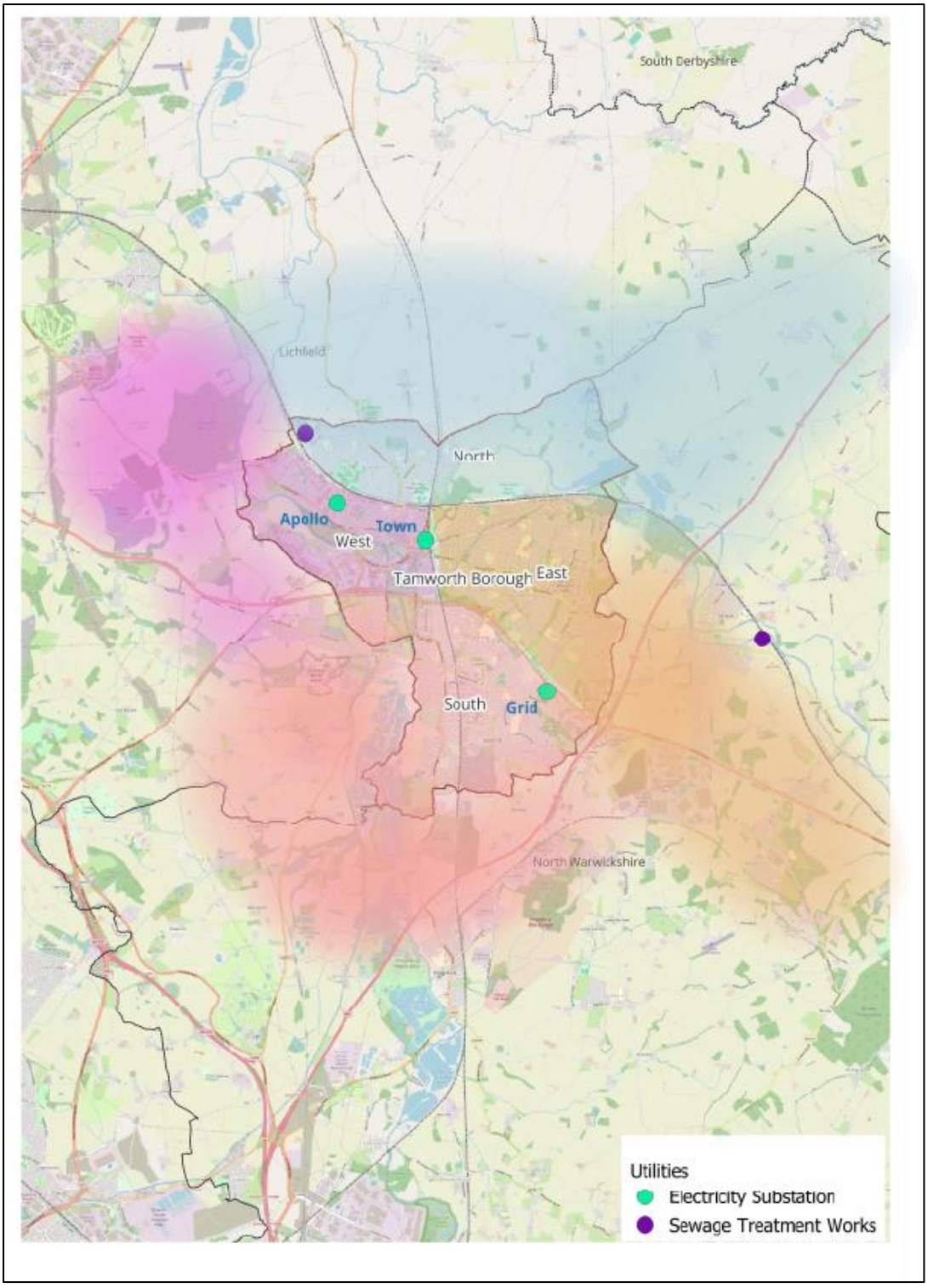


Figure 4 – Utilities Infrastructure

Wastewater

Current position

3.8 Severn Trent Water (STW) confirmed that Tamworth Borough is served by a sewage treatment works to the north-west of Tamworth, situated off Coton Lane. They confirmed that they

considered that there was scope for that sewage treatment facility to be expanded to cater for increased demand in the future.

3.9 A further Sewage Treatment Works is located at Polesworth which is understood to also have additional capacity.

Geographical variations and potential for mitigation

3.10 In terms of any specific geographical variations based on the different options, STW indicated that growth to the **North** within or geographically close to Tamworth would be less constrained because of its proximity to the sewage treatment works and that development in **all other zones** would need to be pumped to the sewage treatment works. This would require further investment to pump wastewater to the treatment works but the mitigation required is considered to be deliverable and would expect to be funded by the levels of development. The mitigation deliverability potential for **all other zones** was therefore considered to be high.

3.11 To the North of the **Northern** zone is the River Mease SAC catchment where there are ongoing issues with nutrient neutrality. Development in this zone would require mitigation including directing sewerage to treatment works outside the catchment area and ensuring that no issues are caused due to surface water run-off or filtration.

3.12 The geographical overview for wastewater can be summarised as follows:

Area	Current RAG Score	Mitigation Deliverability Potential
North		
East		
West		
South		

Scenario Overview

3.13 In terms of specific options, whilst **Option 1** which focuses growth within the Borough has been classified as a medium level constraint in recognition of growth being identified across the Borough rather than solely in the North. **Option 2 (North Focused)** scores as the least constrained option with wastewater for all other options considered to be a medium constraint for growth. However, in relative terms the scope for mitigation is considered to be high for all options at this point in time therefore no options are constrained by waste water.

3.14 The extent to which each of the options for growth are constrained by wastewater is summarised as follows:

Scenario	Level of constraint taking into account mitigation potential	
Option 1-Inside Borough	This option focuses development across the Borough and whilst the majority of the North is the least constrained there is a technical solution to mitigate impact of development in other areas	

Option 2- North focus	Given the proximity to the sewage treatment works, focusing growth in this location is of limited constraint	
Option 3 – East focus	This option has the potential to also utilise capacity at the Polesworth Sewage Treatment Works.	
Option 4 – South focus	Focusing development in this location is furthest from the Sewage Treatment Works but it is understood that this could be mitigated through pumping to connect to the main works.	
Option 5 – West focus	Focusing development in this location is closer to the sewage treatment works but would still require mitigation through pumping of wastewater to the main works.	
Option 6 – Balanced	This option focuses development across the Borough and whilst the North is the least constrained there is a technical solution to mitigate impact of development in other areas	

Gas

Current position

3.15 Cadent confirmed that there are no overall capacity issues in the current low gas pressure network within the Tamworth Borough boundary. Schemes of up to 500 homes can be connected to the gas supply without the need for reinforcement to the network. Developers would need to apply for connections in the usual manner and make the payment for the connection plus provide the usual pipework to individual houses.

3.16 Should the number of homes exceed current capacity, Cadent have a duty to provide reinforcement to the network at their own cost. This will need to be included within their investment plan and will potentially cause some delays to developments going forward. It is recommended that the Council and developers on large sites are encouraged to have regular dialogue with the Cadent strategic team to help an understanding of the need for further reinforcements to the network.

3.17 Current proposals in the Future Homes standard favour a move to all electric homes, and many new homes are likely to have no gas connection at all. However, future development of green gas solutions including conversion to hydrogen and biogas will result in a change to this trend – and will help to balance the demand for extra electrical capacity on the National Grid. However, this is likely to only see impact after 2031 in accordance with Cadent's Hydrogen Heat Policy.

Geographical variations and potential for mitigation

3.18 Cadent identified that there is an issue with providing a supply to sites in the North area as connections would need to be across one of the two railway lines which would need to utilise existing road infrastructure or go underneath the railway line. If a direct connection is required underneath the railway line without using existing infrastructure, this adds costs, and timing issues whilst Network rail are engaged. Aside from the technical challenge of routing gas supplies under the tracks themselves and the need for shut downs on the busy train lines, Network Rail could seek development profit covenants due to the betterment of land value as a serviced plot further impacting on development viability.

3.19 At the present time and with the information available to Cadent, there are no measures to mitigate this issue, however going forward the team at Cadent recommend regular liaison in case the situation changes.

Area	Current RAG Score	Mitigation Deliverability Potential
North		
East		
West		
South		

Scenarios Overview

3.20 In terms of specific scenarios, the gas supply network has capacity in all areas except the north due to the constraint of the railway lines. This means that if gas supply is essential in the North the solution would be to look at going along the existing road over the railway or worst case under the railway track at significant cost with the potential for overage requirements from Network Rail. Future Homes could determine that all electric homes are the solution in the North area with the potential increased build costs/viability challenges this could bring.

The extent to which each of the options for growth are constrained by gas supply is summarised as follows.

Scenario	Level of constraint taking into account mitigation potential	
Option 1-Inside Borough	This option focuses development inside the Borough and whilst it includes development in the North which is potentially most constrained there is a technical solution to mitigate impact of development in other areas	
Option 2- North focus	Given the issue with the railway lines and the challenges of providing access across there is little option to provide additional gas supplies in the North. However, all electric homes could be delivered in this part of the Borough if viability is not prohibitive.	
Option 3 – East focus	Capacity is available	
Option 4 – South focus	Capacity is available	
Option 5 – West focus	Capacity is available	
Option 6 – Balanced	This option focuses development across the zones and whilst the North is constrained there is a technical solution to mitigate impact of development in other areas	

Electricity

Current position

3.21 National Grid confirmed that Tamworth is served by three primary substations, Tamworth Grid, Tamworth Town and Apollo, all three of which are currently at capacity and would all require additional new 33/11kv transformers and circuit reinforcement if new development is to be brought forward. The Apollo substation site is constrained and would require additional land to be purchased for capacity to be increased at that substation. It is relevant to note that there is already a need to reinforce the circuit between Tamworth Grid and the Lea Marston Grid due to the current connection queue.

3.22 Prior to implementing the required upgrades, there is potentially small-scale capacity on local networks which could accommodate sites of up to 50 units.

3.23 Over the longer term, towards the end of the plan period, National Grid are planning a new Super Grid Transformer in 2039 to the south of Tamworth near Coleshill which will provide substantial new capacity. This is needed in part to reflect the move towards Future Homes standard and all electric new homes plus capacity needed for the transition to electric cars, as well as the need to increase capacity for new home building as per the Government agenda.

3.24 In the interim, sites of over fifty units must apply to National Grid for a connection to the nearest primary substation – individual applications are dealt with on a first come first served basis. The application process could take up to two years and would necessitate the design of works to the relevant primary substation to understand if upgrades are possible. These works could then take up to two years to install, with the potential to delay new sites by up to four years.

Geographical variations and potential for mitigation

3.25 There are no real geographical implications as the picture is the same across all the three primary substations serving Tamworth.

3.26 National Grid are keen to have a regular dialogue with the council to maximise the opportunities to connect and to enable new generation opportunities over the next decade prior to the Super Grid Transformer.

3.27 Moreover, early dialogue on potential larger sites is important to ensure that necessary upgrades can be explored to seek to minimise the four-year delay to connection currently envisaged.

Area	Current RAG Score	Mitigation Deliverability Potential
North		
East		
West		
South		

Scenarios Overview

3.28 Electricity supply is challenging in the short to medium term across the whole of the Borough and in the adjacent authorities within the identified zones. Until the Super Grid Transformer is delivered as planned in 2039, the current option is for small development sites to connect to local networks on a first come first served basis, and larger sites to partake in a longer process to seek additional capacity from the three primary substations. This could take up to four years and incur costs that could result in viability issues. One opportunity to further mitigate this is to give consideration to local energy generation schemes linked to larger developments in all the scenario areas.

The extent to which each of the options for growth are constrained by electricity supply is summarised as follows:

Scenario	Level of constraint taking into account mitigation potential

Option 1-Inside Borough	All areas have the same issues regarding connections to the National Grid.	
Option 2- North focus		
Option 3 – East focus		
Option 4 – South focus		
Option 5 – West focus		
Option 6 – Balanced		

Education

3.29 Education services within Tamworth are provided by Staffordshire County Council with some cross boundary pupils registered in the Warwickshire County Council Education authority area. Engagement sessions were held with both Education Authorities. The teams were happy to share their recent baseline data studies which underpins their statutory duty to provide sufficient school places to meet the needs of the local population and take into account planned new development within Local Plans. SEND and early years places are not generally factored into this process but do require attention in terms of infrastructure capacity and meeting future demand. Staffordshire County Education authority stated that generally they were short of places for 2 year olds across the whole Tamworth area.

3.30 We noted that investigations have taken place into the capacity of existing schools and the availability of land/space to extend existing schools across the study area.

3.31 In terms of thresholds for new provision, a development or a combination of small developments in an area of circa 500+ dwellings may trigger the need for a new primary school and a development or a combination of smaller developments of circa 5000+ dwellings may trigger the need for a new secondary school.

3.32 There has been a history of pupils of secondary school age crossing over the local authority boundaries to attend schools in Warwickshire – this has particularly been the case of Tamworth pupils attending the secondary school at Polesworth – with historically about 100+ pupils registering per new year intake. There is little cross-boundary movement at primary school level.

Secondary School Provision

3.33 There are five Secondary schools within Tamworth Borough, of which all are Academies. Academies and Free Schools are independent from the Local Authority and the Department for Education/Secretary of State would be the decision maker for significant changes to an academy. Staffordshire County Council education authority has two planning areas for senior schools – within their defined area of Tamworth North there are two senior schools: The Rawlett School (in Lichfield District) and QEMS. In terms of our study these both fall within the north scenario, but with parental choice and demand for spaces it is to be expected that these schools will be a

consideration across Tamworth generally although the Education authority guidelines suggest a maximum walking distance of three miles at secondary school age. Staffordshire Education Authority's South planning area has three senior schools and generally these fall within the east/south scenarios adopted for this study. Amington, Wilnecote and Tamworth Enterprise college. There are no senior schools located within this study's west scenario area.

3.34 Within Warwickshire County Councils Education Authority there are two relevant secondary schools over the border in North Warwickshire – Polesworth and Kingsbury.

Primary School Provision

3.35 There are 20 primary schools within Tamworth Borough. To note Staffordshire County Education Authority plan for a wider Tamworth School Planning area which also includes 7 primary schools which fall within Lichfield District. Whilst the primary schools are generally spread out over the Tamworth council area – there are only three which fall within this study's west zone. Figure 5 shows the location of the current primary and secondary schools with the exception of primary schools in North Warwickshire.

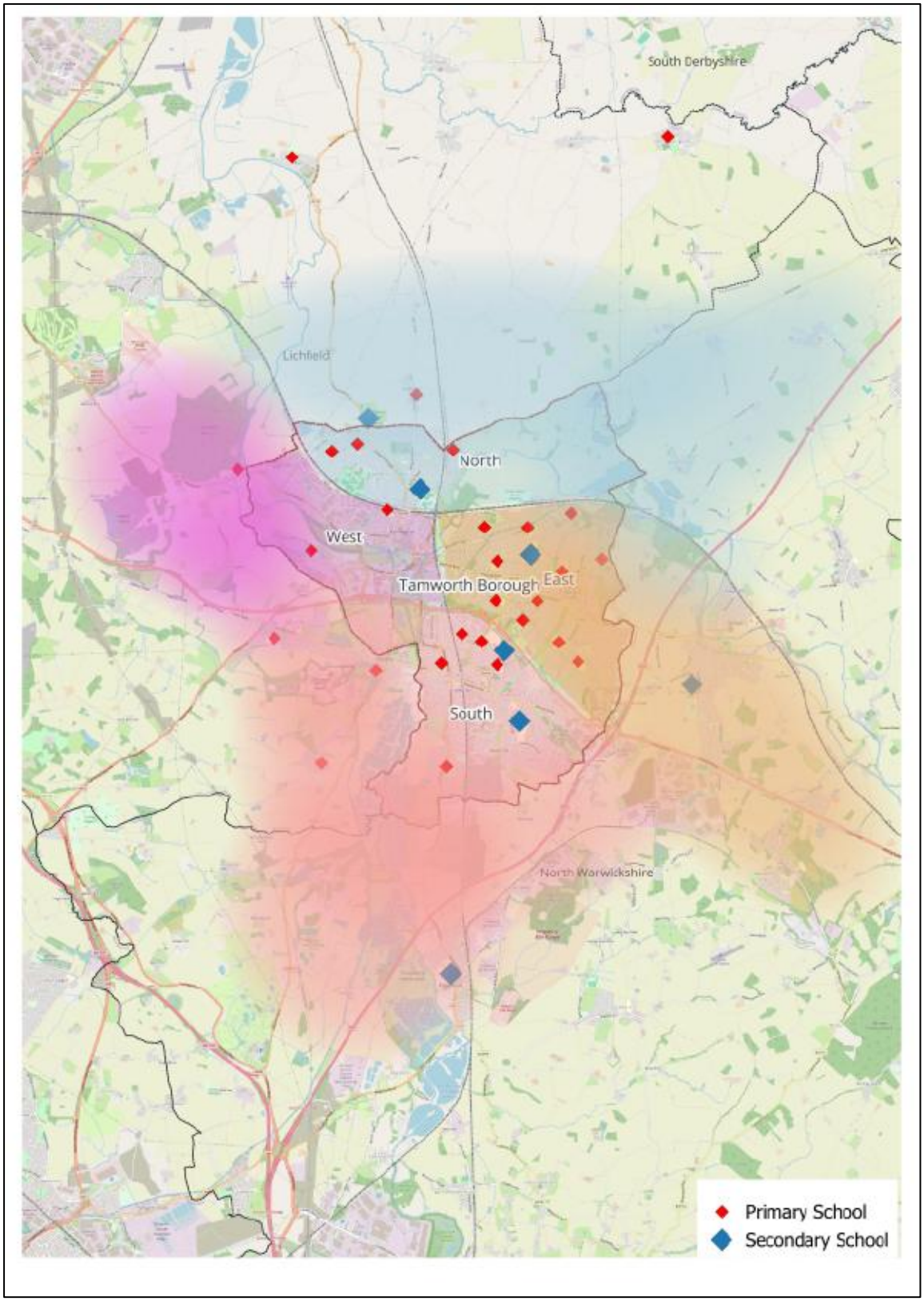


Figure 5 Primary and Secondary Schools (current provision)

Geographical variations and potential for mitigation

North

3.36 The Staffordshire County Education Authority's North **secondary** planning area baseline states that there is currently no capacity within the two secondary schools: The Rawlett School and QEMS. Furthermore, there is likely to be increased demand in the pipeline due to new developments already consented at Arkall Farm and Browns Lane. The potential development of a new primary school at Arkall Farm will also add pressure to the senior school intake in future years.

3.37 In terms of **primary** provision, this area that has seen the most development and housing growth in Tamworth. A new Primary school opened at Anker Valley in 2021 and one primary school, Coton Green has recently been expanded to add 0.5FE for recent/ongoing housing growth in this area. Two further expansion projects to add 0.5FE are proposed at Ashcroft Infants and Flax Hill Junior school to mitigate the impact of a number of recently planning permissions (including appeals) at Brown's Lane, Spinning School Lane and the former Tamworth and Lichfield college site in addition to additional capacity to address early pupil generation on the Arkall Farm development where a primary school will also be provided in due course. It is not anticipated that there will be further capacity to mitigate further housing growth in this area based on current demographics/planned housing and such capacity would require the delivery of a new primary school.

3.38 The rural primary schools covering north Tamworth but which fall within Lichfield District also have extremely limited space with very limited potential to expand.

South/East

3.39 There is sufficient space as well as the ability to expand all three **secondary** schools in Staffordshire's Tamworth South Secondary Education Planning area. This area coincides largely with the east/south scenario within this study. There is already a potential future project to expand Landau Forte Amington as mitigation for the housing development on the former Tamworth Golf Course site. For two of the three secondary schools in this planning area the number on roll is approaching the capacity of the school (The Wilnecote School and Landau Forte Amington). There is a notable amount of available space in Tamworth Enterprise College which has proved a less popular choice for year 7 admissions over the past few years. There are also two schools in North Warwickshire that historically have served pupils from Tamworth. Polesworth secondary school, in North Warwickshire is always popular, and historically any capacity has been picked up by pupils from Tamworth. However, capacity is currently extremely limited with little or no surplus Year 7 spaces between 2025-2031. Furthermore, Polesworth school is currently being considered for either expansion or replacement, to both modernise the facilities and to accommodate additional housing at Polesworth including sites allocated in the North Warwickshire Local Plan. The lead in time of delivery could be circa 10 years which would impact on places available for Tamworth residents over this period. Kingsbury School is currently at capacity with no surplus year 7 spaces anticipated in the forecast between 2025-31. There is sufficient space on site to allow for additional facilities to increase the school capacity by one form entry – however funds to support this build programme would need to be raised through developer contributions.

3.40 There are two situations for **primary** school capacity in the South East. To the north of this zone there is capacity in primary school provision plus expansion potential. This has been enhanced by

the recent opening of the new Garden Village school to mitigate the Tamworth Golf Course site. This new school also has capacity to expand to a further form of entry. New schools would only be required should large scale development be proposed. However, further to the south, there is expected to be extremely limited capacity based on current predictions, and all of the schools have very limited capacity for expansion. Any significant developer of circa 500 homes would require a new primary school.

West

3.41 As previously stated there are no secondary schools within this scenario area. If significant growth was to occur in this area then a new secondary school would be required.

3.42 A primary school at the Dunstall Farm development was opened in September 2024 and there are two further primary schools within this scenario area but again fall within the category of rural schools – small scale growth could be mitigated but this would need to be considered on a case by case basis with very limited potential in the Mile Oak/Fazeley area.

Secondary schools

Area	Current RAG Score	Mitigation Deliverability Potential
North		
East		
West		
South		

Primary schools

Area	Current RAG Score	Mitigation Deliverability Potential
North		
East		
West		
South		

Options Overview

3.43 Education provision is challenging in the Tamworth area with little or no capacity in secondary schools and primary school places fully subscribed in all areas. There is potential to extend schools in the East and South areas subject to funding being available. It is likely that a new secondary school will be required in the Borough to cater for the new housing growth, and that there will be a significant primary school programme with new schools and extensions required. The North is clearly the most under pressure.

The extent to which each of the scenarios for growth are constrained by education provision is summarised below.

Secondary schools

Scenario	Level of constraint taking into account mitigation potential	
Option 1-Inside Borough	The two secondary schools in the north of the Borough are at capacity with no room for expansion. Two of the three schools to the south/east are at capacity but have some room for expansion. With the level of new homes required it is likely that a new secondary school would be required. WCC stated that this is currently forecast at circa £50million for 6FE. It is unlikely that a there would be development at scale that can afford this and therefore funding from the DfE would be required.	
Option 2- North focus	The two schools in the North are at capacity with no room for expansion. A location and funding for a new school would have to be found.	
Option 3 – East focus	There is just one secondary school in the east scenario but with reasonable access to the schools in the south area. These could be expanded subject to funding availability through s106. To note Polesworth school may not have spaces in the medium term (10 years).	
Option 4 – South focus	There are two schools within the south area with room to expand subject to funding through s106. At this stage, whilst this would provide short term spaces - we do not know if this would be sufficient to provide spaces for children from all the new housing growth and it maybe that in time a new school would be required. There is potential to create additional capacity at Kingsbury but this would need appropriate developer contributions.	
Option 5 – West focus	There are no secondary schools in the west area. It is considered that significant housing growth in this area would also trigger a need for a new school subject to land and funding being available.	
Option 6 – Balanced	The situation across the area for secondary education is constrained with limited capacity in the more southeastern half of Tamworth Borough. There is some room to expand, but it is likely that the level of growth would trigger the need for a new secondary school in the medium term.	

Primary schools

Scenario	Level of constraint taking into account mitigation potential	
Option 1-Inside Borough	Primary school age children are limited to restricted travel distances. Alongside the lack of capacity in the north/west and east – the travel distances would mean that any new housing would trigger the need for a local primary school. This is subject to land being available and funding through cumulative s106.	
Option 2- North focus	Primary schools in the north are at capacity with existing plans in place to expand to cope with existing planned housing growth and population predictions. Significant further growth to the north would trigger the need for a new primary school subject to land and funded through S106.	
Option 3 – East focus	There are primary schools in this area with capacity and room for expansion. A new school maybe triggered if all the growth located in this area – subject to land and funding.	
Option 4 – South focus	All the primary schools are at capacity with no expansion potential. Any new growth would trigger the need for new primary schools and would require land and funding through S106.	
Option 5 – West focus	There are only three primary schools in the west area which are small rural schools with limited capacity for expansion. Any growth in this area would trigger the need for new schools subject to land and S106 funding.	
Option 6 – Balanced	If growth is spread throughout the wider Tamworth area there is still going to be the need for new primary schools in the North/West and East areas. Capacity is stretched and travel times at primary school age would impact on the ability to benefit from the spare capacity in the south area. Therefore new provision would be required.	

Green and Blue Infrastructure

3.44 The Green and Blue Infrastructure section is broken down into ecology, open space and flood risk. This is informed by discussions with Tamworth Borough Council's open space team, Natural England, Warwickshire and Staffordshire Wildlife Trusts.

Ecology

Current position

3.45 Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and Staffordshire Wildlife Trust confirmed there are 14 Wild Spaces within Tamworth borough, in addition there are species of significant ecological importance and biodiversity within and outside the borough including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's).

3.46 There is scope to improve the biodiversity within Tamworth. Staffordshire Wildlife Trust have included several opportunity ecological sites as part of Tamworth Local Plan Call for Sites process. The Wildlife Trusts confirmed the following sites are particularly important in regard to Tamworth, with a brief overview of their current position set out below.

Ecological Sites of Importance	Current position
Kingswood SSSI	Impacted by NERC duty
Tame Wetlands	Connectivity is important for travelling species and joining up habitats
River Anker SSSI	Flooding pressures, key stakeholders are currently exploring mitigation
Kingsbury Water Park	High footfall, currently at capacity
Lea Marston Lakes	

Geographical variations and potential for mitigation

3.47 There are no significant geographical implications in relation to ecology, albeit there are ecological sites that could offer potential in terms of capacity and delivery. It is clearly important that all designated sites are retained and appropriate mitigation measures put in place to deal with further recreational pressures should they arise. The wildlife trust consider that there are a number of undesignated opportunity sites that could be improved from a biodiversity point of view and have the potential to be designated. However, limited further work has been done in relation to their potential for upgrading. Should any opportunity ecology sites not subject to statutory designation be considered for development through the Local Plan, such as Wigginton Park in the **North**, further work may be required to understand the potential ecological contribution of these sites going forward and the measures that would be required to mitigate any loss.

3.48 As part of Tamworth's 2023 nature declaration the Council are committed to protecting and regenerating biodiversity across the borough, Tamworth is supporting Staffordshire County Council with the preparation of a nature recovery strategy which has the potential to provide some mitigation.

3.49 Regarding the **Northern** area, it should be noted that part of this zone, outside of Tamworth Borough, is situated within the River Mease SAC catchment where there are ongoing issues with nutrient neutrality. Development in this zone would require mitigation including directing sewerage

to treatment works outside the catchment area, and ensuring that no issues are caused due to surface water run-off or filtration.

3.50 The **West** area is currently just outside the Cannock Chase SAC 15km Zone of Influence.

Area	Current RAG Score	Mitigation Deliverability Potential
North		
East		
West		
South		

Scenario	Level of constraint taking into account mitigation potential	
Option 1- Inside Borough	Given the level of development pressure arising from this option and the need to consider development on some opportunity sites, it is likely that mitigation would be required to address potential loss.	
Option 2- North focus	The proximity to the River Mease SAC catchment is likely to result in development requiring further mitigation	
Option 3 – East focus	Whilst there are assets of ecological importance it is not considered that this is an overriding constraint to development whereby appropriate mitigation would be expected to be funded by the level of development.	
Option 4 – South focus	Whilst there are assets of ecological importance it is not considered that this is an overriding constraint to development whereby appropriate mitigation would be expected to be funded by the level of development.	
Option 5 – West focus	Whilst there are assets of ecological importance it is not considered that this is an overriding constraint to development whereby appropriate mitigation would be expected to be funded by the level of development.	
Option 6 – Balanced	A balanced approach is likely to reduce the impact on particular assets and such impacts should be appropriately mitigated, funded by the level of development.	

Open Space including Outdoor Sports

Current Position

3.51 Tamworth Borough Council Green Spaces team and work previously undertaken confirms Tamworth's current open space provision is below the requirement based on the current population, due to the tight administrative boundary and other constraints. Therefore, there is limited scope to repurpose open space within the borough to support the delivery of homes and infrastructure.

3.52 In terms of outdoor sports provision, including football and rugby, Tamworth is at capacity with a number of the main sports pitches being fully utilised. To allow for intensification of use, there is a need for two more artificial pitches which would also need to provide ancillary accommodation such as changing facilities. Three potential locations are being looked at; two in the Northern zone and one in the southern zone.

Geographical variations and potential for mitigation

3.53 Given the small size of Tamworth Borough some open space and sports assets may fall within a particular zone but actually operate on a strategic basis and meet the needs across a wider geographical area. However, regarding any particular geographical variations, the West (Castle ward) is the only area that has an overprovision of the recommended standards across all categories, including parks, natural greenspace, amenity space, allotments, and play provision. This would suggest there is scope for development to better utilise existing open space in this zone and is potentially more resilient to potential loss of some open space.

3.54 In contrast, the east zone of Tamworth Borough shows widespread under-provision, particularly in parks, allotments, and play areas, confirming the importance of retaining the existing network. The north zone of Tamworth Borough provides some scope for potential capacity as a result of an over provision of parks, albeit there are substantial deficits in natural greenspace and amenity areas. Taking a collective position, the north appears to be constrained in terms of green space, any loss may impact associated benefits and externalities related with a reduction of green space.

3.55 The south zone of Tamworth Borough shows over-provision in certain categories. Trinity, for example, has an over provision of natural greenspace but a shortfall in relation to parks, allotments, and play areas.

3.56 Overall, Tamworth Borough has a strong network of open space, and it is notable that whilst there is over-provision of typologies within certain zones, this is likely to be offset by a shortfall in other typologies so that collectively the position is somewhat balanced. Therefore, development of any green space is likely to require mitigation and alternative provision of green space as part of the measures to mitigate its impact. Whilst there may be scope to release green space/open space within the borough to accommodate the level of housing required to meet the boroughs needs. Further work would need to be undertaken to comprehensively understand the potential impact of any loss of green space, additionally consideration needs to be given to the proportionality of the different categories of green space due to the mixed position within the subcategories (e.g. natural open space vs parks) in respect to the alternative scenarios to understand potential implications on certain typologies. There is also a need to consider the implications and associated infrastructure consideration such as biodiversity, surface water management and habitat connectivity.

3.57 Regarding scenarios outside of Tamworth, a detailed understanding of the open space network in the areas outside the Borough has not been undertaken as part of this work and will therefore require further assessment when there is a more detailed understanding of particular sites. However, given the rural nature in north, south and west, these areas are likely to have fewer established formal open spaces or indoor and outdoor sports facilities.

Area	Current RAG Score	Mitigation Deliverability Potential
North		
East		
West		

South		

Scenario	Level of constraint taking into account mitigation potential	
Option 1-Inside Borough	This option relies upon bringing forward development on some areas of open space which is likely to require appropriate mitigation.	
Option 2- North focus	The implications on the open space network outside of Tamworth have not been fully explored through this study.	Unknown
Option 3 – East focus	The implications on the open space network outside of Tamworth have not been fully explored through this study.	Unknown
Option 4 – South focus	The implications on the open space network outside of Tamworth have not been fully explored through this study.	Unknown
Option 5 – West focus	The implications on the open space network outside of Tamworth have not been fully explored through this study.	Unknown
Option 6 – Balanced	The implications on the open space network outside of Tamworth have not been fully explored through this study.	Unknown

Flood Risk

Current Position

3.58 There are significant parts of the borough which are situated within fluvial floodzone 2 and 3 due to the Tame and Anker rivers. This is a significant constraint to developing certain areas within the Borough. The **north, south and west of the borough** are affected by flood risk, with the **west** being significantly constrained. The **east** is less affected, offering greater potential for development within the borough boundary.

3.59 In terms of the scenarios, as demonstrated in the map below, the western scenario outside of the borough is not impacted by flood risk, with these areas being among the least constrained by flood risk across the wider geography. Moreover, The Environment Agency confirmed that they are introducing further upgrades to flood defences in the Broad Meadow and Hopwas areas, scheduled for completion in 2028. This may provide additional capacity to the west of the borough.

3.60 In relation to the north, east and south scenarios they are all affected by flood risk to some extent, with the south more affected. The north and east scenarios are slightly less affected by fluvial flood risk, with the eastern area relatively the least affected. Whilst further understanding of flood risk will be required at a site-specific level, in broad terms it is not an overriding constraint in these zones but may require further mitigation. The map below (figure 6) shows the flood risk which covers a significant proportion of the borough.

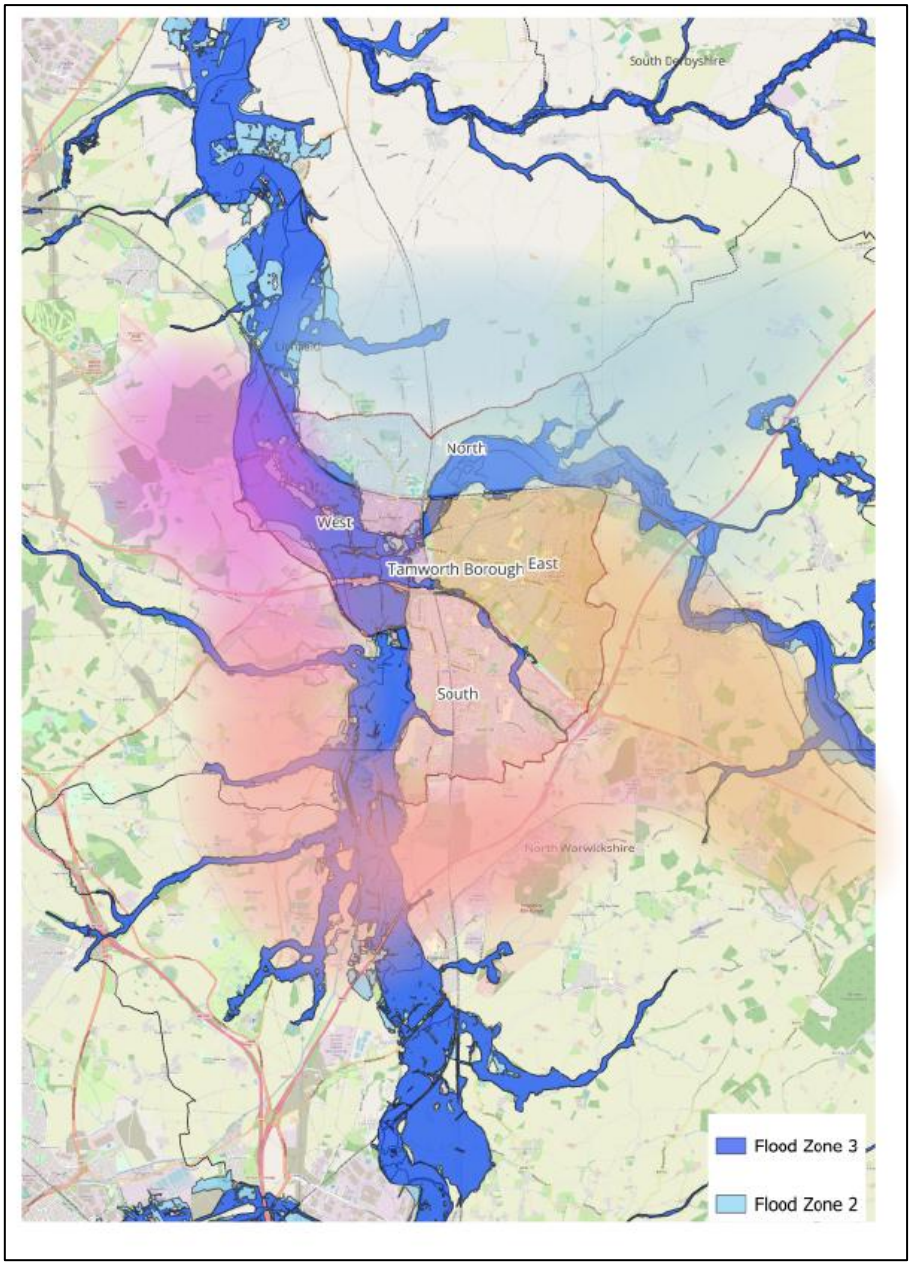


Figure 6 Flood Risk Mapping

Area	Current RAG Score	Mitigation Deliverability Potential
North		
East		
West		
South		

Scenario	Level of constraint taking into account mitigation potential	
Option 1- Inside Borough	By virtue of the level of flood risk within large areas of the Borough this is considered to be a significant constraint that may require further mitigation.	
Option 2- North focus	Parts of this area are affected by flood risk and therefore subject to further detail on specific sites, mitigation may be required.	
Option 3 – East focus	This scenario is the least affected by fluvial flood risk.	
Option 4 – South focus	Parts of this area are affected by flood risk and therefore subject to further detail on specific sites, mitigation may be required.	
Option 5 – West focus	Parts of this area are affected by flood risk and therefore subject to further detail on specific sites, mitigation may be required.	
Option 6 – Balanced	This option balances growth across the zones therefore reducing the likelihood of development pressure on areas of fluvial floodplain.	

Health – Primary Care

Current position

3.61 Tamworth is served by the Mercian Primary Care Network (PCN), which consists of 9 GP premises (with an additional 5 branch sites) serving the current patient population.

3.62 Through conversations with the Stoke and Staffordshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) it is understood that in terms of primary care provision, Tamworth is generally at capacity across the network and the PCN is a priority area for improvement within the wider Staffordshire and Stoke network.

3.63 Under the 10 Year Health Plan the ambition is to adjust the care delivery model and create 'Neighbourhood Health Hubs'. Whilst the detail on these hubs is still being developed, as part of this initiative it is expected that some of the surgeries within Tamworth's PCN will be amalgamated to support long-term health provision and services to meet the needs of Tamworth residents.

Geographical variations and potential mitigation

3.64 The ICB have confirmed in terms of primary care, that the preferred approach is to consider Tamworth collectively, given the urban nature of the Borough where a number of the catchments overlap with each other. This would also align more with the shift towards neighbourhood hubs. Therefore, regarding the specific geographical zones of this study, it is not appropriate to seek to draw clear geographical variations relating to primary care capacity. The Borough as a whole is at capacity but through the provision of these 'neighbourhood hubs' there is scope to mitigate this issue.

3.65 The ICB are yet to explore more detailed options appraisals relating to the location of the 'neighbourhood health hubs'. However, it should be noted that additional space for new provision may be required rather than renovating existing premises. An important part of this process will be understanding precise locations for growth through the Local Plan to understand potential opportunities for new provision and integrating the provision of care with both the new and existing population. Further engagement is required to align the local plan process to the shift towards the neighbourhood hubs and local centres, to understand future capacity and demand.

Area	Current RAG Score	Mitigation Deliverability Potential
North		
East		
West		
South		

Scenario	Level of constraint taking into account mitigation potential	
Option 1- Inside Borough	The borough is currently at capacity in terms of health and relies on the delivery and consolidation of existing health facilities to support the delivery of the neighbourhood health hubs.	
Option 2- North focus	The implications on health provision outside of Tamworth have not been fully explored through this study.	Unknown
Option 3 – East focus	The implications on health provision outside of Tamworth have not been fully explored through this study.	Unknown
Option 4 – South focus	The implications on health provision outside of Tamworth have not been fully explored through this study.	Unknown
Option 5 – West focus	The implications on health provision outside of Tamworth have not been fully explored through this study.	Unknown
Option 6 – Balanced	The implications on health provision outside of Tamworth have not been fully explored through this study.	Unknown

Highways

3.66 Steer has discussed the transport elements of the study (The Transport Infrastructure Study) with the transport authorities of Staffordshire County Council (SCC), Warwickshire County Council (WCC) and National Highways (NH) who are responsible for transport networks across the three local authority areas considered by the Study.

Strategic Highways

3.67 Tamworth Borough has good connections to the strategic road network (SRN) and major road network (MRN). The SRN is the responsibility of National Highways, whilst the MRN is the responsibility of Staffordshire County Council.

3.68 The A5 is an important part of the SRN and forms a key arterial route through Tamworth Borough, North Warwickshire District and Lichfield District. It provides links to Cannock, Nuneaton, the A38 (T), the M42 and the M6 Toll. The A5 provides dedicated lanes for the M6 Toll, which has previously resulted in some lane discipline and capacity issues, The A5 corridor is a critical constraint in Tamworth's infrastructure. National Highways 'A5 Dordon to Atherstone Project' scheme to deliver improvements to sections of the A5 between Dordon and Atherstone in order to increase capacity and provide opportunities for housing and employment growth was supported by WCC and Midlands Connect. However, discussions with WCC and NH as part of this Transport Study confirmed that the potential Homes England funding had been withdrawn due to high costs and insufficient benefits.

3.69 The A38 is close to capacity south of Lichfield. The M42 has a significant impact on Tamworth with Junctions 9, 10 and 11 all affecting access to the local road network. Junction 9 is operating at capacity and is high on the list for upgrades following release of land post HS2.

3.70 Junction 10 is also operating at capacity causing significant delays and queues in to and out of Tamworth. There are also issues caused for cyclists and pedestrians crossing the motorway – particularly evident where development is split across the carriageways. Junction 11 is operating with some capacity.

Area	Current RAG Score	Mitigation Deliverability Potential
North		
East		
West		
South		

Local Highways

3.71 The A51, A513 and A4091 local routes run north to south through the Borough. The A513 Upper Gungate corridor provides the main north-south vehicular route through north Tamworth and the town centre to the A5 and beyond. It also provides access to the Tamworth Education Hub, which has some 3,200 full-time students. As a result, the corridor suffers from congestion during peak times, with the morning peak hour being most critical.

3.72 There are currently no planned schemes to deliver major improvements to the LRN or MRN in Tamworth, Lichfield or North Warwickshire.

Area	Current RAG Score	Mitigation Deliverability Potential
North		
East		
West		
South		

Sustainable Travel

3.73 Tamworth offers excellent opportunities to travel by sustainable transport:

3.73.1 **Bus** - Tamworth is well served by a local bus network compared to other parts of Staffordshire. Interurban daytime services are at least at an hourly frequency to Lichfield and the West Midlands conurbation. There are currently no major planned changes to bus services or bus priority interventions at present. The capital programme for transport is reviewed annually, and due to funding constraints, infrastructure improvements for buses are currently limited. A particular risk is that a significant portion of the bus network is commercially operated (predominantly by Arriva). These operators can withdraw services with relatively short notice, introducing uncertainty into long-term planning.

Area	Current RAG Score	Mitigation Deliverability Potential
North		
East		
West		
South		

3.73.2 **Rail -** Tamworth station is sited on both the West Coast Main Line and the Cross Country Route. It forms a key interchange on the rail network providing services to Lichfield, Stafford, Nuneaton, Rugby, Birmingham, Derby and Nottingham, as well as major cities such as Manchester, Liverpool, London, Bristol, Leeds and Sheffield. Tamworth station provides a twice per hour frequency to Birmingham, Burton-on-Trent, Derby and Nottingham, and a once per hour frequency to Cheltenham Spa, Gloucester, Newport, Cardiff, Lichfield, Rugeley, Stafford, Crewe, Nuneaton, Rugby, Milton Keynes and London. It is understood that peak period services between Tamworth and Birmingham are very busy.

3.73.3 Wilnecote station is located circa 3km to the south of Tamworth town centre. It is on the Cross Country Route. The station is managed by West Midlands Trains but all services are operated by CrossCountry with routes between Birmingham New Street and Nottingham. It provides a service every 1-2 hours to Birmingham, Tamworth, Burton on Trent, Derby and Nottingham, as well as three services per day to Cheltenham Spa, Gloucester, Newport and Cardiff. As the service is a national route with long distance trains, the costs and capacity are more prohibitive for local commuting to Burton, Derby, Nottingham and Birmingham.

3.73.4 Polesworth station is located circa 5.6km to the east of Tamworth town centre, within North Warwickshire. It only has a northbound platform and is served by a single daily service to meet a minimum legal requirement at 06:48 Monday – Saturday to Crewe (a 52-minute journey), via Tamworth, Lichfield Trent Valley, Rugeley (Trent Valley) and Stafford.

3.73.5 Funding confirmed for the West Midlands Rail Hub will provide significant increase to the number of trains operating into or out of Birmingham and provide faster and more frequent services to regional locations, including Tamworth Station. North Warwickshire are investigating improvements to Polesworth station, and if these do not prove feasible a new Parkway station will be pursued. HS2 services will now join the West Coast Main Line near Lichfield, and consequently pass through the bottleneck at Colwich Junction – the effect of which may be to reduce services through Tamworth and Lichfield on the 'classic' West Coast Mainline to the north west and to London.

3.73.6 There is a potential that some services passing through Tamworth on the Cross Country route could, on completion of HS2, terminate at Curzon Street. This could enable more services between Tamworth and Birmingham.

Area	Current RAG Score	Mitigation Deliverability Potential
North		
East		
West		
South		

3.73.7 **Active Travel** - The town benefits from an extensive local cycle network (30 miles within 12 square miles), canal routes (Coventry and Birmingham & Fazeley Canals), and good public transport links to the West Midlands. However, the trainlines and the A5 sever communities across Tamworth and Fazeley, making it challenging to travel between these areas by active modes. This leads to car use for short journeys. Tamworth has made positive progress in encouraging modal shift from cars to walking and cycling. The town centre, Ventura Retail Park, and the rail station are already well connected by walking and cycling routes.

3.73.8 There is a long-term vision to deliver new cycle infrastructure and aspirations to integrate walking and cycling improvements with strategic development sites, including potential new segregated routes over the River Tame and connections to Tamworth rail station. However, there are no major walking and cycling schemes proposed. Such improvements will continue to be delivered by developers and funded through monies from S106, LEP and central Government.

3.73.9 The County Council are of the view that there is little further scope to improve active travel provision in the northern area. Investment has taken place already as a result of development in this area and the Upper Gungate corridor has no room for off road options to further increase active travel.

Area	Current RAG Score	Mitigation Deliverability Potential
North		
East		
West		
South		

Highways Options Overview

Scenario	Level of constraint taking into account mitigation potential	
Option 1-Inside Borough	Scenario 1 would be very challenging to deliver primarily due to its high level of housing in the North area which relies on the Gungate Corridor. This corridor experiences severe peak-period congestion and there is currently no clearly deliverable solution to provide additional capacity for highway, public transport or cycling infrastructure. If car-free or restraint-based parking development were adopted within the Borough, particularly in the North area, their highway impacts could be significantly reduced, potentially making this scenario more feasible	
Option 2- North focus	Development in the North area would be heavily reliant on the already congested Gungate Corridor, with very limited scope for new road links or significant junction upgrades. Active travel infrastructure is also poor and would require major investment to connect new housing to key destinations. As development shifts further from the Borough, highway impacts on Tamworth's local highways – particularly the congested Gungate Corridor – would be reduced, as fewer trips would route through the town centre. However, these more peripheral locations are less	

	well connected to key employment centres, services and amenities, and therefore present a lower potential for sustainable travel patterns.	
Option 3 – East focus	Strategic infrastructure in this area – particularly M42 Junction 10 and the A5 – is already at capacity and would require upgrades to accommodate additional demand. Active travel connections are limited and would need to be significantly improved, particularly across key barriers. With targeted investment in sustainable transport and mitigation at key highway junctions, this scenario could be delivered, although infrastructure funding and cross-boundary coordination would be essential and this is likely to require significant investment from central government and / or further growth beyond Tamworth.	
Option 4 – South focus	The South area is well connected to strategic highways (M42, A5, A38, M6 Toll) and offers access to Tamworth via several local routes. Parts of the area already benefit from regular bus services and Wilnecote rail station is nearby, albeit with limited frequency. There are some local highway congestion points, particularly around Mile Oak and Fazeley, which would require mitigation. Active travel improvements would also be necessary to ensure connectivity to services and stations.	
Option 5 – West focus	The West area offers good access to both Tamworth and Lichfield, with proximity to multiple rail stations and some inter-urban bus routes. The local highway network has spare capacity and fewer congestion issues compared to other areas. Active travel provision is currently limited but can be feasibly enhanced along the A51 corridor and canal towpaths. Access to rail would require improvement via new or modified bus services.	
Option 6 – Balanced	A balanced distribution of growth across all four areas enables more even use of existing transport networks and avoids overburdening any one corridor. However, the additional housing in the North area is likely to still have a severe impact on highway capacity. This approach allows infrastructure investment to support a wider range of public transport and active travel improvements across the Borough and adjacent areas, improving alternatives for existing residents. However, lower housing levels in each area may not achieve the critical mass necessary to fund major mitigation schemes, such as the A5 Dordon to Atherstone Project and along the Gungate Corridor.	

4 Implications for the Tamworth Local Plan

4.1 In light of the overview for various items of infrastructure and their expected capacity, Tamworth Borough Council will need to carefully consider the implications for the Local Plan.

4.2 The high-level nature of this study means that the degree to which infrastructure is an actual constraint and what specific mitigation is required will need to be informed through further engagement with key stakeholders and providers on site specific proposals across the area.

4.3 The below table summarises the RAG assessment for each of the scenarios, by infrastructure. We have grouped infrastructure together under collective headings but separated these where there are clear distinctions between the different sub-categories.

	Utilities	Health – Primary Care	Primary Education	Secondary Education	Green Infrastructure	Flood Risk	Highways & Sustainable Travel
Scenario 1 – Inside Borough							
Scenario 2 – North Focus							
Scenario 3 – East Focus							
Scenario 4 – South Focus							
Scenario 5 – West Focus							
Scenario 6 - Balanced							

Scenario 1 – Within Tamworth

4.4 Focusing firstly on the primary objective of the study, regarding the capacity of infrastructure within Tamworth Borough to accommodate the required level of growth. It is evident that there are significant capacity issues to accommodate growth within the Borough. Highways and Sustainable Travel are a significant constraint with this being particularly notable constraint to development to the North of Tamworth town centre, where there is a significant risk that further development could have severe impacts on the operation of the highway network. The reliance in scenario 1 of development North of Tamworth town centre is a key factor in the RAG assessment of this scenario and this is also strongly influences the conclusions for scenario 2. One of the principal reasons for this is that the network is understood to be at capacity with no clear mitigation strategy identified and no such related funding mechanisms. Regarding green and blue infrastructure, whilst this is not identified as a significant constraint for scenario 1, this could be further exacerbated for green infrastructure when a more fine grained analysis is undertaken relating to assessing specific sites,

where it is understood some of the developable supply is identified on existing areas of open space. This also applies to potential sites of ecological importance.

4.5 The provision of secondary school capacity is a further constraint for development within Tamworth Borough, with the current reliance on pupils attending secondary provision in North Warwickshire likely to reduce as allocated housing sites come forward. In general terms, primary education is not a significant constraint but this can be properly understood at a site-specific level.

4.6 Regarding Utilities, sewage treatment (wastewater) is not an overriding constraint and the ability to provide gas connections only affects the Northern zone to some extent. Electricity capacity is potential a more fundamental constraint to growth within Tamworth, with the current network at capacity across Borough and parts of the wider study area which could have an impact on when large scale developments can come forward. Access to electricity supply is less of an issue towards the end of the plan period when more fundamental improvements are made to capacity at Lea Marston.

4.7 It is therefore going to be extremely difficult for Tamworth to accommodate the level of housing growth under the revised standard method, within its administrative boundaries.

Other Scenarios

1.1 The **West (**scenario 5) and **South** (scenario 4) scenarios are the least constrained in terms of infrastructure capacity. There is therefore potential to further explore growth in these scenarios/areas, with the **West** scenario offering good access to both Tamworth and Lichfield, with proximity to multiple rail stations and some inter-urban bus routes. The local highway network has spare capacity and fewer congestion issues compared to other areas.

1.2 In relation to the **East** and **North** scenarios, related to the highways issues along the Gungate corridor, the **North** scenario is highly constrained. Whilst the **East** (scenario 3) is considered to be relatively less constrained than the North (scenario 2), a key reason for this is that whilst the A5 is at capacity, there is an identified mitigation scheme for this corridor. However, that scheme is reliant on central government funding where there are currently significant questions about whether such funding is available. It is evident that housing growth in this area is heavily reliant upon the delivery of the A5 improvement scheme and therefore its funding is of key importance.

1.3 Improvements to the M42 junction 10 to better support sustainable travel modes would also help the overall connectivity of this area with Tamworth, where it is understood there is a high level of movement for employment, however it is not clear how such a scheme is progressing. Further engagement with central government and their agencies is therefore crucial to addressing capacity issues along this part of the A5 corridor.

1.4 In the context of the assessment of the respective scenarios, to inform Local Plan preparation, the Council will therefore need to engage proactively and constructively with North Warwickshire and Lichfield District to explore opportunities for helping to meet their identified needs. To help ensure these discussions are effective each authority will need to understand and take into account their respective growth aspirations and housing needs which have not been taken into account in this study.

5.Overall Conclusions & Next Steps

5.1 This study has confirmed that Tamworth Borough is highly constrained and that the potential to meet the entirety of its housing need through the revised standard method within the Borough (currently a residual amount of circa 6,113 dwellings up to 2043), will be particularly challenging. Within the Borough itself there are particular issues with further housing development, of scale, to the north of Tamworth town centre.

5.2 Regarding the scenarios outside the Borough, the North scenario is the most constrained which is largely related to the highway capacity issues of the Gungate corridor where there is no identified solution. The other scenarios are not considered to be constrained to the same extent, i.e. infrastructure is not necessarily a barrier to growth in these areas to the same extent that it is in the North. Whilst there are some issues, there are schemes that can mitigate such issues or it could be funded by the level of development. This includes the eastern zone and particular highway capacity issues with the A5 corridor, although there is as scheme identified but there are current issues over its funding. There may be particular opportunities in areas to the South and West that could be explored further as areas to deliver larger scale growth.

5.3 A key next step is to discuss with neighbouring authorities the outcomes of this work and to understand further their growth aspirations for locations in proximity to Tamworth and explore the potential implications on infrastructure and the opportunities for mitigating impacts.

5.4 This study has been informed through a series of engagement sessions with statutory bodies and infrastructure providers, all of which felt the process was useful and would welcome further engagement as the Local Plan progresses. One of the key next steps would be to map out a programme of engagement at key stages of the Local Plan, particularly as choices on potential site allocations become clearer. We consider that this should have a particular focus on:

- Highways including National Highways, Staffordshire County Council and Warwickshire County Council
- Electricity – National Grid
- Education with a particular focus on secondary education - Staffordshire County Council and Warwickshire County Council
- Ecology - Staffordshire and Warwickshire Wildlife Trusts and Natural England to understand mitigation opportunities
- Flood risk – Staffordshire County Council and the Environment Agency
- Health – Staffordshire and Stoke Integrated Care Board

5.5 Given the anticipated progress on Local Plans from both Lichfield District and North Warwickshire Borough, the engagement above could be undertaken on a cross-boundary basis through the creation of thematic based infrastructure groups. Given resource pressures the frequency and attendance of such meetings would need to be carefully considered however these groups should be output focused and cover more detailed site-specific information and help coordinate investment priorities.

5.6 Regarding technical aspects of work, the following are considered to be particularly important next steps with regards infrastructure capacity:

- A more detailed understanding of the implications of potential site allocations on wider elements and strategies, for example a more comprehensive understanding of the implications of potential loss of areas of open space and a clear understanding of potential mitigation strategies will help inform the extent to which these sites can come forward within Tamworth Borough.
- Identifying draft site allocations to ensure a clearer understanding of capacity within Tamworth Borough which will help inform wider discussions on the level of potential residual unmet need arising.
- Regarding potential scenarios outside Tamworth, a more fine-grained review of potential development opportunities and constraints to help inform a more detailed understanding of potential capacity within these areas.
- Finalising the preferred spatial strategy and site allocations, accounting for cumulative planned growth from adjacent authorities.
- Advancing transport modelling of specific sites to quantify impacts and test mitigation options.
- Preparing an updated IDP in parallel with the Local Plan evidence base, potentially informed through the thematic based infrastructure groups identified above.

Appendix 1 – Transport Infrastructure Study