



Town Clerk

Les Trigg

Tel: 01785 619740

Email: clerk@stonetowncouncil.gov.uk

15 Station Road
STONE
ST15 8JP

24 February 2020

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** will be held in the **Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone**, on **TUESDAY 3 MARCH 2020 at 7:00pm**.

I trust you will be able to attend.

Les Trigg
Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. **To receive apologies for absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Requests for Dispensations Received**
4. **To receive the report of the County Councillors**
 - County Councillor Mrs J. Hood
 - County Councillor I. Parry
5. **Representations from Members of the Public**

To consider representations from members of the public on items to be considered at this meeting, in accordance with the Council's scheme of public participation.
6. **Minutes of Previous Meetings**
 - a) To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee, held on 4 February 2020, Minute No's GP20/167 – GP20/184 (attached).

7. Minutes of Sub-Committees

There are no minutes for consideration

8. Meeting Schedule for 2020-21

To consider amendments to the Council's Meeting Schedule for the Year 2020-21 (attached).

9. Local Plan for Stafford Borough

To consider the following Stafford Borough Council consultations inviting views on:

- a) New Stafford Borough Local Plan 2020-2040: Issues & Options Consultation – seeking views on the approach to future development of Stafford Borough over the next 20 years.

A copy of an email from Stafford Borough Council is attached.

A range of documentation and information supporting the consultation is available at: <https://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/new-local-plan->

- b) Draft Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document consultation – expands upon policies in the adopted Plan for Stafford Borough, guiding developers through the ecological mitigation hierarchy of information, avoidance, mitigation, compensation, and new benefits detailing when, what and how to survey.

An email from Stafford Borough Council is attached together with an electronic copy of the Biodiversity draft SPD.

10. Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service Consultation

To consider a Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service Safety Plan 2020-2024 Consultation.

An email from the Chief Fire Officer is attached together with an electronic copy of 'Our Draft Safety Plan' .

11. BT Payphones

To consider a letter from British Telecom who are consulting on a proposal to remove payphones in Stone parish.

An email from Stafford Borough Council is attached together with a letter from British Telecom and a comments form stating the locations of the telephone boxes.

12. Members Motions

Councillor J. Davies

"It was resolved under GP17/113 to fly the Lone Star State Flag on the flag pole at the top of the High Street on specific dates each year. I now ask the Council to amend that resolution by resolving to fly the Lone Star State Flag on the first Saturday of March (to commemorate the anniversary of Texas gaining its independence from Mexico on 2 March 1836), on the first Saturday of July (American Independence Day on 4th July) and on 29th December (the anniversary of Texas gaining admission as the 28th state of the Union in

1845). I also ask the council to make such reasonable financial provision as may be deemed necessary to ensure these events are carried out in an appropriate public manner”.

13. Non-Cheque Payments

To receive a list of non-cheque payments made by the Council during the period 1 January to 31 January 2020 (attached).

14. Update from Working Groups:

- a) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
- b) Stone Area Parish Liaison Group
- c) Traffic Management in Stone Working Group
- d) VE Day 2020 Commemoration Working Group

15. To receive reports from Town Councillors on attendance at meetings of local organisations and outside bodies as a representative of the Town Council

Stone ATC – Mayor & J. Davies

Age Concern Stone & District – Cllrs: T. Adamson & C. Thornicroft

Stafford & Stone Access Group – Cllr T. Kelt

Stone Common Plot Trustees – Cllrs: Mrs J. Hood, R. Kenney & T. Adamson

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group – Cllrs: Mrs J. Hood, M. Hatton & J. Powell

SPCA Executive Committee – Cllr M. Green

Members of the Public are welcome to attend the General Purposes Committee Meeting as observers. Persons attending should enter the Council Offices through the rear entrance door (adjacent to the car park). The Council Chamber is at the top of the stairs.

Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 4 February 2020

PRESENT: Councillor R. Kenney in the Chair, and
Councillors: A. Best, J. Davies, Mrs L. Davies, Mrs K. Dawson, I. Fordham, M. Green,
M. Hatton, Mrs J. Hood, T. Kelt, P. Leason, C. Thornicroft and R. Townsend

ABSENT: Councillors: T. Adamson, K. Argyle, Mrs A. Burgess, J. Hickling and J. Powell

GP20/167 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: T. Adamson, K. Argyle, Mrs A. Burgess,
J. Hickling and J. Powell

GP20/168 Declarations of Interests

None

GP20/169 Requests for Dispensations

None

GP20/170 To receive the report of the County Councillors

County Councillor Mrs J. Hood

Councillor Mrs Hood advised the Committee that the gulley emptying programme was moving along very well. Work on the Lichfield Road is complete but there has been an issue on two estates off the Eccleshall Road. Vehicles associated with the Smart motorway have not been subject to wheel washing which is causing mud to be redistributed and gullies to refill again very quickly.

County Councillor I. Parry

Councillor Parry was not in attendance at the meeting.

GP20/171 Representations from Members of the Public

None

GP20/172 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on the 21 January (Minute Numbers GP20/150 – GP20/166), be approved as a correct record.

GP20/173 Minutes of Sub-Committees

There were no minutes for consideration.

* Items marked with an asterisk refer to reports or papers circulated with the agenda or distributed at the meeting. They are attached as an appendix to the signed copy of the Council minutes.

GP20/174 Meeting Schedule for 2020-21

The Committee considered a proposed programme of meetings and events for the period May 2020 to April 2021.

The Chairman proposed (with the support of the Chairman of the Planning Committee), that the frequency of meetings of the Town Council's Planning Committee are reduced to once monthly and held on the same evening as the General Purposes Committee. The meetings should no longer be held alongside meetings of the Sub-Committees.

The Committee acknowledged that planning consultations would be considered under delegated powers where the final date for submission of comments to Stafford Borough Council precedes the next meeting of the Planning Committee.

RESOLVED:

- a) To approve the schedule of meeting and events dates, with amendment made to the frequency of Planning Committee meetings which will be held alongside meetings of the General Purposes Committee (usually once monthly).
- b) That where the final date for submissions to Stafford Borough Council precedes the next meeting of the Planning Committee, they should be considered under existing delegated powers.
- c) That the revised arrangements in respect of the Planning Committee commence immediately and their effectiveness assessed after a period of six months.

GP20/175 Grant Aid to Local Organisations

To consider the following requests for a grant:

HOSPITAL RADIO STAFFORD

The committee considered the grant application received from Hospital Radio Stafford requesting £500 to replace aged broadcasting equipment including the computer hardware and software required to maintain the quality of day to day output for their listeners.

The application was not supported.

DOUGLAS MACMILLAN HOSPICE

The Committee considered the grant application received from Douglas MacMillan Hospice requesting £360 to pay for a local expert choir master to deliver quality music and singing sessions through a choir. It is widely recognised that music plays an important part in the lives of an increasing number of patients with dementia.

The application was not supported.

STONE & DISTRICT SWIMMING CLUB

The Committee considered the grant application received from Stone & District Swimming Club requesting £500 to assist three volunteer teachers in gaining their Swim England Level 2 qualifications.

RESOLVED: To award £500 to Stone & District Swimming Club.

GP20/176 Railway Stakeholders Conference

The Committee received information on the London Northwestern Railway Annual Stakeholder Conference on 22 January 2020 which had been attended by Councillor T. Kelt.

Councillor Kelt said the meeting had been very interesting and London Northwestern Railway had accepted responsibility for the poor services that had resulted from the rescheduling of the train timetable, introduced in May 2019.

The main change had been to replace the direct service from the Potteries Loop to London via Lichfield with a service to London via Birmingham. The new route was an hour longer as it is a longer route and stops at more stations. The problems encountered included trains running late, trains being cancelled, trains for Stone and Stoke being diverted onto the direct Stafford to Crewe line and trains passing through Stone without stopping.

A number of reasons were offered for these issues which included the new schedules having no resilience as dwell time at stopping points were too short, two platforms at Euston were lost to HS2, the rolling stock was insufficient and there had been various problems with staff levels and staff training.

Councillor Kelt advised that the timetables were changed in December 2019 resulting in a 29% improvement in services running on time and a 50% reduction in delays and cancellations. The company is looking to amend the timetable again from May 2020 in order to bring greater improvements along with staff recruitment and training.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk is asked to forward a letter to Network Rail expressing the Town Council's objection to the orange lamp posts at Stone Railway Station which are not considered to be in keeping with the conservation area.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk in consultation with Councillor Kelt and the Committee Chairman, prepares a letter to London Northwestern Railway highlighting the concerns about the train services through Stone and surrounding area.

GP20/177 Stafford Borough Parishes Forum

The Committee considered an invitation from Stafford Borough Council to attend a Parishes Forum (to introduce and outline Stafford Borough Local Plan 2020 to 2040 Issues and Options Consultation) and determine the Town Council representatives who will attend.

A copy of the email invitation had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

* Items marked with an asterisk refer to reports or papers circulated with the agenda or distributed at the meeting. They are attached as an appendix to the signed copy of the Council minutes.

RESOLVED: That Councillors: Mrs J. Hood, T. Kelt, R. Kenney and R. Townsend are nominated to represent the Town Council at the Stafford Borough Parishes Forum.

GP20/178 Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) Consultation

The Committee considered a Stafford Borough Council consultation inviting views on PSPOs to tackle issues in the county town including 'chuggers', anti-social behaviour and cyclists riding on the pedestrianised high street.

A copy of an email from Stafford Borough Council and a report on the consultation proposals had been circulated with the electronic copy of the agenda.

The Committee noted that in Paragraph 5.5 of the report there had not been any Community Protection Warning letters or fixed penalty notices issued regarding street drinking related anti social behaviour in Stone.

The Committee also noted that the statistics relating to anti social behaviour and alcohol related violence in table 5.6 of the report are for the Stafford and Stone areas combined.

RESOLVED: That before providing the Town Council's response to the Public Spaces Protection Order Consultation, the Town Clerk requests the following information:

- The meaning of 'intimidation', as referenced in paragraph 3.2 of the Cabinet report dated 7th November.
- To request a separation of the statistics (shown as a combined figure for Stafford and Stone in the table in Paragraph 5.6) for anti social behavior occurrences in Stone only.

RESOLVED: That after receiving clarification on the points above, the Town Council submits as part of its consultation response, a proposal that the area for the PSPO covering Stone town centre be extended to include:

- Old Trent Road (from Crown Street to Trent Road) over Workhouse Lane Bridge
- Mill Street
- Adies Alley

GP20/179 Ex Servicemen's Bowls Match

The Ex Servicemen's Bowls Club has suggested the bowls match with Town Councillors takes place on Monday 15 June 2020 at 6:00pm.

RESOLVED: To note the date for the Ex-Servicemen's Bowls Match and to provide the buffet as in previous years.

GP20/180 Non-Cheque Payments

RESOLVED: To note the list* of non-cheque payments made by the Council during the period 1 December to 31 December 2019.

* Items marked with an asterisk refer to reports or papers circulated with the agenda or distributed at the meeting. They are attached as an appendix to the signed copy of the Council minutes.

GP20/181 Update from Working Groups:

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

The Town Clerk updated the Committee on the proposals from Stafford Borough to consider the Town Council's Neighbourhood Plan proposals at its March Cabinet meeting with a view to a referendum in May 2020.

The Clerk also informed the Committee that Stafford Borough had proposed some minor working changes. Urban Vision had advised the Town Council to accept these changes. As a result, the Clerk is intending to agree to the changes under delegated powers.

Stone Area Parish Liaison Group

Councillor Davies advised the Committee that no meeting had taken place.

Traffic Management in Stone Working Group

Councillor Kenney advised the Committee that a meeting of the Traffic Management in Stone Working Group was planned to take place in the next week.

VE Day 2020 Commemoration Working Group

Councillor Kenney advised the Committee that a meeting was planned to take place within the next week to discuss the VE Day 2020 arrangements.

GP20/182 To receive reports from Town Councillors on attendance at meetings of local organisations and outside bodies as a representative of the Town Council

Stone ATC

Councillor Davies advised that he would be attending a meeting of Stone ATC tomorrow.

Age Concern Stone & District

Councillor Thornicroft advised the Committee that no meeting of Age Concern Stone & District had taken place.

Stafford & Stone Access Group

Councillor T. Kelt advised that a meeting of the Access Group would be taking place on 17th February.

Stone Common Plot Trustees

Councillor Kenney advised that there has been concern about the risks to cows grazing on the plot contracting Tuberculosis.

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group

It was reported that a meeting would be held on 24th February.

SPCA Executive Committee

Councillor Green advised that no meeting of the Executive Committee had taken place.

The meeting was adjourned to enable the Planning Committee meeting and confidential items on the Council Meeting agenda to take place.

The General Purposes Committee was then reconvened for the confidential items on the agenda.

* Items marked with an asterisk refer to reports or papers circulated with the agenda or distributed at the meeting. They are attached as an appendix to the signed copy of the Council minutes.

GP20/183 Exclusion of the Press and Public

To resolve, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting whilst the next items of business are discussed on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the debate

RESOLVED: To exclude the Press and Public from the next item of business.

GP20/184 Confidential Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Confidential Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on the 21 January 2020 (Minute Numbers GP20/150 and GP20/166), be approved as a correct record.

CHAIRMAN

Proposed Programme of Meetings and Events in 2020-21

The first meeting on each evening will commence at 7:00pm

| Month | First Tuesday | | Third Tuesday | | Other | |
|----------------|---------------|---|------------------|--|---------------|--------------------------------|
| May 2020 | 12th | Council – Mayor Making | 19th | General Purposes Committee Planning Committee | 8th/ 10th | VE Day |
| June 2020 | 2nd | Council General Purposes Committee Planning Committee | 16 th | Tourism & Town Promotion Sub Environment Sub Mayor's Charity | | |
| July 2020 | 7th | Council General Purposes Committee Planning Committee Richard Vernon Charity | 14 th | Estates Sub Management Sub | 11th 12th | Music Festival Civic Sunday |
| August 2020 | 4th | Council General Purposes Committee Planning Committee | 18th | Tourism & Town Promotion Sub Environment Sub | TBC | Stone by the Sea |
| September 2020 | 8th | Council General Purposes Committee Planning Committee | 22nd | Estates Sub Management Sub | 19th | Classic Car Event |
| October 2020 | 6th | Council General Purposes Committee Planning | 13th | Tourism & Town Promotion Sub Environment Sub | 16th/ 17th | Trafalgar Dinner - TBC |

| | | | | | | |
|---------------|------|---|------|---|----------------------|--|
| November 2020 | 3rd | Council General Purposes Committee Planning Committee | 10th | Estates Sub Management Sub | 8th 19th | Remembrance Sunday Christmas Lights Switch-On |
| December 2020 | 1st | Council General Purposes Committee Planning Committee | 15th | Tourism & Town Promotion Sub Environment Sub | 13th | Civic Carol Service |
| January 2021 | 5th | Planning Committee? Estates Sub Management Sub | 19th | General Purposes Committee | | |
| February 2021 | 2nd | Council General Purposes Committee Planning Committee | | | | |
| March 2021 | 2nd | Council General Purposes Committee Planning Committee | 16th | Tourism & Town Promotion Sub Environment Sub | | |
| April 2021 | 13th | Council General Purposes Committee Planning Committee | 27th | Estates Sub Management Sub | 22nd 24th 24th | Annual Public Meeting St. Georges Day - TBC Civic Dinner |

From: [forwardplanningconsultations](#)
Subject: New Stafford Borough Local Plan 2020-2040: Issues & Options stage consultation
Date: 31 January 2020 13:47:57
Attachments: [image003.png](#)
[Local Plan A4 Consultation Poster print.pdf](#)

Dear Parish Clerk,

New Stafford Borough Local Plan 2020-2040: Issues & Options stage consultation

The purpose of this letter is to invite you to respond to the New Stafford Borough Local Plan 2020-2040 – “Issues and Options” document which we are consulting on during February and March 2020. The consultation seeks views on the approach to future development of Stafford Borough over the next 20 years.

The Issues and Options document examines a range of high-level strategic options including:

- potential housing and employment land requirements, and how these might be distributed across the new settlement hierarchy;
- potential options for one or more new garden communities in the Borough;
- a range of other planning policy issues which need to be addressed through the new Local Plan, including climate change, economic development, housing provision, transport and the environment.

To view the full Issues & Options document, a short Non-Technical Summary document, and a range of evidence reports together with additional information, please visit www.staffordbc.gov.uk/new-local-plan-.

To assist Parish Councils with this consultation, a presentation on the New Local Plan “Issues and Options” document has been arranged for 6.30 pm until 8.00 pm on Monday 10 February 2020 in the Craddock Room at the Civic Centre in Stafford. This event will be open only to Parish Councillors and Parish Clerks.

In addition there will be a number of drop-in exhibitions across the Borough for all interested parties (e.g. Parish Councillors, residents, local business people) to attend in order to discuss the New Local Plan and to ask questions. These are detailed below:

| Date | Time | Venue |
|----------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Monday 24 February 2020 | 4 – 8 pm | Jubilee Room, Eccleshall Community Centre |
| Wednesday 26 February 2020 | 4 – 7 pm | Hixon Memorial Hall |
| Saturday 29 February 2020 | 12 noon to 4 pm | Stafford Library |
| Tuesday 3 March 2020 | 4 – 8 pm | Westbridge Room, Christchurch, Stone |

If you wish to comment, please submit your response using our consultation form which is available here www.staffordbc.gov.uk/new-local-plan-. Alternatively please submit by post to us at Forward Planning, Stafford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford, ST16 3AQ.

Please ensure that your comments are received by us before **12 noon on Tuesday 31 March 2020**.

Please refer to the Privacy Notice within this letter, in terms of the General Data Protection Regulations (May 2018) which sets out how we will use your personal information.

A summary of responses made to the “Issues and Options” consultation will be published in due course. Responses will be taken account of in the preparation of the “Preferred Option” consultation document later in 2020.

If you would like to know more information about the Local Plan please visit www.staffordbc.gov.uk/forwardplans. If you have any additional questions or require assistance in making a representation please do not hesitate to contact the Forward Planning team either by telephone on 01785 619000 or email forwardplanning@staffordbc.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,



Alex Yendole
Planning Policy Manager

NEW LOCAL PLAN 2020-2040: ISSUES & OPTIONS **STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL – PRIVACY NOTICE**

How we will use your details

All representations received to the Stafford Borough New Local Plan 2020-2040 Issues & Options consultation document will be included in a schedule and made publicly available once the consultation has closed.

Stafford Borough Council will consider all representations received, using them to inform the next stage of the process for the New Local Plan 2020-2040.

Comments cannot be treated as confidential. Your personal information, such as your postal and email address will not be published and signatures will be redacted, but your name and organisation will be made available. We will only use your personal information to send you information on the New Local Plan and

associated planning policy matters.

We believe you should always know what data we collect from you and how we use it, and that you should have meaningful control over both. As part of our ongoing commitment to transparency, and in relation to the new General Data Protection Regulations (May 2018), we have updated our Privacy Policy.

Stafford Borough Council are the data controller and you can find information about how we handle your personal data by visiting www.staffordbc.gov.uk/privacynotices and if you have any queries or would like to unsubscribe from receiving information then please contact forwardplanningconsultations@staffordbc.gov.uk

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From: [biodiversity](#)
Subject: PLAN FOR STAFFORD BOROUGH - Draft Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document
Date: 31 January 2020 13:40:59
Attachments: [image003.jpg](#)

Dear Parish Clerk,

PLAN FOR STAFFORD BOROUGH - Draft Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document

The purpose of this letter is to make you aware of the Draft Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document consultation being launched by Stafford Borough Council.

The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) expands upon policies in the environment chapter of the adopted Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031.

The draft SPD details Stafford Borough Council's requirements for applicants to build nature conservation features into developments, ensuring that a measurable net-gain to the Borough's biodiversity is always achieved. It guides developers through the ecological mitigation hierarchy of: Information; Avoidance; Mitigation; Compensation; and New Benefits, clearly detailing: When to Survey, What to Survey for & how Surveys should be conducted by providing a clear "plain English" step-by-step guide for working with protected and priority species and habitats which are likely to be impacted upon by their proposed developments.

This draft SPD highlights the importance that applicants protect and enhance existing nature conversation features within proposed developments, following best practice guidance and the mitigation hierarchy. On occasions where it is not possible to mitigate, the draft SPD details what Stafford Borough Council requires a developer to consider when incorporating ecological compensation (including Biodiversity Offsets) within their development scheme.

The Council are inviting comments on the Biodiversity draft SPD, with the consultation ending at **12 noon on Monday 16 March 2020**. If you wish to comment, please submit your response to biodiversity@staffordbc.gov.uk. Alternatively, please respond by post to us at Forward Planning, Stafford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford, ST16 3AQ

Please refer to the Privacy Notice within this letter, in terms of the General Data Protection Regulations (May 2018) which sets out how we will use your personal information.

Further guidance can be found by visiting the Stafford Borough Council's website at www.staffordbc.gov.uk/biodiversity-and-development-spd.

Alternatively copies of the draft Biodiversity SPD can be inspected at the Ground Floor Reception, Stafford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford, during normal office hours Monday – Thursday 08.30 – 17.00, Friday 08.30 – 16.30. Reference copies have been supplied to Public Libraries within Stafford Borough.

If you have any queries or seek further clarification on the above consultation, please contact the Forward Planning team using the following email address: biodiversity@staffordbc.gov.uk or in writing to Forward Planning, Stafford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford, ST16 3AQ.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

SIG ALEX YENDELL



Alex Yendole
Planning Policy Manager

DRAFT BIODIVERSITY SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL - PRIVACY NOTICE

How we will use your details

All representations received to the Draft Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document will be included in a schedule and made publicly available once the consultation has closed.

The Council will consider all representations received, using them to inform the next stage of the process for adopting the Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document.

Comments cannot be treated as confidential. Your personal information, such as your postal and email address will not be published and signatures will be redacted, but your name and organisation will be made available. We will only use your personal information to send you information on the Local Plan and associated planning policy matters.

We believe you should always know what data we collect from you and how we use it, and that you should have meaningful control over both. As part of our ongoing commitment to transparency, and in relation to the new General Data Protection Regulations (May 2018), we have updated our Privacy Policy.

Stafford Borough Council are the data controller and you can find information about how we handle your personal data by visiting www.staffordbc.gov.uk/privacynotices and if you have any queries or would like to unsubscribe from receiving information then please contact forwardplanningconsultations@staffordbc.gov.uk

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Biodiversity & Development Supplementary Planning Development Document 2020



Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Biodiversity and Development..... | 1 |
| Supplementary Planning Development Document | 1 |
| 2018..... | 1 |
| 1. Executive Summary | 4 |
| 2. Introduction..... | 4 |
| 3. Legislation & Policy Context | 5 |
| 4. The Importance of Biodiversity within Development..... | 6 |
| 5. Stafford Borough's Biodiversity | 7 |
| Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)..... | 8 |
| Sites of Biological Importance (SBI's) and Biodiversity Alert Sites (BAS's)..... | 8 |
| Local Nature Reserve's (LNR's) | 9 |
| Protected Species | 9 |
| Priority Habitats and Priority Species..... | 9 |
| 6. Biodiversity Information & Impact Assessments Required to Support Planning Proposals 10 | |
| 7. A Step by Step Guide to Building Biodiversity into Development..... | 11 |
| Stage A: Preparing to submit a planning application..... | 13 |
| Stage A3: Mitigation and Measures of | 14 |
| Stage A4 Compensation and Biodiversity..... | 15 |
| Compensation and Irreplaceable Nature Conservation Features | 17 |
| Translocation..... | 17 |
| Creation of Nature Conservation Features/habitats | 18 |
| Commuted Sums..... | 19 |
| Stage A5: Conservation and Enhancement/New Benefits | 19 |
| Stage B: Submitting a Planning Application | 20 |
| Stage C: Planning Permission Granted: the Construction Phase | 20 |
| Stage D: Monitoring and Future Management | 21 |
| Appendix 1 Internet hyperlink list..... | 22 |
| Appendix 2: Biodiversity Opportunities Map | 23 |
| Appendix 3: Cannock Chase Map of Zones | 24 |
| Appendix 4: Designated Biodiversity Sites..... | 25 |
| Appendix 5: Maps of designated sites | 27 |
| Appendix 6: Sites of Biological Interest | 51 |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Appendix 7: Local Plan Policies..... | 55 |
|--------------------------------------|----|

1. Executive Summary

This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) expands upon policies of the Stafford Borough Local Plan Strategy.

The SPD guides developers through the ecological mitigation hierarchy of: Information; Avoidance; Mitigation; Compensation; and New Benefits, clearly detailing:

- When to Survey, What to Survey for,
- & how Surveys should be conducted,

It provides developers with a clear “plain English” step-by-step guide for working with protected and priority species and habitats which are likely to be impacted upon by their proposed developments. The SPD details Stafford Borough Council’s requirements for applicants to build nature conservation features into developments, ensuring that a measurable net-gain to the Borough’s biodiversity is always achieved.

This SPD highlights the importance that applicants protect and enhance existing nature conservation features within proposed developments, following best practice guidance and the mitigation hierarchy. On occasions where it is not possible the SPD details what Stafford Borough Council requires a developer to consider when incorporating ecological compensation (including Biodiversity Offsets) within their development scheme.

The SPD also provides developers with a list of useful links and contacts where further information on all the issues discussed can be found (Appendix 1).

2. Introduction

Biodiversity can be simply defined as the ‘variety of life on earth’. This (SPD) forms part of the Stafford Borough’s Local Plan and expands on policies that ensure biodiversity is adequately protected and enhanced throughout the development process. The SPD provides additional information on how these policies will be implemented and provides guidance on biodiversity and nature conservation for development applicants concerned with the conservation of biodiversity in development.

The aim of this guidance is to provide step-by-step advice throughout the planning process and to supplement the policies within the Natural Environment chapter of the current Stafford Borough Local Plan which provides a framework for development in the Borough.

This document explains what Stafford Borough Council expects to be considered with any planning application and the detailed information that needs to be submitted.

Included in this SPD is a list of internet links to other documents and guidance which may be of help to an applicant (Appendix 1). These documents are often specific to one habitat type or species, or to a particular type of development’s impact on biodiversity.

Many of these documents and the methodologies they refer to are in a state of constant review and can be expected to be amended and updated periodically. Only the most recent version of any document should be referred to.

3. Legislation & Policy Context

There is a wide variety of legislation and policy provision relating to biodiversity conservation ranging from international to local level. The key legislation, policies and strategies includes:

- **The Conservation (Natural Habitats etc) Regulations 1994 (as amended 2010);** often referred to as the habitat regulations. They are the mechanism through which the EU Habitats and Species Directive is implemented in the UK.
- **The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended 2010);** the principal act relating to the protection of wildlife in Great Britain. Species listed for protection are in Schedules 1, 5 and 8. The Protection of Badgers Act 1992; an act that brings together all legislation that is specific to badgers with the exception of their inclusion in Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- **Natural Environment And Rural Communities Act 2006** – Stafford Borough Council has a statutory duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 to have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of its functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.
- **The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000**
- **National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949**
- **The Environment Act 1990**
- **The Hedgerow Regulations 1997**
- **The National Planning Policy Framework 2018** - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- **Governments Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services**
- **Government circular 06/2005**
- **UK Biodiversity Action Plan**
- **West Midlands Biodiversity Pledge Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan**
- **Stafford Borough Council Biodiversity Strategy**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) specifically states that Authorities should:

“Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.” (Chapter 15, para 171, NPPF 2018)

And:

“To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and
- b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats,

ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

(Chapter 15, para 174, NPPF 2018)

Nature conservation is regarded as a key test of sustainable development. The local planning process addresses this duty by the inclusion of a number of nature conservation policies in local planning documents. These include:

- Policy N4: The Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure
- Policy N5: Sites of European, National and Local Nature Conservation Importance
- Policy N6 Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Policy N7 Cannock Chase AONB
- Policy N8 Landscape Character

Policy N4: The Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure explicitly states that:

“Any new development where damage to the natural environment is unavoidable must include measures to mitigate and / or compensate such impacts, through the establishment of replacement habitats or features, including appropriate site management regimes.” (Policy N4: The Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure, criterion f, Local Plan 2014)

See Appendix 5 for all Local Plan policies.

4. The Importance of Biodiversity within Development

Any development has the potential to impact (both negatively and positively) on local biodiversity through its effects on nature conservation features.

Within this document the term “Nature conservation features” refers to:

- Species (both plant and animal) and their habitats (including feeding, resting and breeding areas)
- Natural and Historic Landscapes
- Semi natural elements of the landscape with particular cultural or historical significance; and
- Features which provide links or stepping stones from one habitat to another.

Nature conservation features can be defined as having dual functions of contributing to local biodiversity and providing opportunities for people to experience and benefit from them. The benefits to local people provided by nature conservation features can be far ranging. They include valuable ecosystem services such as mitigating the damaging effects of air pollution and climate change, as well as aesthetic and amenity benefits.

Developments have the potential to impact upon nature conservation features both within the boundaries of the development as well sites adjacent and in certain circumstances a significant distance away. As part of the development process these impacts need to be assessed and (if found to be negative) avoided, mitigated or as a last resort compensated for.

Nature conservation features can vary greatly from site to site in both appearance and size.

Some features are obvious to identify and the impact of a development upon them equally obvious: the destruction through development of mature gardens or large areas of habitat, the removal of hedgerow, the removal of mature trees, destruction of badger setts within the development area etc. However, other nature conservation features are cryptic and can often be overlooked: bat roost under raised roof tiles and within roof voids, Great Crested Newt breeding pools in water bodies that dry out for part of the year etc.

Developments which take into account the role and value of biodiversity can support economic diversification and contribute to delivering high quality environments throughout the Borough's (Policy E1: Local Economy). Developments should seek to minimise fragmentation of existing habitats (Policy N4); incorporate beneficial nature conservation features; and must deliver a net gain for Biodiversity.

5. Stafford Borough's Biodiversity

Stafford Borough supports a variety of wildlife rich priority habitats. These priority habitats include heathland, ancient semi-natural woodland and semi-improved grasslands, along with rivers and ponds which support a wide range of flora and fauna including many different mammals, birds, insects and plants. A list of Action Plans are identified in the SBC Biodiversity Strategy and most updated version of the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan (Appendix 1).

International and European Sites (i.e. Natura 2000 site)

The Natura 2000 network consists of sites that are of exceptional importance for the protection of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species within the European Community. These sites comprise of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and include Ramsar sites of international importance for wetland habitats.

In Stafford Borough there are four SACs and three Ramsar sites and may need to be taken into consideration in some planning applications. These are:

- Cannock Chase SAC
- Pasturefields SAC
- Motte Meadows SAC
- Chartley Moss Ramsar / SAC
- Cop Mere Ramsar
- Aqualate Mere Ramsar

These sites are of international importance for nature conservation and are strictly protected from damaging activities.

It is possible for a development to have a negative impact on a SAC whilst being a significant distance from it. For Cannock Chase SAC, a map of Zones are included (Appendix 3) to help to identify if a development would be required to consider its potential impact on the SAC. Where there is a potential impact for Cannock Chase SAC, policy N6 should be referred to.

Methods of calculating the potential impact a development could have on Cannock Chase SAC and mitigation are covered in greater detail in:

Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation Guidance to Mitigate the Impact of New Residential Development (Appendix 3)

Certain developments have the potential to impact upon Natura 2000 sites which are some distance from the Borough's boundary via impacting air quality, hydrology etc. Where there is a possibility of this occurring the applicant must recognise these impacts within their application and suggest appropriate methods of avoidance of mitigation which can be incorporated into the development scheme.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

There are currently 16 statutory SSSI's in the Borough which can be found in the Local Plan. They are designated by Natural England. In addition to the SAC and Ramsar sites already listed there are:

- Allimore Green SSSI
- Baswich Meadows SSSI
- Burnt Meadow SSSI
- Doley Common SSSI
- Doxey Marshes SSSI
- Kings & Hargreaves Wood SSSI
- Loynton Moss SSSI
- Milford Quarry SSSI
- Rawbones Meadow SSSI
- Stafford Brooks SSSI

These sites are considered to be of national importance for nature conservation and are protected from damaging activities.

It is possible for a development to have a negative impact on a SSSI whilst being a significant distance from it. Please consult the SSSI location map (Appendix map 3) for the location of these sites within the Borough. If a development is near to a SSSI, Natural England's Risk Impact Zone GIS System should be consulted.

Sites of Biological Importance (SBI's) and Biodiversity Alert Sites (BAS's)

These sites are important for nature conservation at the county or Borough's level and represent habitats of uncommon quality which are often difficult to recreate. Many support UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats and species. These sites are not statutorily protected, but are a material consideration in the planning process.

SBI's and BAS's in the Borough's generally fall into the following categories:

- Ancient semi natural woodland and pasture woodland
- Hedgerows
- Grasslands, both semi and unimproved
- Heathland
- Wetland and open water
- Sites that support priority species as defined by the UKBAP and SBAP

There are currently 173 SBI's within Stafford Borough; however the total number of sites changes periodically according to site survey results supplied to Staffordshire Wildlife Sites Partnership by the Wildlife Trust. Up to date information on these sites and their boundaries is then held by Staffordshire Ecological Record on behalf of the Council (Appendix 1).

Local Nature Reserve's (LNR's)

LNR's are statutory protected sites designated under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. A LNR designation demonstrates a commitment by the local authority to manage land for biodiversity, protect it from inappropriate development and provide opportunities for local people to enjoy wildlife.

There are seven local nature reserves within Stafford Borough.

- Ferndown LNR
- Barlaston & Rough Close LNR
- Goodall Meadow LNR
- Southern Meadow LNR
- Astonfields LNR
- Kingston Pool Covert LNR
- Kingsmead Marsh LNR

Protected Species

Stafford Borough contains a wide variety of species which are defined by and receive protection under domestic or European legislation. The protection could be partial (prohibiting sale, for example) or full, in which case disturbance, killing or injuring of just one of these species, or interfering with its habitat could constitute a criminal offence.

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The presence of a protected species is a material consideration when determining a planning application. Particular protected species that have been encountered within Stafford Borough include:

- bats
- birds
- great crested newts
- white clawed crayfish
- water voles
- otters
- badgers
- invertebrates
- reptiles
- plant species

Priority Habitats and Priority Species

Priority species and priority habitats are those that have been identified as being the most

threatened and requiring conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP). The UK BAP priority list is produced by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and currently contains 1150 species, and 65 habitats (Appendix 1). These priority habitats and species are listed on the Section 41 list of the National Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and are considered to be Species of Principle Importance for the conservation of biodiversity. A proposed development's impact on any of the species or habitats there listed is therefore a material consideration in the determination of an application.

Additionally, the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan identifies those habitats of importance for the county and includes plans for their conservation and management. Impacts on any of these priority habitats, whether within a locally designated site or not (i.e. non-protected sites), is also a material consideration in the planning process.

6. Biodiversity Information & Impact Assessments Required to Support Planning Proposals

Stafford Borough Council advises all applicants to enter pre-application discussions. Such discussions may establish the potential impact of a development; helping to outline the scope of surveys and assessments required to support an application.

Where there is potential for a proposed development to cause harm to internationally, nationally or locally designated sites, protected or priority species or habitats, then the applicant shall undertake appropriate surveys and assessment to a nationally recognised standard prior to the submission of a planning proposal (see Natural England Standing Advice on protected species survey requirements for more details, Appendix 1).

The information gained from the site survey and assessment should be up-to-date (i.e. less than two years since the survey was conducted) and sufficient to allow the impact of the development to be appropriately assessed.

The likelihood that a nature conservation feature will be affected by development proposals should be established before a planning application is submitted. For further guidance to assess the likelihood of a nature conservation feature being affected by a development proposal see the Natural England's Standing Advice (Appendix 1).

Failure to provide accurate information in relation to biodiversity is a reason to refuse the registration of a planning application or will result in its subsequent refusal when considered against policy.

The advance planning of ecological works should always be considered early in a project. Some developments may require the collation of ecological data over an extended period of time in order to present the most suitable scheme of mitigation.

The provision of mitigation strategies and compensatory habitats are likely to be required in advance of a development project. This ensures that any newly created habitat and/or nature conservation feature is of a suitable standard prior to the loss of the existing habitat or feature. This then allows for the safe relocation of protected species and/or ensures that there is no net-loss to biodiversity caused by the development.

All development in Stafford Borough is required to deliver a net gain for biodiversity. These net gains will have to be demonstrated when a planning application is submitted.

7. A Step by Step Guide to Building Biodiversity into Development

By adopting the approach summarised in Table 1, applications are likely to progress expediently in relation to ecology and will comply with domestic and European legislation and demonstrate best practice. Each stage is expanded in greater detail after the table.

Stage A1: Nature Conservation Features Check

Are existing nature conservation features likely to be affected by the development? (refer to Planning Application Validation: Stafford Borough Council Development Management Planning Application Validation Guidance and Local Validation Criteria and Natural England's Standing Advice).

Yes

Stage A2: Protected/priority species/habitat surveys

All surveys must be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist (holding appropriate licences) and at an appropriate time of year. The applicant's ecologist must take into account any protected/priority species/habitats as well as any other nature conservation features within the development site and wider area.

Yes

Stage A3: Mitigation

Working with the ecologist, ensure the layout and design of the development avoids wherever possible and minimises harm to biodiversity identified in A1 and A2. At this stage ensure less obvious impacts are considered, such as effects outside the development boundary, activities during the construction phase, pipes and underground cables, shading and light pollution. Applications may be delayed or refused if suitable measures of avoidance and mitigation are not demonstrated.

Yes

Stage A4: Compensation and Biodiversity Offsetting

If damage to protected/priority species and/or habitats and nature conservation features cannot be avoided entirely, it may be possible to compensate for these residual effects. Applications which do not compensate for damage are likely to be deemed not in accordance with policy and refused

Yes

Stage A5: Conservation and Enhancement/New Benefits

Development will only be permitted where it delivers a net gain for biodiversity (see local policy NR3). These net gains will have to be demonstrated when a planning application is submitted.

Yes

Stage B: Submitting a planning application

Ensure the application includes all relevant protected/priority species/habitat surveys; appropriate measures of avoidance and mitigation and compensation strategies.

Yes

Stage C: Planner permission granted – Construction Phase

Ensure good practice is followed during construction

Yes

Stage D: Monitoring and future Management

Ensure adequate provision is made for ongoing conservation management

No

Stage A: Preparing to submit a planning application.

Stage A1 Nature Conservation Features Check

The likelihood of a proposed development negatively impacting upon a protected or priority species and/or habitat and/or other nature conservation can be understood by referring to the checklists and flow charts within both Natural England's Standing Advice and Stafford Borough Council Development Management Planning Application Validation Guidance and Local Validation Criteria (Appendix 1).

Natural England's Standing Advice and Stafford Borough Council Development Management Planning Application Validation Guidance and Local Validation Criteria set out the level of biodiversity information required by the local authority to validate a planning application.

If after consulting the aforementioned documents it appears likely that protected/priority species/habitats and/or other nature conservation features may be affected by the proposed development then ecological surveys will be required to be conducted and their results submitted to the authority. Applicants are welcome to contact the council's in house Ecology Team at any point for guidance regarding the different ecological surveys they may need to be conducted prior to submitting an application and the minimum required survey effort.

Attempts to exclude or remove nature conservation features could constitute a criminal offence and should never be undertaken.

The majority of developments in the Stafford Borough have no significant effect on existing nature conservation features. However, to encourage and support our ecological networks and improve wildlife across the Borough's every development (even ones which cause no impact) must provide a net-gain to biodiversity. This could be as simple as planting new trees or erecting a bird box.

Stage A2 – Protected/Priority species and Habitat Surveys

Applicants are advised to refer to Stafford Borough Council Development Management Planning Application Validation Guidance and Local Validation Criteria (Appendix 1), as well as Natural England's Standing Advice for required survey standards (Appendix 1).

Prior to commissioning habitat or protected species surveys, applicants are advised to contact the Ecology Team should they have any doubt about the methodology or the standard of ecological surveys required as part of their application.

Surveys must be carried out by suitably qualified, licensed and experienced ecologists.

Certain protected species (i.e. bats, great crested newts) can only be handled or trapped by personnel holding government licenses; hence it is important to ensure that the appointed ecologist is qualified in those ecological fields that require surveys.

To allow for applications to progress expediently it is recommended that during the survey process all habitats are compared against the Guidelines for the selection of Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) in Staffordshire (Appendix 1); this is especially so if the application is for a major development. If any habitats are found to be of SBI quality (as stated in the guidelines) they should be clearly described as part of the habitat survey.

All required ecological surveys must be in the context of the development proposal and methods, limitations of survey (including evidence where appropriate), results and conclusions must be compiled and submitted as part of a planning application.

It is important to note that even should an ecological survey conclude that no protected or priority species are present on the application site, or that the development proposed will not cause habitat loss or have negative effect on biodiversity it is still required that the survey be submitted in full as part of the planning application.

Sharing Data

Survey data submitted with planning applications should also be provided to the Staffordshire Ecological Record (SER) to ensure that knowledge of the sites nature conservation features is not lost. To submit your information please email info@staffs-ecology.org.uk.

Stage A3: Mitigation and Measures of Avoidance

Mitigation consists of measures taken to avoid or reduce negative impacts on species or habitats. Measures may include: locating a development and its working areas and access routes away from areas of high ecological interest, fencing-off sensitive areas during a construction period, or timing works to avoid sensitive periods.

Where, development would result in significant harm to a protected/priority species/habitat appropriate planning conditions or obligations will be required to adequately mitigate and/or compensate for the harm.

Some forms of mitigation may be relatively simple such as avoiding the bird breeding season whilst undertaking vegetation clearance. Other requirements such as those associated with avoiding harm to bats during building works at a known bat roost may be more complex. Such works may require the input of a licensed ecologist to oversee the work.

The findings of ecological surveys should be taken into careful consideration at the earliest design stage of a development. Possible conflicts can be addressed by having the information available at the right stage and by taking an imaginative approach to site design to avoid harm, informed by advice from an ecologist as part of the design team. The objective should be to mitigate potentially negative impacts and integrate existing biodiversity into the scheme. Impacts on existing nature conservation features should be avoided wherever possible and any residual impacts should be minimised.

In assessing the potential impact of a proposal on biodiversity, applicants should ensure that all stages of the development are considered. Frequently the disturbed area of the development site during construction is greater than that normally shown on application drawings. Impacts may also extend beyond the site boundary long after construction has completed, for example due to shading, increased light pollution or predation by domestic pets. Damaging impacts on the integrity of networks of habitat through fragmentation should also be considered.

Applicants should ensure that they take account of the potential effects of a development on all the life stages of protected/priority species, taking account of the following essential

requirements:

- Food Water Shelter
- Reproduction
- Dispersal

For example, preserving a Great Crested Newt breeding pond within a development would not be sufficient to conserve the species if its terrestrial habitats (which provide the Great Crested Newts with both shelter and food) are destroyed.

The potential habitat fragmentation and isolation effects of a development on the wider environment should be considered. For example, removing a hedgerow or line of trees could sever a bat feeding route with consequential effects on a breeding colony, even if the colony itself is preserved. Developers should therefore consider the use of appropriate plant species (in relation to planting and landscaping schemes), the creation of buffer zones, stepping stone habitats and wildlife corridors to ensure the development is integrated into the wider environment.

Applicants should also consider that some potential effects will be acute and easily detectable, while others may be long term and may only become apparent some months or years after construction is complete. Damaging impacts on nature conservation features may be identified which cannot be avoided without jeopardising the viability of the development. These impacts should be clearly described and a full explanation given, as a part of both outline and full planning applications.

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Stage A4 Compensation and Biodiversity Offsetting

Compensation is the process of providing species or habitat benefits specifically to make up for the loss of, or permanent damage to, biodiversity through the provision of replacement habitats. Any replacement habitat should be of same or greater biodiversity value and be guided by the Stafford Biodiversity Opportunity Map.

Compensation shall be considered as the last resort, with preference always given to protection in entirety followed by appropriate mitigation. Where the benefits of a proposal are demonstrated to clearly outweigh the importance of biodiversity conservation, conditions will be imposed and obligations negotiated with the aim of securing compensatory habitat

creation to prevent biodiversity loss.

Compensation should not be regarded as an alternative to avoidance and should only be considered if avoidance is unachievable. The integrity of a nature conservation site as a whole can be adversely effected by a damaging development affecting a proportion of it, even if compensatory measures are carried out elsewhere. Furthermore there is often a degree of uncertainty over whether compensatory habitats/features will achieve the value of the original nature conservation feature to be lost, at least within a reasonable period of time. Therefore proposals involving compensatory measures must demonstrate why mitigation is not possible to achieve. Alternative solutions should be described and discussed in the planning application. For compensation to be acceptable, the importance of the development must also clearly outweigh the harm caused.

Some compensatory measures can be relatively inexpensive in the scheme of a development, such as the provision of new swift nest sites. Other measures may require the construction of entirely new features, such as a bat roost building and may require planning consent in their own right.

The council requires all losses/gains to the biodiversity value occurring to a site through development to be measured. Where habitat is to be lost its value must first be calculated to ensure any compensatory habitat creation is of greater value. Delivering biodiversity compensation in a measurable way is essential to demonstrating that a net-gain to biodiversity value is likely to be achieved by a development. Where measurable compensation is delivered beyond the boundaries (red and blue lines) of an application it is termed 'biodiversity offsetting'.

Before compensation or biodiversity offsetting can occur the value of the habitat to be lost must be calculated (Appendix 1) Calculating biodiversity units comprises of 7 distinct steps:

- **Step 1** – Apply the 'avoid, mitigate, compensate' hierarchy to understand the residual biodiversity loss.
- **Step 2** – Map the habitat type(s) impacted by your development
- **Step 3** – Assess the baseline condition of each habitat
- **Step 4** – Combine the habitat type and condition weighting to calculate an overall number of biodiversity units.
- **Step 5** – Work out if you have particular requirements for the type of offset you will need to provide
- **Step 6** – Managing hedgerows (only applicable if hedgerows are to be lost) Step 7: Decide how you want to provide compensation
- **Step 7** - Decide how you want to provide compensation

All applicants entering compensation stage must engage with the local authority at this time if they have not already done so.

On site compensation and biodiversity offsetting schemes must produce habitats of measurably greater biodiversity value than will be lost through the development. Stafford Borough Council considers the minimum increased amount or 'replacement percentage' to be set at 20% above the biodiversity unit value of the habitats lost. Hence habitats to be lost valued at 10 biodiversity units, must be compensated for by the creation of habitats valued in

total at no less than 12 biodiversity units. This is the minimum that would be accepted and the replacement percentage may be increased if for example: ecological networks have to be maintained or to avoid fragmentation of important existing habitats.

To assist developers with the offsetting scheme a Biodiversity Map has been created. The habitat type of greatest desire for each scheme will depend on the location of the original development within the Stafford Biodiversity Opportunity Maps. To further assist developers, Stafford Borough Council aim to produce a Biodiversity Offsetting Strategy. This Strategy, when complete, will establish a hierarchy of preference as to the compensatory habitats desired to be created through an offsetting scheme.

Compensation and Irreplaceable Nature Conservation Features

It is not practically possible to compensate for the loss of some nature conservation features. Applications involving proposals to compensate for loss or damage to the following nature conservation features will be refused unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location has been demonstrated to outweigh their loss:

- ancient woodland, veteran trees ancient hedgerows
- Compensation Options

Compensation must be measurable and can take the form of:

- The translocation of existing nature conservation features to:
 - a new location within the development site, or (if this is not possible)
 - a new location within the Stafford Borough.
- The creation of new nature conservation features/habitats within the development site to replace those lost or damaged.
- The creation of new nature conservation features/habitats Stafford Borough to replace those lost or damaged i.e. biodiversity offsetting scheme.
- A commuted sum paid to the council to improve or create equivalent nature conservation features elsewhere in the Stafford Borough.

Development applications involving compensation proposals should consider the above options in that order, for example only including proposals to create nature conservation features (as part of a compensation package) if translocation is not possible.

If it is not possible to translocate or create nature conservation features within the development site as part of compensation, an applicant may choose to carry out equivalent measures on land elsewhere in the Stafford Borough.

Translocation

Both species and habitats can be translocated. Where habitats are translocated it is considered to be a form of compensation, re-using existing vegetation and soils to create a new habitat elsewhere. It is considered very likely that translocated habitats will lose a portion of their biodiversity value through the translocation process; hence additional habitat creation should be included in a development scheme to adequately account for this reduction in biodiversity value.

If legally protected species are involved, in some cases translocation may be the only compensation option available. As part of a submitted planning application, translocation

proposals must be described in detail. To be acceptable to the local planning authority, proposals must include descriptions of:

- The location, size and physical characteristics of the donor and receptor sites and presented on site plans
- The technique to be used to collect and move the feature, including timing
- The equipment to be used
- The personnel involved
- Any habitat management of the donor and receptor areas which may be required before and after the proposed translocation.
- Future ecological monitoring of the habitat translocation.

Guidance on the appropriateness of suitable translocation sites should be sought from the Council's Ecology Team prior to the application being submitted.

Creation of Nature Conservation Features/habitats

The creation of habitats as part of a compensation package must adhere to best practice guidance and be measurable and follow the principles of biodiversity offsetting in calculating compensation. The Authority suggests the use of the Environment Bank Impact calculator to calculate habitat value.

As part of a submitted planning application, habitat creation proposals must be described in detail. To be acceptable to the local planning authority, the following general principles should be applied to development schemes involving habitat creation and proposals must include descriptions of:

- The location, size and physical characteristics of the receptor sites and presented on site plans
- Details of the conservation features to be created and identified on site plans The technique to be used to create the feature, including timing
- The equipment to be used
- The personnel involved
- Any habitat management proposed for the creation of the nature conservation feature/habitat which may be required before creation and ongoing
- Future ecological monitoring of the habitat translocation.

All details regarding the creation of areas of compensatory habitat as part of a development scheme should be presented to the local authority as part of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) or Habitat Management Plan (HMP) as appropriate.

To achieve sustainable development, the compensation measures for species and habitats in the Stafford Borough should include ongoing habitat management measures to further increase the ecological value of the site and include subsequent ecological monitoring to demonstrate success. Where ecological monitoring details a project is failing, contingency measures must be included to rectify this.

The following translocation or habitat creation proposals are therefore unlikely to be acceptable:

- Translocation of habitats or species to sites outside of the Borough's boundary,

Creation of habitats outside the Borough's boundary,

- Translocation of species to sites which already support good populations of the same species, or when habitat enhancement to accommodate the increased population size cannot be reasonably achieved,
- Where the translocated species may have a detrimental impact on other species of conservation importance at the proposed donor site.

Commuted Sums

As previously detailed, in certain circumstances it may not be possible for a developer to either mitigate or compensate for the negative impact of their development on nature conservation features within the development site or wider Stafford Borough; however the development may still be justified. In such circumstances a biodiversity offset is required. Applicants are encouraged to locate and bring forward sites on which their biodiversity offset can occur. The types of habitats to be created or enhanced upon these sites should be reflective of the desired habitat for the sites location as depicted by the Stafford Borough Opportunity Map (Appendix Map 2) as well as any further requirements detailed in the future Stafford Borough Biodiversity Offsetting Strategy.

The appropriateness of all "developer led" biodiversity offsetting schemes shall be assessed by the Ecology Team. Should the scheme be deemed as inappropriate (i.e. the wrong habitat in the wrong location; considered unlikely to succeed etc.), then the scheme will need to be amended or a biodiversity offsetting scheme on an alternative site put forward.

If an applicant is unable to locate and secure an appropriate site on which an approved biodiversity offsetting scheme can be created then this will often necessitate a financial payment to the council via a planning obligation, secured through a S.106 Agreement.

The purpose of such a payment would be to pay for the council to secure adequate compensatory measures and to ensure the sustainable development objectives of local planning policy are achieved. In each instance the required commuted sum is determined by the Ecology Team via a bespoke calculation which accounts for the real costs of habitat creation/enhancement, the costs of ongoing management over a period of 25 years and a management fee to provide the offset. A brokerage fee may also be required.

Stage A5: Conservation and Enhancement/New Benefits

Planning policy requires development to protect where possible and enhance nature conservation features; local planning authorities are expected to actively pursue and maximise such improvements. All development in Stafford Borough is required to deliver a net gain for biodiversity. This must be demonstrated when a planning application is submitted.

Developments should enhance, restore or add to biodiversity. Development can incorporate a range of ecological enhancements from bird nesting and bat roosting opportunities, to sustainable urban drainage systems and green roofs through to providing major new areas of biodiversity habitat alongside development. The type of ecological enhancements and measures introduced must be guided by Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan and the Stafford Borough Biodiversity Opportunity Map (Appendix Map 2). All development must clearly distinguish between the new nature conservation benefits offered and any existing features retained or compensated for. For major planning developments measurable net

gains will need to be demonstrated.

Applicants should ensure that new biodiversity benefits are fully integrated through the development scheme, and not fragmented into isolated pockets or restricted to peripheral parts of the development site. Applicants must also take account of the wider landscape and ecological context of the development to ensure opportunities to promote the connectivity of habitats are maximised (as detailed in policy N4 and N5).

The emerging Stafford Borough Council Biodiversity Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plan will also include targets for biodiversity enhancements in new developments and applicants should refer to this for guidance.

Applicants must provide details of proposed biodiversity enhancements and net gains, informed by expert advice, with planning applications. The council may attach planning conditions to ensure that biodiversity enhancements are implemented.

Stage B: Submitting a Planning Application

By the time a planning application is ready for submission the applicant must be able to provide to the authority:

1. All protected/priority species/habitat surveys highlighted as required by Natural England's standing advice and Stafford Borough Council Development Management Planning Application Validation Guidance and Local Validation Criteria;
2. A detailed mitigation and or compensation scheme guided by the results of previously undertaken surveys (where applicable);
3. And be able to demonstrate a net benefit to biodiversity will be delivered by the application.

Submission of these documents will greatly assist in the speedy arrival of a decision on your planning application.

Stage C: Planning Permission Granted: the Construction Phase

During construction it is essential that steps are taken to ensure all personnel understand the nature conservation objectives of the development. On developments which include a mitigation strategy; ensuring that appropriate steps are taken to safe-guard nature conservation features and that all individuals working on the development are suitably informed will likely be a condition of planning approval. Temporary signage of sensitive areas is advisable and regular checks of the nature conservation features and any protective fencing should be carried out. Nature conservation reports should describe the measures which will be taken to ensure existing nature conservation features are conserved during the construction phase.

Such reports should also address:

- Identification of and contact details for responsible personnel.
- Timing of works to minimise the risk of disturbance to protected and other species.
- Procedures for dealing with unexpected discoveries, such as previously undetected protected species or injured wildlife. If a protected species is found, even after planning permission has been granted, the developer should stop work immediately

and contact Natural England for further advice. Planning permission being granted does not in any way relinquish or diminish the applicant's legal responsibilities when dealing with any protected species (National or European), (Appendix 1).

Stage D: Monitoring and Future Management

Planning applications should include costed maintenance specifications and monitoring proposals for each of the nature conservation features addressed and describe how these aspects would be implemented. This could include a description of the resources required, the personnel involved and a procedure for ensuring that any new owner/occupiers are made aware of their responsibilities.

Appendix 1 Internet hyperlink list

Internet hyperlinks list to further information and relevant documents to assist applications

Stafford Borough Council Development Management Planning Application Validation Guidance and Local Validation Criteria
https://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/cme/DocMan1/planning/Validation_Guidance_and_Local_Validation_Criteria.pdf

British Standard Institute- Biodiversity- Code of practice for planning and development (please note that this document requires purchasing prior to viewing)
<http://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=000000000030258704>

Natural England Standing Advice (links to all UK protected species in development guidance, i.e. bats, birds, great crested newts, white clawed crayfish, water voles, otters, badgers, invertebrates, reptiles):
www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/planningdevelopment/spatialplanning/standingadvice/

Natural England Technical Information Note 51, Bats and Onshore Wind Turbines (interim guidance) <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/35010>

Natural England Technical Information Note 69, Assessing the Effects of Onshore Wind Farms on Birds <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/23024>

DEFRA Biodiversity Offsetting Pilot Scheme Guidance
www.defra.gov.uk/publications/files/pb13743-bio-guide-developers.pdf

& <http://archive.defra.gov.uk/environment/biodiversity/offsetting/documents/1204-bio-offset-pilot-appendix.pdf>

Bat Conservation Trust; Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines 2012
www.bats.org.uk/pages/batsurveyguide.html

Guidelines for the selection of Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) in Staffordshire
www.sbap.org.uk

Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation, Interim Guidance to Mitigate the Impact of New Residential Development www.sstaffs.gov.uk

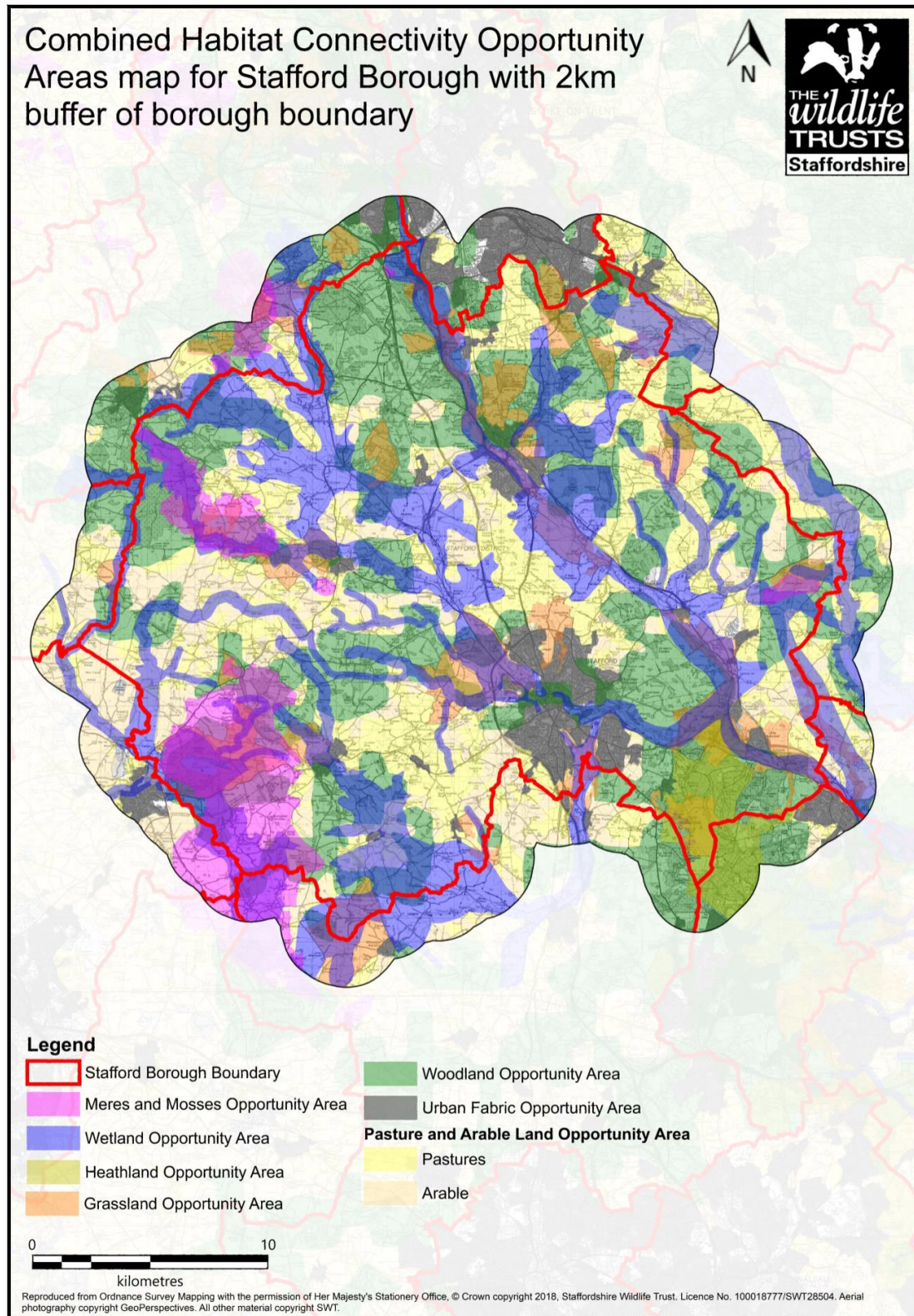
Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan www.sbap.org.uk/

Staffordshire Ecological Record www.staffs-ecology.org.uk

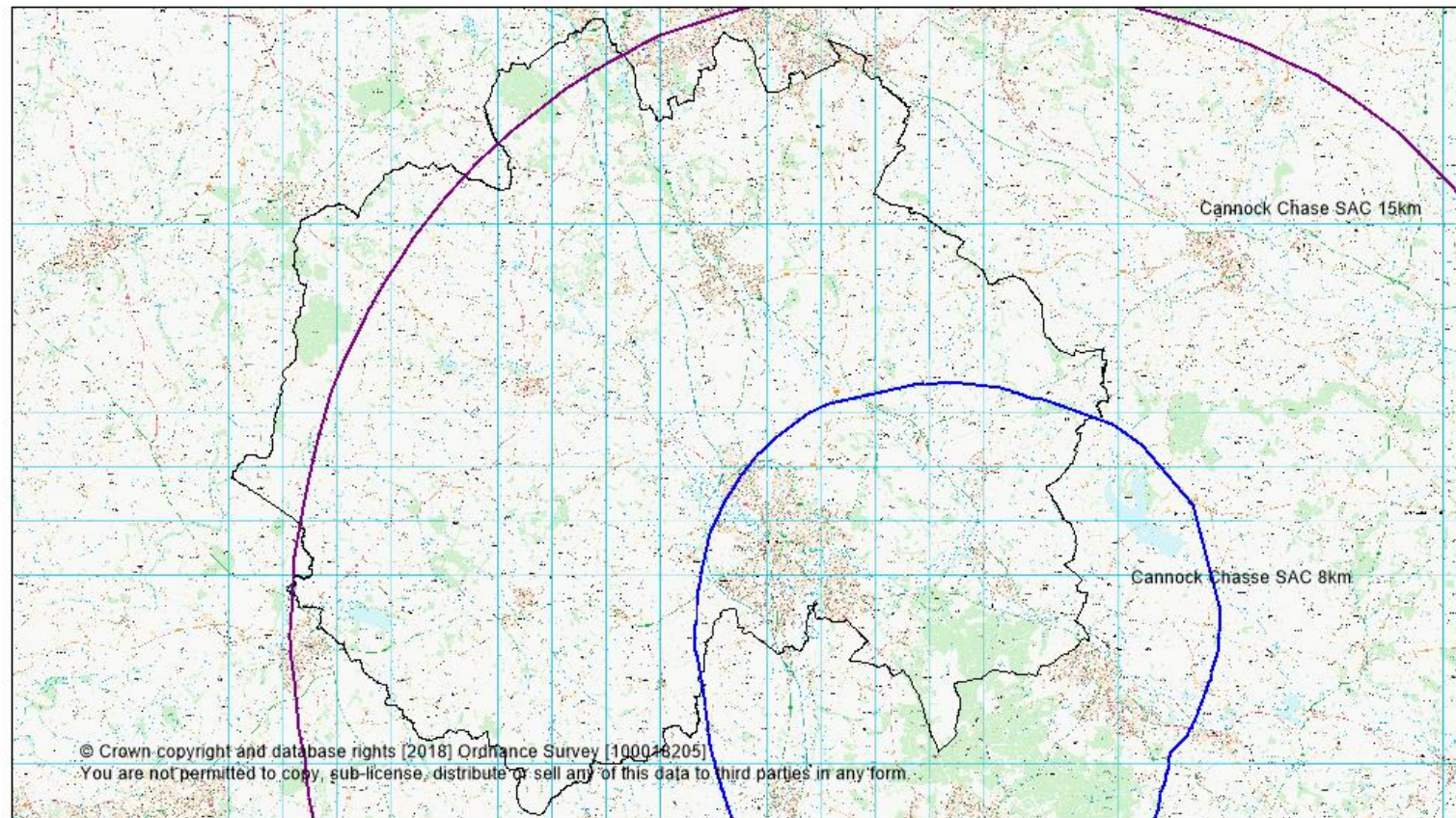
Joint Nature Conservation Committee (providing lists for all current UK BAP species and UK BAP habitats) www.jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5705

Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership
<http://www.cannock-chase.co.uk/>

Appendix 2: Nature Recovery Network Map



Appendix 3: Cannock Chase Map of Zones



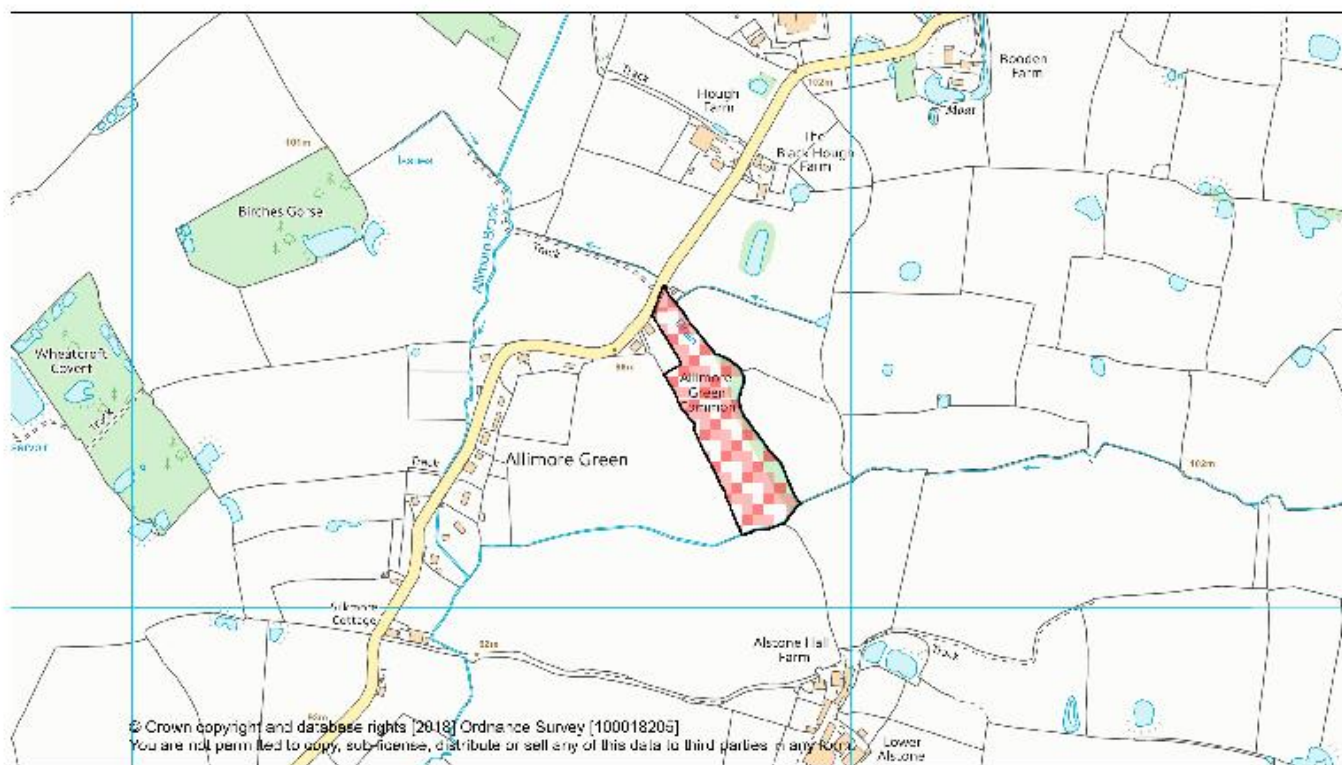
Appendix 4: Designated Biodiversity Sites

| Site Name | Description | Designation | Size (ha) | Accessibility |
|---|--|-------------------|----------------------|---|
| Allimore Green Common | Wet pasture | SSSI | 2.7 | Public |
| Aqualate Mere | Largest natural lake in the West Midlands | SSSI, NNR, RAMSAR | 72 | Public |
| Astonfields Balancing Lakes | Created for flood defence but has evolved over the years to provide a number of habitats | LNR | 4 | Public |
| Barlaston and Rough Close Common | Dry heath and dry acid grassland, abundant with heather, bilberry and bell heather | LNR | 14.9 | Public |
| Baswich Meadows | Unimproved, low-lying permanent pasture. | SSSI | 13.1 | Private |
| Burnt Wood | Semi-natural woodland, with remnants of ancient broadleaved woodland. | SSSI | 41.3 | Private/Forestry Commission – paths through |
| Cannock Chase | Heathland and woodland | AONB, SSSI, SAC | 68.65 (sq kilometre) | Public |
| Chartley Moss | Largest floating bog. A raft of peat about 3, thick floats on a 13m deep lake. | SSSI, NNR, RAMSAR | 107.4 | Public |
| Cop Mere | Lake. Areas of dry and marshy and unimproved pasture fringe of dry woodland. | SSSI, RAMSAR | 37.4 | Private |
| Doley Common | Acid grassland/heath | SSSI | 17.4 | Private |
| Doxey Marshes | Wet grassland habitat | SSSI | 129.3 | Public |
| Ferndown | Meadow and scrub woodland | LNR | 6.7 | Public |
| Goodall Meadow (formerly known as Stone North meadow) | Floodplain meadow | LNR | 8.4 | Public |
| Kings and Hargreaves Woods | Wood | SSSI | 45.7 and 11.8 | Public |
| Kingsmead Marsh | Wetland | LNR | 7.8 | Public |
| Kingston Pool Covert (south) | Damp woodland | LNR | 4.6 | Public |
| Loynton Moss | Grassland, wetland, woodland. | SSSI | 13.7 | Public |
| Mottey Meadows | Wet meadow | SSSI, NNR, SAC | 43.6 | Private |

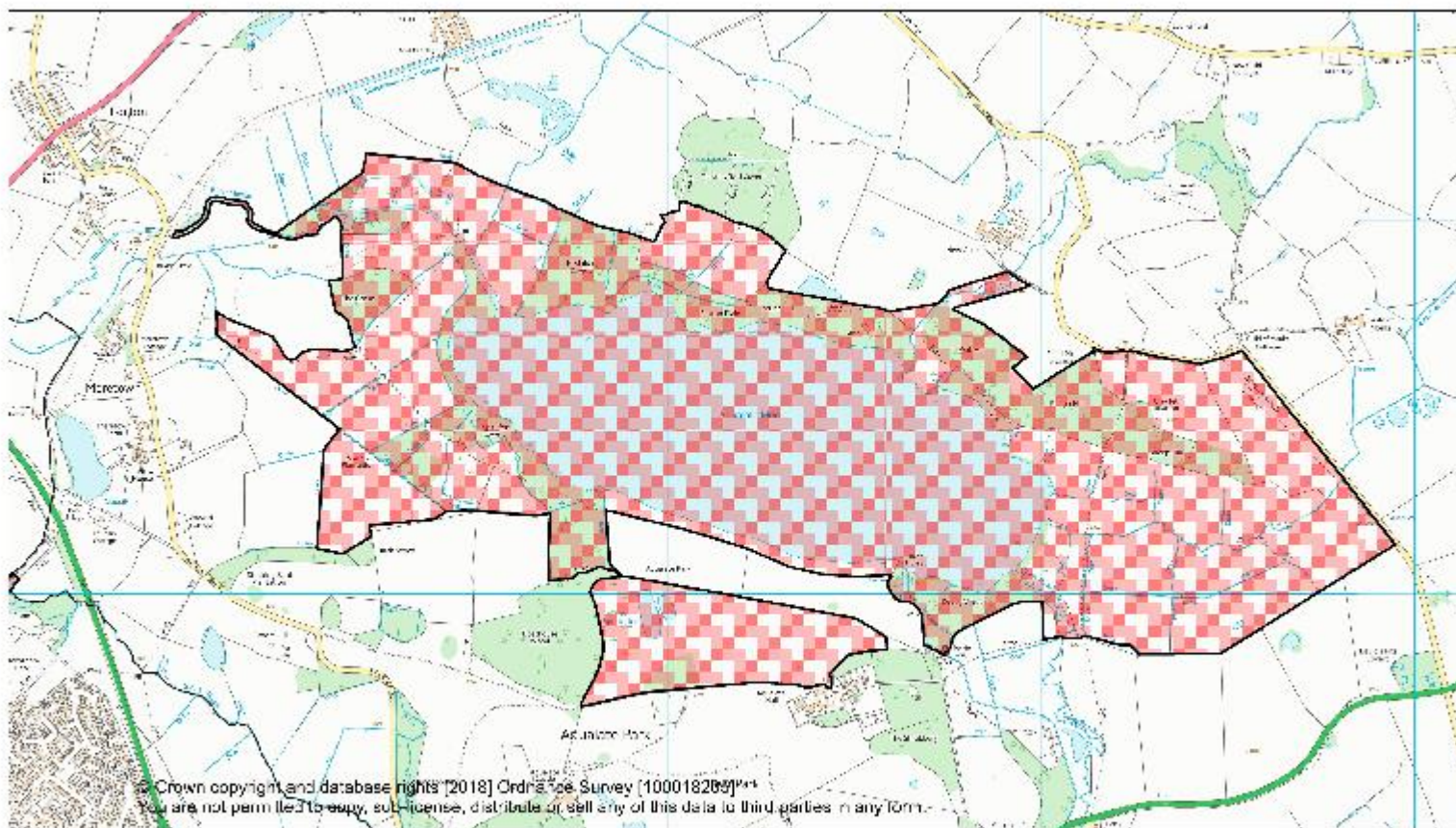
| | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|-----------|--------------------------|---|
| Milford Quarry | Old gravel pit, exposures of the Lower Triassic Bunter Pebble Bed | SSSI | 6.3 | Public |
| Pasturefields Saltmarsh | Saltmarsh | SSSI, SAC | 7.8 | Private (Owned by Staffordshire Wildlife Trust) |
| Rawbones Meadow | Wet meadow | SSSI | 21.3 | Private |
| Stafford Brook | Carr woodland, acidic marshy grassland and fen | SSSI | 6.9 | Owned by Stafford |
| Stone Meadows and Crown Meadow | Three separate meadows | LNR | 14.2 3 (Crown Meadow) | Public |

Appendix 5: Maps of designated sites

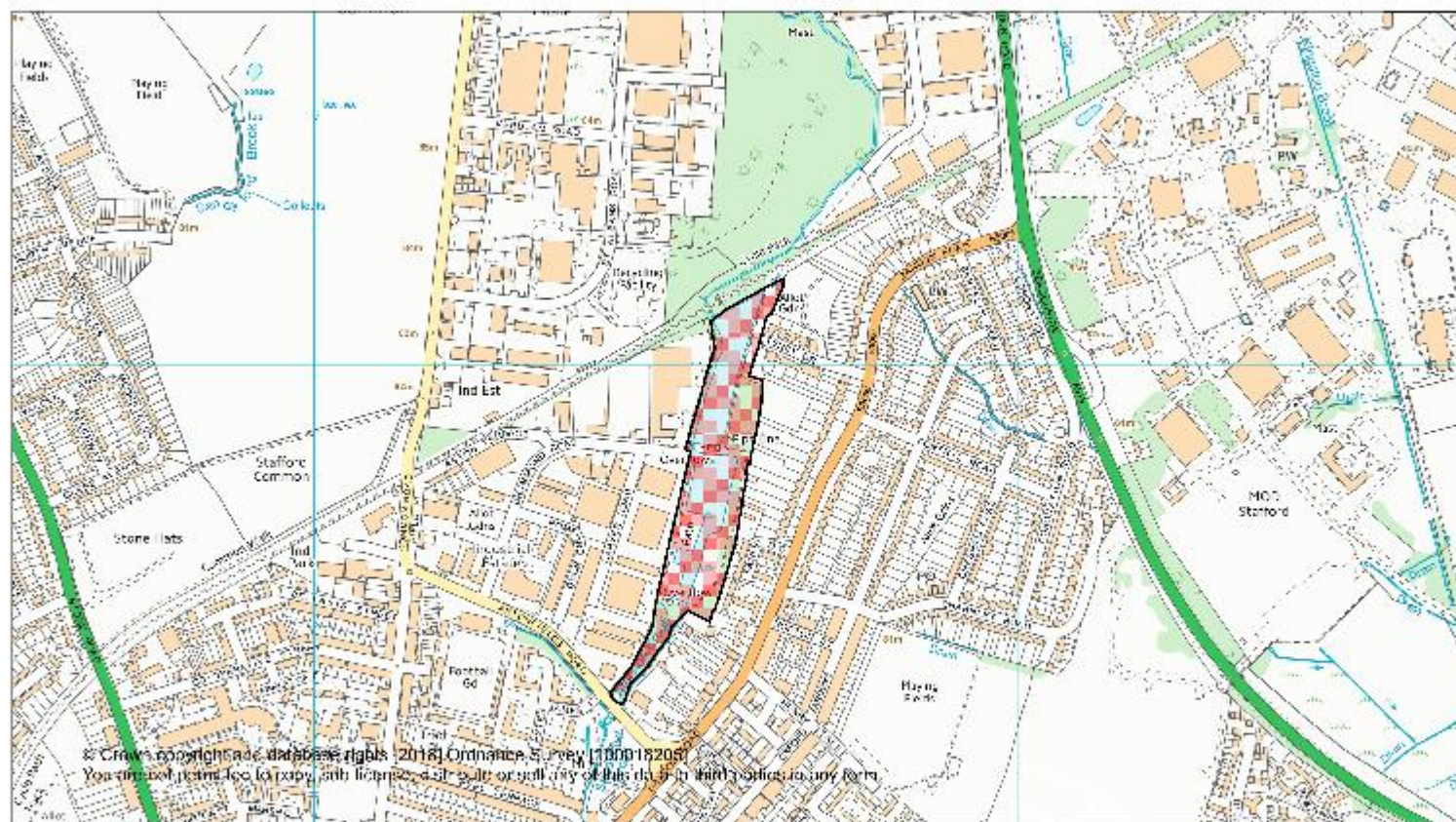
Allimore Green Common SSSI



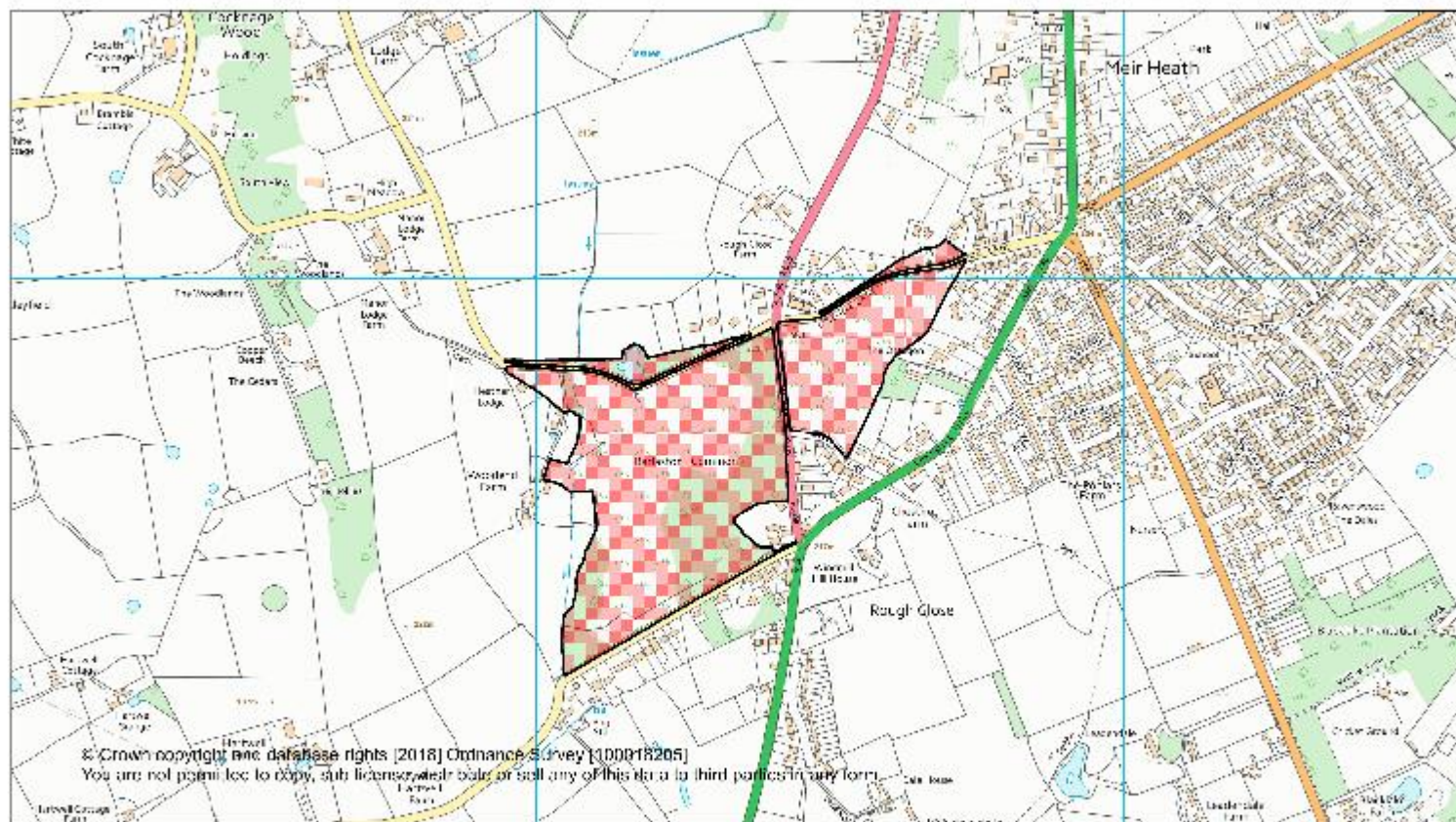
Aqualate Mere SSSI, NNR, RAMSAR



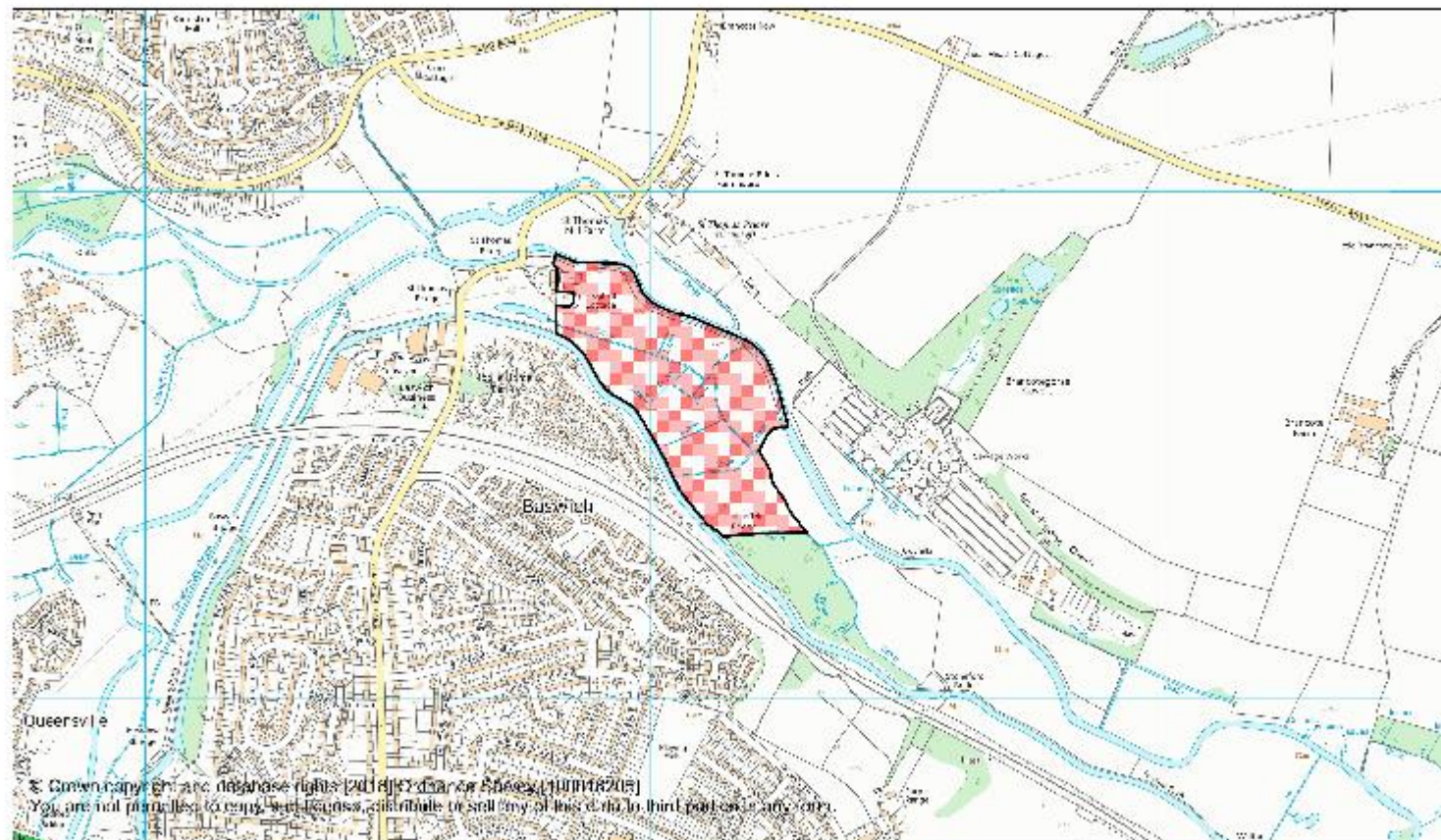
Astonefields Balancing Lakes LNR



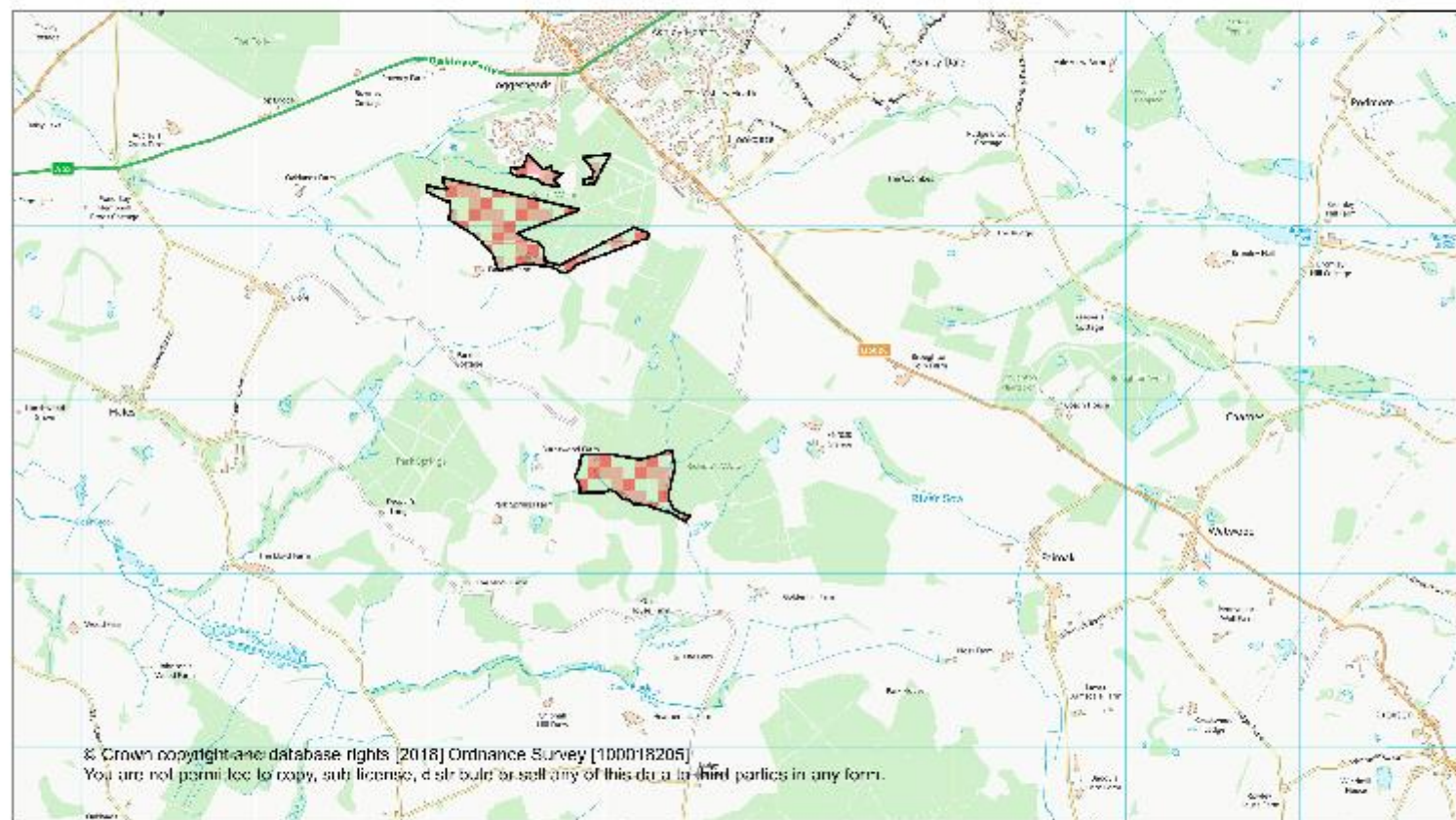
Barlaston and Rough Close Common LNR



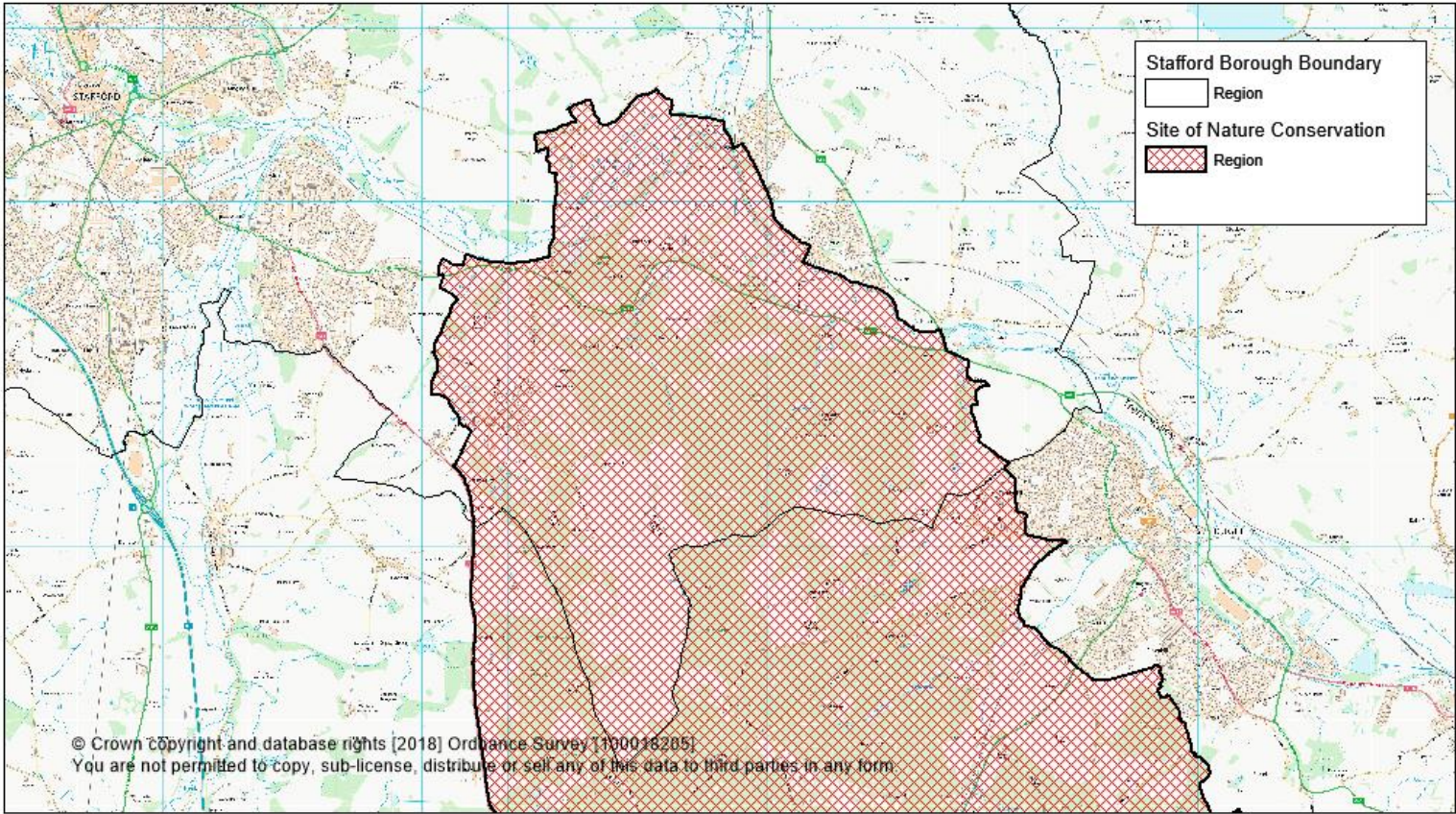
Baswich Meadows SSSI

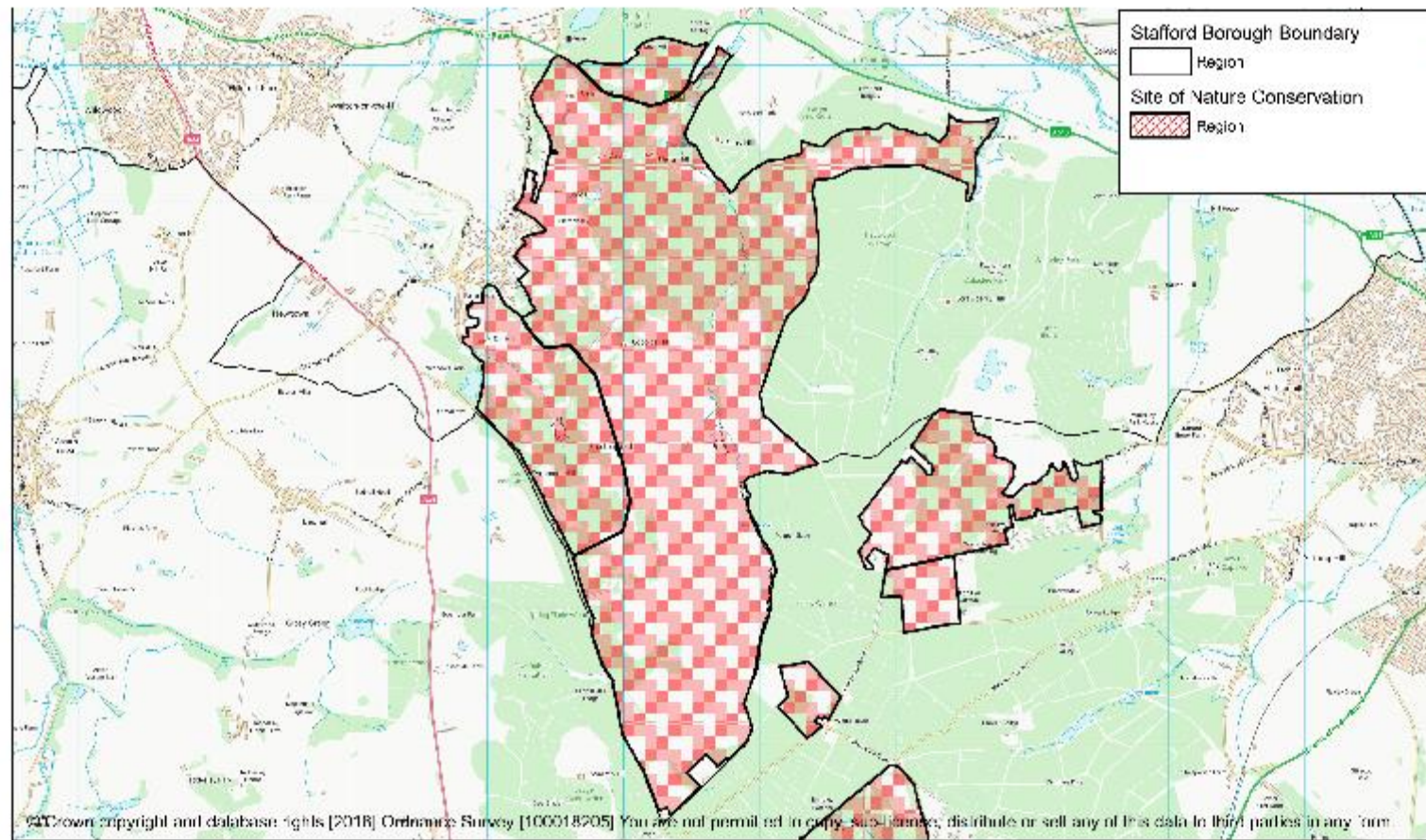


Burntwood SSSI

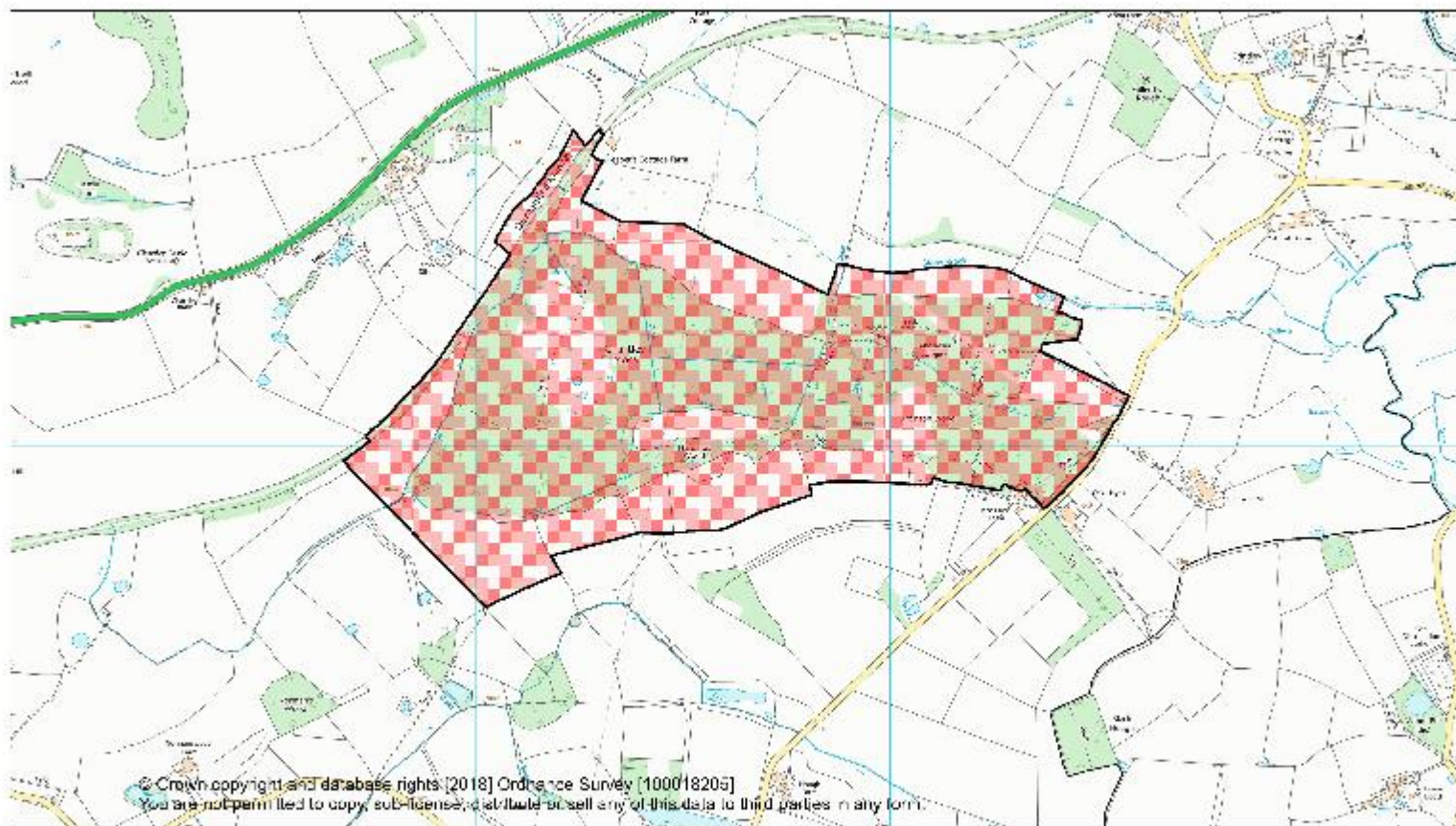


Cannock Chase AONB, SSSI

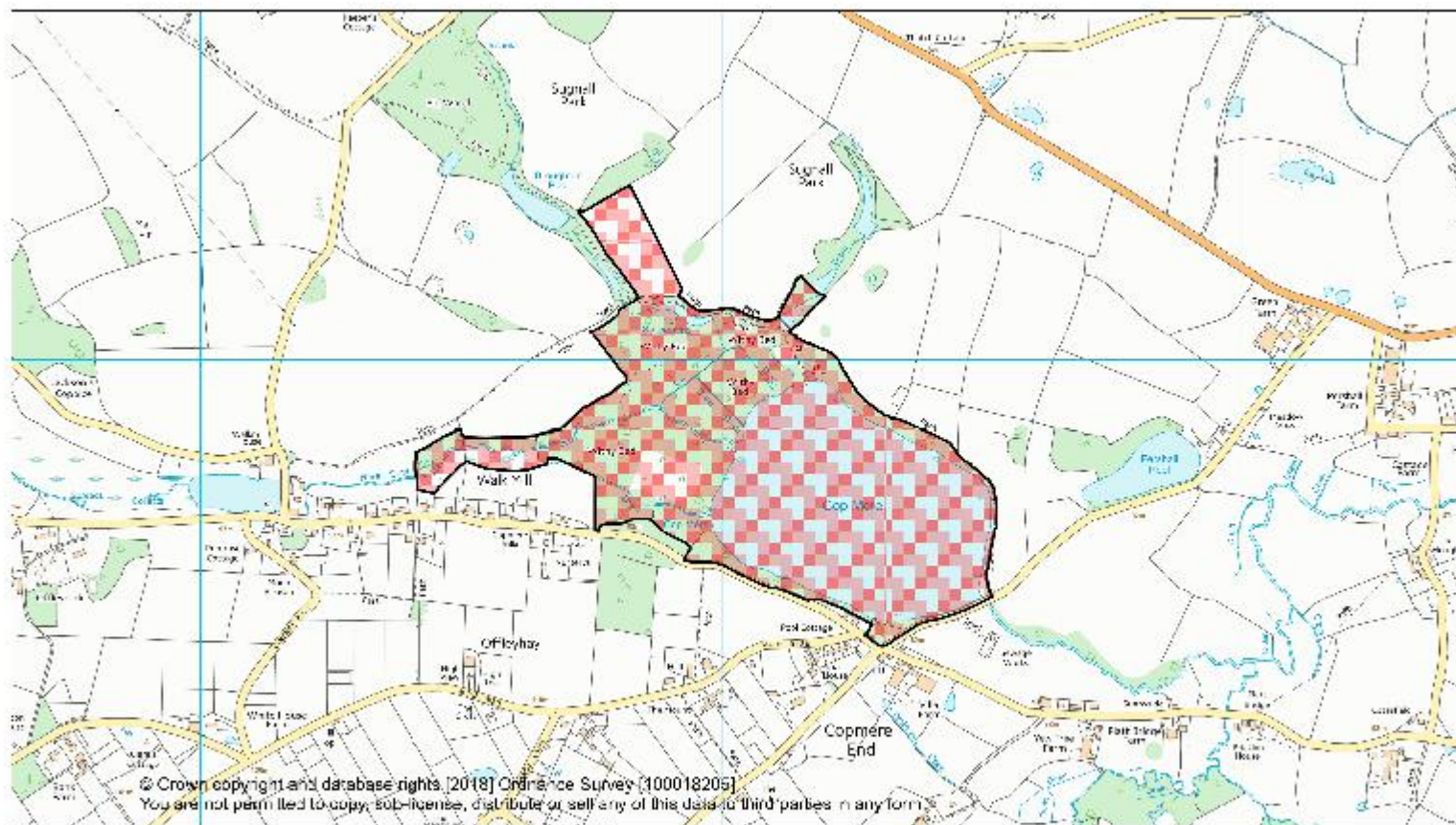




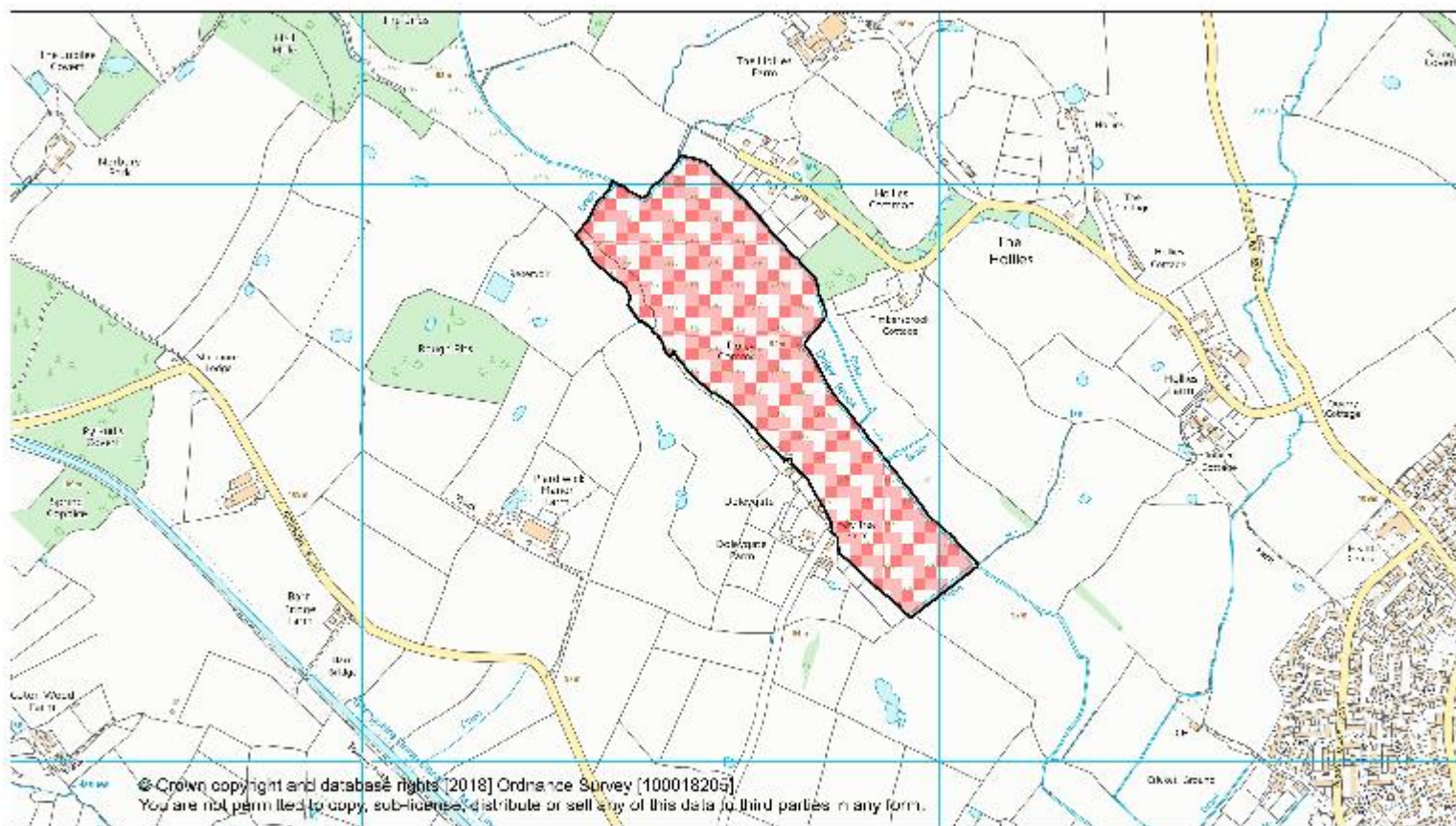
Chartley Moss SSSI, NNR, RAMSAR



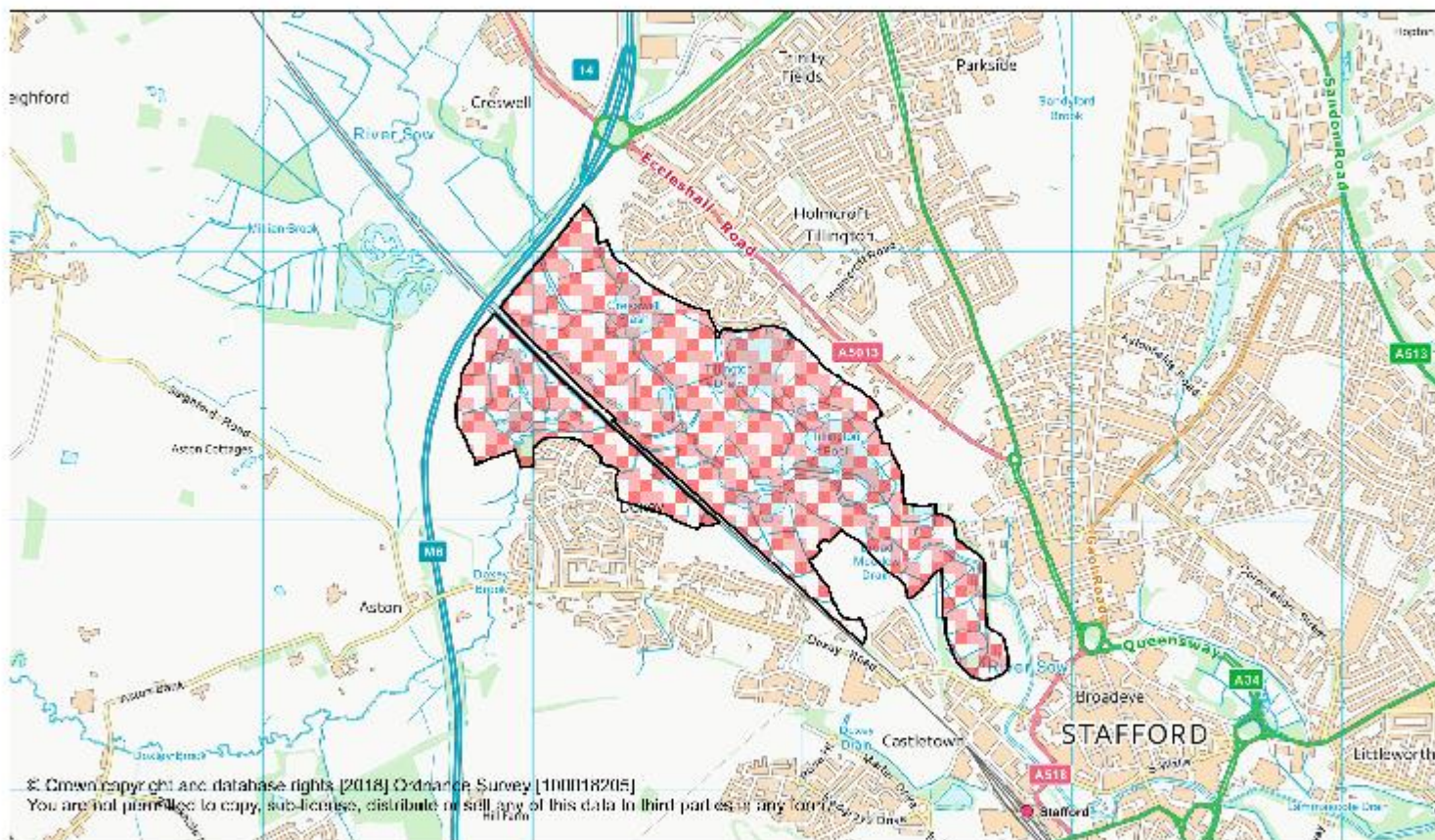
Cop Mere SSSI, RAMSAR



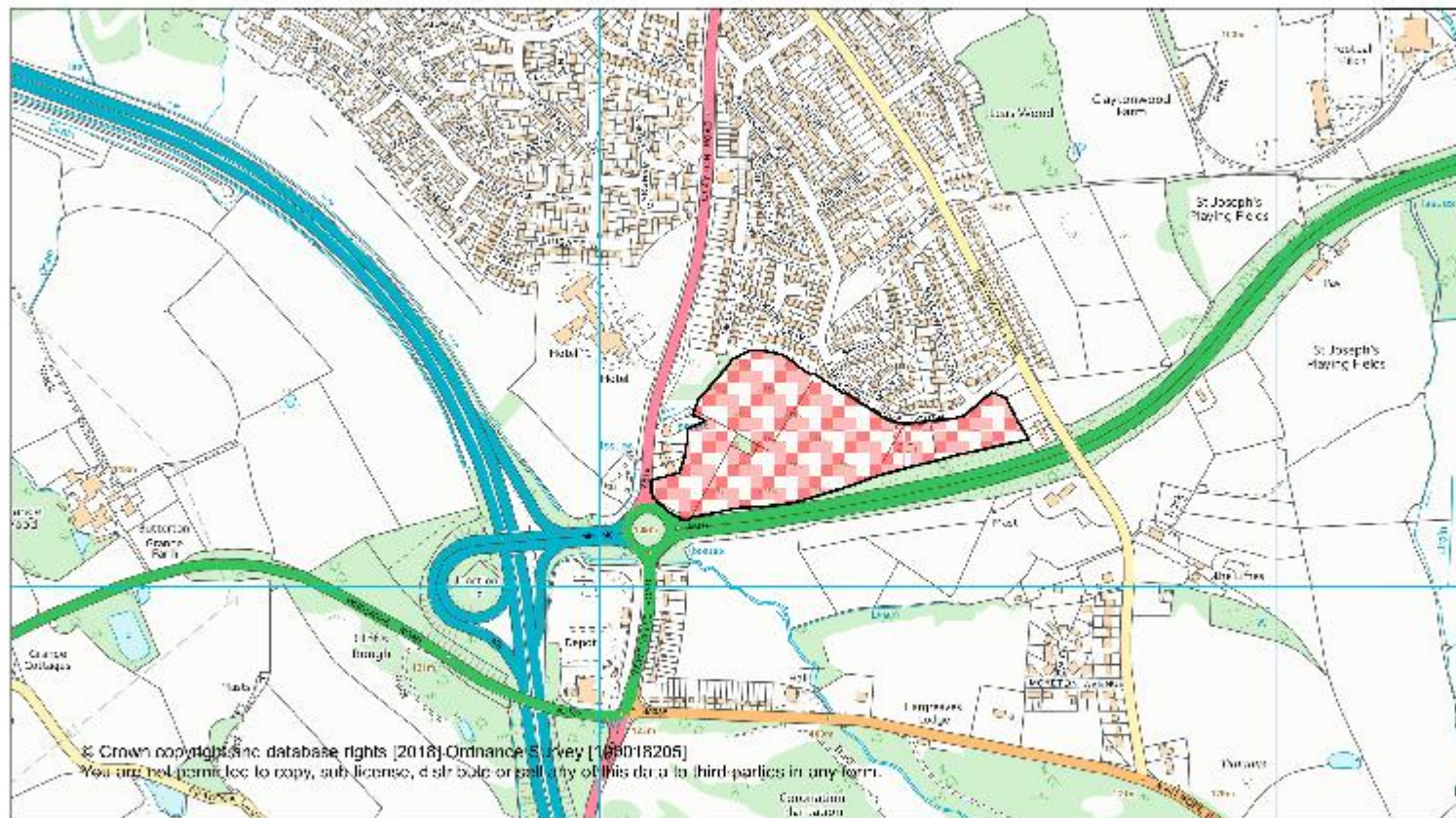
Doley Common SSSI



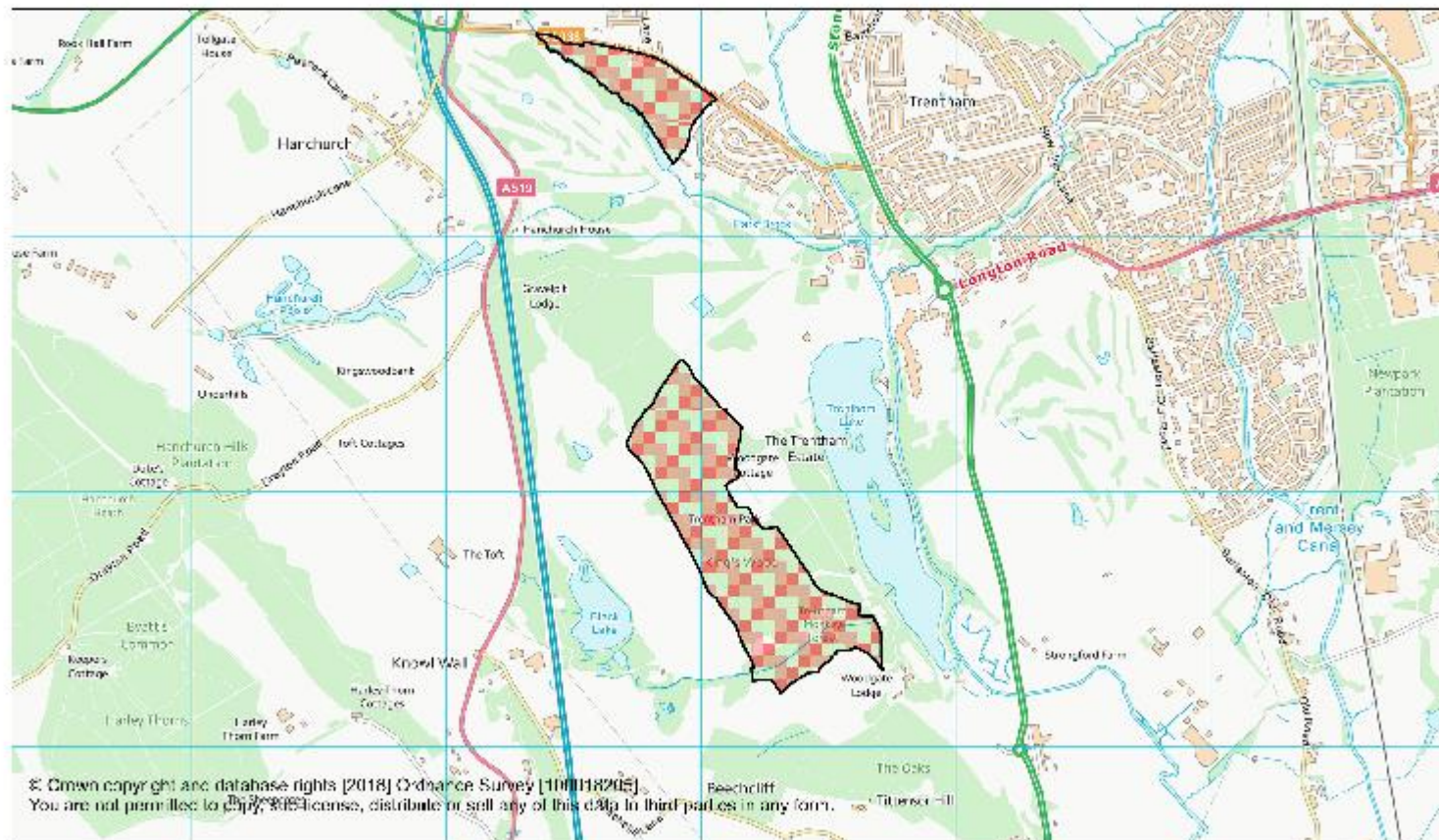
Doxey and Tillington Marshes SSSI



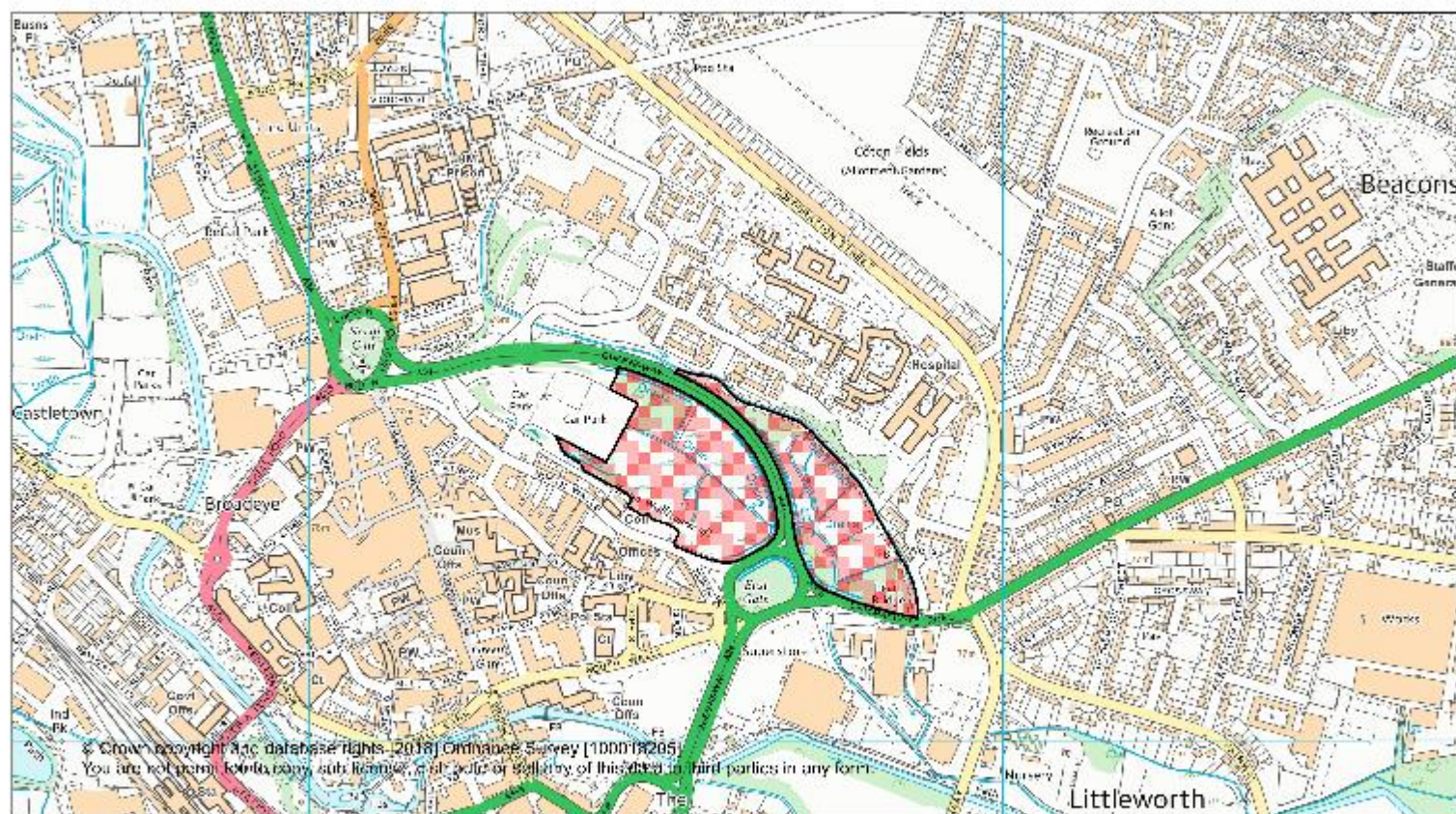
Ferndown LNR



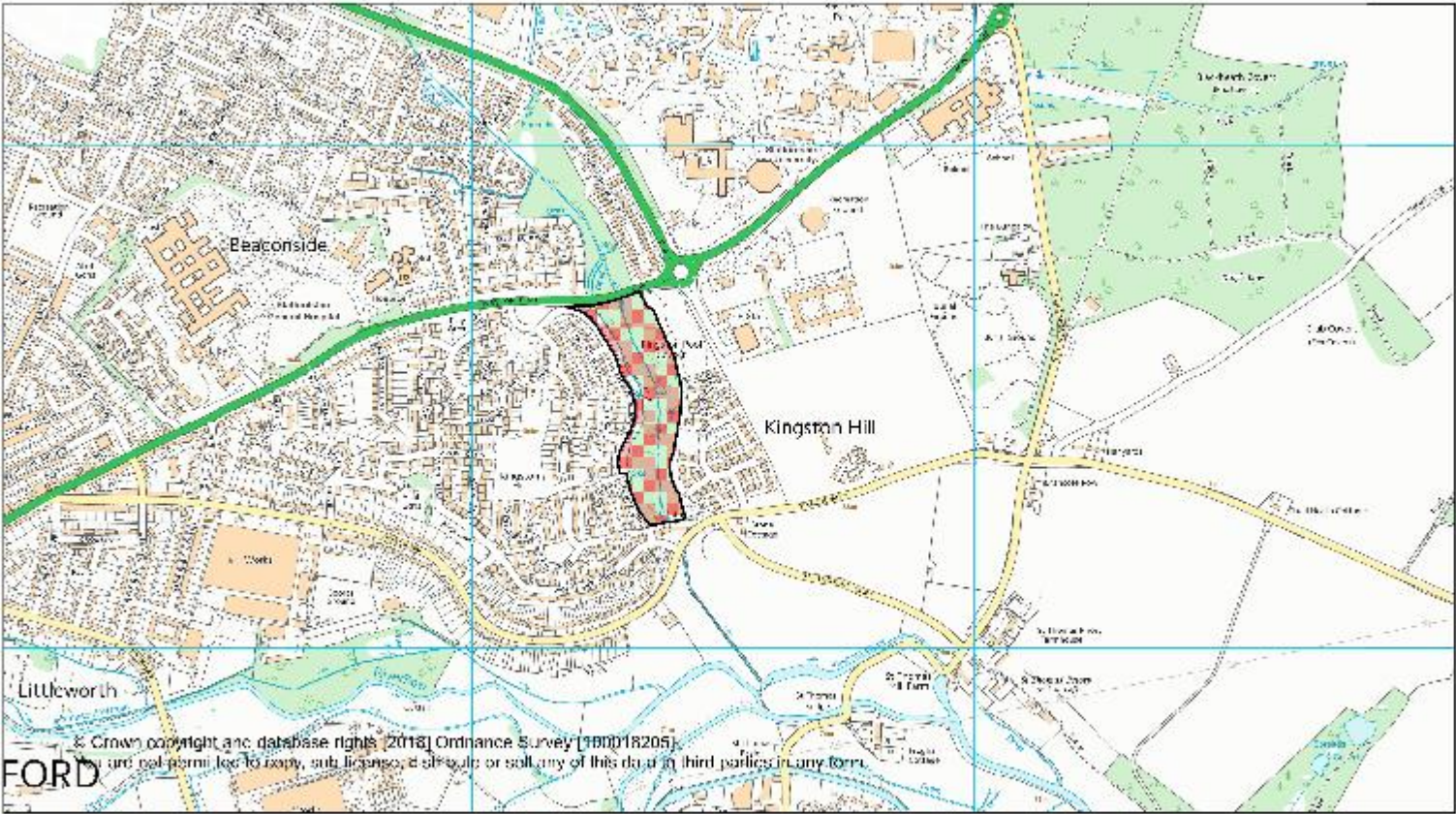
Kings and Hargreaves Wood SSS!



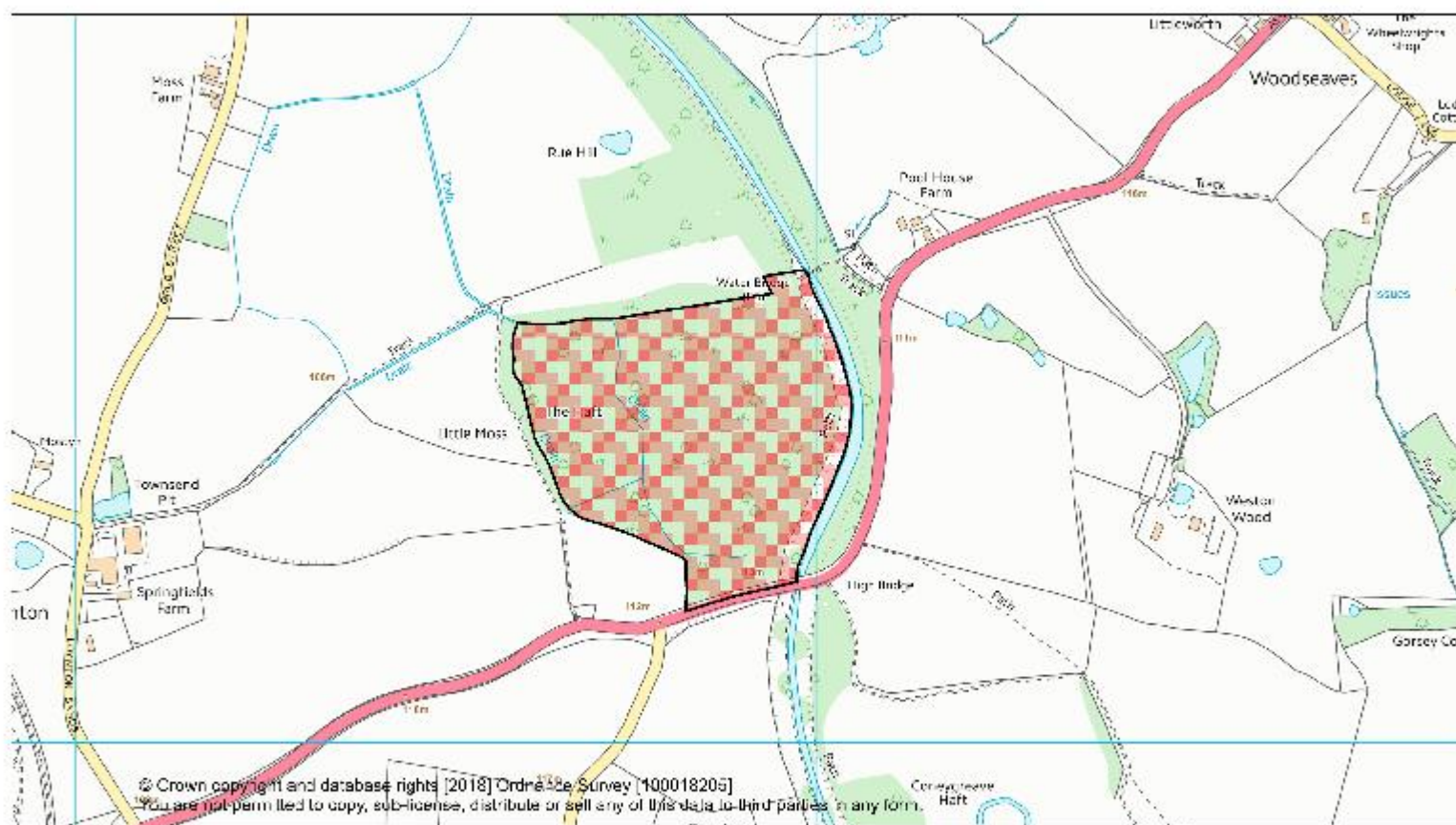
Kingsmead Marsh LNR



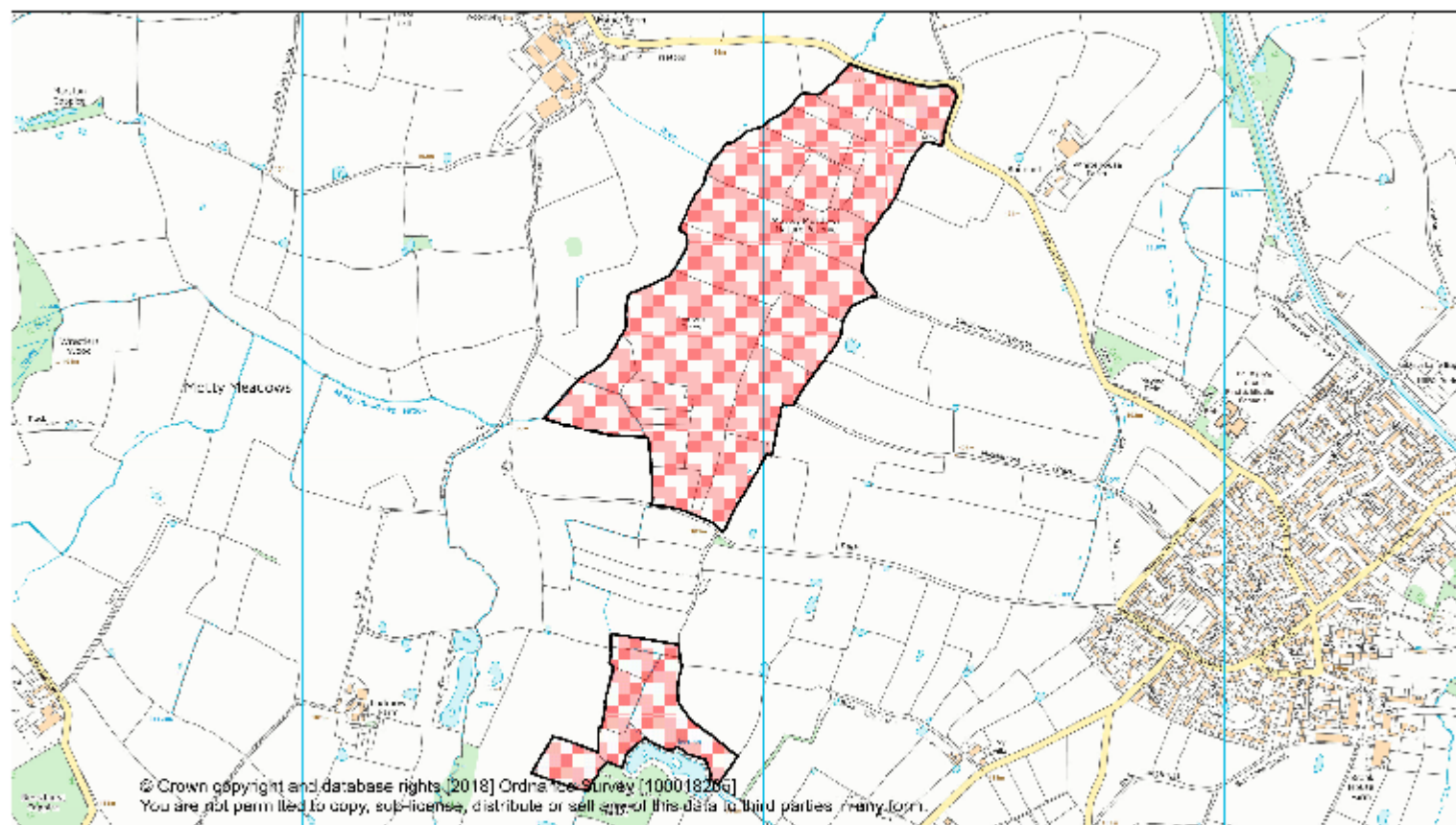
Kingston Pool Covert LNR



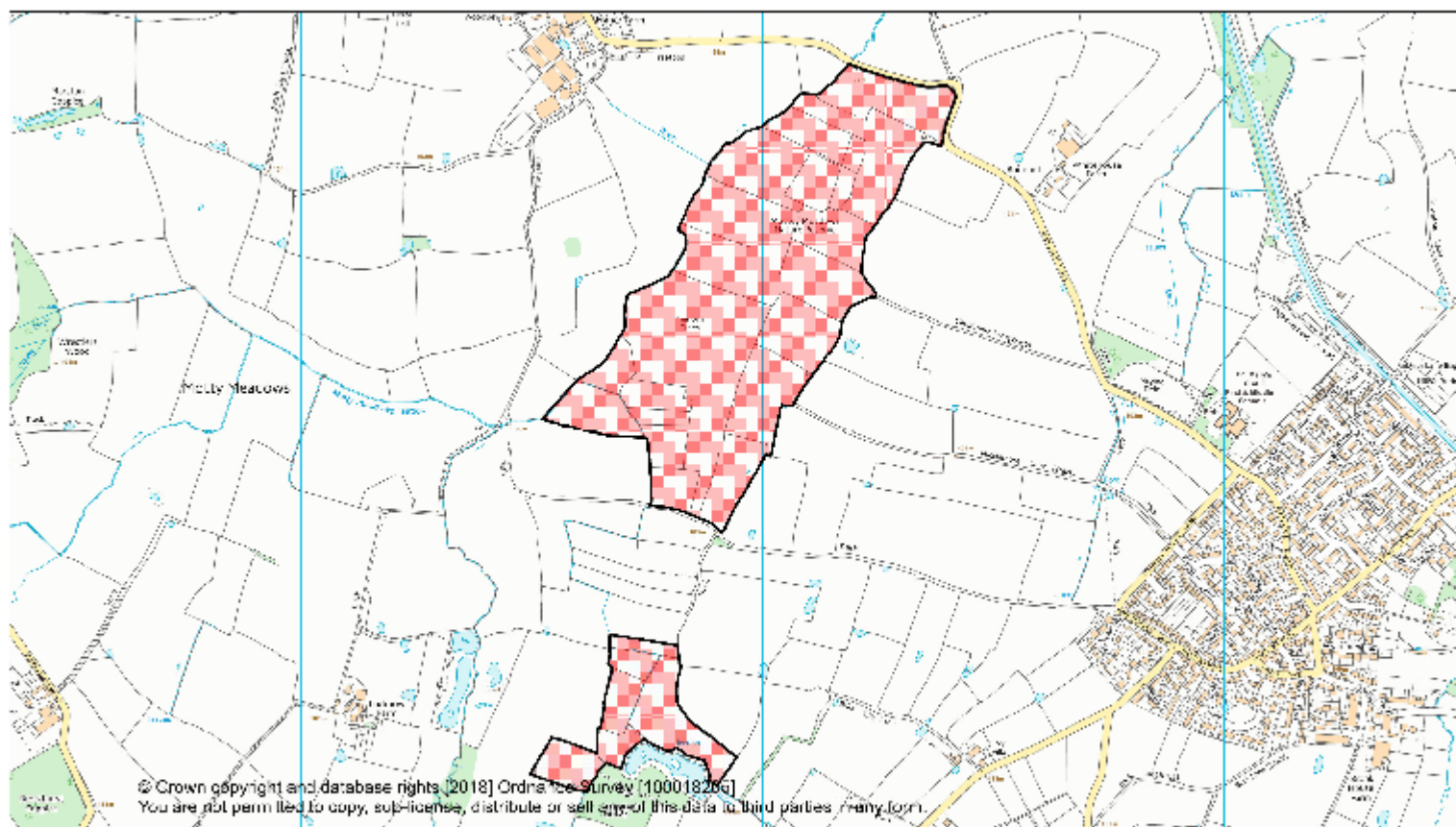
Loynton Moss SSSI



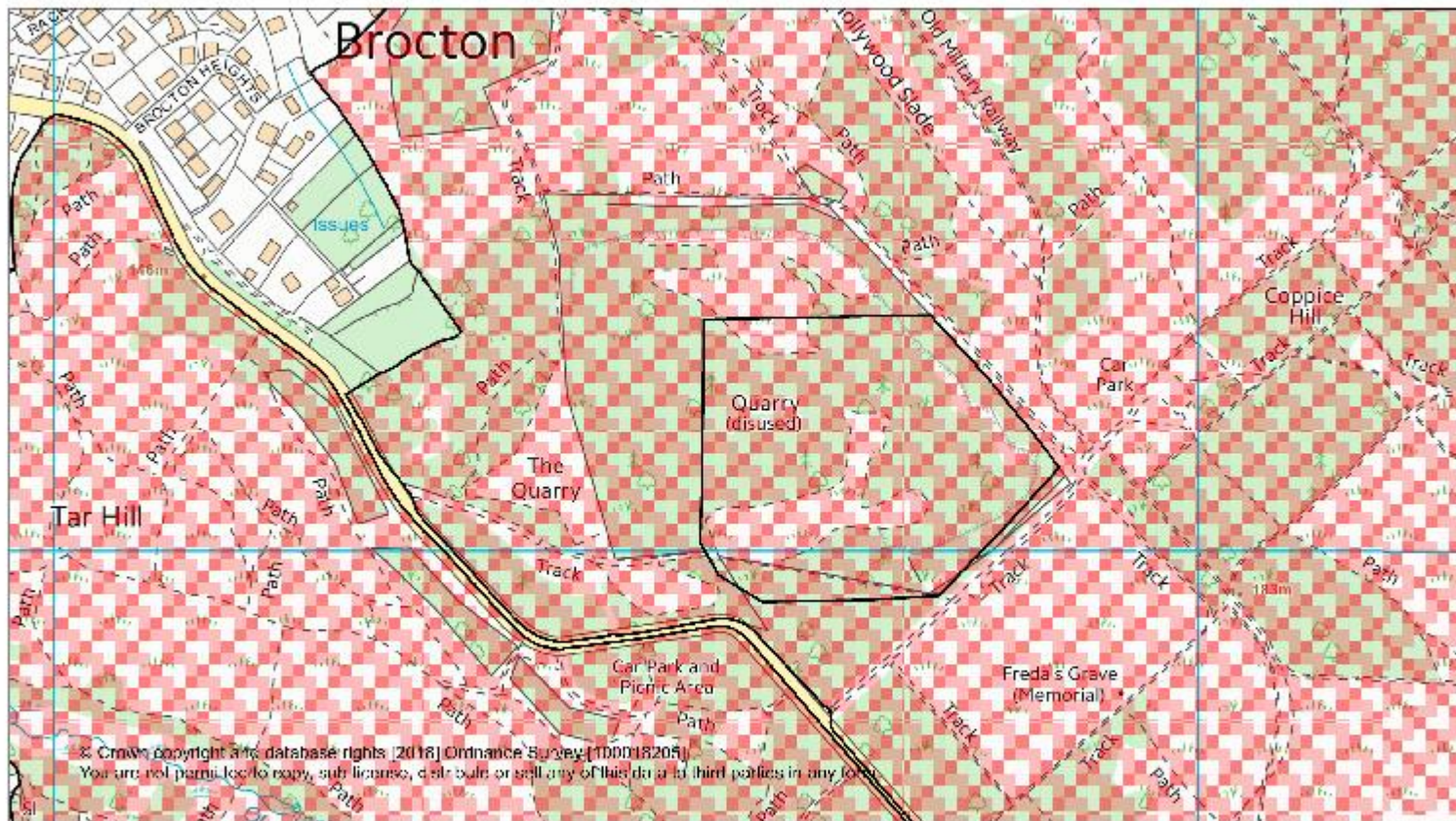
Motley Meadows SSSI, NNR, SAC



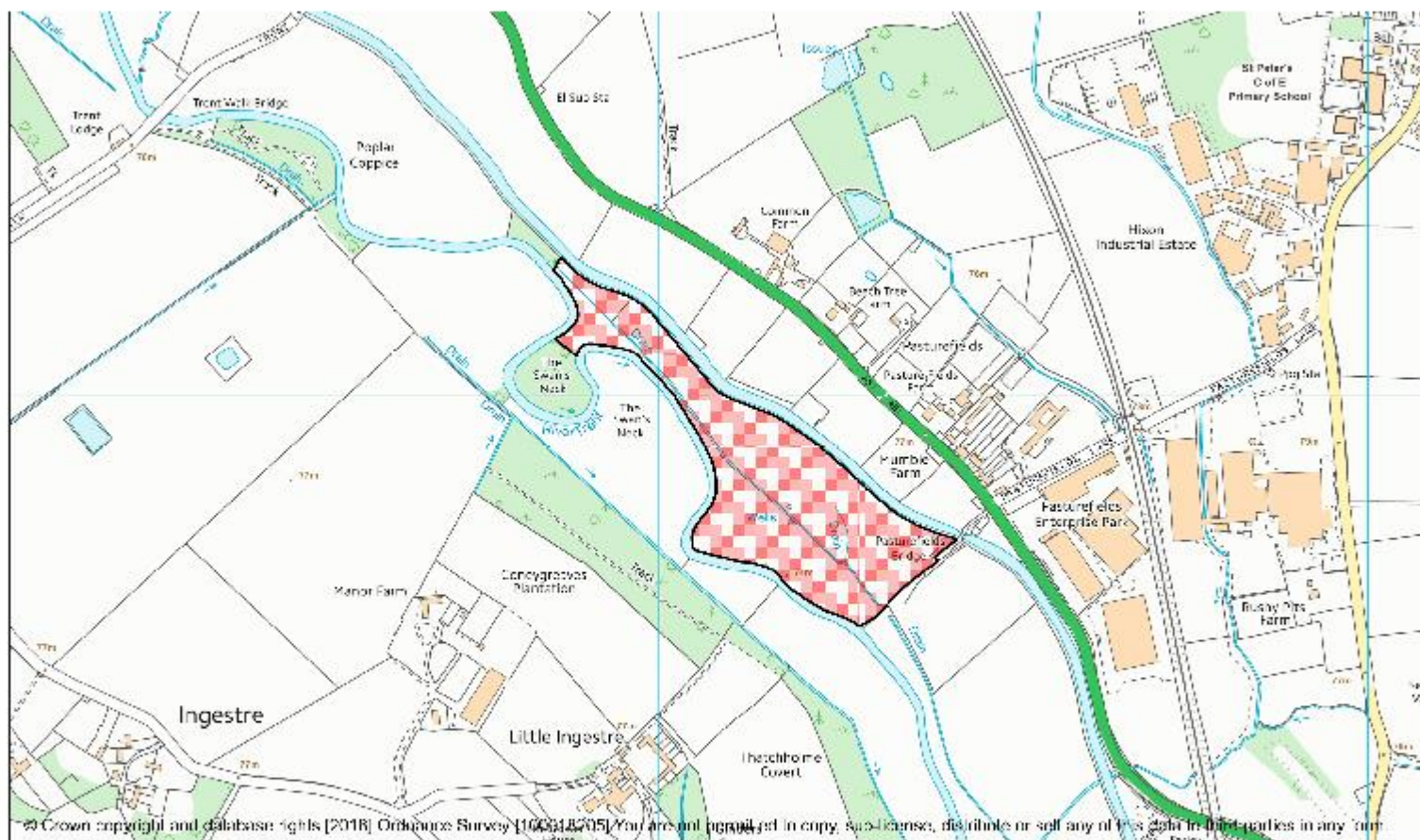
Milford Quarry SSSI (within Cannock Chase AONB)



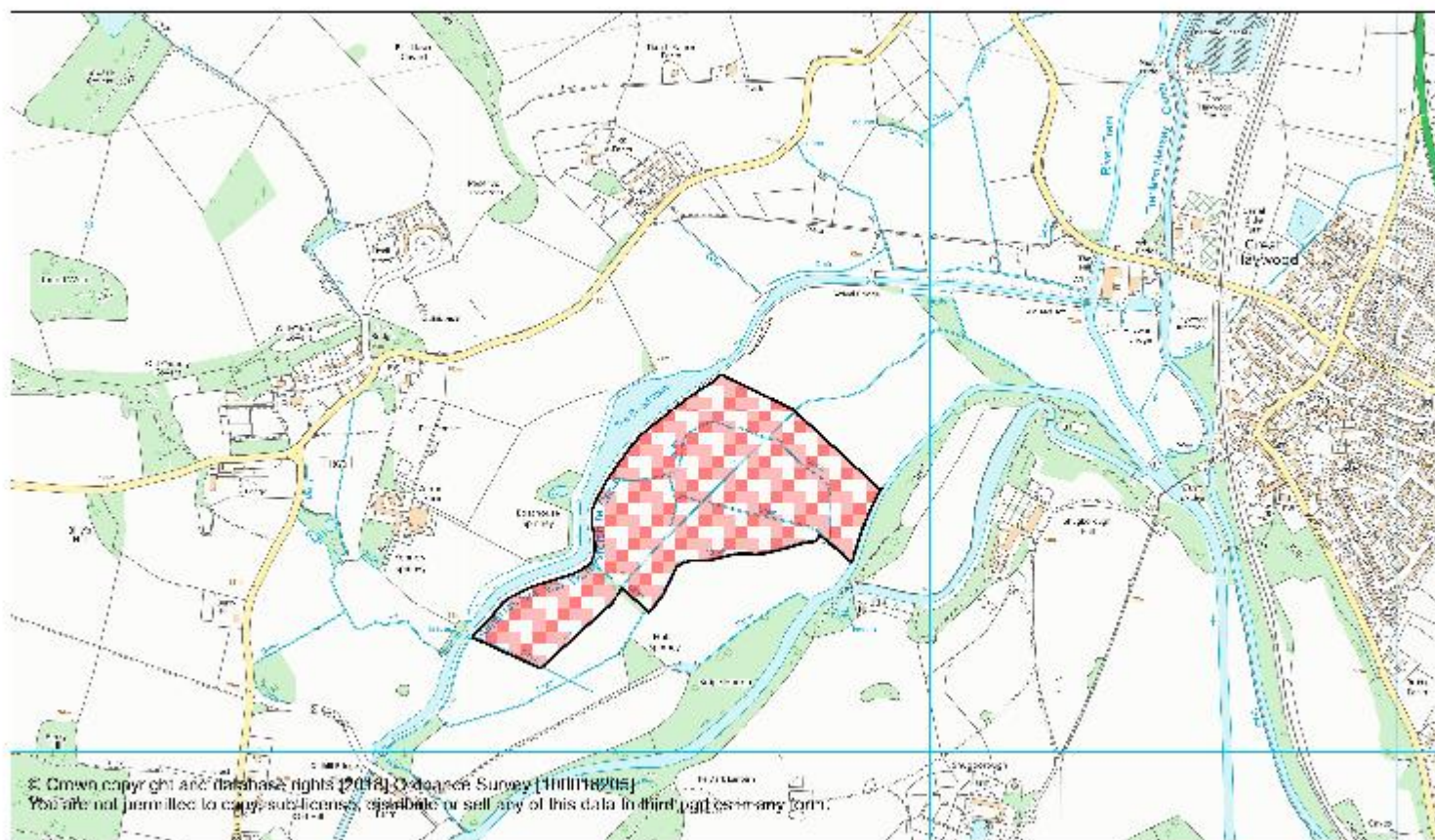
Milford Quarry SSSI



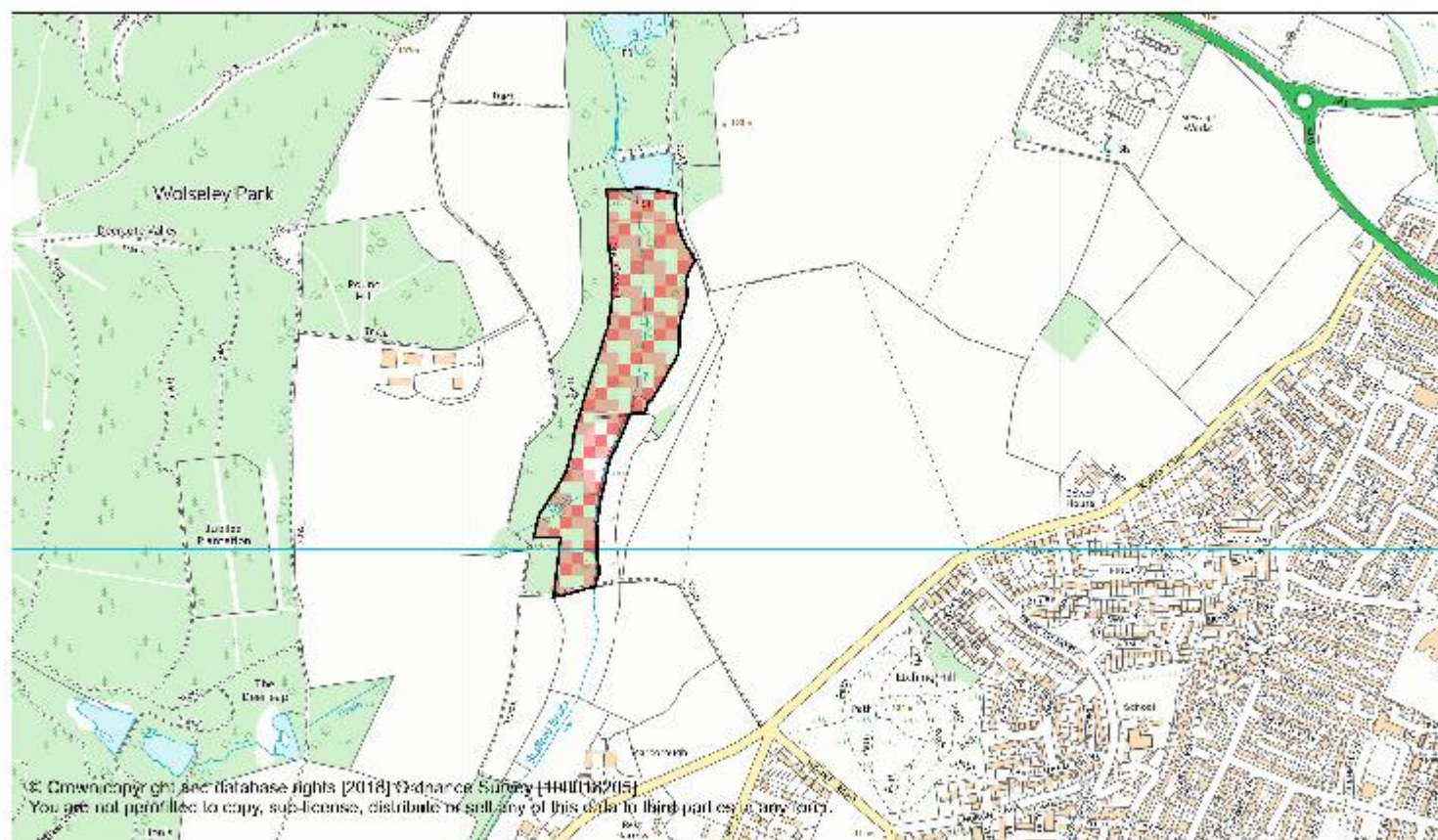
Pasturefields Saltmarsh SSSI, SAC



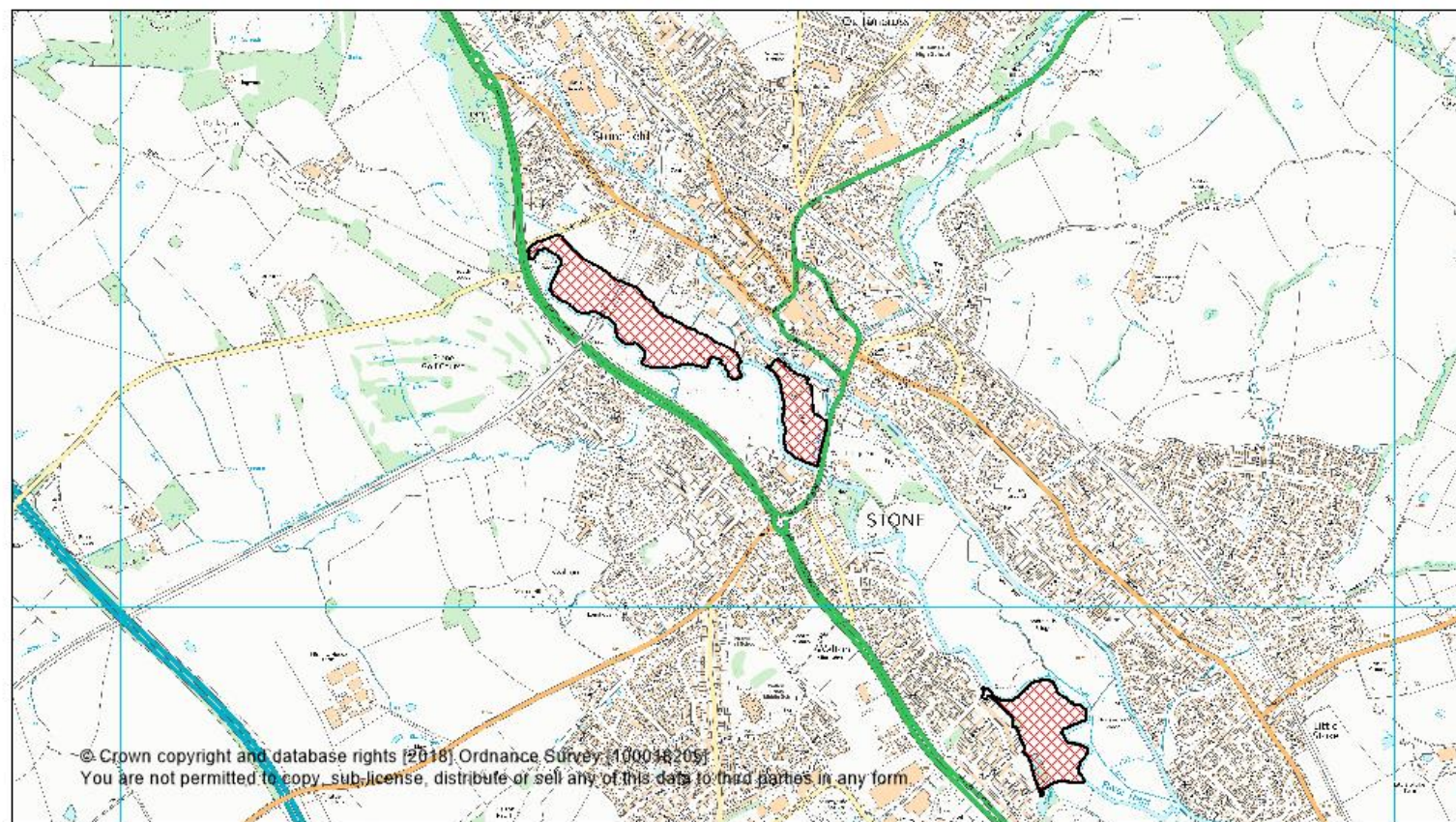
Rawbones Meado SSSI



Stafford Brook SSSI



Stone
Meadows
and
Crown
Meadows



Appendix 6: Sites of Biological Interest

| |
|---------------------------------|
| Rugeley Fen |
| Myott's Wood Pool |
| Radford Meadows (south) |
| A518 Verge (west of Carry Lane) |
| Shirleywich Farm (west of) |
| Lount Farm |
| Booden Grange |
| Leightons Drumble |
| Dunn's Wood |
| Derrington Millennium Green |
| Doley Brook |
| Aston Hall Farm |
| Little Gorse (north-east of) |
| Stafford Castle |

| |
|-------------------------------------|
| Shugborough Hall and Haywood Cliffs |
| Outwoods Bank |
| Polesworth and Lindore Woods |
| Walton Wood |
| Broadhill Common |
| Chamberlain's Covert |
| Bagnallditch |
| Reulemill Covert |
| Shredicote Wood |
| Brocton Hall Golf Course |
| Knighton Reservoir |
| Aqualate Drains |
| Deansbridge Covert |
| Tunstall Lanes |

| |
|--------------------------------|
| Hatchwell's Covert |
| Brook Covert |
| Jackson's Coppice and Marsh |
| Canal Spoil Banks |
| Pollymoor Wood |
| Badgers Covert |
| Oulton Coppice |
| Moat Covert |
| Mill Haft |
| Shelmore Wood |
| Little Champions |
| Ball's Rough and Gorsey Covert |
| Walk Mill Pool |
| Walk Mill Meadow |

| |
|--------------------------|
| Hell Hole |
| Wood Brook Bank |
| Pershall Pool |
| Coton (north of) |
| Rough Pits |
| Hollies Common |
| Lake Covert |
| Dairy House Farm (verge) |
| Hough Meadows |
| Large Covert |
| Walton's Rough |
| Wootton (north-east of) |
| Fieldhouse Dingle |
| Brick Hollow |
| Butterbank Brook |
| Yelds Rough |

| |
|--------------------------------------|
| North Walls Marsh |
| Stafford Common |
| Astonfields |
| Hough Drain |
| Maggie's Fields |
| Flute Meadows |
| Church Lane |
| Stafford Lodges (north of) |
| Tixall Broad Water |
| Shirleywich Fields and canal towpath |
| Colwich Brickworks |
| Keeper's Cottage to River Blithe |
| Bishop's Wood |
| Little Bishop's Wood |
| Jugbank |
| Blorepipe Meadows |

| |
|----------------------------------|
| Rudge Cottages |
| Bishops Offley Mill |
| Croxton Lanes |
| Greatwood Lodge |
| Pennyquart |
| Bromley Pool |
| Greenlane Coppice |
| Podmore Pool |
| Middle Coppice |
| Akesworth Coppice |
| Redgreat (near) |
| Blackwaters |
| Mount Pleasant Farm (wet meadow) |
| The Alders |
| Copmere (north-west of) |
| Chatcull Wood |

| |
|--|
| Brockton Farm (north-west of) |
| Osier Beds |
| Hatton Common |
| Millmeece (south of) (hedges and nearby marl pits) |
| Swynnerton Old Park |
| Pilstones Wood |
| Meece Brook |
| Yarnfield (south-west of) |
| Pool House Pool and Green Drive Pools, Tittensor |
| The Drumble, Stone |
| Darlaston Wood |
| Lakeside Golf Course |
| Barlaston (north of) |
| Common Plot |
| Meaford Sludge Beds |

| |
|---------------------------------------|
| Radford Wood and Coppice Wood |
| Pirehill (north of) |
| Cotwalton Drumble |
| Mill Cottage (south of) and Mill Lane |
| Knenhall Farms (west of) |
| Holly Wood |
| Moddershall Oaks |
| Peakshill Wood (north of) |
| Stallington Heath |
| Oulton House (north of) |
| Garshall House (north-west of) |
| Garshall Green (road verges north of) |
| Mount Pleasant (west of) |
| Milwich (east of) |
| Brick Kiln Pits |
| Rookery Drumble |

| |
|--|
| Spon Drumble |
| Hollybank Ditches |
| Milwich to Garshall Green (road banks) |
| Drumble Wood |
| Wheatlow Brooks |
| Rough Moor |
| Drumble and Platt Meadows |
| Adbaston Pools |
| Furlong Pits |
| Shelmore Trough |
| Kingston Pool Covert (south) |
| Hopton Pools (north of) |
| Monument Plantation and adjacent land |
| Sandon Wood |
| Chartley Castle |
| Moss Farm (north-west of) |

| |
|---------------------------------|
| Hatton Mill |
| Clifford's Wood |
| Closepit Plantation |
| Beechcliff Wood, Swynnerton |
| Lodge Covert, Swynnerton |
| Wing House (north-west of) |
| Highlow Meadows, Swynnerton |
| Poolhouse Wood |
| A34 Woodlands, Tittensor Common |

| |
|--|
| Micklow Wood |
| Stone (west of) |
| Trent Wood |
| The Orange Hayes |
| Jodpool Marshes |
| The Leasows (west of) |
| Kendrick's Wood |
| Doctor's Plantation (and associated sites) |
| Seven Sisters Ridge (and surrounds) |

| |
|---|
| Downs Banks |
| Barlaston Common (AKA Rough Close Common) |
| Yarnfield Meadows |
| Meece Brook/Swynnerton/MOD/Railway |
| Aqualate Deer Park |
| Tittensor Chase |
| Fradswell Park |

Appendix 7: Local Plan Policies

Policy N4: The Natural Environment & Green Infrastructure

The Borough's natural environment will be protected, enhanced and improved by:

a. Implementation of the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan, the Stafford Borough Green Infrastructure Strategy and guidance including 'Biodiversity by Design' or any other successor documents to increase and enhance biodiversity, in terms of habitats and species as well as geological conservation or geodiversity through appropriate management for a network of:

- i. Designated Sites (international, national, regional and local);
- ii. Biodiversity Action Plan habitats and species populations;
- iii. Wildlife Corridors and Ecological Networks;

b. Conservation and enhancement of water courses and their settings for their landscape character, biodiversity and recreational value, particularly for the Borough's extensive rivers and extensive canal system;

c. Protecting, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment and irreplaceable semi-natural habitats, such as ancient woodlands, and ancient or veteran trees;

d. Increasing the ability of landscapes and ecosystems to adapt to different weather patterns and climate change, by increasing the range and extent of Habitats, informed by Biodiversity Opportunity mapping;

e. Ensuring that no new development takes place in areas where environmental risks, particularly flooding, cannot be properly managed;

f. Any new development where damage to the natural environment is unavoidable must include measures to mitigate and / or compensate such impacts, through the establishment of replacement habitats or features, including appropriate site management regimes.

The Borough's green infrastructure network, as defined on the Policies Map, will be protected, enhanced and expanded:

g. Networks of open spaces for formal and informal recreation, natural corridors, access routes and watercourses will be enhanced and created, where those networks:

- i. protect the setting of landscape, heritage and natural (biodiversity and

geodiversity) assets;

ii. reverse habitat fragmentation due to having suffered past loss and degradation;

iii. provide recreational opportunities for new and existing communities;

iv. provide open breaks between neighbouring residential areas and business developments.

h. The network of existing access routes will be improved and expanded to allow sustainable commuting, including:

i. shared surfaces to reduce vehicle speeds;

ii. providing safe, attractive and well-signed walking and cycling routes between residential areas, employment centres, green spaces and the wider countryside.

i. Local landscape and heritage features should:

(i) Be conserved and enhanced and inform the master planning and design of new neighbourhoods;

(ii) be positively managed to conserve and enhance their significance and contribution to the character of the landscape;

(iii) be accessible to local communities, as appropriate, for leisure and recreation.

j. Development will support implementation of the Severn and Humber River Basin Management Plans and not pose a barrier to the meeting of their objectives for any watercourse. To alleviate the effects of climate change and meet the objectives of the Water Framework Directive, new development should:

i. Include measures such as Sustainable Drainage Systems and street trees;

ii. Provide a variety of Green spaces and habitat networks as a flood storage / management function (where appropriate);

iii. Provide adequate development easement from watercourses (culverted or otherwise);

iv. Incorporate proposals for deculverting and renaturalisation of watercourses;

v. Where issues have been identified within the Water Cycle Study, developers should submit a Water Statement that includes evidence to demonstrate that there is already adequate sewerage infrastructure in place,

or that it will be in place prior to occupation;

vi. Support fish migration through the removal of barriers in river channels such as weirs, or where this is not possible, construction of fish passes.

k. All new developments will:

i. Be set within a well designed and maintained attractive green setting, demonstrated through a detailed management plan where appropriate;

ii. Provide a variety of spaces to meet the needs of people and nature;

iii. Provide safe opportunities for sustainable transport;

iv. Refer to the Staffordshire Ecological Record to ensure natural habitats and species in the locality are protected.

Policy N5 Sites of European, National & Local Nature Conservation Importance

The highest level of protection will be given to European Sites, with new development only permitted where:

- a. There will be no adverse effect on the integrity of any European site, or
- b. If adverse effects are identified, it can be demonstrated that the proposed mitigation measures
show that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of any European site;
or
- c. if it cannot be ascertained that no adverse effect on integrity will result, the proposed development will only be able to proceed where there is no alternative solution and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

In relation to air quality issues identified, planning permission will only be granted where:

- 1. It can be demonstrated that development will not significantly contribute to adverse effects caused by local and / or diffuse air pollution at European sites, alone or in combination with other plans and projects; or
- 2. Where development would result in an increase in local and / or diffuse air pollution at European Sites, it would be expected to include measures in line with the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan towards securing an equivalent improvement in air quality, or reduction in emissions from other sources; and
- 3. Require a pollution-neutral strategy for major development near to European sites.

In relation to water quality, supply and run-off issues, planning permission will only be granted where:

- i. There will be no demonstrable impact on the integrity of the European site;
- ii. The development takes account of the Water Cycle Study and Surface Water Management Plan and any other successor documents.

Developments likely to affect Sites of Special Scientific Interest will not be permitted unless the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the nature conservation value of the site itself and the national policy to safeguard the national network of such sites. Cumulative effects will also be considered.

Development likely to have an adverse effect (either directly or indirectly) on:

- A Local Nature Reserve
- A Site of Biological Importance or a Biodiversity Alert Site
- A Local Geological Site
- A natural watercourse, lakes, reservoirs, rivers, canals and groundwater areas, including Water Framework Directive protected areas as listed in the Humber and Severn River Basin Management Plans. will not be permitted unless:

(a) It can be clearly demonstrated that there are reasons for the proposal that outweigh

the need to safeguard the special ecological / geological interest of the site

(b) It has been demonstrated, where development would result in significant harm, that

it can not be reasonably located on an alternative site that would result in less or no harm

(c) harm can be prevented, minimised, adequately mitigated or compensated for.

Where development is permitted, the authority will impose conditions or planning obligations to ensure the protection and enhancement of the site's nature conservation and / or geological interest.

Where the Council considers that any designated site, protected species or any species or habitat of principal importance for conservation may be affected by a development proposal, an ecological assessment will be required to be submitted with the planning application.

Where development is permitted the Council will require developers to:

- a. minimise disturbance;
- b. protect and enhance the site's ecological value;
- c. ensure appropriate management;
- d. ensure appropriate mitigation measures are designed into the proposal and work on the site does not commence until these measures are in place;
- e. work to approved methods; and
- f. create new or replacement habitats equal to or above the current ecological value of the site if damage or loss is unavoidable.

Where possible, the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats and the recovering of priority species populations will be encouraged in line with the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan.

New developments will be required to include appropriate tree planting, to retain and integrate healthy, mature trees and hedgerows, and replace any trees that need to be removed. Development will not be permitted that would directly or indirectly damage existing mature or ancient woodland, veteran trees or ancient or species-rich hedgerows.

Policy N6 Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Development will not be permitted where it would lead directly or indirectly to an adverse impact on the Cannock Chase SAC and the effects cannot be mitigated.

To ensure the Cannock Chase SAC is not harmed, all development that leads to a net increase in dwellings within 15km of the site, as shown on the Policies Map, must take all necessary steps to avoid or mitigate any adverse effects upon the SAC's integrity. This may include contributions to habitat management; access management and visitor infrastructure; publicity, education and awareness raising; provision of additional recreation space within development sites where they can be accommodated and, where they cannot, by contributions to off site alternative recreation space; and measures to encourage sustainable travel.

The effective avoidance and / or mitigation of any identified adverse effects must be demonstrated to the Council as the Competent Authority, and secured by means of a suitable mechanism (e.g. Legal agreement) prior to approval of the development.

Policy N7 Cannock Chase AONB

The conservation and enhancement of the landscape and scenic beauty of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is of primary importance. The principles to be followed in the area are to:

- a. Conserve and enhance the special landscape character, heritage and distinctiveness of the locality;
- b. Conserve and enhance important viewpoints, protect the context and safeguard views out of and into the AONB;
- c. Require appropriate new developments to be suitably located and have regard for existing landscape features and tree screening;
- d. Support suitably located small, well designed sustainable developments, where it is required to meet the needs of the local community;
- e. Have regard to the principles set out in the Cannock Chase AONB management plan for managing recreational activities;
- f. Promote access to the AONB through sustainable forms of transportation, particularly by means other than the car;
- g. Therefore, any proposals for new development (including changes of use) within, or likely to adversely affect the landscape and scenic beauty of Cannock Chase AONB or its setting, will only be allowed where the proposal will enhance the visual, nature conservation and/or historic assets of the landscape.

From: [Consultation](#)
To:
Cc:
Subject: Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service Safety Plan 2020-2024 Consultation
Date: 19 February 2020 11:25:12

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Views sought on our draft Safety Plan 2020-2024

With help from our people and our communities, we are developing our Safety Plan 2020-2024, that will set out our priorities for the next four years.

Our new Safety Plan 2020-2024 will outline the priorities we will adopt and the approach we will take to ensure we do not compromise on our commitment to protecting our local communities, reducing risk and maintaining firefighter safety.

A draft version of this document is available [here](#). We welcome your views about our plans for the future as your opinions really do matter and by listening to them we can make sure we continue to meet the needs of our communities. Visit [here](#) to take part in a short survey about our plans.

Consultation on the draft Safety Plan 2020-2024 is now open and runs from February 17 until March 22, 2020.

Yours faithfully

Rebecca Bryant QFSM MBA BA (Hons) MIFireE Hon DPP
Chief Fire Officer
Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service HQ
Pirehill
Stone
Staffordshire
ST15 0BS

[Unsubscribe](#)

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www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk



For a FREE Safe and Well Visit contact 0800 0241 999 or
<http://www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk/cat.asp>

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Our Draft Safety Plan 2020-2024



www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk



Staffordshire
Fire and Rescue Service
preventing • protecting • responding

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Si vous souhaitez obtenir ce document dans une autre langue ou sous un autre format ou si vous avez besoin des services d'un interprète, veuillez nous contacter.

Urdu

یہ دستاویز اگر آپ کو کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہو، یا اگر آپ کو ترجمان کی خدمات چاہئیں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کیجئے۔

Bengali

যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান অথবা যদি আপনার একজন ইন্টারপ্রেটারের প্রয়োজন হয়, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਾਂ ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਸਮਝਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕਿਸੇ ਇੰਟਰਪ੍ਰੀਟਰ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Arabic

إذا أردت هذه الوثيقة بلغة أخرى أو بطريقة أخرى، أو إذا كنت بحاجة إلى خدمات مترجم، فنرجو أن تقوم بالاتصال بنا.

Chinese

本文件可以翻譯為另一語文版本，或製作成另一格式，如有此需要，或需要傳譯員的協助，請與我們聯絡。

Farsi

اگر این مدرک را به زبانی دیگر یا در فرمتی دیگر می‌خواهید و یا اگر احتیاج به سرویس مترجم دارید، لطفاً با ما تماس بگیرید



0300 330 1000

Welcome to our **Safety Plan**

Our new Safety Plan for 2020–2024 will set out our priorities for protecting Staffordshire over the next four years. We look to build on the success of our previous plans, whilst recognising the challenges we have yet to face. We have been able to deliver an effective and efficient service during the last three years due to good financial planning and the implementation of numerous changes across the organisation. We are one of the best performing fire and rescue services in the country, with a positive culture of embracing change and looking after our people.

We are seeking feedback on the proposals contained within our plan and this document provides the background and rationale for our ideas.

We have worked hard to transform our services and the way we operate to ensure we continue to deliver a first-class emergency response to fires and other emergencies. This transformation will need to continue as public sector finances are set to carry on reducing over the lifetime of this Safety Plan.

The number of deaths and injuries caused by fire have fallen in recent years. As such, we will continue to invest in proactive activities that help prevent fires and other emergencies happening in the first place. However, we cannot be complacent as demand on the fire and rescue service has started to rise, both locally and nationally, with new risks emerging, including terrorism and incidents caused by extreme weather. With these comes increased pressure on our people and our resources. The fire safety work we do with building owners and other partners has increased in the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower fire.

We continually need to review all aspects of the work we do and how we do it. Consideration of new technologies, equipment and training will allow us to explore alternative approaches to how we deliver an effective and efficient service. To meet future demands we need to make sure that we continue to invest in our people, their development and wellbeing, as they are our most valuable asset.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire Rescue Services recently rated us 'good' at making best use of our resources and providing an effective service. We were also rated 'good' at looking after our people and 'outstanding' at promoting the right culture and values.

Our new governance arrangements, under the Staffordshire Commissioner, also offer us new opportunities to collaborate more with other emergency services and partner organisations. Over the next four years, we will actively explore different ways of working where this will help reduce the burden on other public sector services, provide greater value for money and increase public confidence by making our communities safer.

The issues we are likely to face in the years ahead further reinforces the need to work together with our communities, our people, businesses, and many other partners to continue delivering an excellent service in what are likely to be the most challenging times we have faced. After considering the information please complete the survey and let us know your thoughts.



Becci Bryant
Chief Fire Officer

Keeping **Staffordshire** Safe

Identifying and Understanding our Risks

As required by the government's Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, every fire and rescue service must produce a high-level Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) which explains how they use their resources to respond to and reduce the risks they have identified in their local area.

Listening to feedback from our people and our communities, we now call the IRMP for Staffordshire our Safety Plan.

We identify and assess all foreseeable fire and rescue-related risks across Staffordshire and use this information to plan how to control these risks, respond to emergencies and deliver our fire prevention and protection activities in the most efficient and effective way. This means we can make sure we have the right people and resources in the right places at the right time to protect our communities, our buildings, our people and the environment.



Our resources are placed so that we are able to respond to incidents as quickly and as safely as possible. As part of our planning process, we monitor and review the risks within Staffordshire to ensure we remain flexible in our approach and are best placed to suggest improvements where they will benefit the safety of our firefighters and our communities.

This helps us to:

- Improve our knowledge of vulnerability and identify those most at risk
- Better understand the needs of our diverse communities
- Prepare for the challenges ahead.

We continue to use and develop a range of data-driven tools, techniques and modelling programmes to help us monitor, assess and anticipate the impact of future changes in risk and levels of demand. These are key to supporting our risk planning processes. They involve the use of both social and demographic data, consideration of local strategic infrastructure plans, industrial strategies and, information and learning from previous emergency incidents.

The next four years are likely to be the most challenging and uncertain we have known. When planning how we combine our prevention, protection and response activities in the most effective and efficient way possible, we will need to take into account a range of issues, including:

- The changing face of Staffordshire in terms of the risks faced by our communities and our firefighters
- The impact of increased demand upon our services coupled with reduced public sector funding



- The sustainability of our buildings and other assets
- The benefits of new and emerging technologies and tactics.

We will continue to invest in the level of operational training for our staff to ensure that it is effective and meets the foreseeable risks that our firefighters are likely to face in the future.

In planning our response to risk, we work closely with partners including Staffordshire Police, West Midlands Ambulance Service and the Environment Agency. We contribute towards the risk assessment process in the Staffordshire Local Resilience Forum, which produces a community risk register drawing upon local and regional risks set against a national risk framework. Through the Civil Contingencies Unit, we are part of the Staffordshire Resilience Forum and regularly take part in joint exercises and training, testing our Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Principles to ensure we are adequately prepared when crisis hits.

We work with other fire and rescue services and partner organisations to identify new and emerging risks, such as naturally occurring hazards (extreme weather), pandemic illness and malicious threats (including terrorism) and use this intelligence to prepare our firefighters for the types of emergencies they may face.

- In recent years, the number of waste fires and wildfires has increased with several large waste fires at illicit sites and fires involving fly-tipped materials. Extreme weather conditions have already seen hundreds of hours spent tackling wildfires in the Moorlands, which destroyed hundreds of acres of countryside and threatened homes. We have specially-trained waste and wildfire tactical advisors

- Climate change causing wide-scale flooding across Staffordshire and further afield. We have high-volume fire engines and enhanced logistical support vehicles (used during the Cumbria and Thames Valley floods and more recently at the collapse of Whaley Bridge dam)
- As well as aiming to cause physical harm, terrorist attacks now seek to disrupt services by preventing access to buildings or damaging computer systems. We have measures in place involving physical and cyber security, but we must continue to be vigilant and develop our buildings, systems and staff knowledge to keep pace with the threat.

This Safety Plan sets out the priorities, which support our vision of making Staffordshire 'the safest place to be' and are driven by our assessment of the risks across the county. Ensuring that our communities are protected by a first-class fire and rescue service is at the heart of everything that we do. We recognise that delivering these priorities will depend on collaboration, co-operation and effective communication.

Making it **Happen**

Our Priorities

1 Prevention and early intervention

What we aim to do - Develop a detailed community risk profile of Staffordshire, so that we can use our resources in the most efficient and effective way.

To prevent fires and respond promptly and effectively to fires and other emergencies we will:

- Work together with our partners across the county to share information and create a more detailed understanding of the risks to our communities and identify the people and properties most at risk
- Prioritise these risks to ensure our activities have the most positive impact on community safety
- Develop targeted activities to make the most efficient use of our resources and minimise our impact on the environment
- Work with partners to educate our communities and share goals to reduce duplication and inefficiencies in the public sector.

2 Protecting Staffordshire and its people

What we aim to do - Reduce and remove risks in our communities using a combination of prevention, protection and response activities and help make Staffordshire a safer place to live, work and visit.

To protect our people, buildings, the environment and reduce local risk we will:

- Continue to modify and develop our activities to embrace the changing needs of the county and use advances in technology and techniques to ensure our response to emergencies is efficient and effective
- Contribute to building communities which are fit for the future – resilient, healthy and sustainable
- Contribute to ensuring that buildings in Staffordshire are safe for residents and visitors for generations to come
- Ensure that we have the capability to meet new and emerging risks from incidents that may involve flooding, wildfire, terrorism or supporting other emergency services.

3 Public confidence

What we aim to do - Report regularly on our progress and communicate openly about our plans so that, they are clearly understood, meet our legal duties and provide assurance to the public in a way which is transparent and easy to scrutinise.

To maintain public confidence and trust in the service we will:

- Ensure plans and resources are in place to provide a flexible efficient and resilient response to emergency incidents.
- Consult with our communities and listen to our people when developing our plans and services.
- Provide evidence that our activities are based on a recognised need and are targeted where they are needed most.
- Adopt a transparent and easily understood approach to planning and reporting throughout the service.

4 Service reform

What we aim to do - Develop and support a diverse, healthy and highly professional workforce who are motivated and empowered to improve our service.

To ensure we are effective, efficient and able to transform the service to meet the challenges ahead we will:

- Invest in our people by providing them with the right equipment, training and skills to keep them safe, encourage innovation and inspire our future leaders
- Continue to strive to improve the services we provide
- Be honest and open, encouraging people to be themselves and treat each other with kindness and respect
- Promote a positive and supportive culture committed to improving the health, fitness and wellbeing of our people
- Work with our communities and partners to improve the diversity of our workforce.

Our Priorities

1 Prevention and early intervention

Develop a detailed community risk profile of Staffordshire so that we can use our resources in the most efficient and effective way to help prevent fires and protect the most vulnerable people in our communities.

You know that, in an emergency, when you dial 999, we will respond. However, what most people do not realise is that part of our job is to prevent incidents before they happen. We carry out a number of activities, all aimed at making our Staffordshire communities safer and stronger. We know that responding to emergencies is our first duty, but we do not want people to need us in an emergency. We would much rather help prevent fires and other emergencies from happening in the first place. We run a number of services designed to inform and help members of the community to protect their homes and business premises. Whether it is educating children or raising awareness of fire safety among business owners, we know that what we do can have a significant impact - reducing risk and saving lives.

We deliver around 25,000 Safe and Well visits each year. This is part of a nationally-recognised approach taken by fire and rescue services, whereby considering health, social and lifestyle factors alongside fire risks, we will be able to provide support and advice where needed. We work with partners and other agencies to identify the most vulnerable people in our communities and this helps us to be more efficient and effective by targeting our resources where they are needed most.

During these visits, we speak to residents about a wide range of topics, such as fire safety, physical and mental health, wellbeing and general lifestyle choices, in addition to fitting smoke detection where required. We work closely with many partner organisations who can also contribute to improving the wellbeing of an individual, following a referral

from us. In addition to this, we deliver a range of preventative campaigns and interventions such as reducing small deliberate fires (our Flames Aren't Games campaign), focusing on road and water safety, supporting businesses and reducing fire deaths and injuries in accidental dwelling fires by highlighting risks associated with smoking, alcohol, mobility and age (SAME factors).

We also visit around 400 business and other non-domestic premises each year, as it is our legal duty to enforce fire safety legislation. These visits help keep people safe in their homes and the buildings they visit. We know that the tragic fire in Grenfell Tower has highlighted the need to enforce fire safety laws and we want to increase our work in this area.

We know that the structure and use of many buildings has been altered since they were built. Unfortunately, we know that these changes can increase the risk from fire for building users and our firefighters. We have a responsibility and duty to ensure that building owners are keeping their buildings safe and complying with their legal duties. We are increasing the size of our teams who focus on this work and want to increase the number of buildings we inspect.

We would like to target the most vulnerable people to visit and support them with our Safe and Well visits and increase the number of premises we visit to help with their fire safety procedures. How do you feel about us balancing the prevention work we do between keeping buildings and vulnerable people safe?

We will also explore the use of new technology to improve the way we deliver our messages to ensure they have the maximum impact. This has already proved successful with our Safe+Sound interactive pods, which provide an interactive and immersive learning experience for children, young people and other groups to encourage them to be safe and make positive lifestyle choices.

Our Safer Communities, Communities Interest Company (CIC) aims to continue its work within the community and increase its delivery of Prince's Trust programmes in order to help more young people achieve their goals and be safe and healthy. Working with the Prince's Trust, the CIC helps young people aged between 11 and 30 to improve their employability skills and secure further training and education. The CIC also aims to increase the capacity and membership of the Youth Commission so that it can help influence and improve services for children and young people.

We work with partners and share information, data and intelligence to help us improve our understanding of the risks and understand likely vulnerability in our diverse communities. This also allows us to identify current and emerging risks to our organisation and prepare our firefighters for the emergencies they may face. We use information from groups including other emergency services, the Staffordshire Resilience Forum, local authorities, National Health Service and numerous other public and business sector partners where possible to give us a 'joined up' view and richer picture. This helps us all to develop more relevant, efficient and effective public services. We will be reviewing how we can deliver all of our prevention services more

efficiently and effectively. We will be looking to refocus the activities of our teams and assessing how we can deliver the most impact in terms of improving community safety and reducing operational demand.

Where appropriate, and possible, we will explore opportunities for working with partners such as the police, local authorities and other emergency services to deliver some of these activities jointly where we can prove it adds real value to our communities. We will continue to seek opportunities to share premises and information where this will be mutually beneficial and contribute to improving community safety whilst reducing demand on public services and our impact on the environment.

We propose to continue exploring ways of working collaboratively with partners, such as police and health, to improve our effectiveness and efficiency. The focus of this work will be to improve the safety, health and wellbeing of our people and our communities rather than looking primarily to save money. How do you feel about this?



Our **Priorities**

2 Protecting Staffordshire and its people

Reduce and remove risks in our communities using a combination of prevention, protection and response activities and help make Staffordshire a safer place to live, work and visit.

We will work with businesses and other non-domestic premises to help them comply with the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005. We will use intelligence systems and data provided to form a risk profile of non-domestic premises within Staffordshire. We plan our inspection programme around those premises that are at most risk of having a fire, and where a fire is likely to create a risk to life.

We will also use information gathered from visiting premises to plan our response should an emergency occur. Our fire safety teams aim to reduce the risk those premises pose to both members of the public and our firefighters. Where fire safety deficiencies pose an obvious risk to life, we will take formal enforcement action, which can include prosecuting irresponsible business owners.

We will continue to review the findings and outcomes of the independent enquiry following the Grenfell Tower fire. We use any learning from this and other recent incidents to inform and improve our fire safety strategy and policies and

ensure that our teams are suitably trained and resourced. We will continue to work with planning authorities, local authority building control, approved inspectors and architects to ensure buildings are designed with fire safety in mind. This includes ensuring that the potential risks presented by buildings constructed using modern methods of construction such as cladding or timber framed are addressed.

We will promote the use of sprinklers at every opportunity and consider how new technologies and modern methods of construction, e.g. timber framed buildings, can influence building stability and integrity. Sprinklers reduce the risk of large-scale fires developing or spreading, helping to safeguard both residents and firefighters. Our Community Sprinkler Project aims to have sprinklers fitted in all mid to high-rise buildings in Staffordshire by 2026. Our fire engineers will work with the owners of premises housing those most at risk in case of fire to promote the use of sprinklers.

We will continue to develop ways of assessing how we perform operationally, identifying learning to ensure that where appropriate any changes to policy, guidance, equipment and training are implemented in a co-ordinated way. Stations and crewing arrangements will be based on analysis of risk and demand within our communities and taking into account the needs of the whole county. We will explore more flexible ways of working and continue to review how we prepare for and respond to emergencies, including working and learning with others and making the most of technology.



We propose to look at the way we crew our fire engines and review our on-call firefighter duty system to see how we can maximise our availability for responding to emergency calls. Currently, we require on-call firefighters to live or remain within five minutes of a fire station whilst on-call. This restricts the pool of talented people we can recruit. We would like to expand the areas we recruit from, as this will help us to keep our fire engines available. How do you feel about this?

We will plan to respond to all reasonably foreseeable events and ensure that when we experience periods of high demand we can meet the expectations of the public and sustain our efforts without increasing risks to our firefighters. We have arrangements in place to share fire engines and crews across our neighbouring county's borders if the need arises; each arrangement ensures that our neighbours will also help us if our demand rises.

We currently have a range of different vehicles, equipment and crewing systems. We would like to increase the range of options available to us so that we can tailor our approach to best suit each emergency. We believe this would make us more efficient and effective. Do you agree?

We support the Staffordshire Civil Contingencies Unit which co-ordinates multi-agency training, planning for and response to complex incidents that would have a large impact on our county, e.g. pandemic illness, wide-scale flooding or terror related incidents. We have robust business continuity plans in place to deal with major disruption such as floods, cyber-attack, flu pandemic, and loss of a building. We test these regularly to ensure we are resilient and able to respond and carry on should a catastrophic event occur.

The national resilience programme was developed to provide equipment and trained staff which could be sent anywhere in the country to incidents that would otherwise overwhelm local resources. We have high-volume pumping equipment, and enhanced logistical support vehicles (used most recently at the Whaley Bridge dam incident) and detection identification and monitoring teams (to identify unknown chemicals). We also have trained waste fire and wildfire tactical advisors who provide expertise within Staffordshire and can respond nationwide if needed.



Our **Priorities**

3 Public confidence

Report regularly on our progress and communicate openly about our plans so that, they are clearly understood, meet our legal duties and provide assurance to the public in a way which is transparent and easy to scrutinise.

From 1 August 2018, in addition to overseeing Staffordshire Police, the Staffordshire Commissioner became responsible for the governance of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service with responsibility for ensuring the local community is protected by an effective fire and rescue service and holding the Chief Fire Officer to account for delivering that vision.


The commissioner must produce a Fire and Rescue Plan setting out the strategic vision, priorities and objectives for the fire and rescue service in the county. Whilst our plans could be combined, we have agreed to develop separate plans. In line with the Staffordshire Commissioner's term of office, we now look to plan up to four years ahead having a long-term vision of the emerging issues that need to be addressed based on our assessment of the risks faced across Staffordshire. In developing the objectives in our Safety Plan, we have taken into account the four strategic priorities set out in the commissioner's Fire and Rescue Plan.

We propose to publish our Safety Plan as a 'live' document on our website rather than publish in printed format, as this is more efficient and better for the environment. Readers will be able to print their own hard copy for reference if they wish to do so. By doing this, we will also be able to demonstrate the clear links between the priorities in our Safety Plan, the risks we face across Staffordshire, and how our local station plans support our prevention, protection and response activities. This means we can also adapt our plan in line with the changing needs of our communities and clearly show you the impact, or effect, of any changes we make. Do you support this idea?

Underneath this Safety Plan sits a hierarchy of more detailed directorate and departmental plans. We ensure that our plans are simple to understand, revised annually and based on realistic and achievable expectations. Through our planning process, we should be able to evidence and clearly demonstrate why something should be done and importantly to identify how it will make a difference. Public and firefighter safety is paramount, using our finances and resources to deliver better outcomes for our communities. These plans will be available on our website and will show how we use prevention, protection and response activities to prevent fires and other incidents and reduce the impact of identified risks on our communities.

It is important that we review our plans and performance regularly to ensure that we are targeting our activity appropriately and consistently improving and





innovating our prevent, protect and response activities. Our local service delivery Groups ensure that best practice is identified and shared by scrutinising our performance at a very detailed level.

Oversight of our performance is provided by a number of strategic scrutiny boards (both internally and via the Staffordshire Commissioner's office), which provide challenge ensuring we continue to deliver the most efficient and effective service whilst keeping our communities and firefighters safe. Both the commissioner's plan and this Safety Plan are subject to scrutiny by the police, Fire and Crime Panel. Regular public performance meetings are held which include reports on our performance ensuring progress against local and national performance indicators remains on track.

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England requires us to provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters. We do this by publishing an annual Statement of Assurance, which we use as a reporting mechanism to let you know how we are doing and tell you about progress against the objectives in our Safety Plan. We will continue to do this and we will also use it as an opportunity to keep you informed about our plans once we fully understand the impacts of the challenges we face.

The next four years are likely to be the most challenging and uncertain we have known, therefore we will continue to work through various scenarios, which will help us understand and prepare for the possible issues that we may face. This work will help to inform how we consult, engage and where necessary negotiate in order to allocate resources and shape our service to ensure we maintain the best possible outcomes for our staff and our communities.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) carries out its own independent inspections of all 45 fire and rescue services in England in addition to carrying out all national policing assessments.

These inspections focus on three key themes:

- Effectiveness (how effective we are at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks)
- Efficiency (how efficient we are at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks)
- People (how well we look after our people).

HMICFRS ratings are similar to those used by OFSTED for school inspections: Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement or Inadequate. HMICFRS rated us **'good'** at providing an effective service to the public and making the best use of our resources in its latest report, published 17 December 2019. We were also rated **'good'** for looking after our people and **'outstanding'** at promoting the right values and culture.

As part of our planning and performance processes, we consider any findings resulting from these inspections to make sure we continue to drive improvement in everything we do. Inspection reports are available to the public via the HMICFRS website.

www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk

Our Priorities

4 Service reform

Develop and support a diverse, healthy and highly professional workforce who are motivated and empowered to improve our services.

We recognise that our people are our most valuable assets. The people who work and volunteer for us work hard to make sure we are delivering our services efficiently and in the most effective way. We currently have circa 626 firefighters (whole-time and on-call), over 200 support staff and 78 volunteers working in various roles around Staffordshire, all with one common goal; to ensure the people of Staffordshire are as safe as possible. We will ensure our people are equipped and trained to carry out their roles to the best of their ability and to encourage them to reach their full potential.

Our headquarters provides fantastic training facilities using the most real-life scenarios possible. We continue to develop the training and capabilities of firefighters to make sure that we can meet the changing demand caused by new and emerging risks. For example, we have developed and delivered a course dedicated to the incident command of complex waste fires. We provide core prevention training to firefighters and new prevention staff through our accredited community safety module.

The service needs to continually improve, adapt and evolve to be able to thrive in a time of unprecedented change and financial challenge. Our people are at the heart of that. We encourage our people to explore new ways of working and embrace new technology.

We have a strong and enviable record in keeping our people and our communities safe. Over the life of our last Corporate Safety Plan (2017-2020) we made a number of significant changes and transformed the way in which our

services are delivered across Staffordshire, to improve how efficient and effective we are and, to ensure our help is directed where it is needed most, such as:

- Where practical and cost effective, offering and providing shared facilities and response hubs for fire, police, ambulance, health, local authorities and free space for voluntary groups at our community fire stations
- Collaborating with Staffordshire Police to deliver shared services including supplies, logistics, occupational health and a joint transport and engineering facility. Our communications, estates, finance, human resources and procurement teams moved to the police in 2019 creating more shared functions
- The introduction of 11 new fire engines in 2019 equipped with new technology and state-of-the-art equipment helping to improve firefighter safety and the way we respond to incidents



- Developing our multi-agency schools and community safety education programmes with the introduction of our interactive Safe+Sound pods. These offer immersive sessions aimed at encouraging people to make informed and positive lifestyle choices helping to improve their health, safety and wellbeing
- Funding our Community Sprinkler Project, which aims to have sprinklers fitted in all mid to high-rise buildings in Staffordshire by 2026
- Delivering a range of programmes in partnership with the Prince's Trust and our Safer Communities (Community Interest Company) to young people, many whom who have problems associated with a lack of confidence, stress, social isolation, mental ill health and alcohol/substance consumption
- Working with partners to transform our successful home fire risk checks into Safe and Well visits, which now focus on health and wellbeing, as well as fire safety. These visits help to protect the most vulnerable people in our communities and assist in reducing demand upon other public services.

We have achieved all this in the context of reduced funding by remodelling our operational duty systems and crewing methods, reducing the amount of management positions in the organisation and re-designing our staffing models, allowing us to focus on valuable prevention and protection work.

We are confident that our positive approach to transformation and better understanding the needs of our communities places us in an excellent position to continue working in a way that best protects Staffordshire, its people and the environment.

Although our funding for the future is uncertain, we hope to continue to employ the right people who embody the ethos of the service. Our cultural message is at the heart of all we do. We strive to be inspirational role models who motivate each other and promote values of trust and integrity. Treating each other with respect and considering the wellbeing of others is key. Together, with our cultural message underpinning our activities, we aim to ensure Staffordshire is the safest place to be now and in the future.

We put health and wellbeing at the centre of everything we do. As part of our Wellbeing Strategy, we provide a number of ways in which our people can access further support should they need it. We adopt the 'safe person' concept for our operational crews who work in inherently hazardous dynamic environments to ensure their safety at all times.

We propose to continue to strengthen our culture of openness, trust and inclusivity. We will seek to ensure that the makeup of the service reflects the communities we serve. Are there any particular issues that you think we should be focusing on to ensure that we can best understand and support their diverse range of values and needs?

We want our workforce to be more reflective of society at all levels in the organisation. Having a range of perspectives, cultures and experiences brings a greater understanding to our organisation, which contributes to decision making. We will take positive action to help encourage recruitment from under-represented groups. We want to create an inclusive, welcoming environment for our employees, the communities we serve and our partners as we understand these are mutually beneficial relationships.



Our **Funding**

and how we spend it

Our aim is to identify the financial challenges we may face and demonstrate how we intend to mitigate the impact of these and to manage our budgets to deliver services to our communities.

The Staffordshire Commissioner is ultimately responsible for the finances of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service. Our two main sources of funding are:

- Settlement Funding Assessment from central government (this includes a share of local business rates)
- Council Tax, collected on our behalf by the nine local authorities in Staffordshire.

The draft Local Government Finance Settlement for 2020/21 was received on 20 December 2019. The provisional settlement, issued by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, included protection for vital services by increasing core settlement resources, which includes Revenue Support Grant and business rates baseline funding levels, in line with inflation; and by continuing other key grants from 2019/20.

The Settlement Funding for the Staffordshire

Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority included an inflationary increase in Revenue Support Grant (RSG) set at 1.63%. This is the first increase for a number of years, with RSG reducing by £9.0m during the period 2012/13 to 2019/20 following a number of years of reduced funding across the public sector. The decision by the Staffordshire Commissioner to increase the local council tax funding for the service by 1.99% was agreed by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel at its meeting on 10 February 2020. A 1.99% increase in Council Tax is equivalent to an additional £1.51 per annum (three pence per week) and would increase Band D Council Tax for the Staffordshire Commissioner to £77.24 (circa £1.48 per week).

The decision will provide a small increase in funding which will help us to make further progress to deliver on our priorities for protecting people across Staffordshire. Over the last three years, due to good financial planning and the implementation of numerous changes across the organisation to transform our services and the way we operate, we have continued to deliver a first-class emergency response to fires and other emergencies. We need to continue to deliver on the savings

identified within our Efficiency Plan, which we are on track to deliver by March 2020. We are continually exploring our options for developing and improving the services we provide to ensure that we are as efficient and effective as possible and fit for the future.

We have been able to deliver an effective and efficient service during the last three years due to good financial planning. We have also implemented a number of changes across the organisation, such as remodelling our operational duty systems and crewing methods, reducing the amount of management positions in the organisation and re-designing our staffing models allowing us to focus on valuable prevention and protection work.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services has rated us **'Good'** at making the best use of our resources and making our services affordable.

However, uncertainty around future funding may mean we have some difficult choices to make. As a fire and rescue service, are there any other areas you feel we should be looking at?

Whilst we are confident that our positive approach to change and our understanding of the needs of our communities places us in an excellent position to continue working in a way that best supports the people of Staffordshire, funding cuts combined with additional pay and pension pressures may mean we have some difficult choices to make in the future. The way in which we respond to emergencies will have to change in order to meet the financial challenges of a reducing budget.



Our **Future**

Your opinion matters to us

We are accountable to you for the services we provide, so we aim to involve as many people as possible when we are developing our Safety Plan. These conversations with our communities, our people, partners, representative bodies and other stakeholders will help us to improve our understanding about your expectations and the services you require from us.

We will use the feedback from these conversations to help influence and develop our plans as we look to deal with future challenges and ensure that we deliver the best outcomes for our people and the communities of Staffordshire.

As our plans develop over the next four years we want you to help us to shape, improve and transform our prevention, protection and response activities to make Staffordshire safer, meet the challenges of reduced public sector funding and reflect the changing demands and risks placed on the service. When we have specific proposals to discuss, we propose that we will consult with you in more detail. We will do so in a way that helps us understand the effects of such proposals whilst making best use of our resources. Do you agree with this approach?

We will be exploring ways in which we can continue to improve how we do things and look to transform the service to make best use of our people, places and resources. We will consider:

- The way we crew our fire engines
- Our on-call firefighter duty system to see how we can maximise our availability for responding to emergency calls
- Reviewing the way we use, and crew, our specialist vehicles and equipment so that we respond in the most effective and efficient way
- Working collaboratively with partners to improve the safety, health and wellbeing of our people and communities
- The range and scope of the fire safety work we do to help keep people safe in their homes and the buildings they work in and visit
- The way we share our estate with Staffordshire Police where it will benefit the service and our communities.

Consultation on this draft Safety Plan runs from 17 February 2020 until 22 March 2020. To find out more please visit www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk and take part in a short survey about our plans.

We would welcome your opinion about our future proposals and the way, in which we combine our prevention, protection and response activities to make Staffordshire safer, meet the challenges of reduced public sector funding and reflect the changing demands and risks placed on our people and resources.

When we have specific proposals to discuss, we will consult in a way that is proportionate and targeted so we best understand the effects of a proposal on those groups affected. The way we consult on proposals will depend on the issues being considered, who needs to be consulted and available time and resources.

If you would like to take part in future consultation, or you are interested in providing us your feedback, thoughts or suggestions please email us at consultation@staffordshirefire.gov.uk





Staffordshire
Fire and Rescue Service
preventing • protecting • responding

Contact

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters
Pirehill
Stone
Staffordshire
ST15 0BS



www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk

From: [Victoria Barraclough](#)
To: [Fulford](#); [Town Clerk](#); [Michael Dodson](#); [Peter Roycroft](#); [Angela Loughran](#); [Anne Hobbs](#); [Ian Fordham](#); [Rob Kenney](#); [Phil Leason](#)
Subject: Payphones
Date: 20 February 2020 11:32:25
Attachments: [image240460.png](#)
[Consult form.pdf](#)
[Consult letter.pdf](#)

Good Morning all

We have received the attached letter from BT, they are looking to remove payphones in your parish/ward areas.

We have until the 14th May to provide our response so to enable us to collate this please could we have your comments back by 5pm Friday 27th March. These comments should also include whether you agree, object or wish to adopt.

Kind regards

Vicki



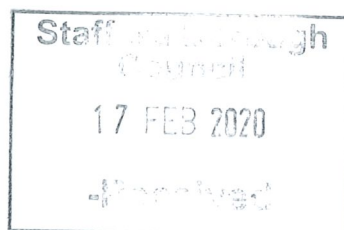
Victoria Barraclough | Planning Support Lead
Stafford Borough Council | Civic Centre | Riverside | Stafford | ST16 3AQ
01785 619327 | VBarraclough@staffordbc.gov.uk | www.staffordbc.gov.uk

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Chief Planning Officer
Stafford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Riverside
Stafford
ST16 3AQ



14 February 2020

TIME SENSITIVE - 90 Day Consultation period end date: 14 May 2020

Dear Chief Planning Officer,

We're continually reviewing the demand for our payphones. Further to our letter of 12 September 2019 we've now identified an additional 4 public payphones that we're proposing for removal under the 90 day consultation process and details of these payphones are attached. We'd welcome your feedback on whether the payphones in question are still needed. We greatly appreciate your help with this.

To ensure that the local community are fully informed, we have placed consultation notices on the relevant payphones, and a sample notice is enclosed. We have also included the date we posted these notices on the payphones. The consultation period will close on 14 May 2020.

This consultation process gives your local communities the opportunity to adopt a traditional red 'heritage' phone box and make it an asset that local people can enjoy. It's really simple to do and it costs just £1 - <http://bt.com/adopt>

Overall use of payphones has declined by over 90 per cent in the last decade and the need to provide payphones for use in emergency situations is diminishing all the time, with at least 98 per cent of the UK having either 3G or 4G coverage. This is important because as long as there is network coverage, it's now possible to call the emergency services, even when there is no credit or no coverage from your own mobile provider.

You may also want to consider Ofcom's affordability report which found that most people do not view payphones as essential for most consumers in most circumstances -

http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/affordability/affordability_report.pdf

On the 14 March 2006 Ofcom published a statement following their 2005 review of universal service in the telecommunications market, which includes a requirement for payphone provision to meet reasonable needs. Part of that statement amended our obligations with regard to the removal of payphone service:

https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0021/34266/statement.pdf

As stated in Ofcom's 2005 review, it is the responsibility of the local authority to initiate its own consultation process to canvas the views of the local community. They would normally expect these consultations to involve other public organisations such as parish or community councils and work within the terms of the Communications Act 2003. This means that you must be able to objectively justify your decisions.

Full guidance on the removal process can be viewed at:

<http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/consultations/uso/statement/removals.pdf>

and a summary is available at:

http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/consultations/uso/statement/removing_callboxes.pdf

The guidance also details the appeals process we must follow in case of unreasonable objections.

What you need to do next

Please complete and return the attached annex with your decision on each payphone.

If the decision is that the local community wish to 'adopt', please provide their contact details and we'll do the rest.

If you wish to 'object', you'll need to complete the last column with your reasons, having reviewed all of the factors set out in Annex 1 of Ofcom's guidance (see link above), and the information sent to you in our previous letter.

If the information is incomplete for any payphone in the list, then we'll assume you have no objection to its removal and also that you do not wish to adopt it.

The best way to respond to us is by email at btp.authorisation.team@bt.com. Please retain proof that the email was sent or apply a read receipt. If you would prefer to respond by post please use the following address and allow at least two days for postal delivery:

BT Payphones

pp 4th Floor Monument TE
11 – 13 Great Tower Street
London
EC3R 5AQ

You will need to obtain proof of postage and be aware that we are unable to receive mail that requires a signature.

If you've got any questions then please get in touch with us by emailing btp.authorisation.team@bt.com.

Yours sincerely

Rick Thompson
Payphone Planning Officer

Please use this annex and return in this format to ensure that the telephone number of the kiosk is clearly shown.

A separate sheet can be used for further comments if required.

If you would like an electronic copy of this letter, please e mail bt.authorisation.team@bt.com

Stafford

| | Telephone Number | Address | Post Code | Number of calls in last 12 months | Posting Completed Date | Agree/ Adopt/ Object | Comments/Reasons |
|---|------------------|--|-----------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| 1 | 01782388520 | NEAR THE WHITE COCK PC01 UTTOXETER ROAD BLYTHE BRIDGE STOKE-ON-TRENT | ST11 9JG | 77 | 27/01/2020 | | |
| 2 | 01785228016 | O/S POST OFFICE PC03 BURTON SQUARE STAFFORD | ST17 9LT | 449 | 27/01/2020 | | |
| 3 | 01785812384 | OUTSIDE NUMBER 19 PC01 QUEENS SQUARE STONE | ST15 8JA | 33 | 27/01/2020 | | |
| 4 | 01785818028 | OUTSIDE MEAKIN HOUSE PC01 NEWCASTLE ROAD STONE | ST15 8LB | 42 | 27/01/2020 | | |
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Signature:

Area: Stafford

Stone Town Council - Non-Cheque Payments

The table below lists non-cheque payments made by the Council in the period since the last report, for the Committee's information.

The table includes payments by direct debit, telephone banking and online banking. It excludes salary and related payments, payments from the Mayor's Charity, and transfers between the Council's bank accounts, which can be seen by any Member on request. All amounts exclude VAT.

| Date | Reference | Supplier | Description | Amount | Month |
|------------|--------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|---------|--------|
| 02/01/2020 | Elec 19/042 | Water Plus | Water charges 29 Aug - 20 Dec 2019 | £70.50 | Jan-20 |
| 02/01/2020 | Elec 19/042 | Water Plus | Water charges 29 Aug - 20 Dec 2019 | £273.61 | Jan-20 |
| 02/01/2020 | D/Dbt 19/014 | Prism Solutions | Analogue line | £46.69 | Jan-20 |
| 03/01/2020 | D/Dbt 19/014 | Stafford Borough Council | Rates - FJC | £427.00 | Jan-20 |
| 03/01/2020 | D/Dbt 19/014 | Stafford Borough Council | Rates - MKT | £114.00 | Jan-20 |
| 03/01/2020 | D/Dbt 19/014 | Stafford Borough Council | Rates - STN | £221.00 | Jan-20 |
| 06/01/2020 | Elec 19/042 | Veolia ES (UK) Ltd | Waste collection - Dec 19 - FJC | £119.43 | Jan-20 |
| 06/01/2020 | Elec 19/042 | Veolia ES (UK) Ltd | Waste collection - Dec 19 - STN | £107.43 | Jan-20 |
| 06/01/2020 | D/Dbt 19/014 | EE | Caretaker's mobile STN | £20.83 | Jan-20 |
| 06/01/2020 | D/Dbt 19/014 | EE | Caretaker's mobile FJC | £20.83 | Jan-20 |
| 09/01/2020 | Elec 19/042 | Virgin Media Business | Tele calls Dec 19/ rental Jan 20 | £40.84 | Jan-20 |
| 09/01/2020 | Elec 19/042 | Stafford Borough Council | Qtly rent of office accom | £150.00 | Jan-20 |
| 13/01/2020 | Elec 19/043 | Angel Springs Ltd | Water cooler charges - STN | £5.50 | Jan-20 |
| 13/01/2020 | Elec 19/043 | Angel Springs Ltd | Water cooler charges - FJC | £10.00 | Jan-20 |
| 13/01/2020 | Elec 19/043 | Virgin Media Business | Qtly broadband - Jan 20 | £51.75 | Jan-20 |
| 13/01/2020 | Elec 19/043 | Angel Springs Ltd | Water cooler charges - Office | £11.00 | Jan-20 |
| 13/01/2020 | Elec 19/043 | EDG Security Limited | Remedial work - fire alarm - STN | £54.00 | Jan-20 |
| 13/01/2020 | D/Dbt 19/015 | British Gas Lite | Elec - 61 High St pillar | £13.07 | Jan-20 |
| 13/01/2020 | D/Dbt 19/015 | British Gas Lite | Elec - 30 High St pillar | £9.12 | Jan-20 |
| 15/01/2020 | Elec 19/043 | MEB Total Ltd | 6mth emergency light - FJC | £118.65 | Jan-20 |
| 15/01/2020 | Elec 19/043 | MEB Total Ltd | Itly fire alarm test - FJC | £67.64 | Jan-20 |
| 15/01/2020 | D/Dbt 19/015 | British Gas | Elec-FJC - Nov 19 | £123.80 | Jan-20 |
| 16/01/2020 | Elec 19/045 | Sage UK Ltd | Payroll Annual Lic Plan | £255.00 | Jan-20 |
| 16/01/2020 | D/Dbt 19/015 | Sage UK Ltd | Transaction charges | £15.00 | Jan-20 |
| 17/01/2020 | Elec 19/045 | J G Fenn Ltd | Stationery | £19.99 | Jan-20 |
| 20/01/2020 | Elec 19/045 | Mr David Littlehales | Repair to broken window | £6.17 | Jan-20 |
| 20/01/2020 | Elec 19/045 | Mr David Littlehales | Repair to broken window | £4.46 | Jan-20 |
| 21/01/2020 | D/Dbt 19/015 | World Pay | Transaction charges | £12.50 | Jan-20 |
| 21/01/2020 | D/Dbt 19/015 | World Pay | Transaction charges | £12.44 | Jan-20 |
| 21/01/2020 | D/Dbt 19/015 | British Gas | Gas - STN - Dec 19 | £426.15 | Jan-20 |

| Date | Reference | Supplier | Description | Amount | Month |
|------------|--------------|--|-------------------------------------|---------|--------|
| 22/01/2020 | Elec 19/046 | Stone Gazette Ltd | Advertising - FJC & STN | £360.00 | Jan-20 |
| 22/01/2020 | D/Dbt 19/015 | British Gas | Gas - FJC - Dec 19 | £436.22 | Jan-20 |
| 23/01/2020 | Elec 19/046 | Prism Solutions | Renewal of domain certificate | £134.40 | Jan-20 |
| 23/01/2020 | D/Dbt 19/015 | British Gas | Elec - STN - Dec 19 | £97.19 | Jan-20 |
| 24/01/2020 | Elec 19/046 | BMA Window Cleaner | Cleaning of windows - STN | £25.00 | Jan-20 |
| 24/01/2020 | Elec 19/046 | J G Fenn Ltd | Stationery | £70.44 | Jan-20 |
| 24/01/2020 | Elec 19/046 | BMA Window Cleaner | Cleaning of windows - FJC | £65.00 | Jan-20 |
| 27/01/2020 | D/Dbt 19/015 | Prism Solutions | ICT costs | £635.13 | Jan-20 |
| 28/01/2020 | Elec 19/047 | Hammond Hygiene Solutions Ltd | Floor polish - FJC | £23.90 | Jan-20 |
| 29/01/2020 | Elec 19/047 | Miscellaneous | Food - Pig Race | £324.00 | Jan-20 |
| 31/01/2020 | D/Dbt 19/015 | NatWest | Bank charges - Jan 2020 | £41.28 | Jan-20 |
| 31/01/2020 | Elec 19/047 | Current Electrical & Property Services | Setting up of marquees - January 20 | £300.00 | Jan-20 |