

Habitats Regulations Assessment Appropriate Assessment Report

April 2011



Staffordshire
Local Transport Plan 2011

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1. Introduction

This report presents the findings of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the Staffordshire draft Local Transport Strategy Plan (LTP) in line with the requirements set by the Conservation (Natural Habitats & c) (Amendment) Regulations 2007.

The report summarises the findings of the earlier screening stage of the HRA and presents the Appropriate Assessment (AA) of the draft version of the Local Transport Strategy Plan. The purpose of the Assessment is to identify whether the policies and measures proposed in the draft Plan, alone or in

Habitats Regulations Assessment

The European Directive (92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna (the Habitats Directive) protects habitats and species of European nature conservation importance. The Habitats Directive establishes a network of internationally important sites designated for their ecological status. These are referred to as Natura 2000 (N2K) sites or European sites, and comprise Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Government Policy (PPS9 and Circular 06/05) has extended the statutory requirements for HRA to include sites designated under the Ramsar convention on Wetlands of International Importance (1971).

Articles 6 (3) and 6 (4) of the Habitats Directive require AA to be undertaken on proposed plans or projects which are not necessary for the management of the site but which are likely to have a significant effect on one or more European sites either individually, or in combination with other plans and projects. In 2007, this requirement was transposed into UK law in Part IV A of the Habitats Regulations (The Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.)(Amendment)(England and Wales) Regulations 2007) and has been subsequently updated and consolidated in the 2010 Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations.

combination with other plans and projects, are likely to have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites (N2K).

This report has been prepared for formal consultation with Natural England and the Environment Agency.

The purpose of HRA/AA is to assess the impacts of plan policies and measures against the conservation objectives of a European Site and to ascertain whether it would produce a significant and adverse effect on the integrity of the site. Such effects may arise as a consequence of direct, indirect or in-combination impacts. Where significant negative effects are identified, proposals should be either abandoned, mitigated or alternative options examined. If it is not possible to avoid or remove the identified effects then it must be demonstrated that there are Imperative Reasons of Public Interest (IROPI) to continue with the plan. The plan or projects can only be implemented once it has been determined that there will be no adverse affect on the site(s) concerned.

Consultation

The Habitats Regulations require the competent authority to consult the appropriate nature conservation statutory body (Natural England). Consultation on the approach to this Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken with Natural England as required.

The Response of Natural England on this Appropriate Assessment is included as Appendix C

2. Methodology

The amended Habitats Regulations and current guidance documents identify a three stage HRA process (see Table 1). This report provides a summary of the initial screening stage and provides an Appropriate Assessment (stage 2) of the draft Local Transport Plan.

Table 1: HRA Stages

Stage	Task	Outcome
Stage 1: Screening	Identify N2K sites and their conservation objectives.	Where effects are unlikely, prepare a 'findings of no significant effect report'. Where effects judged likely, or lack of information to prove otherwise proceed to Stage 2.
	Describe the plan and identify potential effects on N2K sites.	
	Assess the effects on N2K sites.	
Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment	Gather information (plan and N2K sites)	Appropriate Assessment report describing the plan; N2K site(s) baseline conditions; identify potential impacts of the plan on N2K site(s). Detrimental effects to be addressed through firstly avoidance and secondly mitigation. If effects remain after all alternatives and mitigation measures have been considered proceed to Stage 3.
	Predict impacts	
	Evaluation of impacts in view of conservation objectives.	
	Where impacts considered to affect qualifying features, identify mitigation measures or alternative options.	
Stage 3: Assessment where no alternatives exist	Identify 'Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest' (IROPI).	This stage should be avoided if at all possible. The test of IROPI and the requirements for compensation are extremely onerous and are likely to be justified only very occasionally and would involve engagement with both the U.K. Government and European Commission.
	Identify potential compensatory measures.	

3. Findings of the Screening Stage

The screening stage (July 2010) was undertaken to identify which if any sites could potentially be affected by the draft Local Transport Strategy Plan. Whilst the focus of the LTP is to influence transport movements within Staffordshire, it is recognised that there is the potential for cross-boundary effects arising from implementation of plan policies. Therefore in accordance with emerging practice, examination of potential impacts has been extended to include sites within a 15 km. area of the county boundary.

The screening exercise revealed that significant effects could not be ruled out for 8 of the 15 sites investigated. The findings of the screening stage include identification of environmental conditions and transport related issues affecting site integrity, (see Table 2).

Table 2: Findings of the Screening Stage

Site Name	Result of Screening Assessment	Issues to be Examined at Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment
Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1 SPA)	Screened In	Atmospheric Pollution.
Cannock Chase SAC	Screened In	Atmospheric Pollution Recreational Activity
Cannock Extension Canal SAC	Screened In	Water Quality/Run-Off Boat traffic
Mottey Meadows SAC	Screened Out	
Pasturefields Saltmarsh SAC	Screened Out	
Peak District Dales SAC	Screened In	Atmospheric Pollution
River Mease SAC	Screened In	Water Quality
South Pennine Moors SAC	Screened In	Atmospheric Pollution
West Midlands Mosses Chartley Moss SAC	Screened In	Atmospheric Pollution
Bees Nest & Green Clay Pits SAC	Screened Out	
Gang Mine SAC	Screened Out	
Midlands Meres & Mosses Ramsar Site Betley Mere	Screened Out	
Midlands Meres and Mosses Ramsar Site Aqualate Mere	Screened Out	
Midlands Meres and Mosses Ramsar Site Cop Mere	Screened In	Water Quality
Midland Meres & Mosses Ramsar Site Black Firs and Cranberry Bog	Screened Out	

4. Analysis of LTP3

Staffordshire County Council is the transport authority for the whole of the county (excluding Stoke-on-Trent) with responsibility for a network of local roads, cycle lanes, bridges and traffic control infrastructure.

Local Transport Plans are statutory undertakings which describe the policies, objectives and measures that will be implemented by local transport authorities in order to manage, maintain and improve the local transport network. The plan will work in combination with other local strategies to enable development to be undertaken whilst promoting and securing a sustainable transport network.

The LTP will comprise the following elements:

- A Strategy Plan covering a 15-year period, containing policies setting out clearly what we want to achieve and taking account of challenges both within the county and in related areas outside. The Strategy Plan will inform the further development of area-wide and specific topic strategies such as walking and cycling.
- An Implementation Plan which is split into two parts; the first part sets out how we will use available funding to deliver the LTP objectives over the next four years (2011/12 – 2014/15), and identifies those areas of service provision that we are unable to fund at previous levels given the current economic climate. The second part of the Plan describes the arrangements we have put in place for overseeing LTP delivery and ensuring that it remains on track to meet its objectives. The Implementation Plan will be updated annually.

It is the Strategy Plan which is the subject of this report.

Outcome of LTP3 Policy Screening

A screening exercise (see Appendix A) of the Draft LTP has been undertaken to determine which policies could have an effect on N2K sites and those which did not require any further assessment. Those policies which are considered to have the potential to impact on N2K sites are as follows:

Draft Local Transport Strategy Plan

Policy 1.1: We will stimulate regeneration and support areas of deprivation.

Policy 1.6: We will make best use of our roads before considering increasing capacity.

Policy 3.2: We will help to improve bus services.

Policy 3.4: We will seek to improve and integrate 'other' transport services.

Draft Freight Strategy

- Encourage local authority partners to favourably view planning applications from the private sector and make appropriate provision in Development Plans to provide for new or expansion of existing truck stops and service areas for HGVs particularly in the Staffordshire M6-A449, A5-M6 Toll and A38(T) corridors subject to environmental and residential amenity constraints.
- With local authority partners, the Highways Agency and other organisations consider and investigate the provision of further public sector lorry parking and the potential for shared overnight use by HGVs of existing parking facilities (and proposed park and ride facilities).
- With Network Rail, other local and regional partners and the private sector promote the appropriate provision of new and expansion of existing rail freight terminals in and close to Staffordshire with good access to the Primary Route Network and proximate to existing logistics activity.

Draft Walking Strategy

- Area Transport Strategies will include both infrastructure improvements and green travel initiatives aimed at encouraging and promoting walking e.g. traffic calming, pedestrian crossings, direction signing, pedestrian phases in traffic signals, new and improved footways etc.

5. Other Relevant Plans, Policies and Programmes

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires an Appropriate Assessment of

'Any plans or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects.'

The potential effects associated with other relevant plans, policies and programmes have been recorded in Appendix B.

Plans and Programmes Reviewed

In undertaking the HRA of the draft Local Transport Strategy Plan, the following plans and programmes have been reviewed:

- Structure and Local Plans or emerging Development Plan Documents along with accompanying HRA reports: Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011 (Saved Policies); Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 1998 (Saved Policies); Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy Submission Version and Addendums; Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle Borough Joint Core Strategy 2009; Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 (Saved Policies); Stafford Borough Core Strategy Local Choices Consultation 2010; East Staffordshire Local Plan 2006 (Saved Policies); South Staffordshire Local Plan 1996 (Saved Policies); South Staffordshire Policy Choices Consultation 2010; Cannock Chase Local Plan 2007 (Saved Policies); Cannock Chase Core Strategy Preferred Option 2009; Lichfield District Local Plan 1998 (Saved Policies); Tamworth Local Plan 2006 (Saved Policies); Tamworth Borough Core Strategy Preferred Option 2009; Peak District National Park Core Strategy Submission Version 2010; Derbyshire Dales and High Peak Draft Joint Core Strategy 2010; Birmingham City Council Core Strategy Final Draft 2010; Black Country Core Strategy Submission Draft 2009; Wyre Forest District Council Core Strategy Preferred Option 2009; Shropshire Council Core Strategy Submission Draft 2010.

- Management Plans and Strategies: Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan 2009;
- Peak District National Park Management Plan; Peak District Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2000.
- Staffordshire Sustainable Community Strategy

Recent proposed changes to the forward planning system, most notably the decision to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies, has introduced a degree of uncertainty with regards to the scale and location of future development. Whilst this uncertainty makes it difficult to accurately predict the likely impact of meeting future development requirements, it is recognised that additional development is likely to place demands on the transport network and potentially increase pressures on the network N2K sites.

6. Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) SPA Assessment

Qualifying Features and Conservation Objectives

Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) SPA has been designated due to the following qualifying features:

- A098: Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)
- A222: Short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*)
- A140: Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*)

The conservation objectives for the site are:

- unknown.

Atmospheric Pollution

Issues and Trends

Site exceeds critical loads in relation to local air quality, the nearest road is the A53 which runs through the site. Diffuse pollution may be having an adverse effect on habitat structure and the species composition of plant communities. This may have a knock-on effect for associated bird populations and their breeding success.

Effect of LTP3

The LTP promotes measures aimed at reducing traffic growth and associated levels of atmospheric pollution. These measures if implemented successfully could contribute towards addressing levels of diffuse pollution arising from the transport network. Enhancements to the transport network, depending on location and nature have the potential to increase localised levels of atmospheric pollution. LTP policy 5.1 attempts to promote a pollution neutral strategy in relation to the impact of new developments on air quality.

Other Plans, Policies and Programmes

The scale of development in close proximity of this site is likely to be limited as policies within the Peak District National Park prioritise conservation. Development in adjoining areas has the potential to increase traffic levels. Mitigation measures have been proposed through Appropriate Assessments for the relevant core strategy documents for Staffordshire Moorlands District and the Peak District to address any future possible concerns.

Comment/In-Combination Effects

There is the potential for negative impacts on local air pollution arising from additional development in and around the National Park. Mitigation measures have been proposed within Core Strategy AA reports to address these concerns. The relatively isolated nature of this site and the high levels of protection afforded to N2K sites would suggest that it is highly unlikely that the site will be impacted directly by future infrastructure enhancements. Diffuse pollution issues will be addressed through a co-ordinated and sustained response, promoting sustainable patterns of development and smarter modes of travel.

Mitigation

Mitigation should only be proposed if any of the policies and measures within the LTP are considered likely to produce significant effects on those features necessary to ensure the integrity of this site. **At present there is no indication that the policies within the draft Local Transport Strategy document, alone or in-combination with other plans and policies, will produce a negative impact.** It is suggested that the inclusion of an affirmative statement supporting the integrity of the N2K network would enhance the draft LTP and provide a suitable policy context for the future consideration of detailed scheme proposals. An appropriate system of pollution monitoring would be beneficial to promote assessment of the effectiveness of current and proposed policies.

Recreational Pressures

Issues and Trends

Potential disturbance to breeding bird populations from an increase in visitor pressure. Damage to habitats through trampling and erosion will reduce breeding success and the extent of available habitat, potentially causing reduction in population sizes.

Effect of LTP3

The LTP promotes measures aimed at reducing traffic growth and associated levels of atmospheric pollution and growth in trip lengths which if successful could support a more local and less concentrated pattern of recreational activity. The plan does however contain a more generalised support for increasing the levels of participation in activities such as walking and cycling which could create additional problems in already favoured and pressurised locations.

Other Plans, Policies and Programmes

The Peak District National Park Management Plan and Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan support the provision of alternative facilities within and outside of the National Park area to reduce the levels of visitor pressures experienced at N2K sites. The AA prepared for the Peak District Core Strategy DPD concludes that the plan should recognise adverse effects arising from human activity and that assessment should be undertaken where such effects could arise. The Staffordshire Moorlands District Core Strategy AA promotes measures to manage leisure activities to ensure that there is no conflict with the natural environment.

The introduction of a more extensive and localised network of green infrastructure within emerging LDF strategies has the potential to diffuse tourism and recreational pressures.

Comment/ In-Combination Effects

There is no clear indication that visitor pressures arising in Staffordshire present a particular issue. It is suggested that the successful implementation of strategies and plans promoting an expansion of alternative, local recreational opportunities combined with a policy focus on sustainable travel choices could make a considerable contribution towards mitigating existing and future pressures.

Mitigation

Mitigation should only be proposed if any of the policies and measures within the LTP are considered likely to produce significant effects on those features necessary to ensure the integrity of this site. **At present there is no indication that the policies within the draft Local Transport Strategy document, alone or in-combination with other plans and policies, will produce a negative impact.**

7. Cannock Chase SAC Assessment

Qualifying Features and Conservation Objectives

Cannock Chase SAC has been designated due to the following qualifying features:

- 4030: European Dry Heaths
- 4010: North Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*

The conservation objectives for the site are:

- To maintain, in favourable condition, European dry heaths with particular reference to the H8 *Calluna vulgaris*-*Ulex galli* and H9 *Calluna vulgaris*-*Deschampsia flexuosa* communities; and
- To maintain, in favourable condition, North Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix* with particular reference to the M10 *Carex dioica*-*Pinguicula vulgaris* mire and M16 *Erica tetralix*-*Sphagnum* wet heath communities.

Atmospheric Pollution

Issues and Trends

Recent Appropriate Assessment work on Cannock Chase SAC (over 30% of which is within 200m of the road network) has identified that the SAC suffers from nitrate deposition and acidification which is at or over critical loads. Traffic is identified, along with Rugeley Power Station, as the likely cause of nitrate deposition. The Appropriate Assessment undertaken on the phase 2 West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy noted:

“Those parts of the SAC within 200m of the A34, 513 or 460 may be exposed to increased levels of deposition of atmospheric pollutants, causing changes in the plant species composition of the vegetation communities for which the site is designated.”

Effect of LTP3

The LTP promotes measures aimed at reducing traffic growth and associated levels of atmospheric pollution. These measures if implemented successfully could contribute towards addressing levels of diffuse pollution arising from the transport network. Enhancements to the transport network, depending on location and nature have the potential to increase localised levels of atmospheric pollution. The LTP policy 5.1 attempts to promote a pollution neutral strategy in relation to the impact of new developments on air quality.

Other Plans, Policies and Programmes

Additional development could increase traffic pressures and associated levels of local air pollution. Appropriate Assessment work (see Cannock Chase SAC Evidence Base and Visitor Impact Management Strategy) associated with a number of relevant Local Development Frameworks is currently being prepared and mitigating measures will be promoted should any issues which could affect the integrity of the SAC be identified.

Comment/ In-Combination Effects

Whilst the draft LTP alone contains no policies or measures which would conflict directly with the status or integrity of this site, the requirement to accommodate additional levels of growth in areas in close proximity to the site has the potential to increase the levels of traffic in and around this area. These potential impacts are the subject of a separate Appropriate Assessment being undertaken jointly by the relevant local planning authorities.

Mitigation

The LTP needs to reflect the potential that policy changes may be required as a result of the mitigation measures arising from the findings of the Appropriate Assessment work currently being undertaken in relation to development proposals in the relevant Local Development Frameworks. Whilst there is no indication that the policies and measures within the draft LTP strategy document would impact negatively on the integrity of the Cannock Chase SAC, an affirmative statement supporting the integrity of the N2K network would enhance the draft LTP and provide a suitable policy context for the future consideration of detailed scheme proposals. An appropriate system of pollution monitoring would be beneficial to promote assessment of the effectiveness of current and proposed policies.

Recreational Pressures

Issues and Trends

Approximately 58% of the AONB is open access and some of the well used sites have habitats already noted to be fragile. Recreational access and associated visitor pressure is linked with various impacts that include trampling, increased fire risk, erosion, spread of disease and nutrient enrichment. Potential housing developments have been identified as contributing to an additional increase of around 9% in visitor numbers.

Effect of LTP3

The LTP promotes measures aimed at reducing traffic growth and associated levels of atmospheric pollution and growth in trip lengths which if successful could support a more local and less concentrated pattern of recreational activity. The plan does however contain a more general support for increasing the levels of participation in activities such as walking and cycling which could create additional problems in already favoured and pressurised locations.

Other Plans, Policies and Programmes

A 12 mile zone surrounding this site has been identified within which additional residential development is considered to have the potential to increase the level of visitor pressures. Appropriate Assessment work is currently being prepared and mitigating measures will be promoted should any issues which could affect the integrity of the SAC be identified.

The introduction of a more extensive and localised network of green infrastructure within emerging LDF strategies has the potential to diffuse tourism and recreational pressures.

Comment/ In-Combination Effects

The forecast increase in visitor numbers combined with a broad policy support for increased participation in active recreation pursuits could increase pressures and impact negatively on site integrity.

It is suggested that the successful implementation of strategies and plans promoting an expansion of alternative, local recreational opportunities combined with a policy focus on sustainable travel choices could make a considerable contribution towards mitigating existing and future pressures.

Mitigation

The LTP needs to reflect the potential that policy changes may be required as a result of the mitigation measures arising from the findings of the Appropriate Assessment work currently being undertaken in relation to development proposals in the relevant Local Development Frameworks.

8. Cannock Extension Canal SAC Assessment

Qualifying Features and Conservation Objectives

Cannock Extension SAC has been designated due to the following qualifying features:

- 1831: Floating water-plantain.

The conservation objectives for the site are:

- Maintain in favourable condition the habitat for the internationally important population of Floating water-plantain with particular reference to the standing open water.

Boat Traffic

Issues and Trends

The maintenance of the integrity of the SAC requires a balanced approach in the levels of boat activity using the canal. Increased levels of disturbance may cause a decline in the population of open water plants as well as reducing water quality. The most recent condition assessment (Dec 2010) judged the site to be part favourable, part unfavourable recovering.

Effect of LTP3

Draft LTP policy supports a general increase in the use of the canal network for commercial and recreation purposes. Increased boat traffic on the extension canal could conflict directly with the integrity of the site.

Other Plans, Policies and Programmes

There is a general support for expanding the role of tourism within the local economy and promoting the role of the canal network as a focus for leisure, recreation and tourism.

Comment/In-Combination Effects

Policies within the draft LTP and other relevant plans and programmes promote the use of the canal network for leisure and commercial uses. The combined effects of these policies could have a negative effect on the balance of traffic on the extension canal.

Mitigation

Amend the approach within the Local Transport Plan to recognise the need to retain a balanced approach to the activity levels along this site.

Water Quality

Issues and Trends

The Natura 2000 Standard Data Form noted that “existing discharges of surface water run-off, principally from roads, cause some reduction in water quality.”

Effect of LTP3

The LTP promotes measures which seek to reduce the risks associated with run-off from the transport network entering water systems, including a high standard of maintenance and the use of sustainable drainage systems where appropriate.

Other Plans, Policies and Programmes

Additional development could produce an increase in traffic levels and associated risks of polluted run-off. Appropriate Assessment undertaken on behalf of Cannock Chase District and the Black Country Authorities identified Wyrley Common rather than the road network as the source of polluted run-off (letter from Natural England dated 17th November 2009).

Comment/In-Combination Effects

A key objective of the Draft Local Transport Plan is to reduce the environmental impacts associated with transport network, though the letter from Natural England would indicate that the network is not associated with the issues affecting this site.

Mitigation

Mitigation should only be proposed if any of the policies and measures within the LTP are considered likely to produce significant effects on those features necessary to ensure the integrity of this site. **At present there is no indication that the policies within the draft Local Transport Strategy document will alone or in combination with other plans/policies produce such an impact in relation to this issue.**

9. Peak District Dales SAC Assessment

Qualifying Features and Conservation Objectives.

Peak District Dales SAC has been designated due to the following qualifying features:

- 6210: Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates.
- 9180: Tilio-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and ravines.
- 4030: European Dry Heaths
- 6130 Calaminarian grasslands
- 7230 Alkaline Fens
- 8120 Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels.
- 8210: Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation
- 1092 White-clawed crayfish
- 1096: Brook lamprey
- 1163: Bullhead

The conservation objectives for the site are to maintain in a favourable condition:

- Tilio-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and ravines, semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia), Calcerous and calschist screes of the montaine to alpine levels (Thlaspietea rotundifolii) (Eutric scree) and chasmophytic vegetation on rocky slopes (Calcareous sub-types).
- the habitats for the population of white-clawed crayfish, bullhead and brook lamprey.

Atmospheric Pollution

Issues and Trends

The site exceeds critical loads in relation to local air quality; the A515, A623 and the A6 all run within 200m of certain sections of the site. The site is over its critical load in terms of diffuse pollution which may affect the structural diversity of the Tilio Acerion forests, and could change the characteristic vegetation composition of the lowland heathland.

Effect of LTP3

LTP strategy promotes measures aimed at reducing traffic growth and associated levels of atmospheric pollution. These measures if implemented successfully could contribute towards addressing levels of

diffuse pollution arising from the transport network. Enhancements to the transport network, depending on location and nature have the potential to increase localised levels of atmospheric pollution. LTP policy 5.1 attempts to promote a pollution neutral strategy in relation to impact of new developments on air quality.

Other Plans, Policies and Programmes

The scale of development in close proximity of this site is likely to be limited as policies within the National Park prioritise conservation. Development in adjoining areas has the potential to increase traffic levels. Mitigation measures have been proposed through Appropriate Assessments for the relevant core strategy documents for Staffordshire Moorlands District and The Peak District to address any future possible concerns.

Comment/In-Combination Effects

There is the potential for negative impacts on local air pollution arising from additional development in and around the National Park. Mitigation measures have been proposed within Core Strategy AA reports to address these concerns. The relatively isolated nature of this site and the high levels of protection afforded to N2K sites would suggest that it is highly unlikely that the site will be impacted directly by future infrastructure enhancements. Diffuse pollution issues will be addressed through a co-ordinated and sustained response, promoting sustainable patterns of development and the adoption of smarter modes of travel.

Mitigation

Mitigation should only be proposed if any of the policies and measures within the LTP are considered likely to produce significant effects on those features necessary to ensure the integrity of this site. **At present there is no indication that the policies within the draft Local Transport Strategy document, alone or in-combination with other plans and policies, will produce a negative impact.** It is suggested that the inclusion of an affirmative statement supporting the integrity of the N2K network would enhance the draft LTP and provide a suitable policy context for the future consideration of detailed scheme proposals. An appropriate system of pollution monitoring would be beneficial to promote assessment of the effectiveness of current and proposed policies.

10. River Mease SAC Assessment

Qualifying Features and Conservation Objectives.

The River Mease SAC has been designated due to the following qualifying features:

- 3260: Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho – Batrachion vegetation.
- 1149: Spined Loach
- 1163: Bullhead
- 1092: White Clawed Crayfish
- 1355: Otter

The conservation objectives for the site are:

- Maintain the river as habitat for floating formations of water crowfoot (*Ranunculus*) of plain and sub-mountainous rivers, populations of Atlantic salmon, allis shad, twaite shad, bullhead, lampreys, and white-clawed crayfish, and the river and adjoining land as habitat for populations of otter.

Water Quality

Issues and Trends

The Natura 2000 Standard Data Form noted that water quality and quantity are vital to the European interests, whilst competition for water resources is high. Diffuse pollution and excessive sedimentation are catchment-wide issues which have the potential to affect the site. Assessment undertaken as part of the Phase II West Midlands RSS noted existing problems largely associated with agricultural run-off, though there is also a need for improvements in SuDS and water treatment. Studies produced in North West Leicestershire (2010) have identified an issue with high levels of phosphate. The most recent condition assessment (Dec 2010) judged all stretches of the Mease to be in unfavourable condition due to drainage, inappropriate weirs, dams and other structures, siltation, water abstraction, agricultural run-off, pollution discharges

Effect of LTP3

LTP strategy promotes measures aimed at reducing traffic growth and associated levels of atmospheric pollution. These measures if implemented successfully could contribute towards addressing levels of diffuse

pollution arising from the transport network. In addition specific measures including high maintenance standards and the use of SuDS are identified to reduce the risks associated with diffuse pollution from the transport network entering water systems.

Other Plans, Policies and Programmes

Within Staffordshire the impact of additional development on this site is likely to be limited given the rural character of the river catchment within the county. Problems related to water quality and development pressures have been identified during the production of the North West Leicestershire core strategy. The principle issue identified in this report related to high levels of phosphates, sourced from water treatment works.

Comment/In-Combination Effects

A key objective of local transport policy is to reduce the levels of traffic growth and associated pollution levels. A report on water quality within the River Mease produced for North West Leicestershire District Council identified phosphate levels arising from water treatment works as the principal issue. There was no suggestion that run off from the transport network is a source of water quality issues arising within the river catchment area however the AA produced as part of the Phase II review of the West Midlands RSS did promote the use of SuDS.

Mitigation

Mitigation should only be proposed if any of the policies and measures within the LTP are considered likely to produce significant effects on those features necessary to ensure the integrity of this site. **At present there is no indication that the policies within the draft Local Transport Strategy document will alone or in combination with other plans/policies produce such a negative impact.**

11. South Pennine Moors SAC Assessment

Qualifying Features and Conservation Objectives.

The South Pennine Moors SAC has been designated due to the following qualifying features:

- 4030: European Dry Heaths
- 7130: Blanket bogs
- 91A0: Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles
- 4010: North Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix
- 7140: Transition mires and quaking bogs

The conservation objectives for the site are to maintain in favourable condition:

- Blanket bog (active only)
- European dry heaths (all subtypes)
- North Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix
- Transition mires and quaking bogs
- Old oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum

Atmospheric Pollution

Issues and Trends

Site exceeds critical loads in relation to local air quality, the nearest road is the A53 which runs through the site. Atmospheric pollution is associated with eutrophication of wet and dry heaths.

Effect of LTP3

The LTP promotes measures aimed at reducing traffic growth and associated levels of atmospheric pollution. These measures if implemented successfully could contribute towards addressing levels of diffuse pollution arising from the transport network. Enhancements to the transport network, depending on location and nature have the potential to increase localised levels of atmospheric pollution. The LTP policy 5.1 attempts to promote a pollution neutral strategy in relation to impact of new developments on air quality.

Other Plans, Policies and Programmes

The scale of development in close proximity of this site is likely to be limited as policies within the National Park prioritise conservation. Development in adjoining areas has the potential to increase traffic levels. Mitigation measures have been proposed through Appropriate Assessments for the relevant core strategy documents for Staffordshire Moorlands District and The Peak District to address any future possible concerns.

Comment/In-Combination Effects

There is the potential for negative impacts on local air pollution arising from additional development in and around the National Park. Mitigation measures have been proposed within Core Strategy AA reports to address these concerns. The relatively isolated nature of this site and the high levels of protection afforded to N2K sites would suggest that it is highly unlikely that the site will be impacted directly by future infrastructure enhancements. Diffuse pollution issues will be addressed through a co-ordinated and sustained response, promoting sustainable patterns of development and the adoption of smarter modes of travel.

Mitigation

Mitigation should only be proposed if any of the policies and measures within the LTP are considered likely to produce significant effects on those features necessary to ensure the integrity of this site. **At present there is no indication that the policies within the draft Local Transport Strategy document, alone or in-combination with other plans and policies, will produce a negative impact.** It is suggested that the inclusion of an affirmative statement supporting the integrity of the N2K network would enhance the draft LTP and provide a suitable policy context for the future consideration of detailed scheme proposals. An appropriate system of pollution monitoring would be beneficial to promote assessment of the effectiveness of current and proposed policies.

Recreational Pressures

Issues and Trends

Damage to habitats such as blanket bog and heathland caused by trampling and erosion.

Effect of LTP3

The LTP promotes measures aimed at reducing traffic growth and associated levels of atmospheric pollution and growth in trip lengths which if successful could support a more local and less concentrated pattern of recreational activity. The plan does however contain a more generalised support for increasing the levels of participation in activities such as walking and cycling which could create additional problems in already favoured and pressurised locations.

Other Plans, Policies and Programmes

The Peak District National Park Management Plan and Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan support the provision of alternative facilities within and outside of the National Park area to reduce the levels of visitor pressures experienced at N2K sites. The AA prepared for the Peak District Core Strategy DPD concludes that the plan should recognise adverse effects arising from human activity and that assessment should be undertaken where such effects could arise. The Staffordshire Moorlands District Core Strategy AA promotes the introduction of measures to manage leisure activities to ensure that there is no conflict with the natural environment.

The introduction of a more extensive network of green infrastructure within emerging LDF strategies has the potential to diffuse tourism and recreation pressures.

Comment/ In-Combination Effects

There is no clear indication that visitor pressures arising in Staffordshire present a particular issue. It is suggested that the successful implementation of strategies and plans promoting an expansion of alternative, local recreational opportunities combined with a policy focus on sustainable travel choices could make a considerable contribution towards mitigating existing and future pressures.

Mitigation

Mitigation should only be proposed if any of the policies and measures within the LTP are considered likely to produce significant effects on those features necessary to ensure the integrity of this site. **At present there is no indication that the policies within the draft Local Transport Strategy document, alone or in-combination with other plans and policies, will produce a negative impact.**

12. West Midlands Mosses: Chartley Moss SAC Assessment

Qualifying Features and Conservation Objectives.

The Chartley Moss SAC has been designated due to the following qualifying features:

- 3160: Natural dystrophic lakes & ponds
- 7140: Transition mires & Quaking bogs

Ramsar criterion – peatland.

The conservation objectives for the site are to maintain in favourable condition:

- the habitat types for which the site is designated.

Atmospheric Pollution

Issues and Trends

Chartley Moss is approximately 200m from the A518 at its closest point on the northern boundary and may be affected by local air quality. The Natura 2000 Standard Data Form noted that trees at this site trap airborne nutrients and provide roost areas for birds, but the enrichment effect of both is only localised.

Effect of LTP3

The LTP promotes measures aimed at reducing traffic growth and associated levels of atmospheric pollution. These measures if implemented successfully could contribute towards addressing levels of diffuse pollution arising from the transport network. Enhancements to the transport network, depending on location and nature have the potential to increase localised levels of atmospheric pollution. The LTP policy 5.1 attempts to promote a pollution neutral strategy in relation to impact of new developments on air quality.

Other Plans, Policies and Programmes

Uncertainty at present over scale of future development in Stafford Borough and East Staffordshire District. Increased levels of development in Stafford and Uttoxeter could increase traffic levels along the A518. Appropriate Assessment of LDF core strategies may be required and mitigating measures will be promoted should any issues which could affect the integrity of the SAC be identified.

Comment/ In-Combination Effects

The relatively isolated nature of this site and the high levels of protection afforded to N2K sites would suggest that it is highly unlikely that the site will be impacted directly by future infrastructure enhancements.

Diffuse pollution issues will be addressed through a co-ordinated and sustained response, promoting sustainable patterns of development and the adoption of smarter modes of travel. An appropriate system of pollution monitoring should be adopted to enable proper assessment of the effectiveness of current policies.

Mitigation

Mitigation should only be proposed if any of the policies and measures within the LTP are considered likely to produce significant effects on those features necessary to ensure the integrity of this site. **At present there is no indication that the policies within the draft Local Transport Strategy document, alone or in-combination with other plans and policies, will produce a negative impact.** It is suggested that the inclusion of an affirmative statement supporting the integrity of the N2K network would enhance the draft LTP and provide a suitable policy context for the future consideration of detailed scheme proposals. An appropriate system of pollution monitoring would be beneficial to promote assessment of the effectiveness of current and proposed policies.

13. Midland Meres & Mosses Phase 2: Cop Mere Ramsar Site Assessment

Ramsar Criterion

Cop Mere is one of a number of SSSI's within the Midlands Meres and Mosses Ramsar Site identified for supporting:

- a diverse range of habitats including open water, swamp, fen and carr woodland
- a number of rare species associated with wetlands.

Water Quality

Issues and Trends

The AA for the phase 2 review of the West Midlands RSS identified high levels of phosphate associated with agricultural run-off as the principle issue affecting the Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 2 sites. The most recent condition assessment (Dec 2010) showed that the open water element is in unfavourable condition due to water pollution/agricultural runoff.

Effect of LTP3

The LTP strategy promotes measures aimed at reducing traffic growth and associated levels of atmospheric pollution. These measures if implemented successfully could contribute towards addressing levels of diffuse pollution arising from the transport network. In addition specific measures including high maintenance standards and the use of SuDS are identified to reduce the risks associated with diffuse pollution from the transport network entering water systems.

Other Plans, Policies and Programmes

Whilst there is no clear indication of the scale and location of future development it is considered that the impact of additional development on this site is likely to be limited given the rural character of the location and the preference within planning policy for urban brownfield development options.

Comment/In-Combination Effects

There is no suggestion that run off from the transport network is a source of water quality issues affecting this site.

Mitigation

Mitigation should only be proposed if any of the policies and measures within the LTP are considered likely to produce significant effects on those features necessary to ensure the integrity of this site. **At present there is no indication that the policies within the draft Local Transport Strategy document, alone or in-combination with other plans and policies, will produce a negative impact.**

14. Conclusions

It is concluded that it should be entirely possible to avoid and mitigate any adverse impacts on N2K sites arising from the measures proposed in the Local Transport Strategy Plan either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

The policies and measures within the draft Local Transport Strategy plan are predominantly generic statements which do not prescribe any specific physical network alterations or enhancements. The plan aims to reduce the levels of car dependency, promote a shift towards smarter modes of transport and support measures which mitigate the negative effects associated with the operation of the network.

Generally, the potential for any adverse impacts is highly dependent on the nature and location of any future transport schemes and the robustness of the policy framework to avoid and mitigate potential impacts that could arise. Potential issues have been identified in relation to Cannock Chase SAC and Cannock Extension Canal SAC.

In addition the Appropriate Assessment has identified a number of potential policy enhancements. Whilst these amendments are not necessary to mitigate plan impacts it is considered that they would prove beneficial in providing an appropriate policy context for considering future scheme proposals and to support the monitoring of plan policy effectiveness.

It is recommended that to address the issues identified within the AA that a new policy and supporting text should be introduced to supplement the existing policy on biodiversity as follows:

Protecting the Network of Internationally Significant Nature Conservation Sites

The European Habitats Directive (92/42/EEC) provides a framework for the designation of a network of internationally important sites designated for their ecological status. Staffordshire contains 13 such sites including significant heathlands, meadows and habitats supporting protected species.

Many of the county's naturally important areas have roads and rights of way either running through them or close by. The transport network can have a number of potentially negative impacts on habitats including

physical loss, severance and effects associated with pollution.

BOX 7.X Cannock Chase AONB and Special Area of Conservation

The AONB is the second smallest in the country covering just 6,905 hectares. It is an important area for recreation and has 1.9 million people living within 30km. The AONB Management Plan promotes 'positive management' whereby visitors are directed towards areas that are least vulnerable and most capable of absorbing impacts.

Over 1,200 hectares of the AONB has been designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and is the largest surviving area of lowland heath remaining in the Midlands. Lowland heath is an internationally scarce and threatened wildlife habitat. The Chase heathland is under threat from a combination of pressures. A number of roads crossing the Chase are used by commuters and as 'rat runs' with increased development in the area likely to have a detrimental impact on the heathland from road transport emissions. The SAC is currently the subject of a separate HRA process to assess the potential impacts of increased development from proposals contained within a number of Local Development Framework Core Strategy documents. Without prejudicing the outcome of this process the operation of the road network within and around the Chase, parking provision and visitor accessibility may well be features under active consideration as part of the Appropriate Assessment and Visitor Impact Management Plan.

Suggested Additional Policy

We will protect and enhance the N2K network of Nature Conservation Sites by:

- supporting measures aimed at maintaining the integrity of N2K sites
- requiring any new scheme proposal to demonstrate that it will avoid direct or indirect adverse impacts on the integrity of designated European sites.
- support a limit on the levels of boat traffic using the Cannock Extension Canal.
- promote monitoring of pollution and recreational pressures at sites where issues have been identified.

15. References

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Footprint Ecology (2009): Evidence base relating to Cannock Chase SAC and the Appropriate Assessment of Local Authority Core Strategies.

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Annex A – Assessment of Draft LTP3 Policies and Measures

LTP 3 Objective 1. Supporting Growth and Regeneration	Potential effects on N2K Sites
Policy 1.1 We will stimulate regeneration and support areas of deprivation.	
Continuing to provide tailored transport services and travel incentives to those for whom access is a barrier to jobs and education	<p>Certain measures have the potential alone or in combination to affect an N2K site.</p> <p>Measures which promote sustainable transport choices have the potential to reduce transport growth and associated environmental consequences.</p> <p>Depending on location and nature of investment, enhancements to the transport network could result in a number of direct and indirect impacts including loss of habitat, severance and increased incidence of pollution.</p>
Ensuring the transport network – its management, maintenance and development – contributes to the attractiveness and vibrancy of towns and villages.	
Supporting new development that includes or is located in areas with good public transport links, well connected to walking and cycling networks and facilities, with minimal car parking, and where the demand of ‘place’ and ‘movement’ is considered together.	
Ensuring that opportunities are maximised for transport investment to be used to lever external investment, especially where it attracts new knowledge-based, service led industries	
Supporting schemes that ‘add value’ to the transport network, particularly those that support its ‘place’ role.	
Maintaining and where appropriate expanding Staffordshire’s public transport network where it is deemed socially necessary.	
Policy 1.2 We will facilitate sustainable access to tourist attractions.	
Influencing visitors choices and travel behaviour in getting to and around the county.	<p>Potentially positive impact. Promotion of sustainable travel choices has the potential to reduce transport growth and associated environmental consequences.</p>
Supporting visitor attractions that want to develop travel plans to increase the proportion of their visitors and employees travelling by smarter travel modes.	
Policy 1.3 We will endeavour to support rural communities.	
Ensuring that the transport network – its management, maintenance and development – contributes to the attractiveness and vibrancy of towns and villages (where appropriate)	<p>Potentially positive impact. Promotion of sustainable travel choices has the potential to reduce transport growth and associated environmental consequences.</p>
Maintaining and where appropriate, expanding Staffordshire’s public transport network where it is deemed socially necessary. This may include tailored services and travel incentives.	
Policy 1.4 We will maximise the reliable operation of the existing road network.	
Completing a Road Hierarchy Review to ensure the county’s roads reflect their existing function.	<p>Potentially positive. Measures aim to promote the efficient use of the network and enforce measures to address environmental intrusion.</p>
Using Urban Traffic Control to balance the needs of, and minimise delays to, road users including pedestrians and cyclists. Where appropriate, it will be used to encourage the use of the primary road network and to benefit public transport movements.	
Proactively tackling illegal parking	
Using and enforcing Traffic Regulation Orders to maintain traffic flows including where delays may be otherwise caused. These will be considered on safety grounds, where commerce is seriously affected by parked vehicles or where the restriction is essential to provide the maximum benefit from capital investment.	
Returning the network to a normal and safe state of operation as soon as possible after an event, especially on traffic sensitive roads.	
Enforcing moving traffic offences where it causes congestion, environmental intrusion or it is detrimental to road safety.	

LTP 3 Objective 1. Supporting Growth and Regeneration	Potential effects on N2K Sites
Policy 1.5 We will minimise the impact of events on traffic movement.	
Increasing collaboration with and between utility companies and ourselves, to ensure works are better co-ordinated.	Measures not considered to have a significant direct or indirect impact.
Developing incentives for works promoters to apply best practice (such as weekend working) and reduce the amount of time spent on the highway, especially on traffic sensitive roads. This may include initiatives such as a Lane Rental Scheme, a Permit Scheme or other control mechanisms appropriate to the problem.	
Ensuring works promoters give the correct notification through the introduction of a Fixed Penalty Notice Scheme.	
Raising public awareness of current and planned road closures, roadworks, obstructions, and other events using a variety of media.	
Liaising closely with local planning authorities on the granting of temporary road closures.	
Encouraging hauliers to inform us of their plans to move abnormal loads through the county to enable us to provide advice on routing and timing.	
Encouraging event organisers to give advance warning of any event that may cause disruption to the network so that we can plan an appropriate response.	
Ensuring routes near to major events are free from planned roadworks to avoid any unnecessary and additional inconvenience to road users.	
Returning the network to a normal and safe state of operation as soon as possible after an event, especially on traffic sensitive roads.	
Improving information about when and how to travel throughout the duration of an event.	
Identifying and eliminating potential causes of unplanned disruption, focusing initially on traffic sensitive roads.	
Establishing diversionary routes as soon as possible (taking the needs of both through traffic and local communities into account), where roads have been closed as the result of an event, together with appropriate signing and publicity.	
Policy 1.6 We will make best use of our roads before considering increasing capacity.	
New road building will be restricted to where an overall net benefit is categorically proven, taking into account its contribution to Staffordshire's development/regeneration agenda; enhancing the local environment and safety; enhancing conditions for local residents, pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users and businesses; and reducing congestion. Any disbenefits must be mitigated.	Policy has the potential alone or in combination to affect an N2K site. Depending on location and nature of investment, enhancements to the transport network could result in a number of direct and indirect impacts including loss of habitat, severance and increased incidence of pollution.
Policy 1.7 We will keep the highway safe and serviceable whilst achieving value for money.	
This will be achieved through policies contained in Chapter 3 'Maintaining the Highway'.	See assessment of Chapter 3 measures.
Policy 1.8 We will improve the efficiency of freight distribution.	
This will be achieved through the actions and priorities set out in the Staffordshire Freight Strategy.	See assessment of Freight Strategy.

LTP 3 Objective 2. Maintaining the Highway Network	Potential effects
Policy 2.1 We will ensure that funding is used to gain the maximum benefits from the highway.	
This will be achieved by delivering the actions and priorities of the TAMP	The TAMP is produced outside of the LTP framework
Policy 2.2 We will manage street lighting in a sustainable manner	
Ensuring the existing street lighting infrastructure is operating at the required level of efficiency in terms of inventory requirements through the 'invest to save' initiative.	Measures not considered to have a significant direct or indirect impact.
Replacing ageing lights with modern efficient lighting that consumes less energy and reduces 'light spill'.	
Examining the benefits and disbenefits of deilluminating, part night lighting or switch off and removal of certain lights where appropriate	
Review the PFIs design standards to make sure the correct infrastructure is installed in the right places.	
Offering advice to local planning authorities as to whether areas to be adopted require lighting. If lighting is deemed to be required, lighting classes will be specified together with switching criteria which may include dimming and part lighting.	
Maintaining lights in accordance with the principles set out in 'Well-lit Highways – Code of Practice for Highway Lighting Management' and Institutions of Lighting Engineers Technical Reports as well as industry practice.	
Repairing faults within five working days of it being reported (where possible)	
Policy 2.3 We will consider the maintenance implications of all highway schemes.	
Having an understanding of future maintenance requirements (on a whole life basis) at an early stage in scheme design.	Measures not considered to have a significant direct or indirect impact.
Designing maintenance friendly schemes, in terms of production and safety, encouraging good and best practice, and innovation.	
Regularly reviewing schemes' maintenance regimes.	
Policy 2.4 We will treat designated parts of the highway to reduce the effects of frost, ice and snow.	
This will be achieved by following the policies contained in the County Council's Winter Service Policy.	This policy is produced outside of the LTP framework.
Policy 2.5 We will ensure that the impact on the environment of traffic and road improvement work is considered as part of scheme design and delivery.	
This will be achieved by following the policies contained in Chapter 8 'Respecting the Environment'.	See assessment of Chapter 8 measures.
Policy 2.6 We will engage in open communication with those affected by traffic and highway improvement work.	
Undertaking targeted public, stakeholder and member consultation during the feasibility stage of scheme design to gauge need and support, and to ensure that the experience of local people with respect to the proposals are in line with their expectations.	Measures not considered to have a significant direct or indirect impact.
Notifying residents and local businesses about schemes including giving information on road closures, diversions, length of disruption, officer contact details for advice and assistance.	
Publishing information on schemes in the local press, through local radio and on our website.	
Reviewing feedback received about our communication activities and where necessary, responding to individual comments or carrying out further consultation.	
Gaining feedback from the public on the quality of the works operation and satisfaction with the scheme itself.	
Following 'Pitching the Message' – Communication Guidelines for all Highway Schemes.	

LTP 3 Objective 2. Maintaining the Highway Network	Potential effects
Policy 2.7 We will seek opportunities for joint working and the co-ordination of highway activities with third parties.	
Consulting with third parties and neighbouring local transport authorities at an early stage on future maintenance programmes and where possible, amend programmes as appropriate.	Measures not considered to have a significant direct or indirect impact.
Communicating regularly with third parties and neighbouring transport authorities in order that all parties understand the need to meet their maintenance programmes and inform others of any changes.	

LTP 3 Objective 3. Promoting Equality of Access and Opportunity	Potential effects
Policy 3.1 We will support the adoption of sustainable land-use planning policies and reduce the impact of development where it negatively affects the highway.	
Working with local planning authorities and developers through the Local Development Framework process to encourage the design and layout of new development that maximises access by smarter travel modes especially in urban areas.	Potentially positive impact. Promotion of sustainable travel choices has the potential to reduce transport growth and associated environmental consequences.
Working with local planning authorities and developers through the Local Development Framework process to improve street design to create inclusive environments, especially in town centres whilst reconciling safety issues.	
Working with local planning authorities and developers through the Local Development Framework process to promote the retrofit of existing development in order to maximise access by smarter travel modes, especially in urban areas.	
Working with local planning authorities and developers through the Local Development Framework process to seek development mixes and patterns that are accessible to a broad range of services and facilities, which reduce the need to travel by private motor vehicle, especially in urban areas.	
Ensuring that planning obligations are secured where appropriate to bring about travel plans, subsidised bus services and other demand management measures.	
Ensuring that travel plans, when required to support new development, include modal shift targets, sustainable measures, annual performance monitoring, remedies and enforcement obligations.	

LTP 3 Objective 3. Promoting Equality of Access and Opportunity	Potential effects
Policy 3.2 We will help to improve bus services.	
Expanding on-ground bus priority measures on the most congested sections of road.	
Continuing to support Public Transport Partnerships and where appropriate and feasible create new ones where they bring improvements to the quality, reliability and punctuality of bus services.	
Working with bus operators to 'lock-in' the benefits of bus priority measures (such as traffic management and enhanced bus driver communications).	
Working with bus operators to regularly review services so that opportunities for integration (in terms of connections and timings) are maximised.	
Working with bus operators to encourage the creation of new integrated ticketing schemes, where it has the potential to benefit users such as the Plusbus Scheme.	
Working with bus operators and partners to support a more collaborative approach with regards to pre-journey and in-journey travel information.	Certain measures have the potential alone or in combination to affect an N2K site.
Continuing some level of service (where budgets allow) when commercial bus services are withdrawn, especially in deprived and remote areas.	Improving smarter travel services has the potential to reduce reliance on more polluting forms of travel.
Working with transport operators and partners to provide new accessible interchanges where they provide significant user benefits.	
Encouraging bus operators and local planning authorities to adopt minimum standards at key interchanges (such as seating, lighting and security, Passenger Help Points, mobility impaired access, static and real time information displays, cycle and car parking, and signage).	Depending on location and nature , the provision of new interchanges could result in a number of direct and indirect impacts including loss of habitat, severance and increased localised incidence of pollution.
Encouraging measures that enable good accessibility to public transport interchanges from new developments and, where appropriate, secure funding from developers towards the costs.	
Encouraging bus operators to use accessible buses on all their services before 2015.	
Increasing the proportion of accessible buses operating on Staffordshire's subsidised bus network (where budgets allow).	
Enforcing the customer care, equal opportunities, and health and safety conditions set out in our subsidised service contracts, and encouraging rail and bus operators to train frontline staff to ensure that the needs of all passengers are understood.	

LTP 3 Objective 3. Promoting Equality of Access and Opportunity	Potential effects
Policy 3.3 We will support residents with mobility impairments and those without access to a private car.	
Working with local planning authorities and developers through the Local Development process, to improve the layout and design of streets, and remove any unnecessary clutter both in connection with new development and publicly promoted projects.	Measures not considered to have a significant direct or indirect impact.
Ensuring that appropriate street design is considered from the outset in scheme design both in connection with new development and publicly promoted projects.	
Attending Staffordshire Public Access Network's (SPAN) highways sub-group to ensure two-way dialogue between ourselves and organisations representing people with mobility difficulties on scheme design and delivery.	
Increasing the provision of on-street Blue Badge priority parking places.	
Working with the police officers, local authority civil enforcement officers, and other public sector agencies to enforce the correct use of the Blue Badge scheme.	
Continuing to provide high quality advice, information and guidance to the county's community transport schemes.	
Stimulating innovation and encouraging the adoption of best practice within the county's community transport schemes.	
Facilitating the take up and use of concessionary travel passes.	
Reviewing the use of concessionary travel passes on 'other' transport services, including community transport under discretionary enhancements.	
Encouraging service providers to take their services into communities.	
Policy 3.4 We will seek to improve and integrate 'other' transport services	
Investigating the possibility of creating a more integrated approach between long distance coach services and more 'conventional' public transport services in terms of connections, timings, infrastructure, information and possibly ticketing.	<p>Certain measures have the potential alone or in combination to affect an N2K site.</p> <p>Increasing transport integration can improve the efficient use of the existing network and reduce the dependence on more polluting forms of transport.</p> <p>Measures supporting the increased use of the canal network has the potential to conflict with the conservation objectives of the Cannock Canal Extension SAC.</p>
Conserving Staffordshire's waterways in partnership with British Waterways, while maximising the opportunities they offer for leisure, recreation, regeneration and where viable, for freight transport.	
Managing potential conflicts, in partnership with British Waterways that may exist between different users of the canal and towpath network.	
Maintaining contact with regional airport companies to monitor usage and employment of Staffordshire residents.	
Introducing or re-routing existing public transport services to link to regional airports where evidence supports such a step.	
Installing taxi pick-up and drop-off points at key interchanges and other major trip attractors where evidence supports such a step.	
Working with local planning authorities and taxi and private hire operators to encourage the following of best practice.	
Meeting the policies contained in the Staffordshire Walking Strategy and the Staffordshire Cycling Strategy.	

LTP 3 Objective 4. Maintaining Safety and Security	Potential effects
Policy 4.1 We will aim to deliver cost-effective remedial measures which improve safety	
Where the benefit to the community of reactive work is considerable.	Measures not considered to have a significant direct or indirect impact.
Where investigation of accident clusters indicates an engineering solution that can be delivered within funding constraints.	
Where there is a significant flow of vulnerable road users, such as outside schools.	
Where we can demonstrate value for money in terms of the cost of the works related to cost of the collisions estimated to be saved (known as 'First Year Rate of Return').	
Policy 4.2 We will ensure that road safety education is targeted at the right level to those groups most at risk from being involved in road traffic collisions.	
Supporting national and local road safety campaigns.	Measures not considered to have a significant direct or indirect impact.
Making road safety education resources available to schools, colleges and 'at risk' user groups (such as young people and motorcyclists).	
Delivering pedestrian training in primary schools in areas where collision rates are high.	
Supporting initiatives which encourage children and young people to travel safely and sustainably to school and college.	
Delivering cyclist training in primary and secondary/middle schools in areas where collision rates are high.	
Delivering pre and post driver/rider training and education resources targeted at young people, motorcyclists, people driving in the course of their work, and people convicted of driving offences.	
Providing training for fleet vehicle drivers and training for employers on managing occupational road risk.	
Encouraging the safe and correct use of vehicle technology through promotional methods and leading by example in our own vehicle fleet.	
Policy 4.3 We will work with partners to enforce traffic laws.	
Continuing to implement the Speed Limit Review on 'A' and 'B' roads.	Measures not considered to have a significant direct or indirect impact.
Working with the SSRP to provide and operate both fixed and mobile safety cameras at locations that can demonstrate casualty reduction benefits.	
Working with the SSRP to provide and operate speed indication devices.	
Supporting communities that want to operate Community Speed Watch in locations where speed and casualties are a problem (both real and perceived) for communities.	
Investigating and considering the need for red light enforcement cameras at traffic signals where infringement has been identified as an issue.	
Continuing to work with the local parking committees and local planning authorities to operate Civil Parking Enforcement.	
Supporting Staffordshire Police in enforcing speed limits.	
Supporting Staffordshire Police in reducing other illegal driving activities/behaviour (such as driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, failure to wear a seatbelt's, using mobile phones whilst driving, driving defective vehicles and contravening Traffic Regulation Orders).	

LTP 3 Objective 4. Maintaining Safety and Security	Potential effects
Policy 4.4 We will adopt measures designed to reduce crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour on the network.	
Ensuring that new transport schemes are designed to minimise opportunities for crime and disorder to occur.	Measures not considered to have a significant direct or indirect impact.
Working with the Crime Reduction Partnership and local communities to identify areas where the provision of street lighting, CCTV and the closure of subways would benefit the perceived and actual level of crime and anti-social behaviour.	
Working with local planning authorities and developers through the Local Development Framework process, to ensure that safety and security is incorporated into the design and layout of new developments.	
Promoting Staffordshire's good road safety and security record, as well as crime and disorder initiatives.	
Working with public transport operators to ensure that the safety and security of their passengers and staff is of paramount importance.	
Policy 4.5 We will plan for, and respond to, damage caused to the transport network where it poses a threat to safety.	
Maintaining the transport system and the wider public realm in a good state of repair.	Measures not considered to have a significant direct or indirect impact.
Continuing to work with the emergency services, the Highways Agency and neighbouring highway authorities to put in place a series of contingency options and diversion routes in the event of unplanned incidents on the highway, focusing on traffic sensitive roads.	
Working with the Staffordshire Resilience Forum to assess the threat of major incidents that may affect the transport network in order to ensure an appropriate level of preparedness.	
Making changes in our capacity as a local transport authority and an owner of crowded places, to incorporate counter-terrorism protective security measures into the highway and wider public realm.	
Designing, building and maintaining the highway network to be more resilient to extreme weather such as flooding, and increased ice and snow.	
Designing, building and maintaining the highway network in order to protect highway users when events occur.	

LTP 3 Objective 5. Reducing Road Transport Emissions and its Effects on the Highway Network	Potential effects
Policy 5.1 We will reduce travel by private car.	
Encouraging the adoption and implementation of voluntary travel plans and supporting those secured as a planning condition.	Potentially positive impact. Promotion of sustainable development and smarter travel choices has the potential to reduce transport growth and associated environmental consequences.
Monitoring travel plans that have been a condition of planning permission.	
Supporting and advising local planning authorities in the development of their Local Development Frameworks in order to secure development patterns and mixes that reduce the need to travel and enable the use of smarter travel modes.	
Supporting new development that includes or is located in areas with good public transport links, well-connected to walking and cycling networks and facilities, with minimal car parking, and where the demand of 'place' and 'movement' is considered together.	
Opposing development that is likely to lead to a worsening of air quality without appropriate long-term mitigation measures.	
Promoting the financial and environmental benefits to businesses of adopting flexible working practices, especially in areas where traffic levels are approaching their capacity, where future development is expected, in AQMAs or where the workforce travels some distance to get to employment.	
Ensuring transport and access is considered at an early stage in service design and delivery.	
Raising awareness of the financial, environmental and social benefits of taking services to communities/people.	
Sharing information about improving local air quality through the SAQF.	
Promoting the financial, environmental and health benefits of smarter travel modes to individuals, especially in areas where traffic levels are approaching their capacity, where future development is expected or in AQMAs.	
Promoting (and running) schemes that encourage the take up of smarter travel modes.	
Encouraging local planning authorities to keep their car parking strategies under review.	
Introducing Traffic Regulation Orders (such as clear zone, low-emission zone and no stopping/parking zones), subject to there being suitable alternative routes, especially in urban areas and AQMAs.	
Policy 5.2 We will promote the use of low-emitting vehicles and vehicle efficiency.	
Investigating the installation of vehicle-charging infrastructure (i.e. electric charging points) in pilot areas.	Potentially positive impact. Increasing the use of low emitting vehicles could contribute to a reduction in levels.
Encouraging individuals to purchase low-emitting vehicles.	
Investigating the possibility of giving low-emitting vehicles greater road priority.	
Delivering the priorities and actions contained in the Staffordshire Freight Strategy.	
Encouraging businesses with a company car fleet to use low-emitting cars, put their drivers through eco-driver training and minimise their business mileage.	
Encouraging public transport operators to use low-emitting vehicles and put their drivers through eco-driver training.	
Create Freight Quality Partnerships where partners are willing and benefits are identifiable.	

LTP 3 Objective 5. Reducing Road Transport Emissions and its Effects on the Highway Network	Potential effects
Policy 5.3 We will lead by example and reduce our own road transport emissions.	
Replacing old vehicles within our vehicle fleet with ones that are less polluting, wherever possible.	Potentially positive impact.
Assessing our essential car user criteria to ensure that it is fit for purpose.	
Reviewing our staff car parking facilities.	
Continuing to run initiatives that reduce the need for employees to use their cars to get to work.	
Investigating the introduction of eco-driver training for some essential car users.	
Ensuring council offices have access to a pool bicycle and/or car.	
Using recycled and locally sourced materials whenever possible in highway construction and maintenance schemes.	
Delivering other priorities contained within the County Council's Travel Plan (available on request).	
Policy 5.4 We will improve the resilience of the transport network to changing climate conditions.	
Delivering the priorities contained within Development Services' Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (www.staffordshire.gov.uk).	Measures not considered to have a significant direct or indirect impact.
Assessing, managing and minimising risks posed by climate change to people and property where it relates to the transport network.	
Managing disruption and ensuring rapid recovery of the transport network from the impact of a climate change related event.	
Encouraging all owners of the transport network to manage, maintain and develop it with climate change in mind.	
Supporting new development that has been designed with climate change in mind by, for example, including green space and shade.	

LTP 3 Objective 6. Improving Health and Quality of Life	Potential effects
Policy 6.1 We will create a physical and cultural environment in which everyone feels confident to walk and cycle.	
Meeting the aims and policies contained in the Staffordshire Walking Strategy.	See assessment of Walking Strategy.
Meeting the policies contained in the Staffordshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan.	ROWIP is produced outside of the LTP framework.
Meeting the aims and policies contained in the Staffordshire Cycling Strategy.	See assessment of Cycling Strategy.
Policy 6.2 We will help residents access services	
For information about how we plan to improve access to healthy foods, healthcare services and leisure and social facilities, please see Chapter 4 'Promoting Equality of Access and Opportunity' and the Equality Impact.	See assessment of Chapter 4 measures.
Policy 6.3 We will support community cohesion.	
For information about how we plan to improve community cohesion, please see Chapter 4 'Promoting Equality of Access and Opportunity', and Chapter 5 'Maintaining Safety and Security'.	See assessment of Chapter 4 and 5 measures.
Policy 6.4 We will maintain Staffordshire's road safety record.	
For information about how we plan to at least maintain Staffordshire's road safety record, please see Chapter 5 'Maintaining Safety and Security'.	See assessment of Chapter 4 and 5 measures.

LTP 3 Objective 6. Improving Health and Quality of Life	Potential effects
Policy 6.5 We will reduce the negative impact of traffic-related noise.	
Working with partners to prepare and deliver noise action plans.	Measures not considered to have a significant direct or indirect impact.
Working with local planning authorities and developers through the Local Development Framework process, to reduce the impact of noise on new developments.	
Consider - erection of barriers to deflect noise in proximity of residential areas (having regard to alternatives, their visual impact and other site specific considerations).	
Consider - Ensuring new development adopts a three-dimensional approach to the design layout of buildings and intervening spaces to control traffic speeds on streets to avoid vertical speed controlling devices where feasible.	
Consider - Promote smoother and considerate driving styles by individuals and organisations.	
Consider - Use of low-noise carriageway surfacing, especially on high speed roads.	
Policy 6.6 We will reduce emissions from road transport.	
For information about how we plan to improve air quality, please see Chapter 5 'Reducing Road Transport Emissions and its Effects on the Highway Network'.	See assessment of Chapter 5 measures.
Policy 6.7 We will reduce the negative impact of artificial light.	
For information on how we plan to reduce the negative impact of artificial light, please see Chapter 7 'Respecting the Environment'.	See assessment of Chapter 7 measures.

LTP 3 Objective 7. Respecting the Environment	Potential effects
Policy 7.1 We will reduce emissions from road transport.	
For information about how we plan to work with partners to improve air quality, please see Chapter 6 'Reducing Road Transport Emissions and its Effects on the Highway Network'.	See assessment of Chapter 6 measures.
Policy 7.2 We will help to reduce the negative impact of traffic-related noise.	
For information about how we plan to work with partners to improve traffic related noise, please see Chapter 7 'Improving Health and Quality of Life'.	See assessment of Chapter 7 measures.
Policy 7.3 We will reduce the negative impact of artificial light.	
Following the guidance set out in 'Lighting Works within Conservation Areas and in the Vicinity of Listed Buildings'.	Guidance is produced outside the LTP framework.
Maintaining lights in accordance with the principles set out in 'Well-lit Highways – Code of Practice for Highway Lighting Management' and Institution of Lighting Engineers' Technical Reports, as well as industry best practice.	Code of practice is produced outside the LTP framework.
Policy 7.4 We will minimise the risk of flooding, soil erosion and pollutants entering watercourses.	
Cleaning all gullies once a year and their connections to the main highway drain or ditch.	Potentially positive impact. Measures could reduce the risk of run-off pollution impacting on European sites.
Returning with special equipment to unblock gully connections that could not be dealt with during routine gully emptying.	
Returning to assess any defective gully cover and frame we found during routine gully emptying.	
Carrying out any emergency repair work within 24 hours of notification.	
Clearing or digging out grips and ditches when required.	
Integrating sustainable drainage features (such as amphibian-friendly drainage systems) into new schemes.	

LTP 3 Objective 7. Respecting the Environment	Potential effects
Policy 7.5 We will minimise the risk of soil contamination.	
Examining best practice to identify herbicides that once sprayed on or near to the highway will have minimal impact on soil quality.	Potentially positive impact. Measures could reduce the risk of run-off pollution impacting on European sites.
Examining best practice to identify gritting mixtures that once applied onto the highway will have minimal impact on soil quality.	
Clearing spillages (such as fuel) as quickly as possible, especially in areas with sensitive habitats.	
Ensuring consequential compaction as a result of highway operations is avoided or where this is not possible, repairing the areas by rotivation or top soiling.	
Policy 7.6 We will improve the image of townscapes and ensure that heritage assets on the highway remain as close to their original appearance as possible.	
Adopting a minimalist approach whereby measures will involve minimal visual interference within its surrounds.	Measures not considered to have a significant direct or indirect impact.
Retaining historic street furniture or using traditional material and sympathetic colours and designs that are sensitive to their location and reinforce local character.	
Identifying and removing superfluous or redundant items of street furniture.	
Following the guidance set out in 'Conservation within the Highway: Structures of Historic Importance'.	
Ensuring full consultation with residents, local planning authorities and others.	
Following the guidance set out in 'Lighting Works within Conservation Areas and in the Vicinity of Listed Buildings'.	
Securing Commuted Maintenance Payments by way of the Highways Act 1980 (section 38 for new roads and section 278 for alterations made to existing public highways) and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (section 106 for developer contributions towards both 'highway' and 'non highway' infrastructure assets) in respect of the future maintenance costs associated with additional highway infrastructure.	
Working with local planning authorities to ensure that Local Development Frameworks include appropriate local area public realm strategies.	
In relation to historic street furniture including mile markers and fingerposts this will be achieved by:	
• Making the marker or post visible.	Measures not considered to have a significant direct or indirect impact.
• Preventing damage by vegetation.	
• Preventing collapse where markers or posts have sunk into soil or exposed to strong winds.	
• Stabilising the surface against erosion by water and air.	
• Repainting.	
• Replacing part or all in extreme cases.	
• Following the guidance set out in 'Conservation within the Highway: Structures of Historic Importance'.	

LTP 3 Objective 7. Respecting the Environment	Potential effects
<p>In relation to historic bridges this will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimising the number and size of changes to the existing structure and its appearance. • Undertaking sympathetic remedial measures that retain a bridge's character, with minimal loss of historic fabric and minimal adverse effect on the setting. • Replacing traditional materials only where it can be proved that it is essential in the interests of structural stability. • Undertaking appropriate archaeological mitigation and recording on any restoration works. • Carrying out repair to minor damage as required in order to prevent long-term, irreversible damage. • Carrying out regular and thorough inspections. • Following the Roads Liaison Group's guidance entitled 'Management of Highway Structures: Code of Practice'. • Following the guidance set out in 'Conservation within the Highway: Structures of Historic Importance'. • Consulting with residents, local planning authorities, English Heritage and others. 	<p>Measures not considered to have a significant direct or indirect impact.</p>
<p>Policy 7.7 We will enhance biodiversity and landscape where possible.</p>	
<p>Recycling as much highway material as possible.</p> <p>Using imported recycled or secondary aggregates from local sources.</p> <p>Choosing materials and maintenance techniques that minimise the production of greenhouse gases.</p> <p>Using energy efficient products, plant and equipment.</p> <p>Using techniques that address pollution including noise, contamination and light during implementation.</p> <p>Taking full account of the quality and sensitivity of landscapes, habitats and species in the design, assessment and selection of new schemes and ongoing maintenance, particularly where they affect designated landscapes and sites.</p> <p>As far as possible, attempting to fit schemes into their surroundings by careful choice of route and alignment, and by the use of landform and new planting and habitat creation to reduce adverse effects on landscape and ecological character.</p> <p>Screening views of traffic, lighting columns and other infrastructure from sensitive areas while still allowing road users the opportunity to appreciate some views over the wider landscape.</p> <p>Ensuring lighting has as minimal impact as possible on wildlife species, such as bats.</p> <p>Taking account of protected species and important habitats during structure, tree and verge maintenance, and routine cyclical maintenance.</p> <p>Encouraging the inclusion of green infrastructure in scheme design.</p> <p>Seeking opportunities to create new habitats in road improvement works (such as wildflower areas, wetlands, grasslands, ponds, hedgerows and woodlands and geological exposures).</p>	<p>Potentially positive impact.</p>

Freight, Cycling and Walking Strategies

Proposals within the freight strategy to improve facilities depending on location could result in a number of direct and indirect impacts including loss of habitat, severance and increased localised incidence of pollution.

Promoting walking may present conflicts with conservation objectives where recreational pressures are an issue.

Annex B – Other Plans, Policies and Programmes

In-combination impacts have a particular significance given the close inter-relationship between local plans, which establish the scale and location of future development requirements, and the policies and measures contained within Local Transport Plans which focus on meeting existing and future travel requirements.

Other Plans Policies and Programmes – Staffordshire			
Plan Policy & Programmes	Key Policies & Proposals	Other Relevant Proposals	Hra Summary
Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011 – Saved Policies Extended Beyond September 2007	Promote and support urban regeneration within the County and neighbouring urban areas. Greenfield development restricted to nodes within multi-modal transport corridors. Rural development focused on retaining and improving facilities and diversifying the local economy. The open countryside will be protected for its own sake.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support for tourism facilities which are in keeping with wildlife conservation policies and which have regard to the provision of public transport services. • support recreational and leisure development which will provide relief for over-used recreational areas. • promotes an integrated and sustainable transport strategy. • promotes a cycle network which provides easy access to recreational areas. • support for canal facilities though recognises wildlife value of canals which is to be conserved and enhanced. 	N/A
Staffordshire Minerals Core Strategy	Preferred Core Strategy yet to be published.		
Staffordshire Waste Core Strategy	Preferred Core Strategy yet to be published.		
Staffordshire Sustainable Community Strategy 2008	<p>Four key priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a vibrant prosperous economy • strong safe and cohesive communities • improved health and sense of well-being • a protected, enhanced and respected environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved accessibility to employment opportunities • accessible community services • encourage active lifestyles • protect restore and enhance biodiversity • promote 'green tourism' • an effective, accessible and affordable transport network • increase in the use of public transport, cycling and walking. 	N/A
Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 1998 – Saved Policies	New housing development to be located within village and town boundaries, limited infilling in certain villages, restricted residential development in the open countryside.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage tourism development of the Churnet Valley railway 	N/A

Other Plans Policies and Programmes – Staffordshire			
Plan Policy & Programmes	Key Policies & Proposals	Other Relevant Proposals	Hra Summary
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Core Strategy Submission Version 2009 and Addendums Dec 2009 and June 2010	Leek, Biddulph and Cheadle identified as the main future focus for development. Within the rural areas further details on the proposed location of additional developments is required to enable an assessment of potential effects. Recognition that greenfield peripheral releases will be required to meet housing requirements and may necessitate improvements in transport network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural regeneration opportunities identified at Bolton Copperworks, Froghall and Anzio camp. Pro-active promotion of tourism sector. Tourism corridor identified focused on Churnet Valley. 	The Appropriate Assessment concludes that given the overall scale of proposed development and the suitable implementation of the proposed mitigation measures that it is expected that there would be no adverse effects on the integrity of the European sites.
Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle Borough Council Core Strategy Adopted 2009	Housing – 5700 dwellings Employment – 84 Ha. Targeted regeneration of high priority areas primarily focused in the main urban areas of Newcastle and Kidsgrove. Limited amount of development proposed in key rural service centres.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13ha. Mixed use development at Keele Science Park. 	Screening Report concluded that the core strategy is not likely to have a significant effect on any European site.
Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 – Saved Policies	Housing development supported within defined residential boundaries, restricted in areas outside. Support for office and retail growth within the centres of Stafford and Stone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> support for recreation and tourism facilities which do not conflict with wildlife habitats or areas of ecological importance. 	N/A
Stafford Borough Core Strategy Local Choices Consultation 2010	Initial consultation with few definite details. Local choices document promotes 500 new dwellings per annum focused primarily on Stafford Town.		Appropriate Assessment On-going.
East Staffordshire Local Plan 2006 – Saved Policies	Development focused in or close to Burton and Uttoxeter. Restricted development outside development boundaries. Maximise potential of A38 and A50 corridors for employment development.		N/A
East Staffordshire Development Principles November 2010	Initial stages of process to establish a future development strategy. The development principles promote the delivery of strong vibrant settlements with excellent transport connections.		Screening report identified potential issues associated with additional households and construction.
South Staffordshire Local Plan 1996 – Saved Policies	Limited amendments to Green Belt boundaries. Restrictions on development in the open countryside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> support for recreation and tourism facilities which do not conflict with wildlife habitats 	
South Staffordshire Core Strategy Preferred Option 2009 Policy Choices 2010	Dispersed development strategy reflecting character of District in accordance with hierarchy of settlements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> supports delivery of Regional Employment Sites at Wobaston Road and Hilton Cross. support continued role for Wolverhampton Airport. identifies potential housing growth point south of Stafford to meet needs of Stafford town. identifies potential park and ride facility at Featherstone. 	

Other Plans Policies and Programmes – Staffordshire			
Plan Policy & Programmes	Key Policies & Proposals	Other Relevant Proposals	Hra Summary
Cannock Chase Local Plan 2007 – Saved Policies	Housing proposals focused on main settlements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support for recreation and tourism facilities which do not conflict with wildlife habitats 	
Cannock Chase Core Strategy Preferred Pre-Publication Draft, May 2010	Focus development on the three main urban areas i.e. Cannock, Rugeley and Norton Canes. Policy commitment to maintaining the integrity of the Cannock Chase SAC.		Appropriate Assessment On-going.
Lichfield District Local Plan 1998 – Saved Policies	Housing development within identified settlement boundaries. Restriction on development in the open countryside.		N/A
Lichfield District Core Strategy Shaping our District Informal Consultation November 2010	Proposes to concentrate development within or adjacent to existing urban areas. Scale and location of future development subject to on-going local consultation.		
Tamworth Local Plan 2006 – Saved Policies	Housing sites proposed at Anker Valley and within urban fabric.		
Tamworth Borough Core Strategy Preferred Option 2009	Regeneration of town centre and neighbourhoods. Housing development at Anker Valley and within urban fabric.		
Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan 2009	Enhance the AONB. Promote quiet recreation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifies the issues associated with transport impacts • identifies the issues associated with the provision of additional housing in areas adjacent to the AONB • recreational activities encouraged towards the least vulnerable areas. 	

Other Plans Policies and Programmes – Adjoining Areas			
Plan Policy & Programmes	Key Policies & Proposals	Other Relevant Proposals	Hra Summary
Peak District National Park Core Strategy Submission Version September 2010	Strategy prioritises conservation and enhancement of the park. Development directed to the most sustainable locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preferred transport strategy proposes cross-park traffic to go round rather than through the park. 	Appropriate Assessment concludes that it should be entirely possible to mitigate any adverse impacts on N2K sites as a result of the Core Strategy, either alone or in combination with other plans.
Peak District National Park Management Plan	Promotes the conservation and enhancement of the Peak District National Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifies the need for a new sustainable transport strategy • promotes a sustainable destination based tourism strategy • promotes improved access by public transport. 	
Peak District Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2000	Where appropriate attract new visitors, encourage longer stays and encourage visits throughout the year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce visitor car dependency • conserve the landscape. 	N/A
Derbyshire Dales and High Peak Borough Council Joint Draft Core Strategy June 2010	Development to be concentrated in the main market towns with modest development within the larger villages.		The interim conclusion of the HRA is that the draft Joint Core Strategy could potentially result in adverse effects on European Designated sites, and measures are needed in order to avoid such effects on air quality, recreation and water quality.
South Derbyshire District Council Core Strategy	Preferred Core Strategy yet to be published.		
North West Leicestershire District Council Core Strategy	Preferred Core Strategy yet to be published.		Initial scoping undertaken which has identified the issues and options which should be the subject of further consideration owing to potential impacts.
North Warwickshire Borough Council Core Strategy	Preferred Core Strategy yet to be published.		To be produced.
Birmingham City Council Core Strategy Final Draft October 2010	Promotes the vision of Birmingham as a Global City, support the delivery of 50,600 dwellings.		To be produced.
Black Country Core Strategy Publication Document November 2009	Core strategy supports the delivery of a minimum of 63,000 dwellings, the preferred strategy focuses development in a network of corridors and four centres- Brierley Hill, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support improvements to facilities adjoining and serving the canal network. • freight movements by waterways to be encouraged. 	Suggests negative effects can be overcome and promotes further research to inform the HRA requirements of future site allocation DPS's.
Wyre Forest District Council Core Strategy	Core strategy preferred option supports the delivery of 3,400 dwellings, the preferred strategy focuses development principally on Kidderminster but also in Stourport-on-Severn and to a more limited extent to meet local need in the rural areas.		Screening stage concluded that no further appropriate assessment work required.

Date: 3 March 2011
Our ref: SCLTP3
Your ref: LTP3



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Dear Mr. Rigby

Proposal: Local Transport Plan and Habitats Regulations Assessment Location: Staffordshire

Thank you for consulting Natural England on the above which we received on (date). We would like to offer the following comments and hope that they are of use to you:

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development. We are working towards the delivery of four strategic outcomes:

- A healthy natural environment;
- People are inspired to value and conserve the natural environment;
- Sustainable use of the natural environment; and
- A secure environmental future.

Natural England calls for an environmentally sustainable transport system – one that protects and enhances the natural environment, as well as delivering economic and social benefits. Transport affects the natural environment, and people's experience of it, in three key areas:

- Biodiversity, landscape, geodiversity and soils – through direct and indirect impacts from land take and traffic;
- Climate change and energy – through greenhouse gas emissions and the

- Quality of life – through people’s access to and experience of the natural environment, and through links between walking, cycling, health and well-being.

Natural England seeks more positive outcomes for these three areas, with the aim of securing the future of England’s natural environment in a society that faces a fundamental challenge - to ‘square’ our desire for greater accessibility with the urgent need to reduce our carbon emissions. Natural England advocates the prioritisation and protection of the natural environment in transport planning and policy-making and in decisions about the way our lifestyles and economy are developed.

As such we would like to offer the following specific comments.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

We have considered the information submitted to form a Habitats Regulations Assessment and can confirm Natural England is in general agreement with the conclusions of Habitats Regulations Assessment Appropriate Assessment Report, the Assessment of Draft Policies and Measures and the Other Plans, Policies and Programmes.

We note that new text is to be inserted into the LTP as a result of the Appropriate Assessment relating to protecting the network of internationally significant sites for nature conservation, the ongoing work relating to Cannock Chase SAC and enhancements of the Natura 2000 network sites.

As a result of these proposed changes we do not believe that Staffordshire’s Local Transport Plan will have a significant adverse effect on the sites identified.

Draft Strategy Plan

Natural England supports the development of District Transport Strategies, these should help identify what each district can do locally in order to contribute to the wider aims of the Local Transport Plan.

We support the plans’ aspirations to for reducing the county’s emissions produced as a result of transport and cope with the consequences of climate change. The Objectives / Challenges table on page 6 of the document may benefit from including “Reducing the need to travel” as a Challenge within the Reducing Road Transport Emissions and its Effects on the Highway Network objective.

Policy 1.1

Natural England supports this policy, especially the aim for new development that includes or is located in areas with good public transport links , well connected to foot and cycle networks with minimal car parking. We believe that this is likely to lead to more sustainable forms of development in the future.

Policy 1.2

We largely support the policy but we would like to remind your authority of the potential for negative impacts on certain biodiversity sites such as Cannock Chase SAC. However it also has the potential for positive impacts for example by supporting attractions that are best able to cope with increased visitor pressure.

Box 1.10

We note that a new road to the connecting the A518 to the A34 in Stafford town centre is being considered. We believe that alternative, more sustainable solutions should be considered before new roads are constructed. The new road must be carefully planned due to its location near the Doxey and Tillington Marshes SSSI and mitigation and enhancement will likely be needed to ensure that there are no negative impacts on the site.

Policy 2.2

We support this policy, more efficient lighting with less light spill will have a positive impact on protected species such as bats who utilise linear features when travelling but often avoid well lit areas. Reduction in light spill could lead to extension in the range of some bat populations.

Policy 3.1

We support this policy. Natural England believes that the integration of sustainable land use and transport planning can have significant benefits in creating sustainable places. We are pleased that Travel Plans are to be encouraged and feature modal shift targets, sustainable measures, monitoring, remedies and enforcement.

Policy 3.2

We support measures to improve bus services and increased priority for them. This may help encourage a modal shift from car based travel to public transport.

Section 5

We support the aim of reducing road transport emissions and the effects on the highway network. As well as climate change emissions can have effects on vegetation such as Heather and human health. We are pleased that your authority aims to lead by example and reduce your own emissions by 80% by 2050 from a 1990 baseline.

Policy 5.1

We believe this policy will help to bring about a modal shift in Staffordshire's travel pattern. Discouraging travel by private motor vehicle will have benefits such as reducing emissions generated as a result of transportation in line with national carbon reduction targets, promote accessibility by helping to support the district councils in the development of their Local Development Frameworks to secure development patterns and mixes that reduce the need to travel by enabling people to walk cycle or use public transport.

This policy will also help encourage the use of smarter choices such as workplace school or visitor travel plans and help the integration of transport and land use planning.

Policy 5.4

We note that this policy supports new developments of the transport network that has been designed with climate change in mind such as including green space and shade. You should however consider the effects of climate proofing transport schemes on the natural environment. You must ensure that the implementation of these measures does not reduce the ability of wildlife to adapt.

Policy 6.1

We are pleased that this policy will lead to the implementation of the policies contained within the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP). Natural England encourages the integration of the ROWIP into the Local Transport Plan Process.

Policy 7.7

Natural England supports this policy. Transport networks and the associated Green Infrastructure can play a role in providing valuable ecosystem services that assist in the management of adaptation to climate change through carbon storage, drainage, water conservation and cooling urban heat islands etc.

We believe the measures introduced in this policy will help protect and enhance landscapes and biodiversity in Staffordshire.

If you have any queries relating to the contents of this response please contact me at the above address.

Yours sincerely

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