
4 Climatic Factors

Focus of theme:

- Greenhouse gas emissions by source
- Greenhouse gas emissions trends
- Effects of climate change
- Climate change adaptation
- Flood risk

4.1 Policy context

In its 2007 strategy on climate change, the European Commission assesses the costs and benefits of combating climate change and recommends a package of measures to limit global warming to 2° Celsius.⁸ In relation to energy, the Commission recommends that the EU's energy efficiency improves by 20% and the share of renewable energy grows to 20% by 2020.

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- Support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate as a 'core planning principle'.
- There is a key role for planning in securing radical reductions in greenhouse gases (GhG), including in terms of meeting the targets set out in the Climate Change Act 2008⁹. Specifically, planning policy should support the move to a low carbon future through:
 - planning for new development in locations and ways which reduce GhG emissions;
 - actively supporting energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings;
 - setting local requirements for building's sustainability in a way that is consistent with the Government's zero carbon buildings policy;
 - positively promoting renewable energy technologies and considering identifying suitable areas for their construction; and
 - encouraging those transport solutions that support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion.
- Direct development away from areas highest at risk of flooding, with development 'not to be allocated if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding'. Where development is necessary, it should be made safe without increasing levels of flood risk elsewhere.
- Take account of the effects of climate change in the long term, taking into account a range of factors including flooding. Adopt proactive strategies to adaptation and manage risks through adaptation measures including well planned green infrastructure.

⁸ Commission of the European Communities (2007) Limiting Global Climate Change to two degrees Celsius: The way ahead for 2020 and beyond [online] available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0002:FIN:EN:PDF>

⁹ The Climate Change Act 2008 sets targets for greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions through action in the UK of at least 80% by 2050, and reductions in CO₂ emissions of at least 26% by 2020, against a 1990 baseline.

The Flood and Water Management Act¹⁰ highlights that alternatives to traditional engineering approaches to flood risk management include:

- Incorporating greater resilience measures into the design of new buildings, and retro-fitting properties at risk (including historic buildings)
- Utilising the environment in order to reduce flooding, for example through the management of land to reduce runoff and through harnessing the ability of wetlands to store water
- Identifying areas suitable for inundation and water storage to reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere
- Planning to roll back development in coastal areas to avoid damage from flooding or coastal erosion
- Creating sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)¹¹

Further guidance is provided in the document Planning for SuDs.¹² This report calls for greater recognition of the multiple benefits that water management can present. It suggests that successful SuDS are capable of 'contributing to local quality of life and green infrastructure'.

4.2 Baseline summary

Summary of current baseline

Potential effects of climate change

The outcome of research on the probable effects of climate change in the UK was released in 2009 by the UK Climate Projections (UKCP09) team¹³. UKCP09 gives climate information for the UK up to the end of this century and projections of future changes to the climate are provided, based on simulations from climate models. Projections are broken down to a regional level across the UK and are shown in probabilistic form, which illustrate the potential range of changes and the level of confidence in each prediction.

As highlighted by the research, the effects of climate change for the south west by 2050 for a medium emissions scenario¹⁴ are likely to be as follows:

- the central estimate of increase in winter mean temperature is 2.1°C and an increase in summer mean temperature of 2.7°C; and
- the central estimate of change in winter mean precipitation is 17% and summer mean precipitation is -20%.

Resulting from these changes, a range of risks may exist for the Hednesford Neighbourhood Area. These include:

- increased incidence of heat related illnesses and deaths during the summer;
- increased incidence of illnesses and deaths related to exposure to sunlight (e.g. skin cancer, cataracts);

¹⁰ Flood and Water Management Act (2010) [online] available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/contents>

¹¹ N.B. The provisions of Schedule 3 to the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 will come into force on the 1st of October 2012 and makes it mandatory for any development in England or Wales to incorporate SuDs.

¹² CIRIA (2010) Planning for SuDs – making it happen [online] available at: <http://www.ciria.org/service/knowledgebase/AM/ContentManagerNet/ContentDisplay.aspx?Section=knowledgebase&NoTemplate=1&ContentID=18465>

¹³ The data was released on 18th June 2009: See: <http://ukclimateprojections.defra.gov.uk/>

¹⁴ UK Climate Projections (2009) South West 2050s Medium Emissions Scenario [online] available at: <http://ukclimateprojections.metoffice.gov.uk/22290>

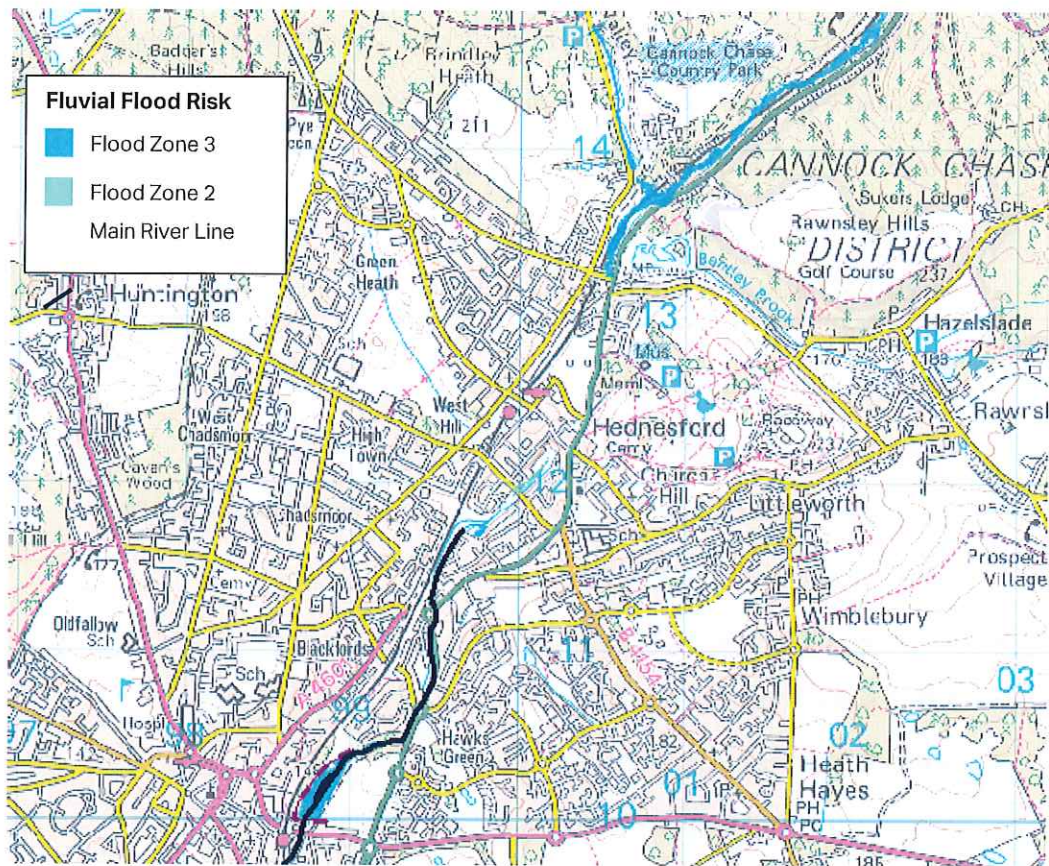
- increased incidence of pathogen related diseases (e.g. legionella and salmonella);
- increase in health problems related to rise in local ozone levels during summer;
- increased risk of injuries and deaths due to increased number of storm events;
- effects on water resources from climate change;
- reduction in availability of groundwater for abstraction;
- adverse effect on water quality from low stream levels and turbulent stream flow after heavy rain;
- increased risk of flooding, including increased vulnerability to 1:100 year floods;
- changes in insurance provisions for flood damage;
- a need to increase the capacity of wastewater treatment plants and sewers;
- a need to upgrade flood defences;
- soil erosion due to flash flooding;
- loss of species that are at the edge of their southerly distribution;
- spread of species at the northern edge of their distribution;
- deterioration in working conditions due to increased temperatures;
- changes to global supply chain;
- increased difficulty of food preparation, handling and storage due to higher temperatures;
- an increased move by the insurance industry towards a more risk-based approach to insurance underwriting, leading to higher cost premiums for business;
- increased demand for air-conditioning;
- increased drought and flood related problems such as soil shrinkages and subsidence;
- risk of road surfaces melting more frequently due to increased temperature; and
- flooding of roads.

Flood risk

The Neighbourhood Plan Area does not include areas at risk of fluvial (river) flood risk (see figure 4.1). There is a river flowing from the Mill Green and Hawks Green Nature Reserve which has limited areas of flood risk along its course. This is outside the Plan area.

Given that the level of development being planned for is in accordance with the Core Strategy, and planning policies exist to manage drainage and flood risk, the Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on flood risk within Hednesford Parish or downstream.

Figure 4.1: Fluvial flood risk in Hednesford¹⁵



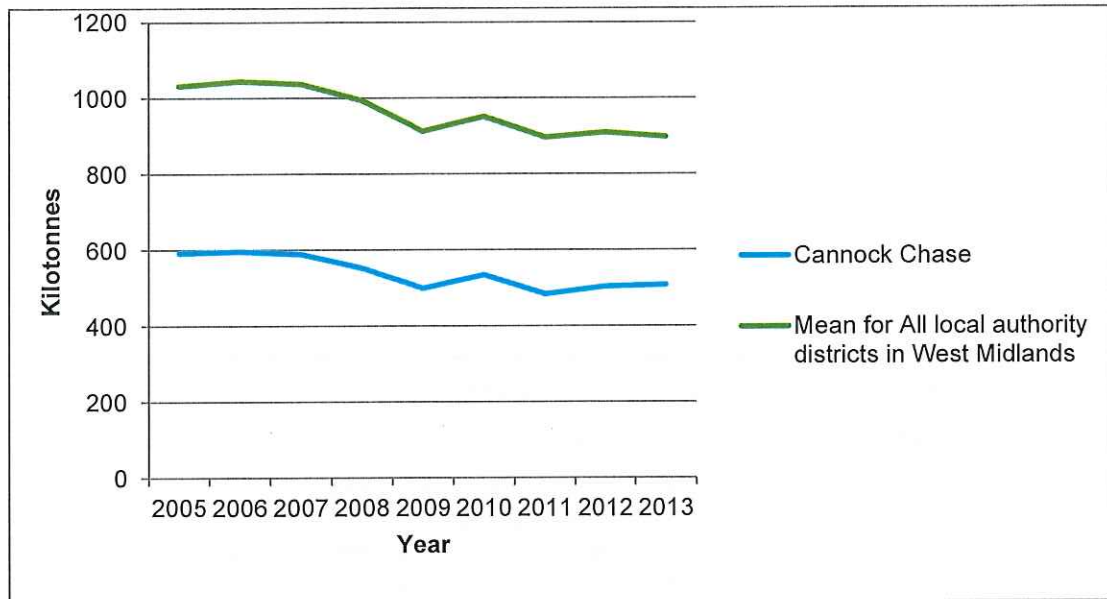
Greenhouse gas emissions

In relation to greenhouse gas emissions, source data from the Department of Energy and Climate Change suggests that Cannock Chase has had consistently lower emissions than the regional average in the West Midlands since 2005. Overall, between 2005 to 2013, Cannock Chase has seen a reduction of 14% total CO₂ emissions. The West Midlands has seen a 13% reduction in CO₂ emissions over the same period. Figure 4.2 below displays these statistics.

As a built-up urban area, the building stock is largely connected to grid gas and electricity, and so there are limited issues with regards to the use of oil or coal to support 'off-grid' properties.

¹⁵ Environment Agency: Flood Risk for Planning <http://maps.environment-agency.gov.uk/>

Figure 4.2 CO₂ emissions estimates - Total (kilotonnes) (from 2005 to 2013) for Cannock Chase & All local authority districts in West Midlands¹⁶



Summary of future baseline

Climate change has the potential to increase the occurrence of extreme weather events in the Hednesford Neighbourhood Area, with increases in mean summer and winter temperatures, increases in mean precipitation in winter and decreases in mean precipitation in summer. This is likely to increase the risks associated with climate change (including fluvial flooding) with an increased need for resilience and adaptation.

In terms of climate change mitigation, per capita emissions are assumed likely to continue to decrease as energy efficiency measures, renewable energy production and new technologies become more widely adopted. However increases in the built footprint of the Neighbourhood Area may lead to increases in overall emissions.

4.3 Key headline issues

- The Neighbourhood Plan Area falls entirely within Flood Zone 1, and so development is unlikely to be affected by fluvial flood risk.

4.4 Scoping outcome

The SEA Topic 'Climatic Factors has been **SCOPED-IN** to the SEA as climate change is an important national and local priority. Although the influence of the Plan may be limited, there is the potential to explore how resilience to climate change can be enhanced as well as contributing towards climate change mitigation.

¹⁶ Local Government Association (2016) Cannock Chase Carbon Dioxide Emissions [online] available at: http://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?mod-metric=440&mod-period=9&mod-area=E07000192&mod-group=AllDistrictInRegion_WestMidlands&modify-report=Apply

4.5 What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Climatic Factors SEA theme?

The SEA topic 'climatic factors' has been 'scoped-in' to this SEA and will therefore be a focus of the appraisal framework. **Table 4.1** presents the SEA objectives and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the Hednesford Neighbourhood Plan in relation to this theme. The questions are focused on those issues that the Plan has the potential to influence. Certain issues will be dealt with by the Core Strategy and / or is out of the remit of the Neighbourhood Plan. It is therefore not appropriate to include appraisal criteria that cover these elements.

Table 4.1 SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Climatic Factors

SEA objective	Supporting questions
Contribute to climate change mitigation	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote high quality design? • Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport? • Reduce the need to travel?
Support the resilience of Hednesford to the potential effects of climate change	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve green infrastructure networks in the plan area to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change? • Sustainably manage surface water run-off, ensuring that the risk of flooding is not increased (either within the plan area or downstream) and where possible reduce flood risk? • Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development in the plan area? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the plan area to the effects of climate change?

5 Landscape and Historic Environment

Focus of theme:

- Landscape and townscape character
- Designated and non-designated sites, areas and features
- The setting of heritage assets
- Archaeological features

5.1 Policy context

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- Protect and enhance valued landscapes, giving particular weight to those identified as being of national importance.
- Heritage assets should be recognised as an 'irreplaceable resource' that should be conserved in a 'manner appropriate to their significance', taking account of 'the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits' of conservation, whilst also recognising the positive contribution new development can make to local character and distinctiveness.
- Set out a 'positive strategy' for the 'conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment', including those heritage assets that are most at risk.
- Develop 'robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics'.
- Consider the effects of climate change in the long term, including in terms of landscape. Adopt 'proactive strategies' to adaptation and manage risks through adaptation measures including well planned green infrastructure.

The Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England¹⁷ sets out its vision for the historic environment. It calls for those who have the power to shape the historic environment to recognise its value and to manage it in an intelligent manner in light of the contribution that it can make to social, economic and cultural life.

There is a Conservation Management Plan for Hednesford Park and War Memorial adopted in 2012¹⁸. This sets out key enhancement projects to be carried out over the coming years. The aims include:

- To meet future enhanced community and visitor needs through the provision of cost effective services providing a welcoming and safe site;
- Enhance and encourage increased usage of existing facilities by creating a wider appeal to the community and visitors;
- Promote participation in health, well-being and informal recreation for all ages and abilities;

¹⁷ HM Government (2010) The Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England [online] available at: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/6763.aspx

¹⁸ Hednesford Park (2012) Conservation Management Plan [online] available at: https://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/hp_conservation_management_plan.pdf

- Improve and increase the site's biodiversity and enhance the historical landscape of the site;
- Increase community learning of heritage and that of others;
- Record, conserve, celebrate and provide interpretation of the site's heritage to the widest audiences; and
- Create sustainable horticultural demonstration and training areas for all ages and abilities.

5.2 Baseline summary

Summary of current baseline

Landscape

Hednesford Town extends in the north from Camp Road just south of the Commonwealth War Cemetery, Cannock Chase, where there is a common boundary with Teddesley Hay, Brocton, Brindley Heath and Huntington Parishes. The northernmost triangle of the Plan area comprises forestry plantations and a narrow series of paddocks alongside Broadhurst Green Road. This area is open countryside with views extending outwards. The western boundary of the Plan area runs through forestry plantations until it reaches the southern boundary which is urban in nature. The eastern boundary heads north-east through residential areas and the Old Brickworks Nature Reserve, around the eastern edge of Hednesford Hills.

Hednesford Hills is an important local habitat, which also forms an important element of the areas character. There are also sensitive landscapes to the south of the Parish including the Cannock Chase AONB, which creates a rural feel to the edge of the Plan area.

The town park is an important local green space, and the Plan area is also punctuated with some large and smaller parcels of open green space.

Historic environment

Table 5.1 below shows the number of heritage assets in Cannock Chase. Of these assets, there are four listed buildings in Hednesford.

- 19th C. two storey building, formerly hotel, now a Wetherspoon's pub at Anglesey Lodge, Anglesey Street, Hednesford (Grade II).
- 16th C. timber framed building, now a dwelling at Cross Keys Farmhouse 46 Hill Street, Hednesford (Grade II).
- 20th C. War Memorial at Hednesford War Memorial and Gates, Rugeley Rd, Hednesford (Grade II).
- 18th C. coaching inn, still in use as a pub the Cross Keys Inn, Hill Street (Grade II).

There are no Heritage features recorded as 'at risk' by Historic England in Cannock Chase¹⁹.

¹⁹ Heritage at Risk (2015) Risk Register – West Midlands [online] available from: <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/har-2015-registers/wm-har-register2015.pdf/>

Table 5.1 Heritage Assets in Cannock Chase²⁰

Number of Listed Buildings	
Grade I	0
Grade II*	8
Grade II	63
Total	71
Number of Scheduled Monuments	
	4

Summary of future baseline

New development in Hednesford has the potential to impact on the fabric and setting of cultural heritage assets and upon the character of the townscape and landscape. This may be negative effects, such as through unsympathetic design, or positive effects such as through targeted redevelopment of derelict / underused land and buildings. It should be noted, however, that existing historic environment designations and Core Strategy policies will offer a degree of protection to cultural heritage assets and their settings, as well as sensitive environments at Hednesford Hills and Cannock Chase AONB.

5.3 Key headline issues

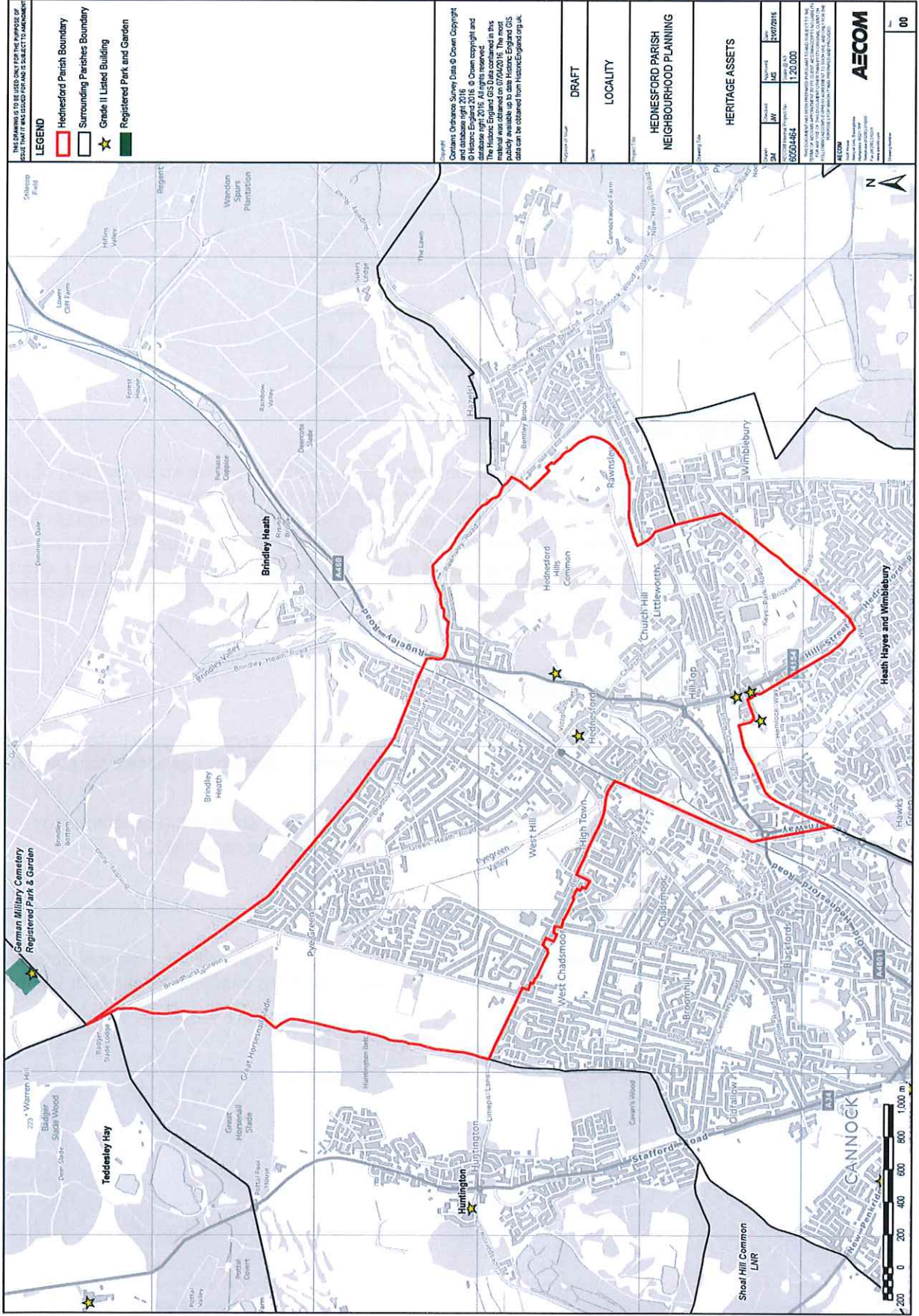
- The landscape is predominantly urban, though includes areas of locally important green space and Hednesford Hills. The parish is also surrounded by Cannock Chase AONB and other areas of sensitive landscape.
- Hednesford Parish contains four listed heritage assets, which could be affected by policies and proposals within the Plan (either positively or negatively).

5.4 Scoping Outcome

Landscape and historic environment has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA as there is potential for significant effects upon the setting of heritage assets and the character of the built and natural environment.

²⁰ Historic England Heritage Counts (2015) [online] available from: <http://hc.historicengland.org.uk/local-authority-profiles/>

Figure 5.1: Map of Heritage Assets within and around the Neighbourhood Plan Area



5.5 What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Landscape and Historic Environment SEA theme?

The SEA topic 'landscape and historic environment' has been 'scoped in' to the SEA and will therefore form part of the appraisal framework. **Table 5.1** presents the SEA objectives and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the Plan in relation to this theme.

Table 5.1: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Historic Environment and Landscape

SEA objective	Supporting questions
Protect, enhance and manage the distinctive character and appearance of the built and natural environment.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve, better reveal the significance and enhance heritage assets, their setting and the wider historic environment? • Contribute to better management of heritage assets or tackle heritage at risk? • Identify and protect / enhance features of local importance? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic environment? • Improve linkages between the town centre, residential areas and open space.

6 Land, Soil and Water Resources

Focus of theme:

- Soils resource
- Soil quality
- Waste management
- Watercourses
- Water availability
- Water quality

6.1 Policy context

The EU's Soil Thematic Strategy²¹ presents a strategy for protecting soils resources in Europe. The main aim of the strategy is to minimise soil degradation and limit associated detrimental effects linked to water quality and quantity, human health, climate change, biodiversity, and food safety.

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) drives a catchment-based approach to water management. In England and Wales there are 100 water catchments and it is Defra's intention is to establish a 'framework for integrated catchment management' across England. The Environment Agency is currently seeking to establish 'Significant Water Management Issues' within catchments with a view to presenting second River Basin Management Plans to ministers in 2015. The plans will seek to deliver the objectives of the WFD namely:

- Enhance the status and prevent the further deterioration of aquatic ecosystems and associated wetlands which depend on aquatic ecosystems;
- Promote the sustainable use of water;
- Reduce the pollution of water, especially by 'priority' and 'priority hazardous' substances; and
- Ensure the progressive reduction of groundwater pollution.

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- Protect and enhance soils. The value of best and most versatile agricultural land should also be taken into account.
- Prevent new or existing development from being 'adversely affected' by the presence of 'unacceptable levels' of soil pollution or land instability and be willing to remediate and mitigate 'despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate'.
- Encourage the effective use of land' through the reuse of land which has been previously developed, 'provided that this is not of high environmental value'. Whilst there is no longer a national requirement to build at a minimum density, the NPPF requires local planning authorities to 'set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances'.

²¹ European Commission (2006) Soil Thematic Policy [online] available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/index_en.htm

- Produce strategic policies to deliver the provision of a variety of infrastructure, including that necessary for water supply.
- With regards to waste, the NPPF does not contain any specific waste policies as waste planning policy will be published as part of the National Waste Management Plan.

Other key documents at the national level include Safeguarding our Soils: A strategy for England²², which sets out a vision for soil use in England, and the Water White Paper²³, which sets out the Government's vision for a more resilient water sector. It states the measures that will be taken to tackle issues such as poorly performing ecosystems, and the combined impacts of climate change and population growth on stressed water resources. In terms of waste management, the Government Review of Waste Policy in England²⁴ recognises that environmental benefits and economic growth can be the result of a more sustainable approach to the use of materials.

6.2 Baseline summary

Summary of current baseline

Quality of agricultural land

The Agricultural Land Classification classifies land into six grades (plus 'non-agricultural' and 'urban'), where Grades 1 to 3a are the 'best and most versatile' land and Grades 3b to 5 are of poorer quality.

In terms of the location of the best and most versatile agricultural land, Figure 6.1 outlines where it is located in the Neighbourhood Area. There are parcels of land classified as Grade 3 agricultural land to the north-west of the plan area. It is uncertain whether the Grade 3 agricultural land present in the parish comprises land classified as the best and most versatile agricultural land (i.e. whether it is Grade 3a or 3b land). The parcel of land to the west of Green Heath Road is unlikely to be Grade 3a, as it appears to be semi-natural open space used for informal recreation. This land is also part of a permitted development that is already under construction.

There is a parcel of land to the west of Pye Green Road that is in agricultural use. However, this area has been identified within the Core Strategy as a location for housing delivery and part of it is in the process of being developed for housing purposes, therefore the remaining agricultural land is smaller than appears on figure 6.1. There would be a loss of Grade 3 land here. Although the Plan cannot influence the strategic approach to development on this site, there is potential to adopt measures to offset the loss of agricultural land – for example, establishment of allotments (should there be demand).

Recycling centres

There is a depot for recycling/skip storage on Station Road in the Plan area. The nearest household waste and recycling centre is just south of the Plan area on Lichfield Road. There is also a recycling bank at Hednesford Tesco.

Watercourses

The main watercourse in the Neighbourhood Plan Area is the river flowing from the Mill Green and Hawks Green Nature Reserve.

²² Defra (2009) Safeguarding our Soils: A strategy for England [online] available at: <http://archive.defra.gov.uk/environment/quality/land/soil/documents/soil-strategy.pdf>

²³ Defra (2011) Water for life (The Water White Paper) [online] available at <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm82/8230/8230.pdf>

²⁴ Defra (2011) Government Review of Waste Policy in England [online] available at: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/files/pb13540-waste-policy-review110614.pdf>

There are also smaller brooks throughout the Neighbourhood Plan Area including within the Mill Green and Hawks Green Nature Reserve and running through the west by Pye green Valley.

Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) have been designated by the Environment Agency in England and Wales to protect groundwater sources such as wells, boreholes and springs that are used for public drinking water supply. The zones show the risk of contamination from activities that might cause groundwater pollution in the area. There is a Zone 3 SPZ present in the Plan area which covers a large part of Hednesford Hills and extends to the town centre. Zone three is defined as the area around a water source within which all groundwater recharge is presumed to be discharged at the source.

The Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) requires Member States to identify areas where groundwaters have nitrate concentrations of more than 50 mg/l nitrate or are thought to be at risk of nitrate contamination. Areas associated with such groundwaters are designated as Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) within which, Member States are required to establish Action Programmes in order to reduce and prevent further nitrate contamination. All of the Plan area includes a surface water NVZ.

Summary of future baseline

Due to increasing legislative and regulatory requirements, there are increasing pressures to improve recycling and composting rates. It is likely that recycling rates will continue, although the rates may slow down after 'quick wins' have been achieved.

In terms of water quality, the requirements of the Water Framework Directive are likely to lead to continued improvements to water quality in watercourses in the wider area. Water quality could be affected by pollution incidents in the area, the presence of non-native species and physical modifications to water bodies. There are plan policies within the Core Strategy (namely CP16 - Climate Change and Sustainable Resource Use) that ought to control these potential risks from new development.

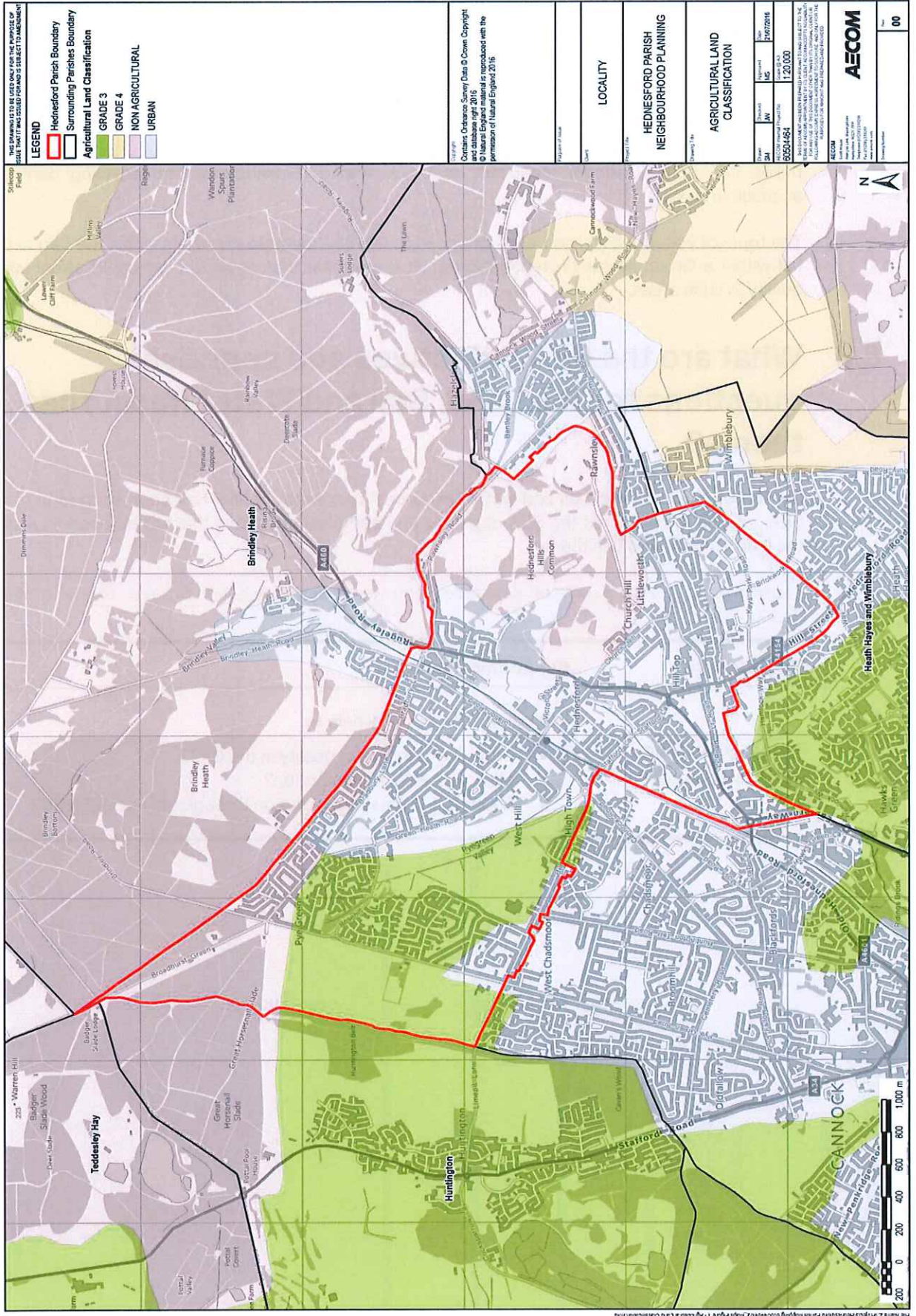
The change of use from agricultural (arable) to housing/mixed use at Pye Green Road could lead to a reduction in the amount of nitrate pollution to watercourses (i.e. through a reduction in fertiliser application etc.).

Water availability in the wider area may be affected by regional increases in population and an increased occurrence of drought exacerbated by the effects of climate change.

6.3 Key headline issues

- The only agricultural land in the Plan area is within areas already permitted or allocated for development. No further agricultural land is likely to be affected by the Plan.
- Part of the Plan area falls within Groundwater Protection Zone 3.

Figure 6.1: Agricultural Land Classification



6.4 Scoping outcome

The topic of 'soil' has been **SCOPED OUT** of the SEA as the Plan is unlikely to have a significant effect on soil / agricultural land.

The topic of 'waste' has been 'scoped out' of the SEA as the Plan is unlikely to have a significant effect on levels of recycling and reuse. Residents already receive kerbside collection services for paper, card, tins, glass bottles and jars and plastic. There are also a number of bring sites that the public can take additional recyclable materials and a household waste recycling centre is accessible by car.

The topic of water quality has been scoped in to the SEA as there are areas within the Parish that fall within a Groundwater Protection Zone. It is possible that development could affect water quality in such areas.

6.5 What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Land, Soil and Water Resources theme?

For the SEA Topic 'land, soil and water resources' only water quality has been scoped in to the SEA. **Table 6.1** presents the SEA objective and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the Plan in relation to this theme.

Table 6.1: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Land, Soil and Water Resources

SEA objective	Supporting questions
Protect ground and surface water quality.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect groundwater quality in the GPZ? • Minimise water consumption? • Reduce surface water pollution through the use of SUDS?

7 Population and Community

Focus of theme:

- Population size
- Age structure
- Deprivation
- House prices and affordability
- Education and skills

7.1 Policy context

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- To 'boost significantly the supply of housing', local planning authorities should meet the 'full, objectively assessed need for market and affordable housing' in their area. They should prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to assess their full housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment should identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period.
- With a view to creating 'sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities' authorities should ensure provision of affordable housing onsite or externally where robustly justified.
- In rural areas, when exercising the duty to cooperate with neighbouring authorities, local planning authorities should be responsive to local circumstances and plan housing development to reflect local needs, particularly for affordable housing, including through rural exception sites where appropriate. Authorities should consider whether allowing some market housing would facilitate the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs.
- The NPPF attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. It explains how good design is a key aspect in sustainable development, and how development should improve the quality of the area over its lifetime, not just in the short term. Good architecture and landscaping are important, with the use of design codes contributing to the delivery of high quality outcomes. Design should reinforce local distinctiveness, raise standards and address the connections between people and places.
- The social role of the planning system involves 'supporting vibrant and healthy communities'.
- The planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities
- Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.
- Ensure that developments create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion. Places should contain clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public spaces, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.
- Ensuring that there is a 'sufficient choice of school places' is of 'great importance' and there is a need to take a 'proactive, positive and collaborative approach' to bringing forward 'development that will widen choice in education'.

7.2 Baseline summary

Summary of current baseline

Population

According to the most recent census data available, in 2011 the total population of Hednesford was 16,789. Hednesford saw an increase of 2.69% between 2001 and 2011 which is less than both the local (5.47%) and regional (5.97%) average.

Table 7.1: Population growth 2001 – 2011²⁵

Date	Hednesford	Cannock Chase	West Midlands	England
2001	16,350	92,126	5,267,308	49,138,831
2013	17,343	98,119	5,674,712	53,865,817
Population Change 2001-2013	+ 6.07%	+ 6.5%	+ 7.7%	+ 9.6%

Age structure

The age structure of Hednesford in comparison to Cannock Chase, West Midlands and national averages is shown in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2: Age Structure (2011)²⁶

	Hednesford	Cannock Chase	West Midlands	England
0-17	20.6%	21.6%	22%	21.4%
18-24	8.5%	8.5%	9.5%	9.4%
25-44	28.1%	27.2%	26.3%	27.5%
45-64	27.5%	26.7%	25.2%	25.4%
65-84	13.9%	14.2%	14.7%	14.1%
85+	1.4%	1.8%	2.2%	2.2%
Total population	16,789	97,462	5,601,847	53,012,456

Hednesford has a lower proportion of residents within the 0-17 and 18-24 age groups than the regional and national averages. The proportion of residents within the 65+ and 84+ groups is also lower. This shows a condensed population of residents between 25-44 and 45-64 age groups. The proportion of people in these age groups is higher in Hednesford than both the local, regional and national average.

Index of Multiple Deprivation

Overall deprivation figures mask pockets of deprivation within both parishes. The more recent Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 (IMD) is an overall relative measure of deprivation constructed

²⁵ ONS Mid-year population estimate, available at: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesanalysis>

²⁶ ONS (2011) Census 2011, Age structure

by combining seven domains of deprivation according to their respective weights, as described below. The seven deprivation domains are as follows:

- **Income:** The proportion of the population experiencing deprivation relating to low income, including those individuals that are out-of-work and those that are in work but who have low earnings (satisfying the respective means tests).
- **Employment:** The proportion of the working-age population in an area involuntarily excluded from the labour market, including those individuals who would like to work but are unable to do so due to unemployment, sickness or disability, or caring responsibilities.
- **Education, Skills and Training:** The lack of attainment and skills in the local population.
- **Health Deprivation and Disability:** The risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health. Morbidity, disability and premature mortality are also considered, excluding the aspects of behaviour or environment that may be predictive of future health deprivation.
- **Crime:** The risk of personal and material victimisation at local level.
- **Barriers to Housing and Services:** The physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services, with indicators categorised in two sub-domains.
 - 1) 'Geographical Barriers': relating to the physical proximity of local services
 - 2) 'Wider Barriers': relating to access to housing such as affordability.
- **Living Environment:** The quality of the local environment, with indicators falling categorised in two sub-domains.
 - 1) 'Indoors Living Environment' measures the quality of housing.
 - 2) 'Outdoors Living Environment' measures air quality and road traffic accidents.

Two supplementary indices (subsets of the Income deprivation domains), are also included:

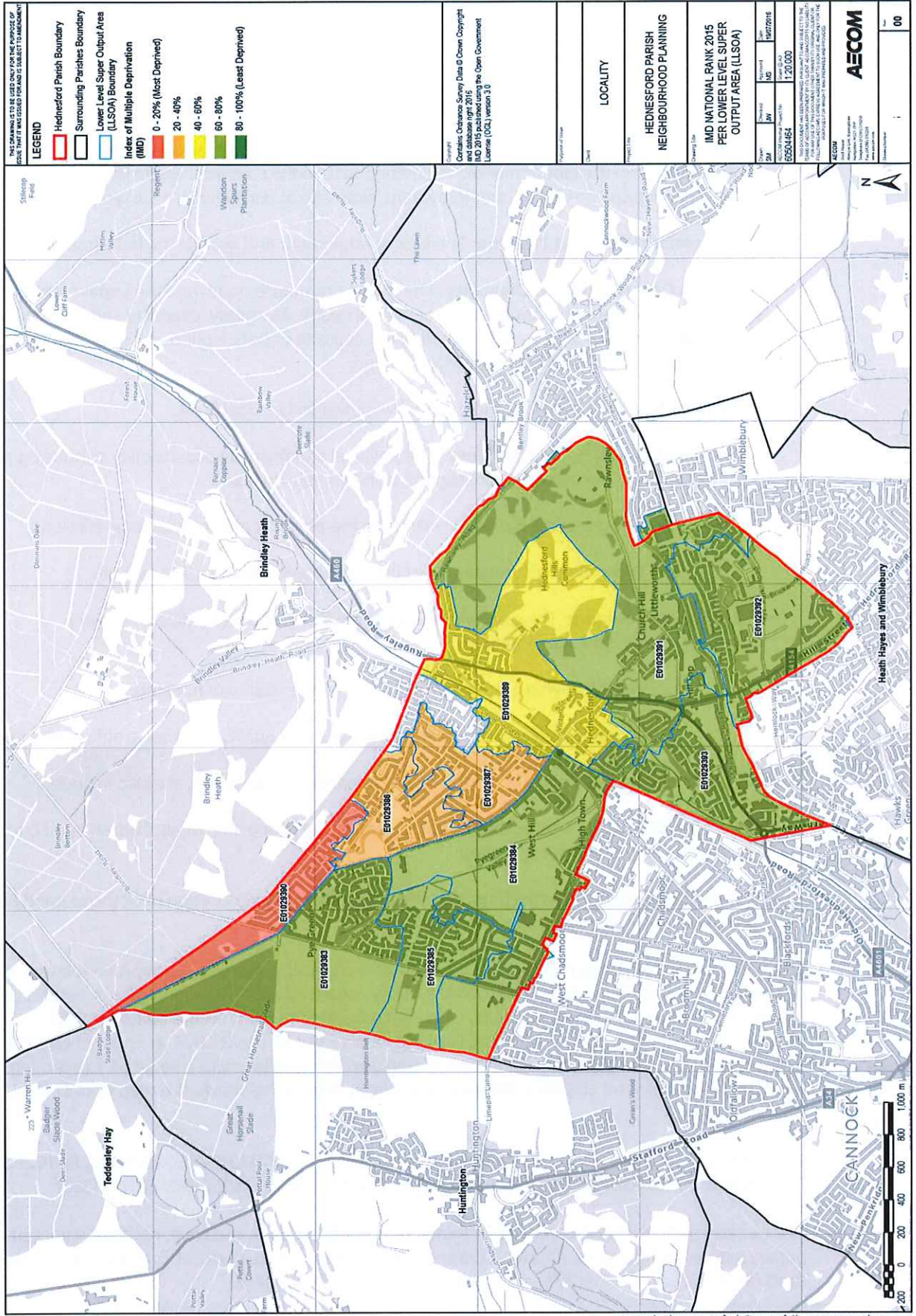
- **Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index:** The proportion of all children aged 0 to 15 living in income deprived families.
- **Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index:** The proportion of all those aged 60 or over who experience income deprivation.

Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are a geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. They are standardized geographies designed to be as consistent in population as possible, with each LSOA containing approximately 1,000 to 1,500 people. In relation to the IMD 2015, LSOAs are ranked out of the 32,844 in England and Wales, with 1 being the most deprived. Ranks are normalized into deciles, with a value of 1 reflecting the top 10% most deprived LSOAs in England and Wales. Figure 7.1 shows the map of IMD 2015 for Hednesford.

The ten LSOAs that are fully in the Neighbourhood Area are: *E01029383; E01029384; E01029385; E01029386; E01029387; E01029389; E01029390; E01029391; E01029392; E01029393*

The general trend for Hednesford sees relatively affluent areas to the west, south and east of the parish, with a slightly more deprived centre. However, the area north of Broadhurst Green and Bradbury Lane is in the top 20% most deprived areas of the country.

Figure 7.1: Map of Hednesford Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2015



Housing tenure

Hednesford and the Cannock Chase local authority area had a considerably higher number of owned households than the regional or English averages in 2011. Subsequently there were fewer households which were classified under shared ownership (which are socially rented, privately rented, or living rent free).

Table 7.3: Housing Tenure (2011) ²⁷

	Hednesford		Cannock Chase	West Midlands	England
	<i>Numbers</i>	%	%	%	%
All Categories	7,277				
Owned (Total)	5,267	72.4	69.1	64.9	63.3
Shared Ownership	22	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.8
Socially Rented	988	13.6	16.9	19.0	17.7
Private Rented	914	12.6	12.1	14.0	16.8
Living Rent Free	86	1.2	1.2	1.5	1.3

Education

Taken from the 2011 Census, the West Midlands regional area as a whole had a higher proportion of individuals who have no qualifications compared to the rest of England. Similarly, Hednesford follows the regional trends of having a higher proportion of people with no qualifications. Hednesford does however have a higher proportion of Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 Qualifications than in England, West Midlands and Cannock Chase but a lower number of Level 4 Qualifications than the West Midlands and England.

Table 7.4: Qualifications (2011) ²⁸

	Hednesford		Cannock Chase	West Midlands	England
	<i>Numbers</i>	%	%	%	%
All Categories	14,206				
No Qualifications	3,695	26.0	28.2	26.6	22.5
Level 1 Qualification	2,313	16.3	16.3	13.7	13.3
Level 2 Qualification	2,637	18.6	17.8	15.4	15.2
Level 3 Qualification	1,915	13.5	12.7	12.3	12.4
Level 4 Qualification and above	2,545	17.9	17.2	23.3	27.4
Other Qualifications	589	4.1	4.2	5.4	5.7

²⁷ ONS (2011) Census 2011 Housing Tenure

²⁸ ONS (2011) Census 2011 Qualifications

Employment

The economically active population within both Hednesford and Cannock Chase exceeds the regional and country levels. Further to this, there are a higher proportion of individuals in full-time employment rather than part-time employment within the Neighbourhood Area, but there are fewer individuals who are self-employed than England levels. The majority of the economically inactive population is retired (52.5%). This proportion is higher than that experienced in Cannock Chase, the West Midlands and England. There is a lower number of people looking after home or family within the Plan area than the England average, and likewise fewer individuals classified as long term sick or disabled.

Table 7.5: Employment (2011)²⁹

	Hednesford		Cannock Chase	West Midlands	England
	Number	%	%	%	%
All Categories	13,112				
Economically Active Total	9,473	72.2	71.0	68.3	69.9
<i>Part Time</i>	2,008	21.2	21.5	20.5	19.6
<i>Full Time</i>	5,392	56.9	56.2	54.8	55.2
<i>Self Employed with Employees</i>	228	2.4	2.5	3.0	3.1
<i>Self Employed without Employees</i>	965	10.2	9.7	9.5	10.7
<i>Unemployed</i>	540	5.7	6.5	7.5	6.3
<i>Full Time Student</i>	340	3.6	3.7	4.8	4.9
Economically Inactive Total	3,639	27.8	29.0	31.7	30.1
<i>Retired</i>	1,912	52.5	51.2	45.5	45.5
<i>Student</i>	480	13.2	12.4	18.8	19.3
<i>Looking after Home or Family</i>	494	13.6	14.3	14.4	14.5
<i>Long Term Sick or Disabled</i>	558	15.3	16.3	13.9	13.5
<i>Other</i>	195	5.4	5.8	7.5	7.3

Summary of future baseline

Population estimates predict that in Cannock Chase the population will reach 108,000 by 2031. A substantial aspect in this growth is the expansion of residents aged over 65 which is projected to increase from 14.6% of the current population to 23.8% in 2031³⁰.

With the large proportion of residents between age 25-44 and 45-64, in Hednesford, there is likely to be continued growth and ageing. The suitability (e.g. size and design) and affordability of housing for local requirements depends on the implementation of appropriate housing policies through the local plan and Neighbourhood Plan. Ensuring family homes and specialist housing is available is likely to be important in the coming years in Hednesford.

Two strategic developments (allocated in the Local Plan) are expected to be implemented over the Plan period, delivering a substantial amount of housing for the area.

²⁹ ONS (2011) Census 2011 Employment

³⁰ Cannock Chase DC (2011) Housing Strategy 2011-2016

7.3 Key headline issues

- The population of Hednesford Parish marginally increased between 2001 and 2011 (2.69%).
- Hednesford Parish’s population has on the whole become younger between 2001 and 2011. This is in part due to a trend of inward migration of families. Future implications include the likely provision of school places and leisure and recreational activities. Conversely, the number of elderly residents is also projected to increase, which will require provision of specialist housing.
- There is a disparity in deprivation with a section to the north of the Plan area in the top 20% most deprived areas which includes poorer housing quality, lower levels of income (particularly for young people), employment and education. Other areas of the Plan area are relatively affluent.

7.4 Scoping Outcome

Housing needs are likely to be met largely through the development of strategic sites that have been identified in the Local Plan. However, these sites are both on the edge of the settlement to the north, and the Neighbourhood Plan could have a role to play in promoting smaller scale housing development in other parts of the Parish. Consequently, the topic ‘population’ has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA.

Although deprivation is an issue to the north of the Parish, there is significant redevelopment earmarked in close proximity to this area which could have beneficial effects upon existing communities (e.g. new community facilities). The scope of the Plan to have further significant effects on deprivation is considered to be limited.

7.5 What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Population and Community theme?

The topic ‘population’ has been ‘scoped-in’ to the SEA. **Table 7.** presents the SEA objectives and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the Plan in relation to this theme.

Table 7.6: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Population and Community

SEA objective	Supporting questions
Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing which meets the needs of occupiers throughout their life.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes? • Support enhancements to the current housing stock? • Meet the needs of all sectors of the community? • Provide quality and flexible homes that meet people’s needs? • Promote the use of sustainable building techniques, including use of sustainable building materials in construction? • Provide housing in sustainable locations that allow easy access to a range of local services and facilities?

8 Health and Wellbeing

Focus of theme:

- Health indicators and deprivation
- Influences on health and well being

8.1 Sustainability context

Key messages from the **NPPF** include:

- The social role of the planning system involves 'supporting vibrant and healthy communities'.
- A core planning principle is to 'take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all'.
- The planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities'
- Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.
- Set out the strategic policies to deliver the provision of health facilities.
- Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

In relation to other key national messages in relation to health, Fair Society, Healthy Lives³¹, the 'Marmot Review' investigated health inequalities in England and the actions needed in order to tackle them. Subsequently, a supplementary report was prepared providing additional evidence relating to spatial planning and health on the basis that there is: "*overwhelming evidence that health and environmental inequalities are inexorably linked and that poor environments contribute significantly to poor health and health inequalities*".

The increasing role that local level authorities are expected to play in providing health outcomes is demonstrated by government legislation. The Health and Social Care Act (2012) transferred responsibility for public health from the NHS to local government, giving local authorities a duty to improve the health of the people who live in their areas. This will require a more holistic approach to health across all local government functions.

South Staffordshire Primary Care Trust's Strategic Plan 2008-2013

The SSPCTs Strategic Plan 2008-2013 outlines a previous commitment to improve the health of local residents within the district. It established a series of priorities to improve child care, increase life expectancy, and to improve mental health and learning disability services across South Staffordshire, including the Hednesford Neighbourhood Area. The new commitment is likely to have affected the current baseline level of health in the area.

³¹ The Marmot Review (2011) The Marmot Review: Implications for Spatial Planning [online] available at: <http://www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/live/12111/53895/53895.pdf>

Dementia Friendly Scheme 2014-2015

Efforts have recently been made to establish Hednesford as a 'dementia friendly' town in order to improve the quality of life for local people living with the condition. The scheme helps to raise awareness of dementia, and to encourage behavioral change within the community.

8.2 Baseline summary

Summary of current baseline

Health indicators and deprivation

Within the wider Cannock Chase area, 'physical activity' and 'emergency admissions' score high on the local authority priority index³². This is supported through the existing baseline of the Plan area, within which the Hednesford North ward exhibits a total of 119 emergency admissions (2014/2015) compared to the England average of 104. Hednesford Green Heath is also highlighted as a ward which has a prevalence of child obesity, with 36% of children suffering from excessive weight, suggesting a lack of physical activity and / or poor diet.

In addition to the priorities raised from the local authority, Hednesford also has a higher proportion of local residents which suffer from a long term, limiting illness (24% in Hednesford North compared to the England average of 18%) and a lower breastfeeding prevalence rate at 6-8 weeks than compared to the England average. Excess winter mortality rates, however, total 6% in Hednesford Green Heath and 4% in Hednesford South, better than the England average of 18%, and the Neighbourhood Area generally performed better than the England average with regards to all-age, all-cause mortality rates, under 75 mortality rate from cardiovascular diseases, and long-term adult social care rates.

The average life expectancy of Hednesford is above that of England, standing at 85 years old for females and 81 years old for males. According to 2011 census data, 19% of 50 to 64 year olds reported that their day-to day activities were limited a *lot* by long term health issues (district average was 25%). 17% of the same demographic reported that day-to day activities were limited a *little* by long term health issues (district average was 27.5%).

The closest hospital to Hednesford is the Cannock Chase Hospital, located approximately 3.8km from the centre of the Plan area. There are also a number of medical practices located along Station Road within the Plan area.

Influences on health and wellbeing

Access to open space and green infrastructure is widely recognised to have a positive effect on the health of communities by facilitating increased outdoor activity levels. Within Hednesford, there are various open spaces which can be utilised in this way.

Table 8.1: Parks and Gardens within the Neighbourhood Area

Park Name	Location within Hednesford	Size	Value
Littleworth Road Park	Hednesford South Ward	1.2ha	Medium/ Low
Pye Green Valley	Greenheath Ward	2+ha	
Old Brickworks Nature	Hednesford South Ward	2+ha	

³² Cannock Chase Locality Profile, Available: <http://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/cannock-chase-locality-profile-2016.pdf>, Accessed 12/07/16

Reserve			
Anglesey Park	Hednesford South Ward	2+ha	
Hednesford Park	Hednesford North Ward	9.6ha	High/Medium

The whole of Hednesford is located within 9 minutes' walk of a semi-natural open space. There are also three indoor and outdoor sports facilities within the Neighbourhood Area. These offer health and fitness stations, thereby allowing access to physical activity (though two of these are private and may be less accessible to deprived communities with less disposable income).

Table 8.2: Leisure facilities within the Neighbourhood Area

Facility Name	Number of Stations	Facility Type
Active Images / Pure Gym Health Club	52	Commercial
Blake Valley Technology College	18	Community School
Nuffield Health Fitness and Wellbeing	78	Commercial

There is a deficiency of allotments within Hednesford, and the existing play areas are reported as being of a lower quality compared to the wider Cannock Chase area³³, suggesting potential areas of improvement.

Summary of future baseline

It is likely that, with increased population growth, there will be a higher demand for health, fitness and leisure facilities within the Parish. Under these circumstances efforts should be made to accommodate the potential increase of users; one area of opportunity being the north-west of Hednesford where the availability of Parks is currently lacking. Strategic developments at Pye Green ought to help improve access to community facilities in these areas.

The commitment to develop Hednesford as a dementia friendly community is likely to result in an improved physical and social environment for individuals who live with and (or) are affected by this condition.

8.3 Key headline issues

- 'Physical activity' and 'Emergency admissions' are highlighted as priority areas to target interventions towards.
- Hednesford has a prevalence of child obesity and a high number of emergency admissions within the population.
- There are a considerable number of parks, leisure and fitness facilities within the Neighbourhood Area, however these are not evenly distributed and vary in quality.

8.4 Scoping Outcome

The SEA topic 'health' has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA as the Plan has the potential to help tackle inequalities in access to quality green space, as well as encouraging active travel, and better links between urban areas and green infrastructure.

³³ Cannock Chase Open Space Assessment, Available: http://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/129b_open_spaces_assessment_2009.pdf, Accessed: 12/07/16

8.5 What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Health and Wellbeing theme?

The topic 'health' has been 'scoped-in' to the SEA. **Table 8.3** presents the SEA objectives and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the Plan in relation to this theme.

Table 8.3: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Health and Wellbeing

SEA Objective	Supporting questions
Protect and improve the health and wellbeing of residents by enhancing the quality and accessibility of open space, facilities for recreation and transport links.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote accessibility to a range of leisure, health and community facilities, for all age groups? • Provide and enhance the provision of community access to green infrastructure, in accordance with Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards? • Improve access to the countryside for recreation?

9 Transportation

Focus of theme:

- Transportation infrastructure
- Traffic flows and congestion
- Accessibility
- Car ownership
- Travel to work
- Parking

9.1 Sustainability context

European and UK transport policies and plans place emphasis on the modernisation and sustainability of the transport network. Specific objectives include reducing pollution and road congestion through improvements to public transport, walking and cycling networks and reducing the need to travel. National policy also focuses on the need for the transport network to support sustainable economic growth. It states that developments should be located and designed where practical to:

- Accommodate the efficient delivery of good and supplies;
- Give priority to pedestrians and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities;
- Create safe and secure layouts which minimize conflict between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians, avoiding street clutter and where appropriate establishing home zones;
- Incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles; and
- Consider the needs of people with disabilities by all modes of transport.

On a more local level, the Cannock Chase District Integrated Transport Strategy 2013-2028 has been developed to help guide Staffordshire to achieve the following vision in line with the national agenda;

- Staffordshire is a place where people can easily and safely access everyday facilities and activities through the highways and transport networks.
- Staffordshire's economy prospers and grows together with jobs, skills, qualifications and aspirations to support it.
- Staffordshire's communities proactively tackle climate change, gaining financial benefit and reducing carbon emissions.

9.2 Baseline summary

Summary of current baseline

Road network and congestion

Hednesford is well served by the national highway network comprising the M6, M6 Toll and A5 trunk road. It is located approximately 5.1km to the North of the M6 Toll/ A5 Junction and is served by one primary route (A640 Rugeley Road) which intersects the Neighbourhood Area. There are several secondary streets throughout the site (Littleworth Road, Bradbury Lane, Belt Road, Station Road and Pye Green Road), with tertiary streets serving the residential areas, ensuring the majority of the site is well connected to local and national vehicle routes.

Hednesford Town Centre Regeneration Strategy has been designed to address problems with junctions surrounding the town centre to ease traffic flow and safety concerns. It includes the provision of additional cycle parking and junction improvements at Green Heath Road/Station Road, a junction upgrade at Rugeley Road/ Bradbury Lane, and a review of the operation at Market Street/ Rugeley Road junction.

Lower Road within the Plan area is highlighted as a site which presents safety issues given the reporting of excessive vehicle speeds³⁴.

Rail network

A railway line intersects the Plan area, with Hednesford Rail Station located centrally. Services have been threatened by a reduction in rolling stock and funding, furthermore the weekday evening service to Birmingham has problems with overcrowding at peak times³⁵. The line between Birmingham and Hednesford (the end station being Rugeley Trent Valley) has become the urban commuter rail line with the highest growth in the West Midlands. Work on the electrification of this line has commenced with a projected timescale for introduction of electric services in late 2017 / early 2018. The half hourly off-peak service is proposed to be reinstated.

Bus network

Hednesford is served by numerous bus services (including the 2, 2E, 19, 20, 25, 26, 61, 62, 70, 70E). These have destinations in Cannock, Rugeley, Wolverhampton and Lichfield; thus providing good connections to Hednesford to a number of local and regional centres.

Availability of cars and vans

Both the Plan area and the local authority area exhibit car ownership which is above the England and Wales average; with there being a lower proportion of households without cars or vans. This suggests a higher dependency on the private vehicle which, if matched with usage, coincides with a higher demand for parking facilities and vehicle spaces.

³⁴ Cannock Chase District Integrated Transport Strategy 2013-2028, Available: <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/transport/transportplanning/localtransportplan/integrated-transport-documents/Cannock-Transport.pdf>, Accessed: 13/06/16

³⁵ Cannock Chase District Integrated Transport Strategy 2013-2028, Available: <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/transport/transportplanning/localtransportplan/integrated-transport-documents/Cannock-Transport.pdf>, Accessed: 13/06/16

Table 9.1: Car and Van Ownership, 2011

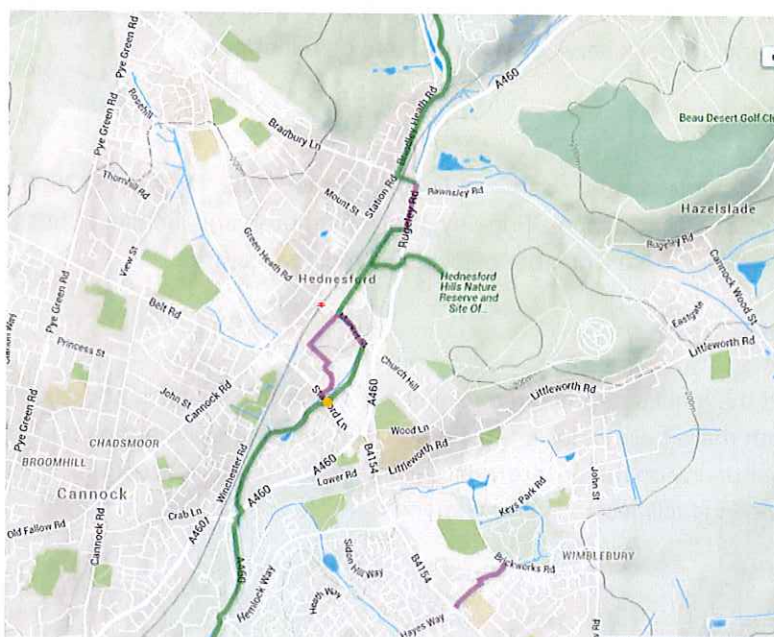
	Hednesford		Cannock Chase		England and Wales
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
No cars or vans in household	1,227	16.9	8,213	20.2	25.6
1 car or van in household	2,956	40.6	16,654	41.0	42.2
2 cars or vans in household	2,420	33.3	12,121	29.8	24.7
3 cars or vans in household	519	7.1	2,827	7.0	5.5
4 or more cars or vans in household	155	2.1	849	2.1	1.9

Cycle network

The Cannock Chase Heritage Trail runs centrally through Hednesford, parallel to the railway line. Most of this route is traffic free, whilst part of the on-road route runs along Cheviot Rise, Anglessey Street and Market Street. No National Cycle Network routes are located within the Neighbourhood Area.

Hednesford is in close proximity to a series of mountain bike trails located within Cannock Chase AONB.

Figure 9.1: Cycle routes within Hednesford³⁶



³⁶ Sustrans Interactive Map, Available: <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/ncn/map>, Accessed: 12/07/16

Travel to work

Corresponding with the relatively high rates of car and van ownership highlighted in table 9.1 above, more individuals in employment use private transport to travel to work. As shown in table 9.2 below almost 86% of journeys to work are made by private vehicle compared to the England and Wales average of 76%. This is also demonstrated at the local authority level although the difference is less prominent (82%). Commuting via Public transport, on the other hand, accounts for less than the England and Wales average (5.4% compared to 10.5%). This is comparable to the local authority proportion.

Table 9.2: Method of Travel to Work (aged 16-74 in employment), Census 2011

	Hednesford		Cannock Chase		England and Wales (%)
	Number	%	Number	%	
Car/ van/ taxi/ motorcycle	7,385	85.7	38,910	82.0	76.4
Public transport	469	5.4	2,333	4.8	10.5
On foot	419	4.9	3,851	8.1	6.9
Bicycle	82	1.0	645	1.4	1.9
Work from home	240	2.8	1,562	3.3	3.5
Other	23	0.3	175	0.4	0.4

Parking

There are substantial parking spaces within the town center, with notable car parks at Tesco / retail-park and the Co-Op. However, dedicated parking for the train station is limited, and as a result commuters may need to park elsewhere with time limited stays.

9.3 Summary of future baseline

The committed electrification scheme between Birmingham and Rugeley Trent Valley has the potential for a significant improvement to the rail line. Increasing the ability of locals to commute ought to decrease congestion on certain rail and bus services, and could catalyze a decrease in the use of private vehicles, subsequently resulting in a decrease in emissions. There are aspirations to improve the rail station to include a ticket office under the Hednesford Town Centre Regeneration Package³⁷, the completion of which would be likely to increase travel efficiency, and may offset the impact of potential future threats.

The Staffordshire Rail Strategy is currently in the process of preparation. The delivery of this document is likely to outline the wider commitment of the Borough to deliver certain rail services and infrastructure, some of which may involve Hednesford.

³⁷ Cannock Chase District Integrated Transport Strategy 2013-2028, Available: <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/transport/transportplanning/localtransportplan/integrated-transport-documents/Cannock-Transport.pdf>
 Accessed: 13/06/16

The production of the Integrated Transport Strategy is likely to help control transport networks and infrastructure until the period 2028, enabling such development to be guided alongside predicted demographic and social trends.

The data suggests that there is reliance on the private car which exceeds the levels experienced in England and Wales. Should this reliance continue, Hednesford may demand an increase in parking, and may have to allocate more space for vehicles. This could have adverse effects upon congestion in the town centre.

9.4 Key headline issues

- Various road networks and junctions within Hednesford have been improved under the Hednesford Town Centre Regeneration Strategy.
- The Hednesford- Birmingham rail service is one of the fastest growing services in the west midlands in terms of passenger numbers however its future funding is uncertain.
- There are a significant number of bus services which serve the Plan area, offering connections to Cannock and Rugeley.
- Cycle routes within the Plan area are sparse and run parallel to the rail line. Mountain biking facilities are located in close proximity though.
- Both Hednesford and Cannock Chase have a higher proportion of car and van ownership and travel to work by car than the England and Wales average.

9.5 Scoping Output

The SEA topic 'accessibility' has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA, as the Plan has the potential to improve linkages between key assets in the town centre, residential areas and open space. There is also need to support enhancements to the train station, including parking provision, which the Plan may have the potential to influence.

9.6 What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Accessibility theme?

The topic 'accessibility' has been 'scoped-in' to the SEA. Table 9.3 presents the SEA objectives and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the Plan in relation to this theme.

Table 9.3: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Health and Wellbeing

SEA Objective	Supporting questions
Reduce the need to travel and support modal shift to active and sustainable modes of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote accessibility to the town centre? • Improve linkages between the town centre and other community facilities such as Hednesford Park and Tesco retail park? • Improve parking provision for commuters? • Reduce the need to travel to access services and facilities?

10 SEA Framework and Methodologies

10.1 The SEA Framework

The SEA framework has been established through the identification of key issues and environmental objectives as part of the scoping exercise. This draws upon the baseline position and policy context that has been prepared for a range of SEA topics (as set out in Chapters 3-11).

The framework consists of a set of headline objectives and ancillary questions, which will be used to appraise the environmental effects of the draft Plan (and any reasonable alternatives).

Table 10.1 below outlines the full SEA Framework, which brings together the objectives and questions that have been set out at the end of each SEA topic chapter. The framework focuses on those issues that have been identified as the most important to consider in the preparation of the Plan; but acknowledging the limited influence that the Plan can have in some areas.

Table 10.1: The SEA Framework

SEA Objective	Supporting questions (Will the option/proposal help to...)
1. Protect and enhance the function and connectivity of biodiversity habitats and species.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support connections between habitats in the Plan area? • Support continued improvements to the designated sites in the Plan area? • Achieve a net gain in biodiversity? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity?
2. Contribute to climate change mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote high quality design? • Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport? • Reduce the need to travel?
3. Support the resilience of Hednesford to the potential effects of climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve green infrastructure networks in the plan area to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change? • Sustainably manage surface water run-off, ensuring that the risk of flooding is not increased (either within the plan area or downstream) and where possible reduce flood risk? • Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development in the plan area? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the plan area to the effects of climate change?

SEA Objective	Supporting questions <i>(Will the option/proposal help to...)</i>
<p>4. Protect and enhance the distinctive character of the built and natural environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve and better reveal the significance of buildings and features of architectural or historic value; including those of local interest? • Conserve and enhance the character of the town centre? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic environment? • Improve linkages between the town centre, residential areas and open space.
<p>5. Protect ground and surface water quality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect groundwater quality in the GPZ? • Minimise water consumption? • Reduce surface water pollution through the use of SUDS?
<p>6. Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing which meets the needs of occupiers throughout their life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes? • Support enhancements to the current housing stock? • Meet the needs of all sectors of the community? • Provide quality and flexible homes that meet people's needs? • Include provision for bungalows and other housing types suitable for the elderly? • Provide housing in sustainable locations that allow easy access to a range of local services and facilities?
<p>7. Protect and improve the health and wellbeing of residents by enhancing the quality and accessibility of open space, facilities for recreation and transport links.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote accessibility to a range of leisure, health and community facilities, for all age groups? • Provide and enhance the provision of community access to green infrastructure, in accordance with Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards? • Improve access to the countryside for recreation?
<p>8. Reduce the need to travel and support modal shift to active and sustainable modes of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote accessibility to the town centre? • Improve linkages between the town centre and other community facilities such as Hednesford Park and Tesco Retail Park? • Improve parking provision for commuters? • Reduce the need to travel to access services and facilities?

10.2 Site appraisal

A small number of site options (for potential allocation in the Plan) will be considered through the Plan preparation process. In order to provide a consistent and fair assessment of each site, the following site appraisal framework will be used.

The selected criteria have been established in the context of the SEA Framework, and therefore seek to test how site options perform with regards to the key environmental issues identified in the SEA.

Table 10.2: Criteria for appraising site options (for town centre uses / housing / mixed use)

SEA Objective	Criteria / threshold
<p>1. Protect and enhance the function and connectivity of biodiversity habitats and species.</p>	<p>Enhancement of biodiversity resource – <i>site with limited biodiversity value – layout and scale of site would permit habitat establishment and GI nearby that could be connected.</i></p> <p>Biodiversity unlikely to be affected (More than 50m from biodiversity assets).</p> <p>Disturbance to biodiversity species and habitats (within 50m of habitats and species.</p> <p>Loss of a designated biodiversity asset (Protected habitats and species on site).</p>
<p>2. Contribute to climate change mitigation</p>	<p><i>Achievement of this objective is likely to be driven by design and layout, rather than site location.</i></p>
<p>3. Support the resilience of Hednesford to the potential effects of climate change</p>	<p>Potential to strengthen ecological networks</p> <p>Potential to provide shelter / shade in public places</p> <p>Development unlikely to support resilience measures</p>
<p>4. Protect and enhance the distinctive character of the built and natural environment.</p>	<p><u>Heritage</u></p> <p>Assets within 500m of a proposed site allocation will be identified in the first instance. Professional judgement will be used to assess the impact of site allocations upon identified heritage assets, in a proportionate manner, using available evidence such as conservation area appraisals and information on the HER.</p> <p>The site seeks to protect and enhance heritage assets and/or has a positive effect on the historic environment including tacking heritage at risk or provides an opportunity to better reveal the significance of heritage assets.</p> <p>neutral: no heritage assets or their settings are likely to be affected by the site allocation.</p> <p>The site would result in harm to the significance of heritage assets and/or their setting. It is likely that impacts can be avoided/mitigated.</p> <p>The site will result in harm to the significance of heritage assets and/or their setting. It is unlikely that impacts can be avoided/mitigated</p>

SEA Objective	Criteria / threshold
	<p><u>Landscape</u></p> <p>Site visibly intrusive to Hednesford Hills / Cannock Chase AONB (and within 400m)</p> <p>Site visibly intrusive to Hednesford Hills / Cannock Chase AONB (further than 400m)</p> <p>Site not visibly intrusive to Hednesford Hills / Cannock Chase AONB.</p>
5. Protect ground and surface water quality.	<p>Lies within Groundwater Protection Zone</p> <p>Outside of Groundwater Protection Zone</p>
6. Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing which meets the needs of occupiers throughout their life.	<p>Up to 25 dwellings</p> <p>Provision of 25 – 100 dwellings</p> <p>>100 dwellings</p>
7. Protect and improve the health and wellbeing of residents by enhancing the quality and accessibility of open space, facilities for recreation and health care	<p><u>Access to natural greenspace</u></p> <p>Standard 1. Natural greenspace of 2ha within 400m from home</p> <p>Standard 2. 20ha greenspace within 2km from home</p> <p>Criteria met for both standards</p> <p>Criteria met for one standard</p> <p>Criteria not met for either standard</p> <p><u>Access to a GP surgery / medical-center</u></p> <p><800m / 800-1200m / 1200m-3km / >3km</p>
8. Reduce the need to travel and support modal shift to active and sustainable modes of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport.	<p><u>Proximity to local convenience store / supermarket</u></p> <p>400m / 400-800m / 800m-1200m / >1200m</p> <p><u>Proximity to primary school</u></p> <p>400m / 400-800m / 800m-1200m / >1200m</p> <p><u>Proximity to bus stop or train station</u></p> <p>400m / 400-800m / 800m-1200m / >1200m</p>

Using the site criteria and thresholds identified in table 10.2, a proforma will be prepared for each site option in the Plan that is identified as a reasonable alternative (for housing or mixed use development). The scores will be determined through a combination of quantitative and qualitative information. To establish objective scores for each site, qualitative measurements will be calculated using GIS software. This will be complemented with qualitative information gathered from site visits, local knowledge and professional judgement.

11 Next Steps

11.1 Subsequent stages for the SEA process

Scoping (the current stage) is the second stage in a six-stage SEA process:

- Screening (NPPG Stage A)
- Scoping (NPPG Stage B)
- Assess reasonable alternatives, with a view to informing preparation of the draft plan (NPPG Stage C)
- Assess the draft plan and prepare the Environmental Report with a view to informing consultation and plan finalization (NPPG Stage D/E)
- Publish a 'statement' at the time of plan adoption in order to 'tell the story' of plan-making/SEA (and present 'measures decided concerning monitoring') (NPPG Stage F)

The next stage will involve appraising reasonable alternatives for the Plan. This will consider alternative policy approaches for the Plan. The findings of the appraisal of these alternatives will be fed back to the Parish Council / Neighborhood Group so that they might be taken into account when preparing the draft plan.

Once the draft ('pre-submission version') plan has been prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, it will be subjected to SEA and the Environmental Report prepared for consultation alongside it.

Following consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan / Environmental Report, the plan will be finalised and submitted to Cannock Chase Council for subsequent Independent Examination.

11.2 Consultation on the Scoping Report

Public involvement through consultation is a key element of the SEA process. At this scoping stage, the SEA Regulations require consultation with statutory consultation bodies but not full consultation with the public.

The statutory consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England. The Scoping Report has been released to these three statutory consultees.

Consultees are invited to comment on the content of this Scoping Report, in particular the evidence base for the SEA, the identified key issues and the proposed SEA Framework.

11.3 Download and viewing details

The Scoping Report can be downloaded at: www.hednesford-tc.gov.uk

Comments on the Scoping Report should be sent to:

Ian McCluskey, *Senior Sustainability Consultant, AECOM Ltd, 4th Floor, Bridgewater House, Manchester, M1 6LT*

Email address: ian.mccluskey@aecom.com

All comments received on the Scoping Report will be reviewed and will influence the development of the SEA where appropriate.

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Appendix B Site appraisal proformas

C80 Keys Park

SEA Objective	Appraisal findings
1. Protect and enhance the function and connectivity of biodiversity habitats and species.	Designated biodiversity assets are more than 400m away. However, the SSSI impact zones for Hednesford Hills suggest that any net gain in residential development within this location has the potential for adverse effects. Given that the site contains wooded areas which may have ecological value, a potential negative effect is identified.
2. Contribute to climate change mitigation	<i>Achievement of this objective is likely to be driven by design and layout, rather than site location.</i>
3. Support the resilience of Hednesford to the potential effects of climate change	There are wooded areas around the boundary of the site. Development could potentially have a negative effect on such green infrastructure, unless it was maintained. Links between wooded areas could potentially be created as part of development, but it is uncertain whether this would strengthen ecological networks. A neutral effect is recorded.
4. Protect and enhance the distinctive character of the built and natural environment.	<u>Heritage</u> Cross Keys Farmhouse and Cross Keys Inn (both Grade II listed buildings) are within 300m. However, the site is screened from both buildings. Development would not affect the setting of these assets, which are both located along main roads, which influences their character and setting. Neutral: no heritage assets or their settings are likely to be affected by the site allocation. <u>Landscape</u> Site not visibly intrusive to Hednesford Hills / Cannock Chase AONB.
5. Protect ground and surface water quality.	Outside of Groundwater Protection Zone
6. Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing which meets the needs of occupiers throughout their life.	Provision of 25 – 100 dwellings

SEA Objective	Appraisal findings
7. Protect and improve the health and wellbeing of residents by enhancing the quality and accessibility of open space, facilities for recreation and health care	<p><u>Access to natural greenspace</u></p> <p>Within 2km of 20ha greenspace (Hednesford Hills is over 10ha) Within 400m of 2ha greenspace</p> <p>Meets both standards</p> <p><u>Access to a GP surgery / medical-center</u></p> <p>1.87km from nearest GP surgery (Hednesford Valley Health Centre)</p>
8. Reduce the need to travel and support modal shift to active and sustainable modes of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport.	<p><u>Proximity to local convenience store / supermarket</u></p> <p>613m from nearest convenience store (One Stop Stores mini market)</p> <p><u>Proximity to primary school</u></p> <p>1.11km pedestrian route from nearest primary school (Five Ways Primary School)</p> <p><u>Proximity to bus stop or train station</u></p> <p>360m to bus stop on Hill street with links to Hednesford centre.</p>

C220 (a and b) Oaklands Business Park / Image Business Park

SEA Objective	Appraisal findings
1. Protect and enhance the function and connectivity of biodiversity habitats and species.	<p>Over 900m (as the crow flies) from nearest designated wildlife site (Hednesford hills SSSI). SSSI impact zones suggest that all residential development should be examined for potential effects. The site itself does not have any value for wildlife, as it is predominantly built-up. Therefore, the effect on habitats that could support species is unlikely. Recreational pressure from these sites would not be greater than development elsewhere in the Plan area.</p> <p>Neutral effect on biodiversity</p>
2. Contribute to climate change mitigation	<p><i>Achievement of this objective is likely to be driven by design and layout, rather than site location.</i></p>
3. Support the resilience of Hednesford to the potential effects of climate change	<p>Neutral - Unlikely to contribute to increased resilience to climate change.</p>
4. Protect and enhance the distinctive character of the built and natural environment.	<p><u>Heritage</u></p> <p>Unlikely to have an effect on heritage assets or their setting, Not visible to nearby listed buildings, and the site does not contribute positively to local character.</p>

SEA Objective	Appraisal findings
	<p><u>Landscape</u></p> <p>Site not visibly intrusive to Hednesford Hills / Cannock Chase AONB.</p>
<p>5. Protect ground and surface water quality.</p>	<p>Outside of Groundwater Protection Zone</p>
<p>6. Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing which meets the needs of occupiers throughout their life.</p>	<p>Provision of 25 – 100 dwellings</p>
<p>7. Protect and improve the health and wellbeing of residents by enhancing the quality and accessibility of open space, facilities for recreation and health care</p>	<p><u>Access to natural greenspace</u></p> <p>Within 2km of 20ha greenspace (Hednesford Hills is over 10ha) Within 400m of 2ha greenspace</p> <p>Meets both standards</p> <p><u>Access to a GP surgery / medical-center</u></p> <p>1.72km from nearest GP surgery (Hednesford Valley Health Centre).</p>
<p>8. Reduce the need to travel and support modal shift to active and sustainable modes of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport.</p>	<p><u>Proximity to local convenience store / supermarket</u></p> <p>617m from nearest convenience store (Co-Op petrol Hednesford)</p> <p><u>Proximity to primary school</u></p> <p>1.53km from nearest primary school (Five Ways Primary School)</p> <p><u>Proximity to bus stop or train station</u></p> <p>38m to nearest bus stop on Lower Road</p>

C43 (427-433 and 437-445) Cannock Road

SEA Objective	Appraisal findings
1. Protect and enhance the function and connectivity of biodiversity habitats and species.	485m (as the crow flies) from nearest designated wildlife site (Hednesford Hills SSSI). SSSI impact zones suggest that all residential development should be examined for potential effects. The site itself does not have any value for wildlife, as it is predominantly built-up / gardens. Therefore, the effect on habitats that could support species is unlikely. Recreational pressure from this site would not be greater than development elsewhere in the Plan area (565m along pedestrian routes). Neutral effect
2. Contribute to climate change mitigation	<i>Achievement of this objective is likely to be driven by design and layout, rather than site location.</i>
3. Support the resilience of Hednesford to the potential effects of climate change	Neutral effect on climate change resilience. Unlikely to support ecological networks or to provide public shading.
4. Protect and enhance the distinctive character of the built and natural environment.	<u>Heritage</u> 220m (as the crow flies) from nearest heritage asset (Anglesey Hotel Grade II listed). Site does not contribute to the setting of this heritage asset. Development should help to improve the quality of the built environment by tackling dereliction, but effects on heritage would be unlikely. A neutral effect is recorded. <u>Landscape</u> Site not visibly intrusive to Hednesford Hills / Cannock Chase AONB.
5. Protect ground and surface water quality.	Lies within Groundwater Protection Zone
6. Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing which meets the needs of occupiers throughout their life.	Provision of 25 – 100 dwellings
7. Protect and improve the health and wellbeing of residents by enhancing the quality and accessibility of open space, facilities for recreation and health care	<u>Access to natural greenspace</u> Within 2km of 20ha greenspace (Hednesford Hills is over 10ha) Within 400m of 2ha greenspace Meets both standards <u>Access to a GP surgery / medical-center</u> 60m from nearest GP (Hednesford Valley Heath Centre)

SEA Objective	Appraisal findings
<p>8. Reduce the need to travel and support modal shift to active and sustainable modes of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport.</p>	<p><u>Proximity to local convenience store / supermarket</u> 200m to nearest convenience store (Co-op).</p> <p><u>Proximity to primary school</u> 395m from nearest primary school (West Hill Primary School)</p> <p><u>Proximity to bus stop or train station</u> 250m to Bus Station on Victoria Street. 70m to Hednesford Train station.</p>

