

CANNOCK WOOD PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2022 - 2039



Cannock Wood and Castle Ring Iron Age hillfort, photographed on 9 October 2008 ©Historic England Archive (20829/52)

SUBMISSION VERSION

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View from Castle Ring looking north-east

Foreword

This draft Neighbourhood Plan (NP) has been drawn up in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 to give the residents of the Parish a greater say in how Cannock Wood will develop in the future.

Following extensive consultation, including surveys delivered to every household, a clear majority voiced concern about future development in or around the village.

Cannock Wood has a tightly drawn settlement boundary set within the Green Belt as shown on the map in Figure 1. It is wholly within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which offers some protection from development outside the settlement boundary. Its elevation gives wonderful vistas in many directions which are greatly valued by respondents to the surveys. In addition, we are fortunate to have two sites of historic significance, Castle Ring and a medieval moated site and bloomery in Courtbanks Covert.

It is clear from the survey responses that, for the majority of residents, we should keep any future development within the settlement boundary, maintain the rural character of the village and preserve the wonderful views. The policies contained in this draft NP aim to do this and to establish a blueprint for the future, protecting the character and beauty of the area.

The draft NP will be submitted to Cannock Chase District Council (CCDC) under regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Plan (General) Regulations. The final version (amended, if necessary, after examination) will need to be approved at a referendum by the electorate of Cannock Wood before it becomes a key part of the planning framework of CCDC and will influence all future planning decisions in Cannock Wood Parish.

This draft plan has been produced by a Working Group of Parish Councillors and committed and hard-working residents. Thanks to all who have worked so hard to produce this document.

Cannock Wood Parish Council, May 2022.



Park Gate Barn

The Neighbourhood Plan covers the whole of Cannock Wood Parish



Figure 1: Cannock Wood Parish (Designated Area) and Settlement Boundary

Boundary of Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan designated area



Indication of settlement boundary



(see Cannock Chase District Council planning policy map for the definitive settlement boundary)

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View from Castle Ring car park south towards Barr Beacon

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

Why a Neighbourhood Plan for Cannock Wood Parish?

Cannock Wood Parish Council (PC) began exploring in late 2017 the advantages, disadvantages and the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. In June 2018 the PC distributed a paper questionnaire to all households asking a range of simple questions based on guidance produced by central government. As the results¹ of the questionnaire indicated that a clear majority of the residents had concerns over the village's potential development, both at the time and in the future, the PC² decided on 20th September 2018 to develop a Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) for the Parish. With appropriate planning policies and guidance, the Plan would address several issues affecting the area, in particular:

- Issue 1 Housing
- Issue 2 Preserving and Enhancing the Landscape, Character and Views including supporting the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Green Belt designations and boundaries
- Issue 3 Transport and Road safety for all road users including pedestrians
- Issue 4 Maintaining and Protecting key assets in the area such as Castle Ring and Community Facilities

Some of the issues identified from the questionnaire that fall outside the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan may form the focus of new projects and voluntary activities in the village.

By working with Cannock Chase District Council, Cannock Wood Parish Council established that a Neighbourhood Plan would be a good way to address these issues. The Plan sets out the vision and objectives for the future of the Civil Parish of Cannock Wood and establishes how that vision and those objectives will be achieved by identifying planning policies and guidance specific to land use and development within the Parish boundary.



Public footpath CW2 looking north-east

Evidence base references in Appendix 1

¹ Summary results of June 2018 survey

² Minutes of Parish Council meetings 2018-2022

Cannock Wood

Cannock Wood is a village and civil parish in the Cannock Chase District of Staffordshire, England. The parish includes Castle Ring, an Iron Age hillfort, at the highest part of Cannock Chase with an altitude of 242 metres above sea level. Cannock Chase is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Cannock Wood is the only village that is completely within the boundaries of the AONB.

The elevated position of Cannock Wood offers long panoramic views in many directions which are highly valued by residents. Castle Ring is a Site of Biological Importance and the close proximity of Gentleshaw Common, a Site of Special Scientific Interest adjoining the parish, means Cannock Wood and its surrounding Green Belt is a haven of tranquillity and wildlife and of importance for biodiversity.

Castle Ring is one of two Scheduled Monuments in this small parish of just over 1,000 inhabitants. The second is a medieval Moated site and bloomery at Courtbanks Covert. Also close to this site is Nun's Well, where a spring rises in a chamber cut from rock that is covered by a Tudor style brickwork arch beneath a venerable tree.

Historically Cannock Chase formed part of the hunting grounds of kings and bishops until the mid-16th century when Henry VIII gave lands to Sir William Paget and part of what remains of their Beaudesert stately home and estate is within Cannock Wood. Under the ownership of the Pagets (later styled the Marquesses of Anglesey), the coal and iron resources of Cannock Chase were exploited and there was a pit at Cannock Wood from 1775 until 1973.

In 1666 Cannock Wood was a hamlet of eighteen houses and White's 1851 Gazetteer records that Cannock Wood had "a few good farms, and 275 inhabitants, and includes a large portion of the open heath, where there are a number of cottages, with small plots of garden attached". Until the 1930s there was still just a small number of homes scattered around the parish, mostly farmhouses or cottages where there had been informal enclosure of the surrounding heathland. There had been some limited development in the late 1920s when a row of semi-detached properties was built overlooking the newly built covered reservoir and extensive Playing Field which is held in trust for the village. During the 1930s Beaudesert Hall was largely demolished, its extensive gardens and woodland were vested into a charity 'The King George V Memorial Scout and Guide Recreation Lands' for the use of Scouts, Guides and other young people; the estate is private property and there is no general public access in line with the Trust's safeguarding policy.



Playing field looking south over houses on Buds Road to Barr Beacon

The aerial photograph shown in Figure 2 below was taken in 1956, shortly before the main development phase during the 1960s and 1970s.



Figure 2: Castle Ring and Cannock Wood, 6th April 1956
Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photography © copyright reserved.

As part of this, a Village Hall was built in 1967 after sustained community fundraising on land kindly donated and held in trust for the inhabitants of Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw. The Village Hall is much used and there is a primary school and a church just over the road from Cannock Wood in Gentleshaw, which is in the Longdon Parish of Lichfield District. There is one combined community of Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw despite the administrative separation of Parish and District Council boundary lines. There is a small historic Methodist Chapel and there are two pubs in Cannock Wood and two more just the other side of the parish boundary in Gentleshaw.

In 2022 Cannock Wood has 441 homes and is a mainly residential area within the tightly drawn settlement boundary, but the pattern of scattered dwellings is still present in the areas outside the settlement boundary which are designated Green Belt.



Extensive horse-grazing at Court Bank Farm

fringed by parts of Cannock Chase Forest and other mixed woodland, the Green Belt land accommodates a commercial livery, as well as farmland used as hayfields and for grazing cattle, sheep and horses, and some is maintained under the Countryside Stewardship scheme.

Engagement

In 2021 Cannock Wood Parish Council set up a Working Group to oversee the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan). The Working Group was asked to develop a consultation and engagement strategy allowing the residents of Cannock Wood to be involved throughout the process. By following this strategy, residents have been consulted as widely and thoroughly as possible to ensure that the draft and final Plan is representative of the views of residents. The voluntary Working Group membership itself comprises a dozen or more residents as well as Parish Council representation. The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by Cannock Wood residents for Cannock Wood residents.

The consultation and engagement strategy has been principally based on the distribution to every household in the parish of printed documents at various stages in the process. Whilst the same documents have been made available as pdfs on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the Parish Council's website www.cannockwood.org, the requirement for paper distribution to all households was recognised to ensure that there was no digital divide within the community.

Signage has also been used to raise awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan at various consultation points, an example of which is shown in Figure 3. An email address for queries and feedback has been publicised on the signage. Provision has been made for residents to address any queries or feedback verbally at Parish Council meetings and a local telephone number was made available when the survey was delivered for additional copies to be requested or if help was needed.



Figure 3: signage used to raise awareness and promote engagement

The Neighbourhood Plan survey conducted in November 2021 was a fundamental part of the development of the Plan. It was a comprehensive document that provided an explanation about the process and included a draft Vision statement for comments as well as a range of questions. Detailed analysis was prepared of the survey responses and the full survey results including every comment made were published on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the PC website. Results relevant to local organisations were provided to them in bespoke documents between December 2021 and February 2022. As the survey responses showed a 97.5% approval rating for the draft Vision statement, draft Objectives for the Plan were then developed to support the Vision.

In February 2022 a second major printed document providing summary highlights of the Survey Results and the Draft Objectives was distributed to every household and published online. A Village Drop-in Event was held at the Village Hall on Saturday 19th February 2022 offering residents the opportunity to chat to the Working Group members and their consultant about the Neighbourhood Plan, ask any questions and provide feedback about the draft Objectives. This was a well-publicised event through invitations within formal printed documents, online through Nextdoor and through signage within and at three entry points to the village as shown in Figure 3 above. Public comments on the Draft Objectives and supporting text were explicitly encouraged and facilitated and that feedback was in turn used to inform the development of Draft Policies.

In early March 2022, a printed document of the Draft Policies was distributed to every household and published online. Responses were strongly encouraged using a tick box for ease of completion and analysis, whilst also being entirely open to comments and suggestions. Cannock Chase District

Council (CCDC), Staffordshire County Council (SCC) and Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) were informally consulted on the Draft Policies in March 2022 and all generously made time to respond. The Draft Policies were revised taking into account feedback from residents, CCDC, SCC and AONB and the revised wording is presented in this Pre-Submission consultation.

More detail and a full list of the printed documents circulated to all residents for consultation and published online is provided in Appendix 4.



Ivy Lane looking south-west towards Court Bank Farm and Nunswell Park

SECTION 2 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

VISION

Based on engagement with both residents and local businesses, Cannock Wood Parish Council developed a Vision statement for the future of Cannock Wood and this was consulted on in the November 2021 survey. The survey responses showed a 97.5% approval rating for the Vision for the village set out below.

Cannock Wood should

- be a village apart from urban sprawl surrounded by a sea of Green Belt,
- have long countryside views and ready access to open spaces,
- reinforce its local distinctiveness as a haven of tranquillity and wildlife.

Cannock Wood housing should be

- of a high standard of design and use appropriate materials,
- a mix of properties of appropriate size according to residents' needs,
- sustainably and sensitively developed within a tightly drawn settlement boundary to respect and enhance the AONB setting which is so important to the village.

Cannock Wood residents will have greater well-being

- as part of a friendly and cohesive community,
- as a mix of families and those of retirement age,
- by having access to important community facilities and services,
- by taking steps together to improve the village we call home.



Public footpath in Cannock Chase forest

OBJECTIVES

Cannock Wood Parish Council aims to work towards realising the shared Vision by achieving the following Objectives.

OBJECTIVE 1: HOUSING
Ensure that any new housing is of high quality and well designed, is appropriate for the needs of the area and respects the character of the village.

The consensus from the survey is that the housing stock in the village is generally adequate but any new development should focus upon appropriate housing types such as smaller bungalows or starter homes.

A Design Code can help articulate what “good design” and “high quality” mean including considering aspects such as:

- Materials – traditional brick or render or other sympathetic materials.
- Green spaces and space around properties, avoiding removal of existing native hedgerows and trees and encouraging the planting of native hedges and trees.
- Scale and proportion in relation to surrounding buildings and setting in the village and wider landscape.
- Maintaining views for existing residents and glimpsed views between properties.
- Inclusion of features to improve energy conservation and future accessibility and adaptability.
- Provision of adequate porous off-road parking, minimising surface water run-off, and landscaped with hedges and trees to screen parking.



Hayfield Hill looking towards Bradwell Lane



Stang Lane looking towards the forest



Chestall Road

OBJECTIVE 2: LOCAL CHARACTER

New development should respect local character, protect landscape character and reflect local vernacular or high-quality contemporary design and be fully integrated into the Parish.

The Survey has shown that people value the character of the area very highly and that this should be respected. A Character Assessment can identify the elements that contribute to the distinctive character of the Parish possibly including specific character areas within the Parish boundary so as to distinguish between them. A Design Code can indicate suitable approaches to respect the local character.



Chapel Lane looking south-west with farmland and woodland rising beyond



Panoramic view through 90° from Chapel Lane from west round to north

OBJECTIVE 3: VIEWS

Views, in particular the long panoramic views which are so important to residents in Cannock Wood, should be protected and where possible enhanced.

Cannock Wood, given its elevation, enjoys long panoramic views. There are also many important views through and into the Parish from outside the Settlement boundary. Some protection already exists but views can be better protected and enhanced by identifying and documenting them and reflecting their importance in policy. There may also be opportunities to enhance views through selected clearance of overgrown areas.



View looking east from public footpath CW3 with Lichfield Cathedral in the middle distance



View from Holly Hill Road looking south-west



View from Park Gate Road looking south over Bradwell Lane to Barr Beacon and beyond

OBJECTIVE 4: GREEN BELT

Support the aim of the Green Belt to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.

National Policy provides protection for land identified as Green Belt as follows:

"Protecting Green Belt land

137. The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

138. Green Belt serves five purposes:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land."*

The area of the parish outside the settlement boundary is green belt and there is overwhelming support for that designation to continue to apply where it does now.



View from public footpath CW5 over Shaw Brook to Christchurch, Gentleshaw

OBJECTIVE 5: CASTLE RING

Protect and enhance Castle Ring.

Threats to Castle Ring include mountain biking and horse-riding and potential inappropriate access interventions. Castle Ring belongs to Cannock Chase District Council and has protection in policy already. We see benefits for the community to be involved in any planned alterations or maintenance to the site.

OBJECTIVE 6: AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB)

Protect the scenic natural beauty, landscape character and tranquil wildlife habitats of the AONB.

The AONB gives substantial protection from major development but it does not completely prevent development. It is important that any development should be appropriate for the area both in scale and proportion, particularly at the sensitive edges of the Settlement Boundary.



View over hayfield looking south-east to Gentleshaw Common and beyond

OBJECTIVE 7: BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

Protect and enhance the biodiversity and wildlife of the parish including tree and hedgerow coverage.

Where there is development, biodiversity gain can be achieved through measures such as enhancing hedgerows and trees and by linking areas of biodiversity together through green corridors / wildlife connectivity corridors.

Opportunities may exist to designate new local nature reserves and enhancement opportunities for Biodiversity Net Gain.



View looking west from Gentleshaw Common over horse pastures to woodland beyond



View looking west to Courtbanks Covert and woodland beyond

OBJECTIVE 8: LIGHT POLLUTION

Minimise light pollution wherever possible especially within rural areas.

This supports the Dark Skies project being run by the AONB and Campaign to Protect Rural England to promote better:

- appreciation and enjoyment of the wonder of dark skies in Cannock Chase AONB, and
- understanding of the effects of light pollution on human well-being, wildlife and sustainability.

OBJECTIVE 9: FOOTPATHS

Seek to improve provision for pedestrians in the village in terms of accessibility, safety and quality.

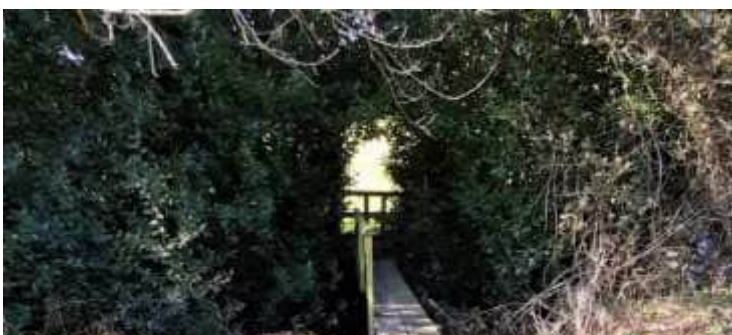
Opportunities for improvements to pedestrian movement can be identified, for example the entrance to the footpath from Holly Hill Road/Chestall Road alongside Gentleshaw Reservoir and checking that Rights of Way are accessible. Some of these can be supported through policies in the Neighbourhood Plan while others may require complementary interventions such as lobbying Staffordshire County Council for improvements.



Public footpath CW6



Public footpath CW3



Public footpath CW5

OBJECTIVE 10: ROADS

Seek to improve road safety in the village for all users by working with the relevant authorities.

Opportunities for improvements to road safety can be identified, for example at the junction of Buds Road and Chestall Road and the speed of vehicles using Cumberledge Hill, Hayfield Hill and Buds Road. These can be supported in a number of ways such as lobbying Staffordshire County Council for highways improvements but are less likely to be enabled through land use planning policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.



Park Gate Road junction with Gilwell Road and Bradwell Lane



Inconsiderate parking, congestion and speeding traffic create dangers for all road users and pedestrians

OBJECTIVE 11: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Strive to ensure that the community facilities and amenities are appropriate for the needs of the parish, allowing residents of all ages the opportunity to take part in activities that lead to a sense of individual and/or community well-being.

This is important to people in the parish and a number of options can be explored such as improving communication with respect to use of existing facilities, identifying opportunities to develop other facilities that might be appropriate given the AONB/Green Belt context and providing protection for existing community facilities. “Community facilities” might include function rooms, shops, leisure and recreation or health and educational facilities and may be enclosed or open air and may be multi-functional.



Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Village Hall



Playing field on a match day, with play equipment, pavilion and basketball court beyond

OBJECTIVE 12: PUBLIC REALM

Support improvement to the public realm.

Public realm improvements can include enhanced areas of public realm such as high quality-public open space and safe pedestrian priority.



Corner of Gilwell Road and High Meadow



High Meadow



Pineside Avenue



Sycamore Hill



Planter in verge on Sycamore Hill



Junction of Sycamore Hill, Bradwell Lane, Cumberledge Hill and Hayfield Hill

DELIVERING THE VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Cannock Wood Parish Council aims to achieve the Objectives above through the Neighbourhood Planning Policies set out in the following section. Some Objectives have a single corresponding Policy and others are a theme reflected in multiple Policies as set out Table 1 below. There are some elements of the shared Vision which are outside the scope of Planning Policies and Cannock Wood Parish Council will seek to work alongside community groups and other volunteers on projects to meet those aspirations.

Table 1: Policies arising from each Objective

OBJECTIVES	POLICIES
OBJECTIVE 1: HOUSING Ensure that any new housing is of high quality and well designed, is appropriate for the needs of the area and respects the character of the village.	CW1: HOUSING DESIGN
	CW7: PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE CANNOCK CHASE AONB
OBJECTIVE 2: LOCAL CHARACTER New development should respect local character/protect landscape character and reflect local vernacular or high-quality contemporary design and be fully integrated into the Parish.	CW2: LOCAL CHARACTER
	CW3: NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS
	CW4: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT
	CW6: PROTECT AND ENHANCE LANDSCAPE HERITAGE
OBJECTIVE 3: VIEWS Views, in particular the long, panoramic views which are so important to residents in Cannock Wood, should be protected and where possible enhanced.	CW5: VIEWS AND VISTAS
	CW6: PROTECT AND ENHANCE LANDSCAPE HERITAGE
	CW7: PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE CANNOCK CHASE AONB
OBJECTIVE 4: GREEN BELT Support the aim of the Green Belt to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.	CW7: PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE CANNOCK CHASE AONB
	CW14: VILLAGE BOUNDARY
OBJECTIVE 5: CASTLE RING Protect and enhance Castle Ring.	CW6: PROTECT AND ENHANCE LANDSCAPE HERITAGE
OBJECTIVE 6: AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY Protect the scenic natural beauty, landscape character and tranquil wildlife habitats of the AONB.	CW7: PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE CANNOCK CHASE AONB
	CW9: TRANQUILLITY AND LIGHT POLLUTION
OBJECTIVE 7: BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE Protect and enhance the biodiversity and wildlife of the parish including tree and hedgerow coverage.	CW6: PROTECT AND ENHANCE LANDSCAPE HERITAGE
	CW8: PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY OF THE PARISH INCLUDING TREE AND HEDGEROW COVERAGE
	CW10: FOOTPATH AND BRIDLEWAY IMPROVEMENTS
	CW13: PUBLIC REALM AND OPEN SPACE

OBJECTIVES	POLICIES
OBJECTIVE 8: LIGHT POLLUTION Minimise light pollution wherever possible especially within rural areas.	CW9: TRANQUILLITY AND LIGHT POLLUTION
OBJECTIVE 9: FOOTPATHS Seek to improve provision for pedestrians in the village in terms of accessibility, safety and quality.	CW10: FOOTPATH AND BRIDLEWAY IMPROVEMENTS
OBJECTIVE 10: ROADS Seek to improve road safety in the village for all users by working with the relevant authorities.	CW11: HIGHWAY SAFETY CW13: PUBLIC REALM AND OPEN SPACES
OBJECTIVE 11: COMMUNITY FACILITIES Strive to ensure that the community facilities and amenities are appropriate for the needs of the parish, allowing residents of all ages the opportunity to take part in activities that lead to a sense of individual and/or community well-being.	CW12: COMMUNITY ASSETS
OBJECTIVE 12: PUBLIC REALM Support improvement to the public realm.	CW13: PUBLIC REALM AND OPEN SPACES



Central part of Castle Ring

SECTION 3 POLICIES

POLICY CW1: HOUSING DESIGN

- a. Respond positively to the character of Cannock Wood Parish as outlined in this Neighbourhood Plan and the Character Assessment (See Policy CW2: Local Character, below).
 - b. Be respectful of the character of the village in scale and proportion.
 - c. Be of high quality and well designed. This may include innovative and contemporary design solutions provided they positively enhance character.
 - d. Avoid reducing the gaps between the main settlement boundary and clusters of buildings outside the boundary.
 - e. Avoid further extending strips of development outside the settlement boundary.
 - f. Consider the need for external lighting as part of the siting and design of development. Whilst sufficient lighting for safety is supported, light pollution should be avoided as detailed by Policy CW9: Tranquility and Light Pollution. See also the Design Code (Appendix 1) and contact Cannock Chase AONB to see their current local guidance on lighting.
 - g. Consider inclusion of features to improve energy conservation and future accessibility and adaptability including electric vehicle charging points.
2. All residential proposals including extensions should:
- a. Use appropriate materials – traditional brick or render or other sympathetic materials – in keeping with the character of the area.
 - b. Where possible, avoid ‘terracing’ whereby semi-detached and detached houses end up so close to one another that the effect is similar to a continuous terrace.
 - c. Protect and enhance green infrastructure by avoiding removal of existing native hedgerows and trees and encouraging the planting of native hedges and trees.
 - d. Be of a scale and proportion in relation to surrounding buildings and setting in the village and wider landscape so as to not dominate them.
 - e. Demonstrate sensitive positioning within plots.
 - f. Maintain glimpsed views between properties.
 - g. Maintain a reasonable level of landscaping with native hedges and trees.
 - h. Promote or maintain natural surveillance over public space such as streets for example by ensuring that houses overlook the street.
 - i. Create or maintain clear public/private interface i.e., a clear difference between what is public and what is private land.
 - j. Create or maintain active frontage i.e., facing outwards onto the street rather than presenting a blank elevation.
3. All housing proposals except extensions should meet the following criteria:
- a. Provide an appropriate housing type and tenure to the population. The Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix 1) has highlighted that the highest need for housing is for small bungalows and starter homes.

continues on following page

POLICY CW1: HOUSING DESIGN (continued)

3. All housing proposals except extensions should meet the following criteria: *(continued)*
 - b. Be 'tenure blind' so that the tenure of the housing (i.e. whether it is privately or socially owned or rented) cannot be determined from its design or location.
 - a. Provide safe access and adequate parking.
 - b. Show how the building, landscaping and planting creates attractive green spaces.
 - c. Use native trees and hedgerows in landscaping schemes and boundary treatment where possible to enhance the surrounding character and local biodiversity.
 - d. Minimise flood risk by incorporating Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) which minimises surface water run-off. These may include features such as ponds, swales and permeable paving designed as part of the development and to reflect the character of the area. Every option should be investigated before discharging surface water into a public sewerage network, in line with the surface water hierarchy.
 - e. Where it is a legal requirement for development to be provided with a drainage strategy, copies of any existing and proposed drainage strategies should be provided to the Parish Council as well as the Cannock Chase District Council so records can be retained at a local level.
4. Where housing proposals involve demolition of an existing building, proposals will be required to show that the replacement building will be of an equal or superior design in terms of the above criteria.
5. Redevelopment, alteration or extension of historic farmsteads and agricultural buildings within the Parish should be sensitive to their distinctive character, materials and form.
6. The Cannock Wood Character Assessment (Appendix 1) and Design Code (Appendix 1) will be used to assess development schemes coming forward.

INTENTION

To meet the Objective:

OBJECTIVE 1. HOUSING

Ensure that any new housing is of high quality and well designed, is appropriate for the needs of the area and respects the character of the village.

JUSTIFICATION

Cannock Wood lies entirely within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This status prevents major development from taking place within Cannock Wood. However, minor proposals can take place, although even these will be largely restricted to minor infill by strategic policy including the Green Belt designation. The AONB Design Guide¹³ states that: *'New development should be carefully located, especially when sited towards the edges of settlements, so that it does not contribute to unnecessary ribbon development or coalescence between settlements.'*

Good design is about more than character. It includes other aspects of design mentioned above, for example active frontage and safe streets, use of green areas and planting to minimise flood risk such as from hard landscaping of driveways.

Evidence base references in Appendix 1

¹³ Cannock Chase AONB Design Guide

INTERPRETATION

The Character Assessment³ (Appendix 1) outlines the elements that make up the character of the area.

The Design Code⁴ (Appendix 1) provides guidance on how housing design can meet the policy.

According to the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)⁵ (Appendix 1): *“In addition to the ageing of the population ... and the clear demand expressed in the survey, bungalows may be an appropriate typology for the Neighbourhood Plan Area due to its topography, protected views and residents’ preferred housing densities.”*

Across the parish of Cannock Wood there are a number of historic farmsteads, mainly of 19th century origin. These farmsteads contribute to the overall historic character of the parish landscape and face increasing pressure due to the diversification of farming practices and demand for housing. Staffordshire County Council, in partnership with Historic England, have produced guidance⁶ on understanding the contribution of farmsteads to the historic landscape character of the county. The guidance offers design advice and a framework to facilitate long term conservation and sensitive conversion of historic farm buildings. Information on the location, form and survival of farmsteads across the parish is held within the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record⁷.

The settlement boundary is indicated by the red line in Figure 1. The settlement boundary is as defined by the Cannock Chase Local Plan.

EVIDENCE

Character Assessment³ (Appendix 1).

Design Code⁴ (Appendix 1).

Housing Needs Assessment⁵ (Appendix 1).

Historic Farmsteads⁶ (Appendix 1)

Staffordshire Historic Environment Record⁷ (Appendix 1)



Bradwell Lane



Holly Hill Road

Evidence base references in Appendix 1

³ Character Assessment

⁴ Design Code

⁵ Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)

⁶ Historic Farmsteads

⁷ Staffordshire Historic Environment Record

POLICY CW2: LOCAL CHARACTER

1. Proposed development should respond to, protect and enhance the character of the immediate surroundings, the wider Neighbourhood area and the rest of AONB. Proposals should be able to demonstrate a thorough understanding of the character, history and design of the surrounding buildings and landscape and show how this has been taken into account in the design of the proposals.

In particular, proposals should be of a scale, density and mass that is sympathetic to the character of the immediate surroundings and the wider area.

As described in the Character Assessment in Appendix 1, consideration should be given to the elements which contribute to local character including the following:

- a. Landscape and Topography
- b. Biodiversity and Green and Natural Features
- c. General Patterns of Built Form and Open Space including Density
- d. Main Uses and Mix of Uses
- e. Views and Vistas and Enclosure
- f. Movement and Legibility
- g. Building Typologies
- h. Building Details including Scale and Height
- i. Heritage
- j. Streetscape
- k. Parking and Access
- l. Lighting and Security
- m. Gardens, Boundary Treatments, and the Public Private Interface.

Reference should also be made to the Cannock Wood Design Code (Appendix 1) where appropriate.

2. Landscape improvements in particular should be appropriate for the surrounding landscape character.

INTENTION

To meet the Objective:

OBJECTIVE 2. LOCAL CHARACTER

New development should respect local character, protect landscape character and reflect local vernacular or high-quality contemporary design and be fully integrated into the Parish.

JUSTIFICATION

The Neighbourhood Plan Survey⁸ in November 2021 has shown that residents value highly the character of the area and that this should be respected. A Character Assessment can identify the elements that contribute to the distinctive character of the Parish, possibly including specific character areas within the Parish boundary so as to distinguish between them. A Design Code can indicate suitable approaches to respect the local character.

INTERPRETATION

The Character Assessment³ in Appendix 1 identifies those elements that contribute to the character

Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

⁸ Neighbourhood Plan Survey and results

of the area including ways in which the character varies from one part of the Parish to another.

The Design Code⁴ in Appendix 1 has specific guidance on how to protect and enhance local character and landscape character.

A Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) can be used to assess the impact of development proposals. The Landscape Institute provides guidance on LVAs which can be found at:

<https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical/glvia3-panel/>.

Landscape character types have been identified by:

- the Review of AONB Landscape Character Framework, Stage 2 Landscape Character Type Descriptions⁹, 2017;
- the section on Landscape and Topography in the Cannock Wood Character Assessment which examines how these types work in Cannock Wood Parish including recommendations about appropriate management and other interventions.

The four Landscape Character Types within the Parish shown in Figure 4 below are discussed in more detail in the Character Assessment.

It is noted that over time some of the higher tier policy documents and legislation may change in terms of some elements that can be implemented and the spirit of Local Character as described should continue to be respected.

EVIDENCE

Character Assessment³ (Appendix 1)

Design Code⁴ (Appendix 1)

Review of AONB Landscape Character Framework⁹, Stage 2 Landscape Character Type Descriptions, 2017 (Appendix 1)



View towards Buds Road triangle from public footpath CW5

Evidence base references in Appendix 1

³ Character Assessment

⁴ Design Code

⁹ Character Type Descriptions 2017

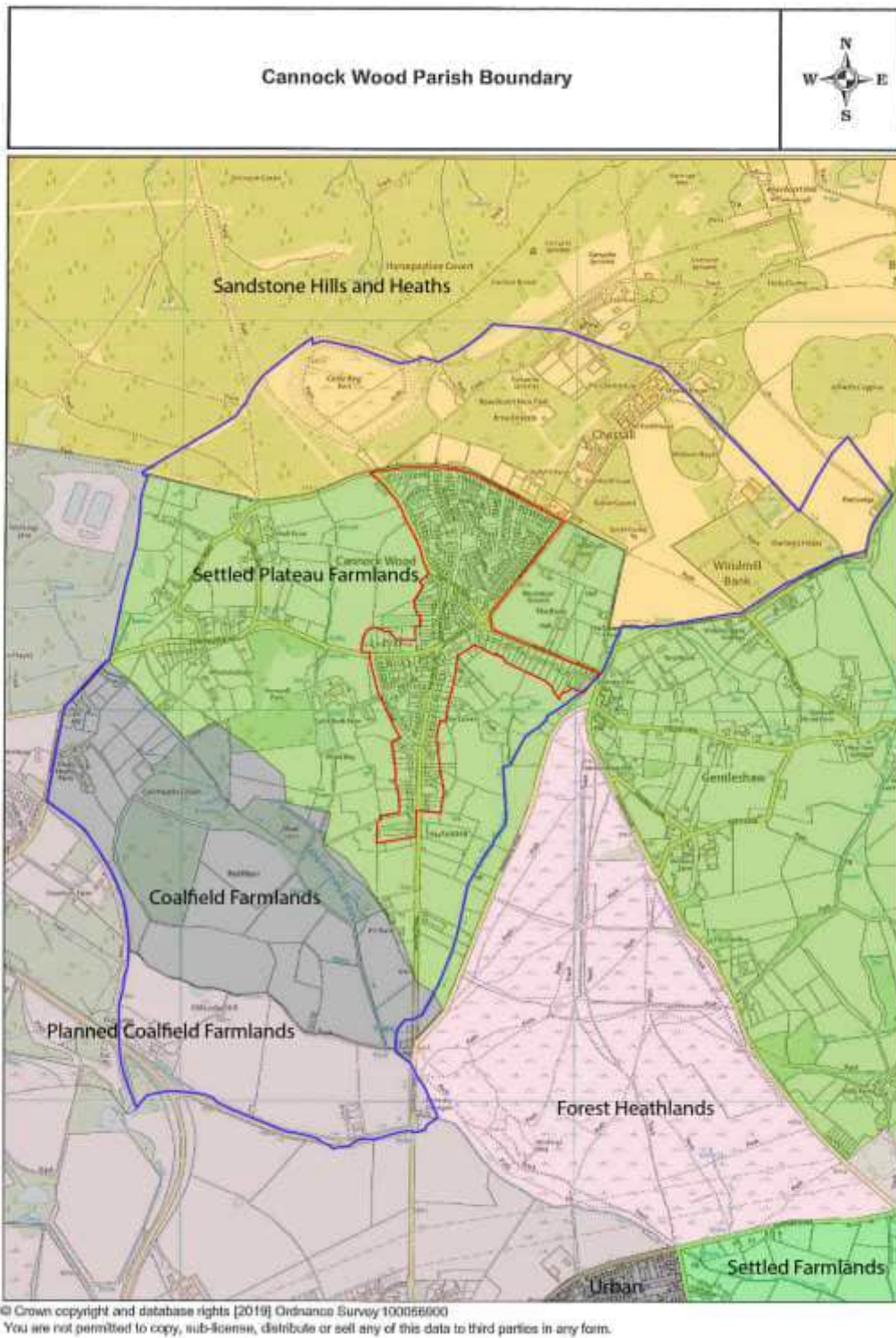


Figure 4: Landscape Character Types - based on a map from the Review of AONB Landscape Character Framework, Stage 2 Landscape Character Type Descriptions, 2017 by Ashmead Price for Cannock Chase AONB

POLICY CW3: NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

1. The sites listed in Table 4 (Appendix 2) should be regarded as non-designated heritage assets.
2. Proposals which affect the significance of non-designated heritage assets will be determined by considering the extent to which those aspects which contribute to its significance are conserved or enhanced.
3. The assets identified as non-designated heritage assets in Appendix 2 should be submitted for inclusion in Cannock Chase District Council's emerging Local List of non-designated heritage assets once it is established. Inclusion of any non-designated heritage assets on the Local List is not necessary for the application of policy CW3.

INTENTION

To meet the Objective:

OBJECTIVE 2. LOCAL CHARACTER

New development should respect local character, protect landscape character and reflect local vernacular or high-quality contemporary design and be fully integrated into the Parish.

JUSTIFICATION

There are two Scheduled Monuments (Appendix 2) within Cannock Wood: Castle Ring and a Moated site and bloomery in Courtbanks Covert; they are designated heritage assets.

The development of a Neighbourhood Plan provides the opportunity to recognise those other buildings and sites which make positive contribution to the local character and sense of place because of their heritage value for Cannock Wood. This policy sets up a list of Non-Designated Heritage Assets of buildings and sites which have heritage significance for Cannock Wood. Cannock Wood Parish Council may add assets to this list where further research provides the evidence required.

The non-designated heritage assets identified in the policy all contribute to the character of the area so their protection is important to achieve the objective of respecting local character.

INTERPRETATION

A heritage asset is defined as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets.

Cannock Chase District Council's Design Supplementary Planning Document proposes that:

"any building or feature shall meet one or more of the following criteria in order to be selected for the Local List:

- *Of local historic interest serving as a reminder of the social, economic, cultural or military history of the District including archaeological interest or a link to a local figure.*
- *Of architectural or landscape interest including innovative design, decoration, craftsmanship or plan form.*
- *Making a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness, character and appearance of the District, including the interest of any group of buildings of which it forms part, landmark value or contribution to local identity.*
- *Is unprotected by statutory listing though may be within a Conservation Area'.*

Cannock Chase District Council could use the non-designated heritage assets in Appendix 2 as potential candidates for a future Local List¹⁰ for the Cannock Chase District, along with others included on the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record⁷.

EVIDENCE

Historic Environment Assessment¹¹ Cannock Chase AONB, June 2015 (Appendix 1).



Cannock Wood Methodist Church



Nun's Well



Cumberledge Hill

Evidence base references in Appendix 1

¹⁰ Cannock Chase Local List

¹¹ Historic Environment Assessment AONB

POLICY CW4: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

1. Proposals which affect any part of the historic environment, both built heritage and above and below ground archaeological remains, will be determined by considering the extent to which those aspects which contribute to its significance are conserved or enhanced.
2. Proposals affecting any part of the historic environment should be informed by an understanding of the site's context and heritage significance and proposals which impact, directly or indirectly, on a heritage asset or its setting, shall be accompanied by a heritage statement which must:
 - a. Explain how the proposal has taken into account the significance of any designated or non-designated heritage assets.
 - b. Evaluate any effect that the proposal would have on the significance of a heritage asset, and support the proposal by:
 - i. Demonstrating that they have avoided or minimised harm to the significance of an asset through the design of the development.
 - ii. Explaining how possible mitigation of any harm has been fully considered.
 - iii. Identifying any public benefits that would arise.

INTENTION

To meet the Objective:

OBJECTIVE 2. LOCAL CHARACTER

New development should respect local character/protect landscape character and reflect local vernacular or high-quality contemporary design and be fully integrated into the village settlement.

JUSTIFICATION

The two important Scheduled Monuments (Appendix 2) at Castle Ring and the Moated site and bloomery in Courtbanks Covert, the Non-Designated Heritage Assets (Appendix 2) and other sites identified elsewhere including Historic Environment Assessment¹¹ Cannock Chase AONB, June 2015 and on the emerging Cannock Chase Local List¹⁰ all contribute to the character of the area. Their protection is important to achieve the objective of respecting local character. Loss or unsympathetic development impacting any of these sites would lead to a gradual and irreversible loss of the character of the village and we must act as the custodians of the sites for the future.

Evidence base references in Appendix 1

¹⁰ Cannock Chase Local List

¹¹ Historic Environment Assessment AONB

INTERPRETATION

The historic environment is defined as all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

The historic environment includes:

- the two Scheduled Monuments which are designated heritage assets (Appendix 2)
- Non-designated Heritage Assets identified in this plan (Appendix 2) and
- sites identified elsewhere including the Historic Environment Assessment¹¹ Cannock Chase AONB, June 2015 and Addendum¹² 2017, the "Buildings of Historic Character" identified in the Settlement Constraints and Opportunities map on Page 21 of the Cannock Chase AONB Design Guide¹³, July 2020 and any others on the emerging Cannock Chase Local List¹⁰.

EVIDENCE

For a local context to the historic environment and its sensitivities within Cannock Wood parish, the Cannock Chase and the Cannock Chase AONB Historic Environment Assessments (HEAs) are useful aids. These assessments aimed to provide a summary of the historic character and sensitivities within defined areas, dividing each into a series of Historic Environment Character Zones (HECZs). The assessment also provides an overall evaluation of the potential impact of larger scale housing development upon the historic environment within each identified 'zone'. Within the Cannock Chase HEA refer specifically to Zone CHECZ 24 (Cannock Wood) and within the Cannock Chase AONB HEA refer to Zones HECZ 16 (Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw) and HECZ 13 (Beaudesert Park).

- Historic Environment Assessment¹¹ Cannock Chase AONB, Staffordshire County Council, June 2015 (Appendix 1).
- Historic Environment Assessment Addendum¹² (Appendix 1)

Staffordshire Historic Environment Record⁷ (Appendix 1)

Cannock Chase AONB Design Guide¹³, July 2020 (Appendix 1).

Evidence base references in Appendix 1

⁹ Historic Environment Assessment

¹¹ Historic Environment Assessment AONB

¹² Historic Environment Assessment Addendum

¹³ Cannock Chase AONB Design Guide

POLICY CW5: VIEWS AND VISTAS

Those key views and vistas listed in Table 2 and indicated on the map below (Figure 5) should be conserved from any significant adverse impact of new development (such as detracting from or obscuring views and vistas). Proposals must demonstrate that they do not as a result of height or scale or any other aspect of the development have an adverse impact on the key views and vistas, and positively enhance them where possible. The list is not exhaustive and the policy applies to any views and vistas that might be affected by development proposals and these should be considered when determining planning applications.

Table 2: The Views and vistas identified by the Views Assessment are:

Ref	Description	Viewing points
1	Panoramic vista to south and south-west, with horizon formed by Sutton Park, Barr Beacon, Birmingham skyline and The Wrekin	From the playing field (and village hall entrance)
2	Panoramic vista to east and south-east, including Lichfield Cathedral, Tamworth and far beyond towards Nuneaton	From public footpath CW3 alongside covered reservoir
3	Vista over farmland and Shaw Brook to Gentleshaw Common, with horizon formed by Sutton Park, Barr Beacon and the Birmingham skyline. This forms part of the foreground to AONB Views and Settings Guide Viewpoint 10 and the middle distance for AONB Views and Settings Guide Viewpoint 11.	South and west from Hayfield Hill and Buds Road, looking towards AONB Viewpoint 10 on Gentleshaw Common. Also looking east and from public footpath CW7.
4	View over farmland towards Cuckoo Bank (SSSI), Courtbanks Covert ancient woodland, Nunswell Park and Cannock Chase Forest. This forms part of the foreground and middle distance to AONB Views and Settings Guide Viewpoint 10 and Viewpoint 11.	South and west from Hayfield Hill, Slang Lane and public footpath CW5. Also looking north and west from public footpath CW7.
5	Panoramic vista to south and west with wide open views across farmland to Barr Beacon, Nunswell Park, Cannock Chase forest and to Cannock Wood village.	South and west from Park Gate Road and Holly Hill Road.
6	View over grazing land to woodland	North from Holly Hill Road
7	Castle Ring. Castle Ring. Panoramic vista to north and east, and depending on forestry management also to west and south and also views of the Iron Age hill fort and surrounding forest/	360° views. See AONB Views and Settings Guide Viewpoint 9 for further information.
8	Views of Cannock Wood parish from Gentleshaw Common.	See AONB Views and Settings Guide Viewpoint 10 for further information.
9	Views of Cannock Wood parish from entrance to AONB at Rugeley Road.	See AONB Views and Settings Guide Viewpoint 11 for more information.

POLICY CW5: VIEWS AND VISTAS (continued)

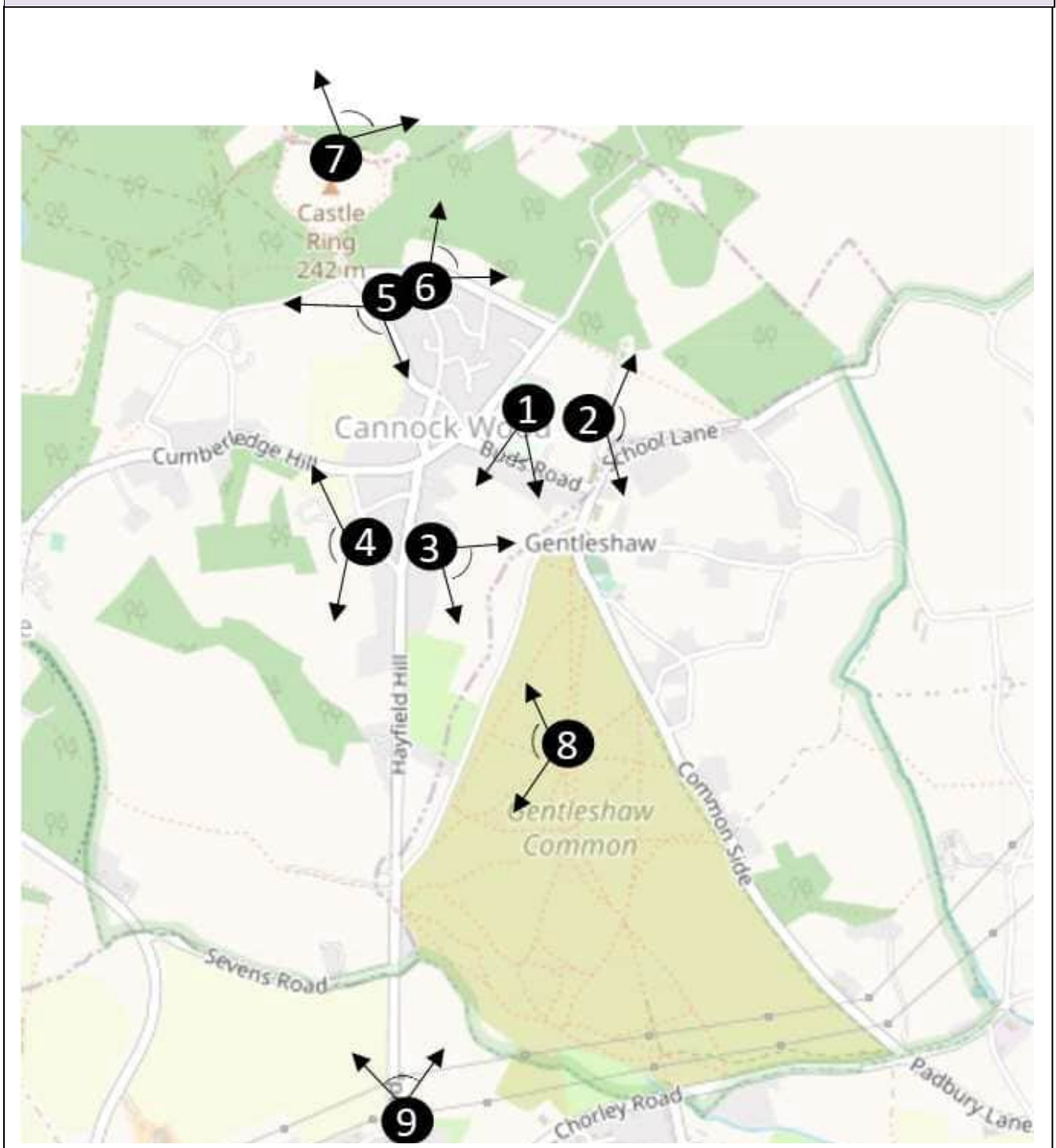


Figure 5: Views and vistas identified by the Views Assessment

© OpenStreetMap contributors

INTENTION

To meet the Objectives:

OBJECTIVE 3. VIEWS

Views, in particular the long panoramic views which are so important to residents in Cannock Wood, should be protected and where possible enhanced.

OBJECTIVE 6. AONB

Protect the scenic natural beauty, landscape character and tranquil wildlife habitats of the AONB.

OBJECTIVE 4: GREEN BELT

Support the aim of the Green Belt to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.

OBJECTIVE 2. LOCAL CHARACTER

New development should respect local character, protect landscape character and reflect local vernacular or high-quality contemporary design and be fully integrated into the Parish.

JUSTIFICATION

The Statement of Significance required to justify Cannock Chase's status as an AONB hangs on several key criteria including Scenic Quality, in accordance with Natural England's Guidance for assessing landscapes for designation. The special qualities of Cannock Chase on which AONB designation depends include 'inspiring views, both to the elevated plateau of the Chase from surrounding areas and from the high ground of the Chase across the farmed vales and countryside of the Midlands'.

Due to the topography of Cannock Wood, there are important panoramas, views and vistas within Cannock Wood which contribute not just to the character of Cannock Wood but also to the special qualities of the AONB itself.

The AONB Cannock Chase Management Plan 2019-2024 is a 'locally prepared and agreed statement of public policy for managing this nationally important landscape'. Although the current Management Plan runs only until 2024, this edition builds upon the previous three editions and will in due course be replaced by subsequent iterations since it is a requirement of Section 89 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000 to produce a Management Plan for the AONB and to ensure it is reviewed every five years.

The AONB Management Plan recognises that wide-ranging uninterrupted views are one of the AONB's special qualities and that views towards the distinctive profile of Cannock Chase are also an important attribute within the surrounding area. These are part of the special qualities essential to AONB designation. The Management Plan states at paragraph 2.1.4 that 'the loss, damage or deterioration of any of these special qualities would fundamentally alter the character and quality of the natural beauty of Cannock Chase'.

The AONB Management Plan explains the particular importance of protecting the setting of the AONB as follows (paragraph 4.12):

'Protecting the setting. The elevated plateau of the Chase gives long vistas over the farmed vales and countryside of the Midlands from many places within the AONB. At the same time, the Chase is present as a prominent wooded skyline from many surrounding settlements and roads. The small size of the AONB and its prominent elevation mean that its setting has an increased significance to the Chase's landscape character. Protecting and enhancing the

setting of the AONB is important for ensuring the long-term survival of the special qualities. Views, including historic views, are one of the key ways that setting is experienced and understanding these views into and out of the Chase will help to protect them.'

It is for this reason that the AONB has produced its Views and Settings Guide on significant viewing points and views into and out of the AONB. The number of views analysed in the Guide was restricted on cost grounds to 20 for the whole of Cannock Chase and the Guide states that 'the 20 locations identified are by no means an exhaustive list of the important views within the setting of the AONB but have been used to demonstrate how the guide may be applied to specific views within the landscape'.

It is not by chance that 3 of the 20 views are from or of Cannock Wood, even though Cannock Wood is just a small part of the whole AONB; other views from or to Cannock Wood have been used to illustrate the AONB's Views and Settings Guide. Cannock Wood is at the southern end of Cannock Chase and includes the highest point of Cannock Chase at Castle Ring. There are panoramic views in all directions from Cannock Wood and these are recognised as one of the special qualities of the AONB. They enable residents and visitors to enjoy the scenic beauty of the AONB and beyond. The views into, out of and across Cannock Wood are an important part of the character of the area as identified in the Character Assessment³ and the Cannock Wood Views Assessment¹⁴. They enable residents and visitors to enjoy the scenic beauty of the AONB and beyond. The views can be vulnerable to inappropriate development such as poorly designed or located or overly large buildings or extensions, or large expanses of glass which can cause distracting reflections. Views can also become interrupted by overgrown vegetation.

INTERPRETATION

There are many views and vistas in the Parish. The Views Assessment¹⁴ attempts to list just some of these as listed in the policy in Table 2 and it provides photos of the views.

Views are important or very important to 98% of respondents in the survey. When asked to explain which views are important, over 40% did not just give one or two views, but stated 'all views are important' even though the question did not invite that response. One of the main tenets of the Neighbourhood Plan is to uphold the rural setting of the main settlement and maintain the highly valued AONB status and including open fields adjacent to the settlement boundary which are important elements of the village landscape.

The Cannock Wood Views Assessment¹⁴ includes the three views of or from Cannock Wood which are used as examples in the AONB Views and Settings Guide, including the Zone of Theoretical Visibility studies performed for those. The Views Assessment indicates which of the other views identified by residents:

- form part of those identified by the AONB, as they often look towards the viewpoints selected by the AONB;
- can be appreciated from the network of roads and public footpaths in and immediately around the Parish.

EVIDENCE

Character Assessment³ (Appendix 1).

Cannock Wood Views Assessment¹⁴ (Appendix 1).

Cannock Chase AONB Views and Settings Guide¹⁵ (Appendix 1).

Evidence base references in Appendix 1

³ Character Assessment

¹⁴ Cannock Wood Views Assessment

¹⁵ Cannock Chase AONB Views and Settings Guide

POLICY CW6: PROTECT AND ENHANCE LANDSCAPE HERITAGE

1. Protection and enhancement of the sites at Castle Ring and Courtbanks Covert including improvements to access will be supported where they maintain and preserve these Scheduled Ancient Monuments in their present state and respect the character of the area as well as the fragile habitats in the Site of Biological Importance and Ancient Woodland and the wildlife found there.
2. Proposals which harm Castle Ring and Courtbanks Covert and their fragile habitats and the wildlife found there will be resisted. Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons. As ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees are irreplaceable, discussions over possible compensation should not form part of the assessment to determine whether the exceptional benefits of the development proposal outweigh the loss of ancient woodland and any development boundary.
3. Sensitive woodland management will be supported to respect the former dominance of Castle Ring as an Iron Age hill fort in the landscape through retention of open views.

INTENTION

To meet the Objectives:

OBJECTIVE 2. LOCAL CHARACTER

New development should respect local character/protect landscape character and reflect local vernacular or high-quality contemporary design and be fully integrated into the village settlement.

OBJECTIVE 3. VIEWS

Views, in particular the long panoramic views which are so important to residents in Cannock Wood, should be protected and where possible enhanced.

OBJECTIVE 5. CASTLE RING

Protect and enhance Castle Ring.

OBJECTIVE 7. BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

Protect and enhance the biodiversity and wildlife of the parish including tree and hedgerow coverage.

The Department for the Culture Media and Sport's document 'Scheduled Monuments and nationally important but non-scheduled monuments, October 2013' states:

"Under the terms of the 1979 Act the Secretary of State has a duty to compile and maintain a schedule of ancient monuments of national importance, the purpose being to help preserve them, so far as possible, in the state in which they have come down to us today. The Act creates criminal offences in respect of unauthorised works to, or the destruction or damage of, Scheduled Monuments."

The government's 2018 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment'¹⁶ is more ambitious: 'to leave our environment in a better state than we found it'.

Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

¹⁶ A Green Future: 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment

Both the Scheduled Monuments in Cannock Wood are important natural habitats and the term 'landscape heritage' is used here to embrace both natural heritage and cultural heritage. The foreword to Natural England's 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' explains that 'Landscape reflects the relationship between people and place, and the part it plays in forming the setting to our everyday lives. It is a product of the interaction of the natural and cultural components of our environment, and how they are understood and experienced by people.'

Castle Ring

Castle Ring is both a Scheduled Monument and Site of Biological Importance.



Castle Ring with acidic grassland and standing water

According to Cannock Chase District Council's website¹⁷ description of Castle Ring in 2022:

"Today the monument is a shadow of its former self. Human activities and weather have worn away the banks. The long-term aim is to maintain and preserve the monument in its present state. This is being achieved by preventing invasive scrub taking over site. Repairing erosion scars with locally sourced materials and plastic reinforcement meshing. Due to high visitor pressure the site also requires the topping up of the paths with locally sourced sand and gravel. Recent additions have been a circle created next to the car park representing the size of an iron age round house and new notice boards have been installed to inform visitors about the site.

You can help us protect the site by:

- *Keeping to the footpaths.*
- *No horse riding on the monument.*
- *No cycling on the monument.*
- *No sledging on the monument."*

As such it is important that any works to the site protect and enhance it.

Cannock Chase District Council's website description of Castle Ring in 2022 continues:

"As well as being a Scheduled Monument the site is also a Site of Biological Importance. The nature of the site has led to a variety of small but distinct habitats from sphagnum bog, acidic grassland to areas which are more like heathland. This variety provides home to a range of birds, mammals, reptiles and invertebrates. You may see species such as the black darter dragonfly, green

Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

¹⁷ Cannock Chase District Council's section on Castle Ring

hairstreak butterfly and lizards if you are lucky.

These habitats are fragile and easily damaged through pressures from access and disturbance, so please keep to the main paths.

Access

A circular route can be taken around the top of the monument via steps from the car park. Castle Ring is a great place to start longer walks off into the adjoining Beaudesert Old Park and Cannock Chase. There is also a route down to Hazelslade Local Nature Reserve. Castle Ring is found just at the edge of the village of Cannock Wood. There is a large free car park, off Holly Hill Road and opposite the Park Gate Inn."

Castle Ring lies on two long distance footpaths, The Heart of England Way and the Two Saints Way, and these are part of an extensive network of public footpaths in Cannock Chase.

There are currently issues with respect to access to Castle Ring. The site is particularly difficult for mobility impaired to access and so appropriate improvements would be welcome provided they do not damage the site in terms of its value both in terms of heritage and wildlife.

Courtbanks Covert

Courtbanks Covert is Ancient Woodland, as indicated in Figure 6 below, and includes the site of a Scheduled Monument.

The standing advice¹⁸ from Natural England and the Forestry Commission states:

"Ancient woodland takes hundreds of years to establish and is defined as an irreplaceable habitat. It is a valuable natural asset important for:

- *wildlife (which include rare and threatened species)*
- *soils*
- *carbon capture and storage*
- *contributing to the seed bank and genetic diversity*
- *recreation, health and wellbeing*
- *cultural, historical and landscape value."*

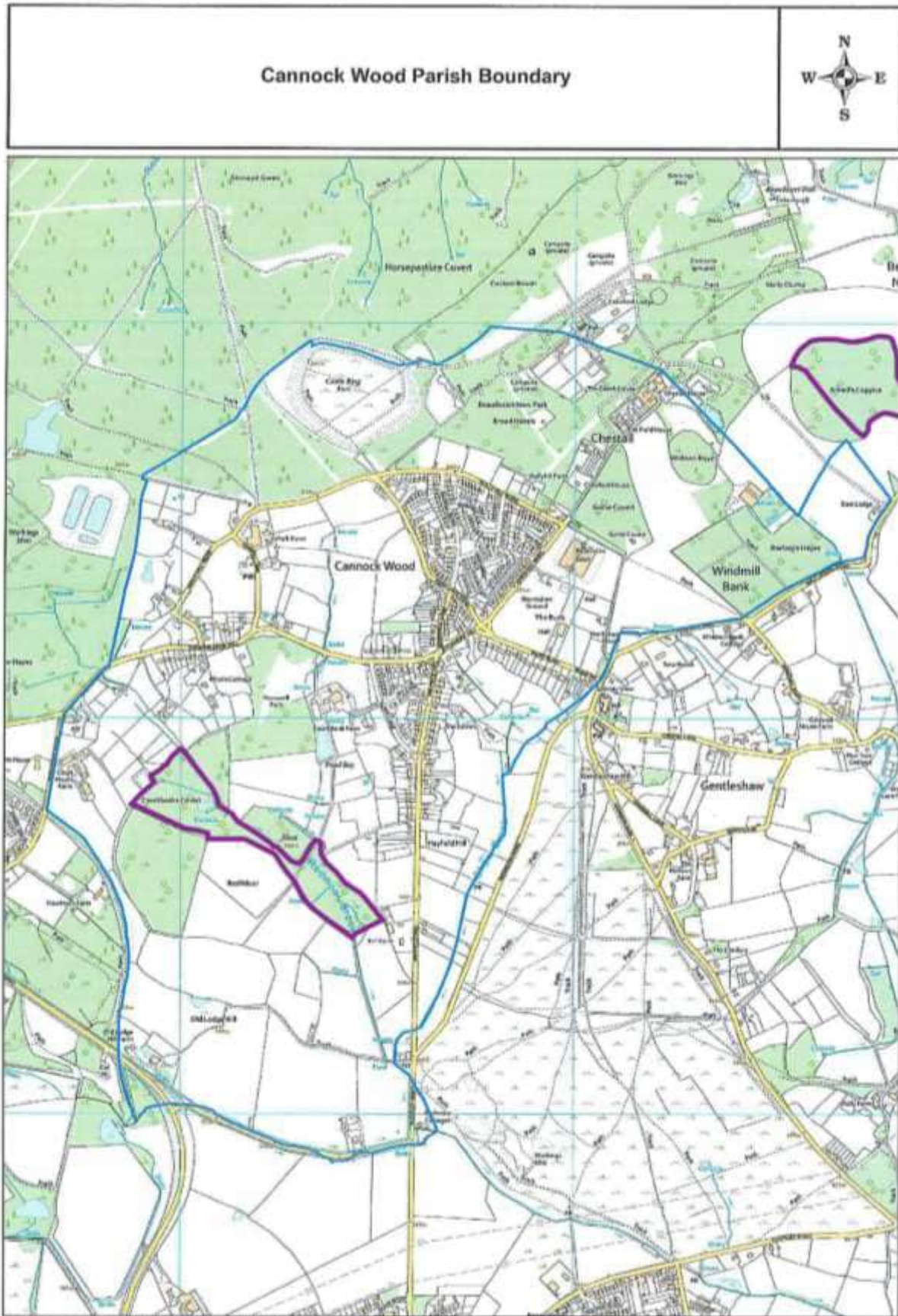
Trees are some of the most important features of the area for local people and eponymous for Cannock Wood. Cannock Chase Local Plan (2014) identifies the fact that trees are an important part of the character and visual amenity and that they can play a significant role in well-designed development proposals. The Cannock Chase AONB Design Guide¹³ points out that: 'many of the settlements within the AONB are set within a context of mature tree cover which contributes to their character'; as the only settlement wholly within the AONB this applies nowhere more strongly than for Cannock Wood.



Green Heritage Flag awarded for 2021/2022

Evidence base references in Appendix 1

¹⁸ Ancient Woodland Standing Advice



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Figure 6: Ancient Woodland outlined in purple



Courtbanks Covert, 9th October 2008

© Historic England Archive 20829/055

The government's Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services (2011)¹⁹ set out the government's ambition to halt overall loss of England's biodiversity by 2020, support healthy, well-functioning ecosystems, and establish coherent ecological networks, for the benefit of wildlife and people. The Natural Capital Committee's first report in 2013 noted that ancient woodland cannot be replaced and states: "When thinking about natural capital, wild species and habitats require special treatment that reflects their irreplaceability". The Neighbourhood Plan policies aim to avoid harm to ancient woodlands and veteran trees and are in conformity with the revised National Planning Policy Framework.

The Scheduled Monument (Appendix 2) listing of the Medieval moated site and bloomery at Court Bank Farm describes the site as follows:

"The monument includes the earthworks and buried remains of a medieval moated site and a nearby bloomery situated within the valley of Redmoor Brook. A rectangular moated site measuring externally up to 140m north west to south east by 100m south west to north east encloses an internal area of approximately 0.5 hectares. The Redmoor Brook has been re-cut to run through the south west and south east arms of the moat. It is possibly the site of a royal hunting lodge built by Henry II in 1157-1158. To the north east at SK 0414 1179 lie the buried remains of a medieval bloomery or iron furnace, evident by buried mounds of iron slag, cinder and black earth. Situated close by is a rock-cut well known as Nun's Well which may be medieval in date. The possible site of a 12th century hermit priory which adopted Cistercian rule in 1141 and then moved to Stoneleigh by 1159, is thought to lie in the vicinity."

Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

¹⁹ Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy

Landscape heritage is also revealed by Historic England's Cannock Chase Interactive map²⁰ using lidar in the immediate vicinity. This shows evidence of ridge and furrow farming practice and slopes and banks, likely also to be medieval, on the south-west facing slopes above Courtbanks Covert.

INTERPRETATION

Potential improvements to access to Castle Ring could be made without damaging the site including wheelchair access from the car park.

Potential improvements to access to Courtbanks Covert could be made with the consent of the landowners by creation of a permissive footpath between The Redmore Inn and Courtbanks Covert, joining up public footpaths CW7 and CW5 as outlined below in policy CW10: Footpath and Bridleway Improvements.

Signage around Castle Ring and on routes to the site especially those used by mountain bikers could emphasise the damage that cycling on the site can cause. Facilities to secure bicycles could be provided to encourage visiting cyclists not to take their bikes on to Castle Ring.

Signage around Castle Ring and on routes to the site especially those used by dog walkers could emphasise the damage that not picking up dog fouling can cause to the biodiversity of the site.

Signage around Courtbanks Covert could inform those using the adjacent public footpath about the nature of the heritage of the Scheduled Monument and the wider landscape heritage, as well as the qualities of the Ancient Woodland.

Sites of Biological Importance are referred to nationally as Local Wildlife Sites. They are locally identified and have no statutory designation but can be subject to planning policy.

The government's Biodiversity 2020 Strategy identified as a priority action bringing "a greater proportion of our existing woodlands into sustainable management and expand the area of woodland in England" and continued:

- *"Woodlands are one of our richest habitats, containing a very wide diversity of wildlife. Woodlands cover 10% of England, of which around half is 'priority woodland habitat' (i.e. ancient and native woodland).*
- *Active management of woodland can prevent and address the most widespread and serious problems affecting ecological condition, for example, shadiness and high deer populations causing a loss of shrub layer and ground cover. It can also deliver other benefits, for example, woodfuel and timber and recreation and leisure.*

Our woodland resource is highly fragmented. Small, isolated patches of ancient woodland are particularly vulnerable to climate change and other pressures. Many species typical of ancient



Broadleaved woodland adjacent to Castle Ring

Evidence base reference in Appendix 1
²⁰ Historic England Interactive Lidar Map

woodland are slow to colonise new areas and only move slowly across the landscape. Enlarging and buffering ancient woods is therefore often a more immediate priority than attempting to create large-scale networks and corridors."

The standing advice¹⁸ from Natural England and the Forestry Commission provides additional information on the qualities of buffer zones for designated Ancient Woodland:

"For ancient woodlands, the proposal should have a buffer zone of at least 15 metres from the boundary of the woodland to avoid root damage (known as the root protection area). Where assessment shows other impacts are likely to extend beyond this distance, the proposal is likely to need a larger buffer zone. For example, the effect of air pollution from development that results in a significant increase in traffic.

For ancient or veteran trees (including those on the woodland boundary), the buffer zone should be at least 15 times larger than the diameter of the tree. The buffer zone should be 5 metres from the edge of the tree's canopy if that area is larger than 15 times the tree's diameter. This will create a minimum root protection area.

Where assessment shows other impacts are likely to extend beyond this distance, the proposal is likely to need a larger buffer zone.

Where possible, a buffer zone should:

- *contribute to wider ecological networks*
- *be part of the green infrastructure of the area*

A buffer zone should consist of semi-natural habitats such as:

- *woodland*
- *a mix of scrub, grassland, heathland and wetland*

The proposal should include creating or establishing habitat with local and appropriate native species in the buffer zone.

You should consider if access is appropriate. You can allow access to buffer zones if the habitat is not harmed by trampling.

You should not approve development proposals, including gardens, within a buffer zone.

You should only approve sustainable drainage schemes if:

- *they do not affect root protection areas*
- *any change to the water table does not negatively affect ancient woodland or ancient and veteran trees."*

EVIDENCE

Cannock Chase District Council, which owns Castle Ring, has a lot of information about the site including its history, its biological importance, threats to the site and its management on its website¹⁷ (Appendix 1).

Ancient Woodlands Natural England/Forestry Commission¹⁸ (Appendix 1)

Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services (2011)¹⁹ (Appendix 1)

Historic England Interactive Lidar Map²⁰ (Appendix 1)

Scheduled Monument listing (Appendix 2).

POLICY CW7: PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE CANNOCK CHASE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

As the whole of the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area lies within the protected landscape areas of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the area receives the highest degree of protection from damaging or inappropriate development by National Policy. This policy gives great weighting to conserving and enhancing the landscape in AONBs.

Development proposals within the Parish will be expected to positively contribute to the AONB and its setting.

Development proposals which, individually or cumulatively, adversely impact the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB or its setting, including its visual relationship with its surroundings, will be resisted.

All development proposals will need to set out how the development would contribute to meeting the following objectives of the AONB Management Plan (2019-2024 and subsequent plans):

- a. Landscape character;
- b. Wildlife and nature;
- c. Historic environment and culture;
- d. Experience and enjoyment; and
- e. Communities and business.

INTENTION

To meet the Objectives:

OBJECTIVE 6. AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB)

Protect the scenic natural beauty, landscape character and tranquil wildlife habitats of the AONB.

OBJECTIVE 4. GREEN BELT

Support the aim of the Green Belt to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.

OBJECTIVE 3. VIEWS

Views, in particular the long panoramic views which are so important to residents in Cannock Wood, should be protected and where possible enhanced.

OBJECTIVE 1. HOUSING

Ensure that any new housing is of high quality and well designed, is appropriate for the needs of the area and respects the character of the village.

JUSTIFICATION

Cannock Wood lies entirely within the Cannock Chase AONB. This status prevents major development from taking place within Cannock Wood. However, minor developments may be proposed and it is important that such development is controlled so as not to damage the unique character and beauty of the area.

INTERPRETATION

AONB Management Plan²¹ (2019-2024) gives more detail about the AONB landscape as does the Review of AONB Landscape Character Framework, Stage 2 Landscape Character Type Descriptions⁹, 2017 (Appendix 1).

EVIDENCE

AONB Management Plan²¹ (2019-2024 and subsequent plans) (Appendix 1).



View from Gentleshaw Common looking north west towards Cannock Wood



View down Holly Hill Road with adjacent broadleaved woodland and farmland in distance

Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

²¹ Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan

POLICY CW8: PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY OF THE PARISH INCLUDING TREE AND HEDGEROW COVERAGE

1. The conservation, management and enhancement of local features of interest for their biodiversity and geodiversity will be supported and encouraged. These include:
 - a. Retention of hedgerows and traditional field boundary treatments and restoration, where these are fragmented, to improve their landscape condition and contribution, while avoiding encroachment onto pavements and obscuring of traffic sight lines.
 - b. Retention of existing trees around and within new development and additional planting where appropriate to maintain and enhance tree cover.
 - c. Promotion of the nature conservation and ecological value of current and future Local Wildlife Sites, Green Infrastructure, existing Woodland and Wildlife Corridors as designated in the Cannock Chase District Council Local Plan and subsequent Local Plan versions, or identified by the relevant designating bodies.
 - d. Retention and restoration of historic field patterns wherever possible including within any areas of new development.
 - e. Management of semi-natural habitats to prevent deterioration.
 - f. Incorporation and maintenance of hedgerows into the wider landscape whilst ensuring existing open views are not obscured.
 - g. Incorporation of new woodland and tree cover within the wider landscape whilst ensuring existing open views are not obscured.
 - h. Creation of Wildlife Corridors and Stepping Stones between existing and future areas of biodiversity including, but not limited to: various types of designated wildlife sites within and beyond the Parish; privately owned nature reserves, Ancient Woodlands and other irreplaceable habitats; and priority habitats such as lowland meadows and lowland heath.
 - i. Support for other initiatives which assist in linking biodiversity sites such as land management.
 - j. Protection and enhancement of surface and ground water quality to comply with the Water Framework Directive in ensuring that development does not cause deterioration of the status of inland waters.
2. The potential impacts on any protected and priority species and opportunities for Biodiversity Net Gain should be identified at an early stage in the design of any development proposal and then incorporated as the design of the scheme develops. Advice shall be sought from Natural England, Environment Agency, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Cannock Chase District Council and any other relevant bodies with suitable expertise.
3. Development proposals should include information demonstrating how any adverse impacts have been avoided, satisfactorily mitigated or compensated for as appropriate to the particular proposal.

continues on following page

POLICY CW8: PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY OF THE PARISH INCLUDING TREE AND HEDGEROW COVERAGE (continued)

4. Development must not adversely impact on areas of ecological importance such as waterbodies, habitat corridors and stepping stones, or designated wildlife sites including Sites of Scientific Interest. Adverse impacts to Local Wildlife Sites will not be permitted unless they can be adequately mitigated to retain and enhance the size, condition and function of the site. A landscaped buffer of appropriate width will be required between any built development and a designated wildlife site or feature of importance, commensurate with the site-specific requirements for conserving the habitats and species potentially impacted. Detailed advice and evidence will be sought to inform the design of any buffer area.
5. The Environment Act 2021 provides that grants of planning permission in England be subject to a condition requiring biodiversity value attributable to the development to exceed the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat by a relevant percentage. Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021 sets the relevant percentage at a minimum of 10% and empowers the Secretary of State by regulations to vary the relevant percentage. Biodiversity Net Gain should be achieved even where there are no losses as an integral part of sustainable development. Development proposals on land designated as Green Belt in the parish of Cannock Wood should demonstrate a minimum gain of the higher of 20% and the relevant percentage under Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021.

INTENTION

To meet the Objective:

OBJECTIVE 7. BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

Protect and enhance the biodiversity and wildlife of the parish including tree and hedgerow coverage.

JUSTIFICATION

Biodiversity is an important objective for the Neighbourhood Plan, identified through community engagement in the survey. It is an important element of the landscape and wider character of the area, as identified in the Character Assessment.

Designated Green Belt surrounds Cannock Wood’s tightly drawn Settlement Boundary, as well as the entire boundary of Cannock Wood parish. The whole parish lies within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, attaching a premium to the importance of maintaining and enhancing biodiversity.

Adjacent to the parish to the south-east lies Gentleshaw Common, which is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and to the south-west of the parish is another SSSI, Chasewater and the Southern Staffordshire Coalfields.

Local Wildlife Site is a nationally used term which covers all locally designated sites. These are called Sites of Biological Importance and Biodiversity Alert Sites in Staffordshire, which are of county and district importance for wildlife respectively. Local Wildlife Sites are identified and designated by the Staffordshire Local Wildlife Sites Partnership, which is led by Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and involves all the local planning authorities in Staffordshire.

There are two Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) at Castle Ring and Courtbanks Covert and two Biodiversity Alert Sites: Hayfield Hill (near Redmoor) and Gentleshaw Grassland. Two further sites lie adjacent to the parish boundary (Sevens Road SBI and New Hayes Tip SBI), which could have

relevance to any development proposal nearby with regards to potential impacts or opportunities for habitat links.

Any opportunities to improve and protect the existing Local Wildlife Sites should be encouraged. The 'Making Space for Nature' report²² recommends that we need 'more, bigger, better and joined' sites to make our ecological networks robust. Wildlife corridors linking important sites can enhance their function, and can coincide with walking and cycling routes where multiple benefits can be actively encouraged. Stepping stones are unconnected areas of semi-natural habitat close to wildlife corridors, allowing more mobile species to move through the landscape.

The adjoining planning authority, Lichfield District Council has since 2015 embedded a Biodiversity Net Gain policy within its local plan, requiring a minimum gain of 20% to be demonstrated. Of the entire length of the parish boundary of Cannock Wood, 70% is bordered by Lichfield District Council and Biodiversity Net Gain in Cannock Wood should be commensurate with the minimum Biodiversity Net Gain long-established by Lichfield District Council. A Viability Assessment²³ has been prepared to evaluate the significance for development of a 10% uplift in Biodiversity Net Gain above the mandatory minimum 10% in the Green Belt areas of Cannock Wood.

Ecological networks must be maintained and fragmentation of important existing habitats avoided and it takes time for populations to establish and flourish, so better mitigation is provided by requiring a higher minimum Biodiversity Net Gain in the Green Belt areas of Cannock Wood.

The Biodiversity Net Gain requirements of The Environment Act 2021 are effective from November 2023 but early adoption in Cannock Wood is encouraged using the latest adopted biodiversity metric.



Valley ditch at Castle Ring between the ramparts

Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

²² Making Space for Nature 'The Lawton Report'

²³ Viability Assessment

INTERPRETATION

Development proposals and associated landscape schemes can conserve and enhance biodiversity including protecting the habitats of wildlife. These habitats can include hedges, ditches, ponds, woodland, wild areas and wildlife corridors for example. These elements should be seen as forming a connected system and opportunities should be taken to enhance it.

Nunswell Park was formerly recognised for its biodiversity value in initial surveys of the county but has not been assessed to the current Local Wildlife Site criteria. It is a key opportunity for assessment and possible enhancement.

The number, size, condition and connectivity of Local Wildlife Sites are key factors to increase and therefore Staffordshire Wildlife Trust were commissioned to produce a report²⁴ on Nature Sites to:

- identify sites for further survey for potential Local Wildlife Site designation;
- identify areas and sites where Biodiversity Net Gain could be best achieved;
- suggest potential projects for nature recovery and enhancement.

Sites and potential projects identified in the report will be the subject of ongoing work, where funding allows, to update the biodiversity evidence base for the parish and facilitate future green infrastructure delivery.

Potential biodiversity enhancement areas are outlined in green in Figure 7. These areas should be considered as strategic locations for the purposes of assessing biodiversity net gain. Any development within these areas should contribute to, and avoid conflicting with, the objectives of the area.

- Northern Woodland Link: linking Local Wildlife Sites New Hayes Tip, Castle Ring and Alfred's Coppice ancient woodland, including several areas of semi-natural woodland.
Objectives: Enhance existing woodlands structure, tree shrub and flora diversity, using locally sourced seed and plants. Management to create glades, rides, more dead wood and varied age structure of trees.
- Grassland Edge: existing species-rich / semi-improved acidic grasslands along the edge of New Hayes Tip.
Objectives: Manage and enhance grasslands for good floral diversity and sward structure for invertebrates.
- Shaw Brook Corridor: meadows along the Shaw Brook adjacent to Gentleshaw Common SSSI, linking to the north.
Objectives: Enhance and link grasslands in the corridor to create species rich dry and damp meadows along the brook corridor, to slow water flow and buffer/link Gentleshaw Common with other semi-natural habitats.
- Redmoor Brook Corridor: ancient woodland and semi-natural woodlands along the Redmoor Brook, linking New Hayes Tip SBI to Gentleshaw Common.
Objectives: Naturalise brook with more woody debris and meanders
- Old Lodge Hall Heathland Link: grassland and heathy areas linking Sevens Road SBI with Gentleshaw Common SSSI
Objectives: Create heathland mosaic habitats (heathland, acid grassland, scrub) along linear features to link up existing habitats. Manage existing habitats for greater floristic and structural diversity. Add invertebrate features.

Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

²⁴ Staffordshire Wildlife Trust evidence

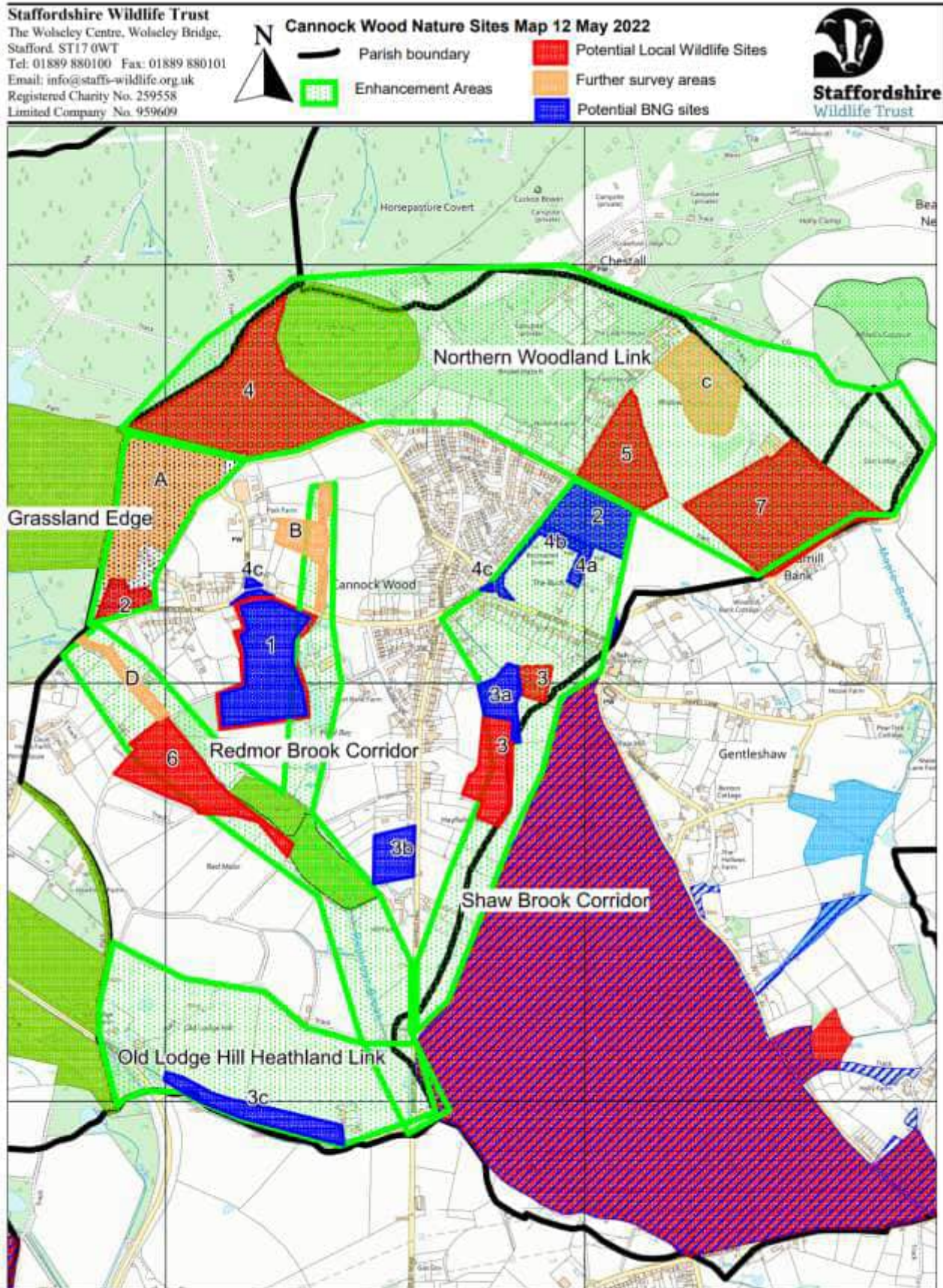


Figure 7: Nature Sites

Potential projects or general initiatives that could apply across the parish include enhancing the wildlife value of:

- Brook corridors
- Road verges
- Heathland mosaic links
- Greenways
- Equine land management
- Hedgerow enhancement
- Pond creation

Funding could be sought to enable such work in future, whether through grants, partnership projects or biodiversity offsetting. New development should also consider incorporating or contributing to such features, where appropriate.

EVIDENCE

Making Space for Nature, 'The Lawton Report'²² (Appendix 1).

Viability Assessment²³ (Appendix 1).

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust evidence²⁴ (Appendix 1).

Cannock Chase District Nature Recovery Network Mapping²⁵ FINAL REPORT, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust 2020 (Appendix 1).

Environmental Capacity in Cannock Chase District²⁶ Final Report Prepared by LUC, January 2013 (Appendix 1).

Green Infrastructure Assessment²⁷ (Final Version), March 2011, Cannock Chase District Council (Appendix 1)

Biodiversity net gain. Good practice principles for development. A practical guide²⁸ (Appendix 1)

Evidence base references in Appendix 1

²⁵ Nature Recovery Network Mapping for Cannock Chase

²⁶ Environmental Capacity in Cannock Chase

²⁷ Green Infrastructure Assessment

²⁸ Biodiversity net gain. Good practice principles for development. A practical guide.

POLICY CW9: TRANQUILLITY AND LIGHT POLLUTION

1. New development should not significantly disturb the tranquillity of the Parish through the creation of excess noise and increases in traffic or light pollution.
2. Proposals for development will be required to demonstrate that, if external lighting is required, it protects public visual amenity and the night sky from light pollution through:
 - a. The number, design, specification and position of lamps;
 - b. Full shielding at the horizontal and above of any lighting fixture exceeding 500 initial lumens and evidence of limited impact of unshielded lighting through use of adaptive controls;
 - c. Limiting the correlated colour temperature of lamps to 3000 Kelvins or less; and
 - d. Providing landscaping to reduce glare and reduce unnecessary light throw to a minimum.

The Design Code⁴ (Appendix 1) and Cannock Chase AONB should be consulted for further guidance on lighting.

INTENTION

To meet the Objectives:

OBJECTIVE 8. LIGHT POLLUTION

Minimise light pollution wherever possible, especially within rural areas.

OBJECTIVE 6. AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB)

Protect the scenic natural beauty, landscape character and tranquil wildlife habitats of the AONB.

JUSTIFICATION

Cannock Chase AONB in which Cannock Wood is located is the smallest inland AONB in England and suffers from more light pollution than any other AONB due to light spilling in from the surrounding towns. Nonetheless it still benefits from relatively dark skies and darkness at night is an integral part of the landscape’s character, adding to its beauty, tranquillity and sense of remoteness.

The AONB website²⁹ in 2022 outlined the problems caused by light pollution.

“A starry night sky and the wonder of the Milky Way is one of the most magical sights the countryside can offer, connecting people to an important part of our natural heritage. Sadly, many people don’t get to experience this beauty due to light pollution. As well as reducing our ability to see the stars, light pollution has serious impacts for wildlife, our health, and the health of the planet. It disrupts the natural behaviour of wildlife, can be harmful to human health and wastes energy, at a time when many people are trying to live more sustainably.

Human health

Our sleep can be disrupted by too much light at night, and research suggests that night light can increase risks for more serious health problems. Research suggests that exposure to blue light at night is especially harmful.

Wildlife and ecosystems

Plants and animals depend on the daily rhythm of light and dark to govern life-sustaining behaviours such as breeding cycles, food and sleep. Stray artificial light has negative effects on many creatures, including amphibians, birds, mammals, invertebrates, and plants, and as a result

Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

²⁹ Cannock Chase AONB Dark Skies

affects the sensitive habitats on the Chase. Controlling stray light particularly helps nocturnal animals that are busy at night.

Energy costs and carbon emissions

Poorly-designed or misdirected light, which shines into the sky contributes to 'sky glow', the orange haze many of us now see rather than dark skies and the stars. This wastes energy, raising costs unnecessarily and contributing to carbon emissions and global warming. By turning off or dimming down unnecessary lighting, substantial savings can be made by local authorities, businesses and individuals.”

In April 2021 Staffordshire County Council began the replacement of over 47,000 street light luminaires (lanterns) in Staffordshire with energy efficient LED equivalents. The project will take four years to complete across the county and will reduce street lighting energy consumption by 70%, an energy saving of 8,627,504 kWh per annum. The completed scheme will result in a reduction of the county's annual street lighting energy bill by £1.6m and reduction of CO₂ emissions by an estimated 2,650 tonnes every year. Although the LED lantern the County Council chose may give the impression of dimmer overall lighting levels compared to the old lights, the advancement in LED streetlights means that the emitted light should be more accurately focused on the highway and significantly reduce upward light pollution. The relamping of the street lights in Cannock Wood has been completed.

Lighting can sometimes be too bright or aimed so that it spills upwards polluting and impairing appreciation of the night sky. It can also create shadows which can impair visibility as well as being wasteful of energy.

Lower height columns and shielding is beneficial for manège lighting, as is restricted operation hours and landscape mitigation.

INTERPRETATION

Further advice can be found at: Dark-Sky Lighting Basics³⁰ (Appendix 1)

EVIDENCE

Cannock Chase AONB Dark Skies²⁹ (Appendix 1).

Dark-Sky Lighting Basics³⁰ (Appendix 1).

National guidance³¹ on how to consider light pollution in the Planning System (Appendix 1)

Artificial Light in the Environment³², Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, 2009 (Appendix 1).

Cannock Chase AONB Annual Review³³, 2020-21 (Appendix 1).

Evidence base references in Appendix 1

³⁰ Dark Sky Lighting Basics

³¹ National planning guidance on light pollution

³² Artificial Light in the Environment

³³ Cannock Chase AONB Annual Review 2020-21

POLICY CW10: FOOTPATH AND BRIDLEWAY IMPROVEMENTS

1. The improvement of footpath and bridleway access and the facilitation of new circular walks and routes around and from the village will be supported. New provision should complement existing provision and if possible also link communities with local facilities and services including public transport.
2. All improvements should respect the character of the area in terms of use of materials, lighting, surfacing, location and signage appropriate to the AONB status. Through good design footpath/bridleway improvements and improved signage can both improve access for visitors while also protecting local habitats.
3. Provision should be made for the ongoing maintenance of any footpaths and bridleways provided under this policy.
4. Design or adaptation of new footpaths and bridleways to function as wildlife corridors is encouraged.

INTENTION

To meet the Objectives:

OBJECTIVE 9. FOOTPATHS

Seek to improve provision for pedestrians in the village in terms of accessibility, safety and quality.

OBJECTIVE 7. BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

Protect and enhance the biodiversity and wildlife of the parish including tree and hedgerow coverage.

JUSTIFICATION

Footpaths and bridleways are key to the character of the area and to the enjoyment of the parish and beyond, especially the rest of Cannock Chase AONB. The physical and mental health benefits of walking and of connecting people of all ages to the environment are well established¹⁶ making the availability and quality of footpaths and bridleways fundamentally important.

- Footpaths serve both as a way for people to enjoy the countryside and as access routes around and through the parish.
- Some Rights of Way have been obstructed and others closed.
- Some footpaths need repair and others could be improved through new infrastructure.
- The strategic network could be improved through a variety of works which have been identified.
- New and existing footpaths and bridleways can work as wildlife corridors connecting areas of biodiversity.
- Some footpaths suffer from poor access due to gates that make it hard to get a pushchair, pram, bike, wheelchair or mobility scooter through and these could be improved.

INTERPRETATION

A number of potential improvements to the strategic network of footpath and cycle links have been identified including those indicated in Figure 8 and described below.

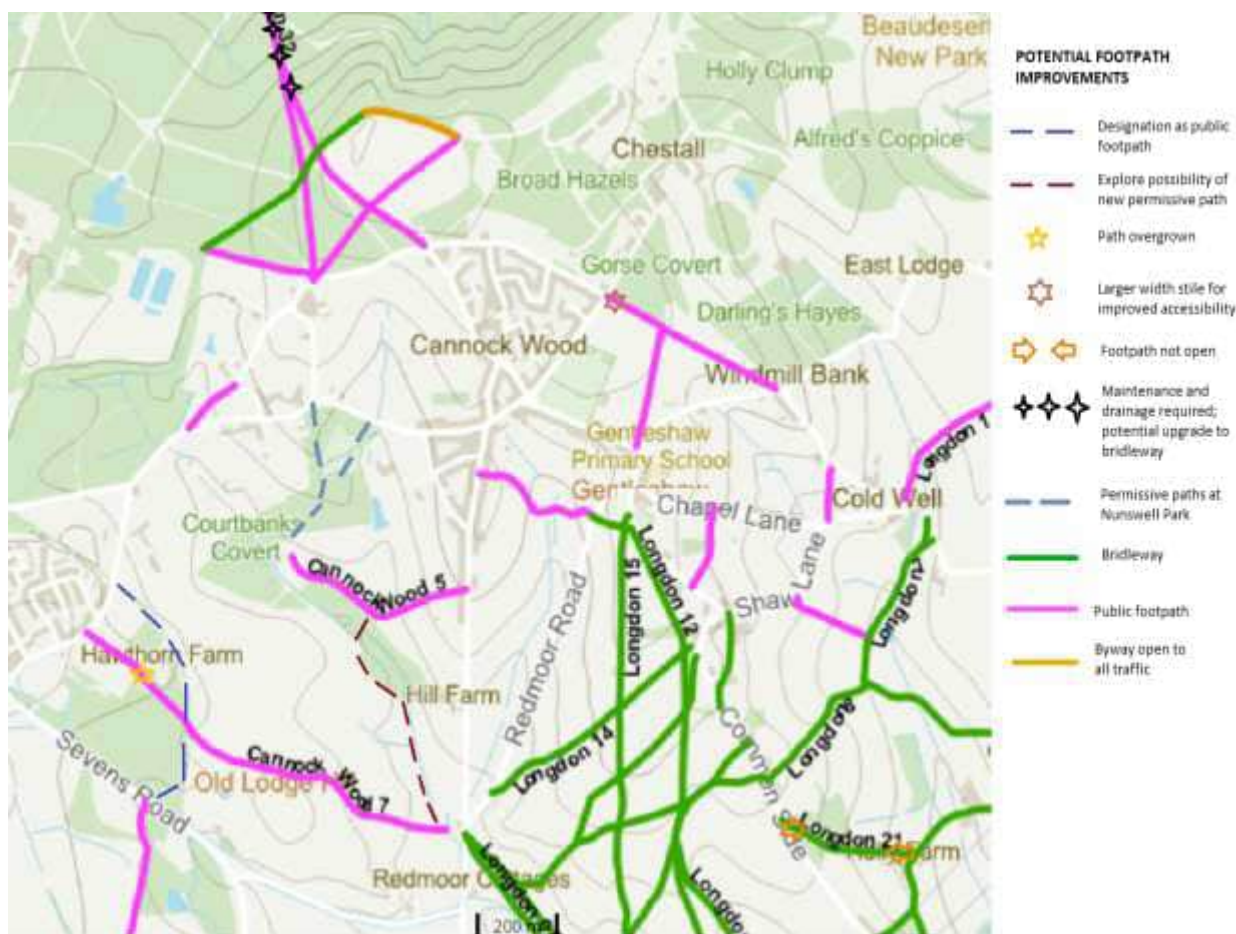


Figure 8: Potential footpath improvements

- New designation as public footpath of the route of the former mineral railway which forms part of the Chase2Water Route between paths Cannock Wood 7 and Cannock Town 0.795.
- Discussion of the possibility of a new (permissive) footpath from The Redmore Inn to Courtbanks Covert to link up with footpath Cannock Wood 5. It might be possible to use the existing track which is well fenced.
- Maintenance of footpath Cannock Town 67 near Hawthorn Farm where the path is overgrown with brambles.
- Expansion of the stile on footpath CW2 which currently cannot get a pram or buggy through the stile without dismantling the pram or folding up the buggy, on what would otherwise be a walking route to the school, church and village hall. It is also inaccessible for wheelchairs.
- Maintenance of footpath Cannock Town 0.782 / 0.785, locally known as Telegraph Hill, including drainage and cambering so the path does not get eroded by rainwater as at present and to ensure the lower end is not flooded. This work is required just for maintenance of the public footpath but it would enable the route to be upgraded to a bridleway to provide connection from Cannock Wood to the extensive network of cycle paths in Cannock Chase.
- Re-opening of Rights of Way at path Longdon 22 from Commons side. This is not in Cannock Wood Parish itself but is part of the footpath network in the immediate area.

Further improvements to the strategic network may be identified by the Parish Council from time to time and an up to date version of the network including proposed improvements will be kept on the Parish Council website at <https://cannockwood.org>. Any proposed new public footpaths must be designated as such by Staffordshire County Council, but permissive paths depend on the goodwill of landowners.

Provision for ongoing maintenance might be through a number of mechanisms including adoption of the path as highway or by recording the path as a public right of way on the Definitive Map or by other appropriate mechanism.

Staffordshire County Council Rights of Way Charter sets out the standards by which the County will deal with identified issues in Rights of Way.

Improvements could include provision of appropriately designed and sited cycle parking.

The Design Code⁴ gives guidance on footpath design and cycle parking.

It may be important that any areas of development land required to safeguard a future link identified in the strategic network, or to safeguard a link to a potential development site, be included in the adopted public highway, or otherwise be transferred into public ownership and remain in public ownership.

EVIDENCE

The Plan at Figure 8 above is adapted from and based on the Staffordshire County Council map of Public Rights of Way [Staffordshire County Council interactive map](#).

Character Assessment³/Design Code⁴ (Appendix 1).

A Green Future: 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment¹⁶



Crossing Shaw Brook on public footpath CW4



Public footpath CW5 at Hayfield Hill

POLICY CW11: HIGHWAY SAFETY

1. Development proposals should demonstrate that there is no significant detrimental impact on traffic safety and where possible contribute to improvements in traffic safety including the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.
2. Where proposed development sites are located on a road with no pavements or other provision for pedestrians, consideration should be given to making new provision for pedestrians where this would enhance safety.
3. Where appropriate proposals should reduce car dependency and incorporate sustainable transport provision, including:
 - a. having good access to public transport;
 - b. prioritising the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders;
 - c. providing any necessary highway improvements to accommodate proposed development;
 - d. demonstrating how the traffic generated by the proposed development will, when considered in conjunction with other committed developments, be accommodated through the proportional contribution towards any necessary highway improvements, to ensure that there is no significant detrimental impact on traffic safety, congestion or air quality.
4. Where development proposals will create demand for parking they will be required to provide off-street parking and not reduce safety for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.
5. New development should provide safe access to the carriageway.
6. The impact of the private car on the street scene should be minimised wherever possible.
7. The numbers of traffic signs should not exceed what is necessary and shall be the minimum size necessary to meet the requirements of safety.

INTENTION

To meet the Objective:

OBJECTIVE 10. ROADS

Seek to improve road safety in the village for all users by working with the relevant authorities.

JUSTIFICATION

Many residents of Cannock Wood continue to register their concern over road safety on Parish roads, especially along Hayfield Hill and Cumberledge Hill where many cars travel in excess of the 30mph speed limit, and at the junction of Parkgate Road and Buds Road.

INTERPRETATION

Road safety improvements could consider including traffic calming, signage, junction improvements, priority changes or pedestrian crossings. Manual for Streets³⁴ gives greater detail of how to design safe streets and roads. Staffordshire County Council is the highway authority responsible for highway improvements and safety.

Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

³⁴ Manual for Streets

EVIDENCE

Manual for Streets³⁴, Department for Transport, 2007 (Appendix 1).

Residents Survey⁸ highlighted road safety as a major issue (Appendix 1).



Looking down Sycamore Hill at Buds Road triangle junction with Chestall Road and Park Gate Road



Speed limit signage on Hayfield Hill

POLICY CW12: COMMUNITY ASSETS

Community assets of importance to the life and enjoyment of the local community are shown on the map at Figure 9. Development proposals that will enhance the viability and/or community value of the assets shown in Figure 9 or any others subsequently added Cannock Chase District Council’s list of Assets of Community Value³⁵ will be supported as long as it is not detrimental to the character of the Parish. Otherwise, proposals that result in either the loss of the asset or in significant harm to the community value of an asset will be resisted, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the operation of the asset or the ongoing delivery of the community value of the asset is no longer financially viable.

INTENTION

To meet the Objective:

OBJECTIVE 11. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Strive to ensure that the community facilities and amenities are appropriate for the needs of the parish thus allowing residents of all ages the opportunity to take part in activities that lead to a sense of individual and/or community well-being.

JUSTIFICATION

Community facilities are valued in the area but there may be some potential threats to them. For those facilities designated as Assets of Community Value, the Parish Council would be made aware should an asset of community value be put on the market and provide a short moratorium to explore potential options including the Community Right to Bid.

INTERPRETATION

Potential improvements could include:

- Improvements to access.
- Improvements that allow other uses that the community values.
- Improvements that make the asset more viable.

The local community regard all the assets shown in Figure 9 as important.

The Localism Act 2011 introduced the term ‘Asset of Community Value’ in relation to buildings and other land added to the local authority’s register of Assets of Community Value. The main use must currently or recently have



The Rag Inn

been to further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community and could do so in the future. The Localism Act states that ‘social interests’ include cultural, recreational and sporting interests. An Asset of Community Value is subject to additional protection from development under the Localism Act 2011. Voluntary and community organisations such as the Parish Council can nominate an asset to be included on Cannock Chase District Council’s register of assets of community value. The Parish Council intends to apply for Nunswell Park, the Village Hall and Village

Hall Field, and the Beaudesert Sports Field And Recreation Ground to be included on Cannock Chase District Council's register of Assets of Community Value³⁵. The Park Gate Inn was added to Cannock Chase District council's register of Assets of Community Value in March 2022 at the request of the Parish Council, but a request to include Cannock Wood Methodist Church was rejected in April 2022 and a request to include The Rag Inn was rejected in June 2022.



Nunswell Park

EVIDENCE

List of Assets of Community Value in Cannock Chase³⁵ (Appendix 1).

Evidence base reference in Appendix 1

³⁵ List of Assets of Community Value in Cannock Chase

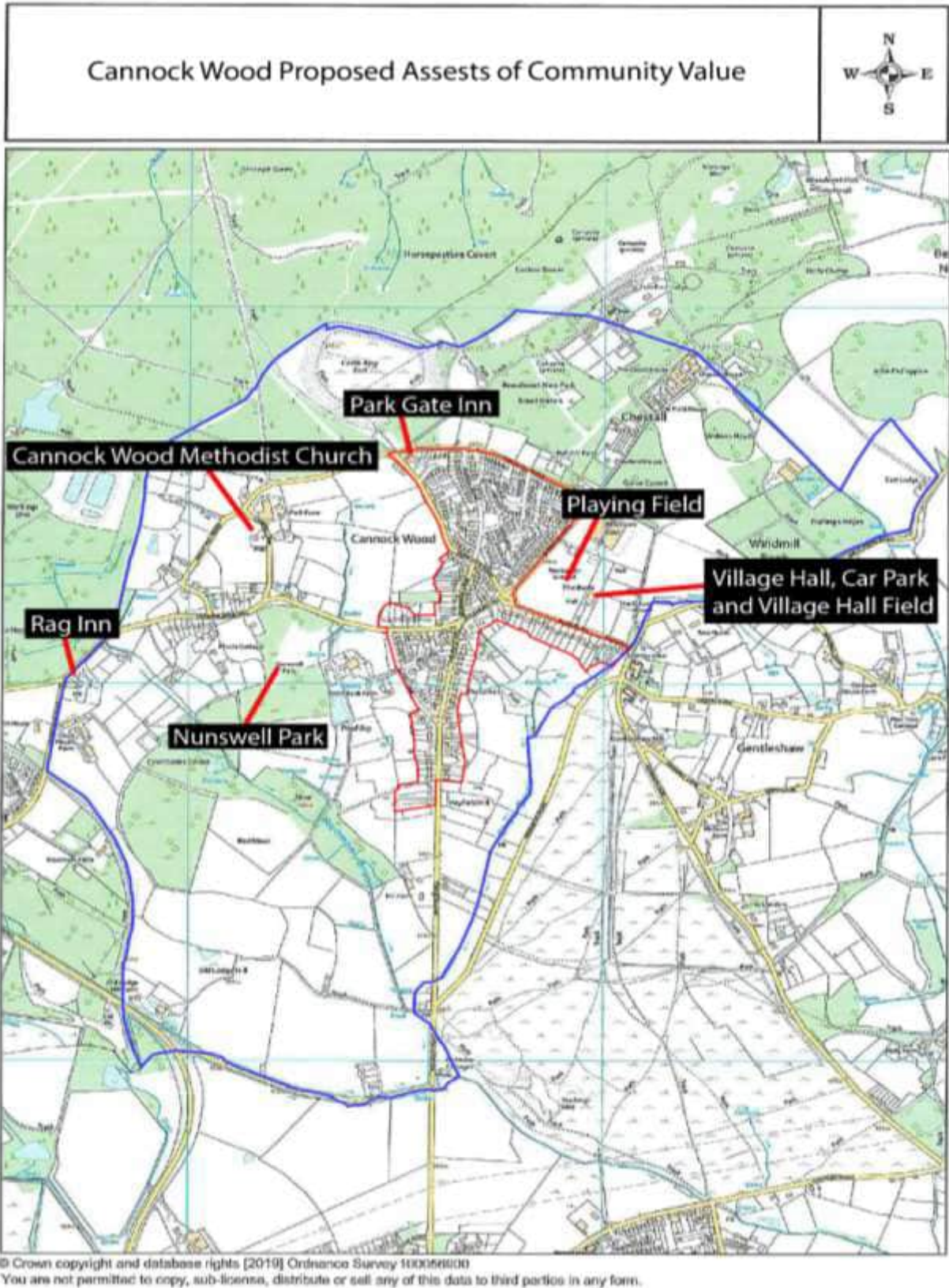


Figure 9: Proposed Assets of Community Value

POLICY CW13: PUBLIC REALM AND OPEN SPACES

Proposals for alterations, which include maintenance, cleaning, appearance, safety and condition of the public realm and open spaces will be supported provided they are in keeping with the character of the area as described in the Character Assessment³ and are informed where appropriate by the Design Code⁴. Public Realm includes road, pavement, grass verges, street furniture, the playing field and other public areas.

INTENTION

To meet Objectives:

OBJECTIVE 12. PUBLIC REALM

Support improvement to the public realm.

OBJECTIVE 10. ROADS

Seek to improve highway safety in the village for all users by working with the relevant authorities.

OBJECTIVE 7. BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

Protect and enhance the biodiversity and wildlife of the parish including tree and hedgerow coverage.

JUSTIFICATION

The quality of the public realm contributes to the quality of the environment and the character of the area. There are many ways in which different aspects of the Public Realm and Open Spaces in the Parish could be enhanced in terms of design and appearance so that they better serve residents and visitors and contribute to the character of the area. For example, grass verges could be places where biodiversity is encouraged and junctions could be made more pedestrian friendly.

INTERPRETATION

The Character Assessment outlines aspects of the public realm and open spaces that contribute to the character of the area. The Design Code provides guidance on ways in which the public realm and open spaces could be improved.

EVIDENCE

Character Assessment³ (Appendix 1)



Playground and cricket pavilion



Buds Road triangle and post box

POLICY CW14: VILLAGE BOUNDARY

In the Cannock Chase District Council Local Plan Part 1, 2014, Policies Map, the Main Settlement is excluded from the Green Belt by a Settlement Boundary. The rest of the Parish lies inside the Green Belt. Any development outside the Settlement Boundary and therefore lying within the Green Belt will have to demonstrate exceptional circumstances, as well as evidenced need and must be in conformity with other policies in this Plan, the adopted Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

INTENTION

To meet Objective:

OBJECTIVE 4. GREEN BELT

To support the aim of the Green Belt to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.

JUSTIFICATION

The protection offered by the Green Belt is welcomed by the Parish Council as it keeps land open between settlements within the Parish and beyond which is a key feature of the character of the area.

INTERPRETATION

The Green Belt covers all the area outside the Settlement Boundary as shown in Figure 10.



View looking north east from public footpath CW7 to Gentleshaw Common across Green Belt land

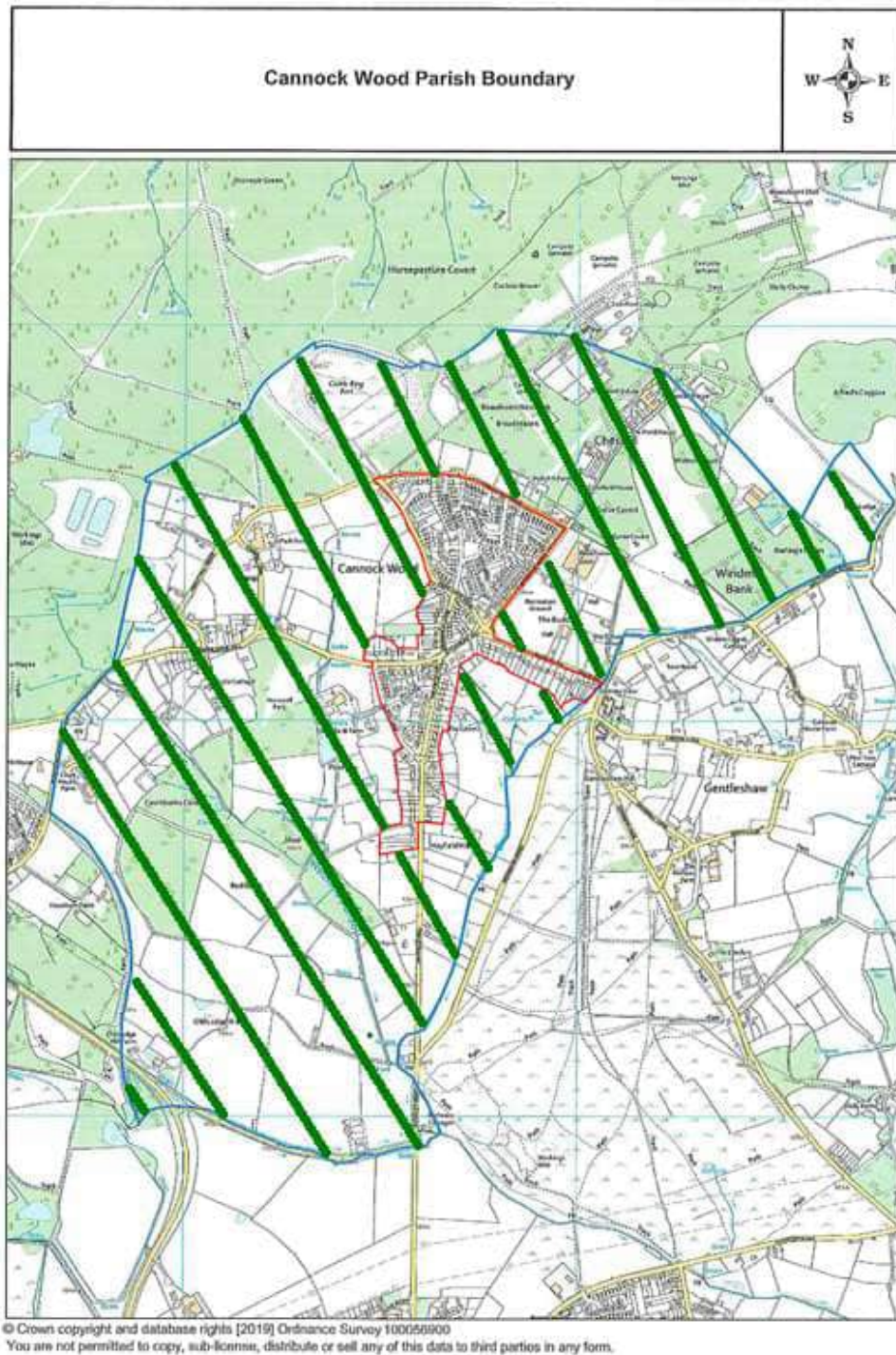


Figure 10: Indication of Green Belt rural areas of Cannock Wood

Boundary of Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan designated area —————

Indication of settlement boundary —————
 (see [Cannock Chase Planning Policy Map](#) for the definitive settlement boundary)

Indication of Green Belt rural area // //
 (see [Cannock Chase Planning Policy Map](#) for the definitive boundaries)

SECTION 4 DELIVERY

Monitoring the Plan after it has been made

Cannock Wood Parish Council is notified of all planning applications within the Parish by Cannock Chase District Council and asked for their comments. Monitoring the Plan after it has been made is important to ensure that the Plan is achieving its objectives and to understand how it is being used, and how decisions are taking into account the Parish Council's comments on planning applications.

Application Response Form

The Parish Council will use an Application Response Form (as shown on the next page) to record its comments on planning applications. This form will prompt the Parish Council to comment on how it determines individual planning applications have considered each of the Neighbourhood Plan's policies by providing space against each policy for comments. It also provides space for noting the eventual outcome, i.e. the District Council's decision and how the Parish Council's comments and Neighbourhood Plan policies have been considered in the decision.

A Plan Monitoring Table

A Plan Monitoring Table, as shown below, can be used as a framework for monitoring the effectiveness of the Plan over time by recording information about a range of planning decisions. It contains spaces for a brief summary of the information for each planning application commented on by the Parish Council including relevant dates and a brief summary of the Parish Council's comments and outcome. This will help give an overview of how applications are being dealt with and decided upon.

On an annual basis this table can be used to form the basis of a report on the effectiveness of the Plan which can include recommendations for how the Plan can be monitored in the future and for potential future versions of the Neighbourhood Plan. This table will be available on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

Application Number	Registration Date	Date Parish Council Notified	Target Date for Determination	Date of Determination	Parish Councils Response and Outcome

Cannock Wood Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan Application Response Form				Application Reference			
Description of Development							
Address or Location							
Registration Date		Date Parish Council Notified		Target Date for Determination		Date of Determination	
Policy Number	Policy Name			Parish Council's Comments			
CW1	HOUSING DESIGN						
CW2	LOCAL CHARACTER						
CW3	NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS						
CW4	HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT						
CW5	VIEWS AND VISTAS						
CW6	PROTECT AND ENHANCE LANDSCAPE HERITAGE						
CW7	PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE CANNOCK CHASE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB)						
CW8	PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY OF THE PARISH INCLUDING TREE AND HEDGEROW COVERAGE						
CW9	TRANQUILLITY AND LIGHT POLLUTION						
CW10	FOOTPATH AND BRIDLEWAY IMPROVEMENTS						
CW11	HIGHWAY SAFETY						
CW12	COMMUNITY ASSETS						
CW13	PUBLIC REALM AND OPEN SPACE						
CW14	VILLAGE BOUNDARY						
Other Comments							
Outcome: How was the planning application determined and how were the Neighbourhood Plan policies and Parish Council comments dealt with in the decision?							

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Appendix 1 Schedule of Evidence

1. Summary results of June 2018 survey
[Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan - Cannock Wood](#)
2. Minutes of Parish Council meetings 2018-2022
[Cannock Wood Parish Council Meetings - Cannock Wood](#)
3. Cannock Wood Character Assessment
[Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan - Cannock Wood](#)
4. Cannock Wood Design Code
[Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan - Cannock Wood](#)
5. Cannock Wood Housing Needs Assessment
[Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan - Cannock Wood](#)
6. Historic Farmsteads
[Historic Farmsteads](#)
7. Staffordshire Historic Environment Record
[Staffordshire Historic Environment Record](#)
8. Neighbourhood Plan Survey 2021 and results
[Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan - Cannock Wood](#)
9. Character Type Descriptions: AONB Landscape Character Framework, Stage 2 Landscape Character Type Descriptions, 2017
[AONB Landscape Character Assessment 2017](#)
10. Cannock Chase Local List
[Local List | Cannock Chase District Council](#)
11. Historic Environment Assessment Cannock Chase AONB, June 2015
[Cannock Chase AONB Historic Environment Assessment](#)
12. Historic Environment Assessment Addendum 2017
[Historic Environment Assessment Addendum 2017](#)
13. Cannock Chase AONB Design Guide
[AONB Design Guide](#)
14. Cannock Wood Views Assessment
[Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan - Cannock Wood](#)
15. Cannock Chase AONB Views and Settings Guide
[Cannock Chase AONB Views and Settings Guide](#)
16. A Green Future: 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment
[25-year-environment-plan](#)

17. Cannock Chase District Council Website – Castle Ring
[Castle Ring Scheduled Monument | Cannock Chase District Council](#)
18. Ancient Woodland Standing Advice
[Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions](#)
19. Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy
[Biodiversity 2020](#)
20. Historic England Interactive Lidar Map
[Chase Through Time: the Archaeology of Cannock Chase Revealed from the Air by Lidar | Historic England](#)
21. Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan
<https://www.cannock-chase.co.uk/publications/aonb-management-plan/>
22. Making Space for Nature (Lawton et al. 2010)
[Making Space for Nature: Lawton et al 2010](#)
23. Viability Assessment
[Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan - Cannock Wood](#)
24. Staffordshire Wildlife Trust Evidence on Cannock Wood
[Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan - Cannock Wood](#)
25. Cannock Chase District Nature Recovery Network Mapping, FINAL REPORT, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust 2020
[SWT nature recovery mapping for Cannock Chase](#)
26. Environmental Capacity in Cannock Chase District, Final Report Prepared by LUC, January 2013
[Environmental Capacity in Cannock Chase District](#)
27. Green Infrastructure Assessment (Final Version), March 2011, Cannock Chase District Council
[Green Infrastructure Assessment Cannock Chase](#)
28. Biodiversity Net Gain. Good practice principles for development. A practical guide.
[Biodiversity net gain. Good practice principles for development. A practical guide \(cieem.net\)](#)
29. AONB Dark Skies
[Dark Skies - Cannock Chase AONB \(cannock-chase.co.uk\)](#)
30. Dark-Sky Lighting Basics
[Outdoor Lighting Basics - International Dark-Sky Association \(darksky.org\)](#)

31. National guidance on how to consider light pollution in the planning system
[Light pollution - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
32. Artificial Light in the Environment, Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, 2009
[Artificial Light in the Environment](#)
33. Cannock Chase AONB Annual Review, 2020-21
[AONB Annual Review 2020-21 - Cannock Chase AONB \(cannock-chase.co.uk\)](https://cannock-chase.co.uk)
34. Manual for Streets, Department for Transport, 2007
[Manual for Streets](#)
35. Assets of Community Value in Cannock Chase
[Assets of Community Value | Cannock Chase District Council](#)

Appendix 2 Scheduled Monuments and Non-Designated Heritage Assets in Cannock Wood

Scheduled Monuments

There are two Scheduled Monuments within Cannock Wood Parish, as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Scheduled Monuments

Castle Ring, a multivallate hillfort and medieval hunting lodge	Moated site and bloomery in Courtbanks Covert
Grid reference SK 04434 12827	Grid reference SK 04225 11733
Entry list number 1014687	Entry list number 1003750
<p>Castle Ring is a good example of an Iron Age hillfort in a commanding position. The ramparts and ditches will retain archaeological information on the construction of the hillfort, in particular, the partly silted ditches will retain environmental evidence on the economy of the site's inhabitants and the landscape in which they lived. The site retains buried features and structures which will provide information not only on the site's occupation during the Iron Age but also on its reuse in the medieval period. The reuse of the hillfort following the construction of the hunting lodge is matter of interest since it illustrates the resumption of high-status occupation at the site. Furthermore, as a feature of the park of Beaudesert, the hunting lodge itself provides evidence for the leisure activities of the nobility during the medieval period.</p> <p>Castle Ring, a multivallate hillfort and medieval hunting lodge, Cannock Wood - 1014687 Historic England</p>	<p>The monument includes the earthworks and buried remains of a medieval rectangular moated site and a nearby bloomery situated within the valley of Redmoor Brook. The Redmoor Brook has been re-cut to run through the south west and south east arms of the moat. It is possibly the site of a royal hunting lodge built by Henry II in 1157-1158. To the north east at SK 0414 1179 lie the buried remains of a medieval bloomery or iron furnace, evident by buried mounds of iron slag, cinder and black earth. Situated close by is a rock-cut well known as Nun's Well which may be medieval in date. The possible site of a C12 hermit priory which adopted Cistercian rule in 1141 and then moved to Stoneleigh by 1159, is thought to lie in the vicinity.</p> <p>Moated site and bloomery in Courtbanks Covert, Cannock Wood - 1003750 Historic England</p>

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

The Cannock Wood list of Non-Designated Heritage Assets at the date of this Plan is shown in Table 4 below. The character of each of these assets makes a positive contribution to local identity, distinctiveness and appearance.

Table 4: Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Asset	Grid Reference
Cannock Wood Methodist Church, Chapel Lane	SK 04188 12357
Nun's Well, Court Bank Farm	SK 04149 11798
The Cottage, Slang Lane	SK 04538 12007
Broome Cottage, 6 Cumberledge Hill	SK 04581 12169
1 Chestall Cottages, Beaudesert Park	SK 05073 12671
4 Chestall Cottages, Beaudesert Park	SK 05051 12690
The Granary, Chestall Park	SK 05118 12795

Other sites and buildings may be added by the Parish Council which is responsible for curating the list of Non-Designated Heritage Assets. A complete listing is available from the Parish Council on request.



Cannock Wood Methodist Church in middle distance

Appendix 3 Localism Act, 2011: Neighbourhood Planning and Assets of Community Value

The 2011 Localism Act introduced a number of new rights for communities including neighbourhood planning and the right to nominate land and buildings as Assets of Community Value to give them extra protection.

Neighbourhood Planning

What is neighbourhood planning?

Neighbourhood Planning allows local communities to set planning policies through a neighbourhood plan that forms, along with the Local Planning Authority's Local Plan, part of the development plan used to determine planning applications. Cannock Chase District Council is the Local Planning Authority for Cannock Wood.

According to Government guidance:

"Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead. Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to plan for the types of development to meet their community's needs and where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area."

(Source <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#what-is-neighbourhood-planning>)

What is the status of neighbourhood planning?

The status of neighbourhood planning is outlined in paragraphs 29 and 30 of The National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021):

"29. Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies.

30. Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently. "

Who does neighbourhood plans?

Where a designated neighbourhood area contains all or part of the administrative area of a parish council, the Parish Council is responsible for neighbourhood planning. However, where the Parish Council chooses to produce a neighbourhood plan it should work with other members of the

community who are interested in, or affected by, the neighbourhood planning proposals so that they can play an active role in the preparation of the neighbourhood plan.

For more information on how Cannock Wood Parish Council put together the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan, please see Appendix 4, How Cannock Wood Parish Council Prepared their Plan

See also [National Planning Policy Framework - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework-guidance) and <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/> for further details about neighbourhood planning.

Assets of Community Value

In England, the Localism Act 2011 provides additional protection to land or buildings known as Assets of Community Value that the local community regards as being of importance. The Local Authority must keep a register of Assets of Community Value and voluntary and community organisations (such as Parish Councils) can nominate land or buildings to be included on this register.

Once an Asset is on a register the local community can benefit from a Community Right to Bid should the Asset come up for sale. This a right under the Act which imposes a moratorium period (known as the Full Moratorium Period) on the sale of the Asset for up to 6 months to allow the local community a chance to determine if they can raise the finance to purchase the Asset and if so submit an offer to purchase it. The community group have a period of 6 weeks once the owner has notified the Council of an intention to sell the Asset to decide if they want to be considered as a bidder (this is known as the Interim Moratorium Period). There is no obligation on the owner to accept the offer or treat the community group as a preferential bidder.

For more information on this process, see <https://mycommunity.org.uk/what-are-assets-of-community-value-acv>

Although not a provision of the Localism Act, the status of land or buildings as Assets of Community Value can be treated as a material consideration in a planning application including refusal for full or partial demolition or change of use. Also Assets of Community can be subject to Compulsory Purchase by a Local Authority where there is the threat of long-term loss to the community.

Further to the Localism Act, The Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012 set out more detailed regulations.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2421/contents/made>

Appendix 4 How Cannock Wood Parish Council Prepared their Plan

The Parish Council carried out a village survey in 2018 which showed that 70% of respondents felt housing to be the most important of several issues affecting Cannock Wood then and in the future. Cannock Wood Parish Council established that a Neighbourhood Plan with appropriate planning policies and guidance would be a good way to address some of these issues.

Area Designation

Cannock Wood residents were interested in issues that could affect large parts of the Parish and so the Parish Council decided to apply to Cannock Chase District Council for the whole Civil Parish to be designated as the Neighbourhood Plan Area in May 2019. The District Council was therefore required to designate the Neighbourhood Area as requested and no public consultation on the application was required (in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012, as amended) Regulation 5A). On 6th June 2019, Cannock Chase District Council (via delegated authority) resolved to designate the Cannock Wood Parish as the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Area.

Plan Preparation

The Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 ("the Regulations"), the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2003 and the EU Directive 2001/42 on Strategic Environmental Assessment.

This included setting up a Working Group and Cannock Wood Parish Council has been fortunate enough to be able to draw on local expertise in a variety of specialist areas in the form of volunteers. The Working Group started detailed work in October 2021 to oversee the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan for Cannock Wood. The Working Group comprises two or three parish councillors and twelve to fifteen local residents. The Working Group has met regularly, usually once a month, and smaller sub-groups have met as required to focus on certain themes of the plan's development and to organise public engagement.

The Parish Council and Working Group decided that they would need independent specialist help at certain points in the Plan-making process. To this end the Working Group established a budget including grants made available by the Government specifically for the purpose of producing Neighbourhood Plans. The Working Group has liaised frequently with Edward Taylor of PlanSpace and is very appreciative of his time, technical guidance and expertise. It was also able to access support from Cannock Chase District Council including large scale maps of Cannock Wood.

Community Engagement

The Parish Council tasked the Working Group with producing a consultation and engagement strategy, showing how the public would be involved throughout the process, and consulted as widely and thoroughly as possible during the process to ensure that the draft and final Neighbourhood Plan would be representative of the views of residents.

The strategy developed is principally based on distribution to every household in the parish of printed documents at various stages in the process. The same documents have been made available as pdfs on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the Parish Council's website www.cannockwood.org. It was agreed that paper distribution was required to all households to ensure that there is no digital divide within the community. A full list of the paper documents circulated is provided in Table 5 below and all have made clear that feedback and comment is welcome throughout and all opinions expressed would be considered in the round to inform the contents of the developing Neighbourhood Plan.

The village survey prepared by the Working Group in October 2021 was a fundamental part of the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. It was comprehensive and provided explanation about the process and a draft Vision as well as a range of questions. It was also an ideal opportunity for the residents to pool ideas and suggestions about what else is important for Cannock Wood. There was a good response rate, and many residents made a lot of thoughtful comments and suggestions.



Collection box at central location for survey and consultation responses

The Working Group undertook the considerable task of analysing all the responses, logging responses on a spreadsheet including every comment made, however long; a sample was cross-checked for accuracy independently by a member of the Working Group not involved in the inputting of data. The spreadsheet provided data for the tables and charts which are shown in the subsequent survey results and feedback documents prepared by the Working Group. Full survey results including every comment made were published on the website and results relevant to local organisations provided to them in bespoke documents between December 2021 and February 2022.

The survey responses showed a 97.5% approval rating for the draft Vision and so, based on the detailed analysis of the survey responses, draft Objectives for the Plan were developed. A second major document providing highlights of the Survey Results and the Draft Objectives was distributed to every household in February 2022 and published online.

A Village Drop-in Event (shown in Figure 11) was held at the Village Hall on Saturday 19th February 2022 that offered residents the opportunity to have a chat about the Neighbourhood Plan, ask any questions and provide feedback. This was well publicised by invitations within formal documents, in a free newsletter which has been an early positive outcome of the Neighbourhood Plan process, and online through Nextdoor. Over 100 people attended.



Figure 11: Village Drop-in Event



Figure 12: Variable signage which was removed to storage when not needed, so that it was less likely to be overlooked at key stages of public engagement.

Signage (as shown in Figure 12) was also erected in four prominent locations within the parish to raise awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan survey in 2021 and the Drop-in Event in 2022; it was removed to storage when not current for greater impact when in use. The text on a red background has been changed to keep the message relevant to the stage of the Neighbourhood Plan process. An email address for queries and feedback has been publicised on the signage and in the survey.

Public comments on the Draft Objectives and supporting text were explicitly encouraged and facilitated and that feedback used to inform the development of draft Policies.

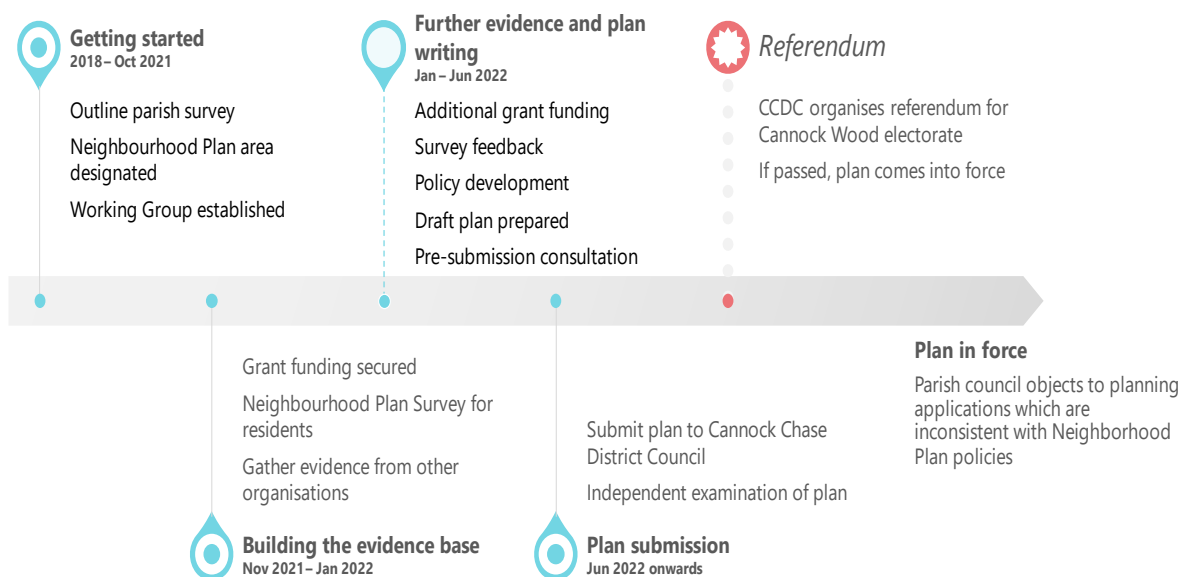
The text of the Draft Policies was distributed in print to every household in early March 2022 and published online. Responses were strongly encouraged using a tick box for ease of completion and analysis, whilst also being entirely open to comments/suggestions.

Provision has also been made for residents to address any queries or feedback verbally at the Parish Council. A local telephone number was made available when the survey was delivered for additional copies to be requested or if help was needed in returning the survey. Lifts to the Village Drop-in Event were offered to make it possible for those unable to make their own way to attend.

Detailed survey and explanation of process and draft vision	20 A4 pages	Printed and delivered to every house in the village and pdf online. Returns could be made to a central collection box or to the Village Hall. NP survey (cannockwood.org)	November 2021
Full survey results including every comment made	80 A4 pages	Pdf online. Pdf available for consultation at drop-in event provided to the Parish Council. Full survey results (cannockwood.org)	December 2021
Survey results relevant to local organisations provided to them in bespoke documents	Various	Pdf and paper and discussion in person: four local pubs, the shop, the Village Hall and Playing Field committees, and the Vicar. Regarding Castle Ring ancient monument to Cannock Chase District Council's Principal Landscape & Countryside Officer. Some of results were also incorporated into a Housing Needs Assessment prepared by AECOM.	December 2021 – February 2022
Survey feedback and draft objectives	16 A4 pages	Printed and delivered to every house in the village and pdf online Survey feedback and draft objectives (cannockwood.org)	February 2022
Draft policy consultation	16 A4 pages	Printed and delivered to every house in the village and pdf online. Draft policy consultation (cannockwood.org)	March 2022
Informal policy consultation: draft policies with purpose and justification	32 A4 pages	Distributed as pdf for comment to Cannock Chase District Council CCDC, Staffordshire County Council SCC, Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty AONB, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust SWT and Historic England, as all have been contributed to the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.	March 2022
Formal pre-submission consultation	20 A4 pages	Printed and delivered to every house in the village and pdf online. Also to statutory consultees.	May 2022
Full Plan, Design Code and Character Assessment.	183 A4 pages	PDF online. Reference copies made available by appointment with the Chair of the Parish Council	May 2022

Every public engagement document distributed to all homes in the parish has included an outline of progress with the development of the Neighbourhood Plan and what to look out for next. This has also been summarised in a timeline infographic shown at Figure 13 which is included on the Neighbourhood Plan website, along with more detail on the steps required and organised public engagement [Neighbourhood Plan milestones](#).

Figure 13: Infographic for website



Once draft policies had been developed and the informal consultation described in Table 5 was drawing to a close, a screening report was prepared to establish whether formal Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) were required. The feedback from the informal policy consultation of residents and organisations informed the development of the “pre-submission Plan”.

Before the Plan was submitted to Cannock Chase District Council, Cannock Wood Parish Council undertook a statutory 6-week consultation on the “pre-submission Plan”.

After the 6-week pre-submission consultation any feedback, suggestions and comments were recorded and where appropriate amendments made to the Plan accordingly. This is recorded in the Consultation Statement which accompanies the Plan as it is submitted to the Council for Examination and Referendum.

Local Authority Engagement

It has been critical to engage with the Local Authority, Cannock Chase District Council, throughout the process as once the Plan has passed the Referendum it will form part of the Development Plan for the area and any Planning Applications made for development in Cannock Wood from that point on will then be judged against the Neighbourhood Plan as well as the Local Plan.

Preparation of the Plan was happening at the same time as Cannock Chase District Council's Local Plan was being reviewed. As the Neighbourhood Plan has to be in general conformity with the Strategic Policies of the Local Plan, this made it even more important to maintain a good dialogue with Cannock Chase District Council throughout the process.

In addition, Cannock Chase District Council have been able to help in a variety of ways in accordance with the Duty to Support required by the Localism Act.

Engagement with other bodies

As the whole of Cannock Wood lies within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty the generous support of the AONB planning policy officer and her counterpart at Staffordshire Wildlife Trust have also been key in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. Strong support has also been provided by various teams at Staffordshire County Council including Historic Environment, Rural Development and Public Rights of Way and by a County Councillor.

Appendix 5 Glossary of Terms

Ancient Woodland: An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB): Land protected by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act). It protects the land to conserve and enhance its natural beauty.

Assets of Community Value: As defined in the Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012. Land or buildings nominated by a Town or Parish Council or certain local voluntary or community groups and which the Council decides meets the requirements to be listed as an asset of community value giving the local community an opportunity to make a bid for the asset when it comes up for sale.

Biodiversity: The wide variety of plants, animals, fungi and bacteria on earth.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG): An approach to development, and/or land management, that aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand.

Design Code: A document that sets out rules and/or guidance for development in a specified area.

Development Plan: This includes adopted Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans that has been made, as defined in Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It is the starting point for determining planning applications and contains the policies against which applications are determined. Neighbourhood plans that have been approved at referendum are also part of the development plan, unless the local planning authority decides that the neighbourhood plan should not be made.

Geodiversity: The range or variety of geological and geomorphological features and processes (rocks, minerals, fossils, structures) that make up the surface and subsurface of the earth and constitute and shape the physical landscape.

Green Belt: A planning policy whose fundamental aim is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

Habitat Corridor: Strip of land, for example along a hedgerow, or a set of steppingstones of habitat conserved and managed for wildlife, usually linking more extensive wildlife habitats. Also known as Wildlife Corridors.

Heritage Asset: A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Historic Environment: All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

Irreplaceable habitat: Habitats which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen.

Light Pollution: When artificial light becomes a source of annoyance to people or harmful to wildlife or undermines the enjoyment of the countryside or the night sky, especially in areas with intrinsically dark landscapes.

Listed Building: A building of special architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings are graded I, II* or II with grade I being the highest. Listing includes the interior as well as the exterior of the building and includes any buildings or permanent structures within its curtilage which have formed part of the land since before 1 July 1948. Historic England is responsible for designating buildings for listing in England.

Local Plan: The plan for the future development of Cannock Chase District, drawn up by Cannock Chase District Council in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the Development Plan. Documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, current core strategies or other planning policies, which under the regulations would be considered to be Development Plan Documents, form part of the Local Plan.

Local Planning Authority (LPA): The Local Authority or Council that is empowered by law to exercise planning functions. In the case of this Neighbourhood Plan the LPA is Cannock Chase District Council.

Local Plan Core Strategy: This sets out the overall vision and planning strategy for development in Cannock Chase District and contains strategic planning policies to ensure that new development addresses the economic, environmental and social needs of the area. It covers the period 2006-2028.

Neighbourhood Plan: The Cannock Wood Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

Non-designated Heritage Assets (NDHAs): Buildings, structures and potentially areas which while not qualifying as either Listed Buildings, Registered Parks or Conservation Areas or Scheduled Monuments are recognised as having heritage value and can be given some protection through policy.

NPPF: The National Planning Policy Framework which sets out planning policy in England.

NPPG: The National Planning Practice Guidance which provides guidance for interpretation of the NPPF.

Parish Council: Cannock Wood Parish Council.

Pre-Submission Draft: The Pre-Submission version of the Cannock Wood Parish Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) consulted on under Regulation 14. Following consultation, the pre-submission version will be amended if appropriate to produce the submission version to be submitted to Cannock Chase District Council for Examination.

Public Realm: Any part of the built environment that the public have free access such as roads, pavements and squares

Regulation 14: Regulation 14 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 directs that the Pre-Submission of the Neighbourhood Plan is used to publicise and consult with people who live, work or carry on business in the Neighbourhood Area.

Right of Way: You can walk on all public rights of way and some public rights of way are also open to horse riders, cyclists or motorists.

Scheduled Monument: A building, structure, or work whether above or below the surface of the land, and any cave or excavation or any site comprising the remains of any such building, structure or work or any cave or excavation included on the Schedule of Monuments found on the National Heritage List for England which is maintained by Historic England on behalf of the Secretary of State for DCMS.

Settlement Boundary: In the case of Cannock Wood a line around the main settlement which effectively excludes the main settlement from the Green Belt which applies to the rest of the Parish.

Site of Biological Importance (SBI): A non-statutory designation used by Staffordshire County Council to protect locally valued sites of biological diversity described generally as Local Wildlife Sites by the UK Government. A local example is Castle Ring.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): A formal conservation designation for land under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Submission Draft: The version of the Cannock Wood Neighbourhood Plan which will be submitted to Cannock Chase who will perform a legal check on the Plan before appointing an Examiner.

Wayfinding: The means and processes by which people find their way around an area. This can include signage as well as other visual cues such as landmarks. It is sometimes referred to as 'legibility'.

Wildlife Corridor: Strip of land, for example along a hedgerow, or a set of steppingstones of habitat conserved and managed for wildlife, usually linking more extensive wildlife habitats. Also known as Habitat Corridors.