

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1.1 This report has been prepared by DTA Transportation (DTA) on behalf of Taylor Wimpey, to support proposed residential development (Proposed Policy SH2) as part of the Cannock Chase Local Plan.

1.2 The site is clearly and demonstrably appropriate for residential development. A statement setting out the accessibility credentials of the site is attached at **Appendix A**. This response identifies a number of soundness concerns with the Council's approach on transport and accessibility matters, which are summarised in the conclusion.

2.0 SITE SELECTION METHODOLOGY – JULY 2023

2.1 This study sets out the process through which Cannock Chase District Council (the Council) has selected the sites which will contribute to meeting identified needs for development. In relation to transport the methodology considers three broad topics:

Transport / Public Transport

2.2 It is agreed and accepted that the thrust of Chapter 9 of the NPPF (September 2023) (and Para 105) in particular) is that:

The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.

2.3 However, the detail of the RAG rating requires sites to be within 1km of a railway station to score Green. This approach is overly prescriptive and simplistic. Mode of travel choice, particularly in the context of Cannock Chase District as a whole would be more appropriately linked to proximity of the site to the public transport network generally. The arbitrary inclusion of walk distances to railway stations in particular do not reflect the level of choice available to future residents.

2.4 Due to the nature of the built-up areas around the existing railway stations in the area,

there are no Strategic Housing Allocations, either proposed or considered, which could meet this criteria.

- 2.5 As described in the assessment the site is very well connected to existing bus services with two services running in close proximity to the site, one of which has a half hourly frequency and one on an hourly frequency. In particular the No. 60 runs from Lichfield to Cannock centres and serves the railway station at Cannock. This provides a direct and appropriate link to the railway station.
- 2.5.1 The commentary suggests there is no access to cycle routes, and this misrepresents the position. The site is approximately 2.5km from Route 5 of the National Cycle Network (NCN) which can be reached via Wimblebury Road and Cannock Road (A5190). NCN Route 5 is a long-distance route which connects Reading and Holyhead via Oxford, Banbury, Stratford-upon-Avon, Redditch, Bromsgrove, Birmingham, Walsall, Stafford, Stoke-on-Trent, Chester, Colwyn Bay and Bangor.
- 2.6 The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2021-2031 published in April 2021 identifies Wimblebury Road as a cycle route prioritisation whereby over 101 cycle to work journeys are forecast per day. The proposals for the section of road between the Brickworks Road/ Wimblebury Road roundabout and Bank Street include a 20mph speed limit and additional crossing points.
- 2.7 Therefore, whilst the site is scored as Amber (which is consistent with all the strategic housing locations) it should be noted that it scores as high as any potential allocation site would and thus should be afforded a Green scoring.

Access

- 2.8 Appropriately the site is scored **Green** in this respect. The proposed masterplan for the site includes accesses onto Wimblebury Road in a manner consistent with the concept diagram. All three access points indicated are deliverable and achievable.
- 2.9 In addition, with the land control of Taylor Wimpey, there is the opportunity to provide the Wimblebury Road Relief Road which will require a new roundabout onto the A5190 Cannock Road.

2.10 Alongside this SCC are considering the need for further Non Motorised User (NMU) crossings in the vicinity of the Five Ways Junction as also indicated within **Appendix B**.

Concept Diagram



- Key**
-  Site Boundaries
 -  Existing Streets
 -  Existing Urban Area
 -  Existing Area of Woodland
 -  Existing Areas of Open Space
 -  Existing Pond
 -  Existing PRoWs
 -  Indicative Vehicular Access Points
 -  Indicative Strategic Infrastructure Route
 -  Indicative Active Travel Access Points
 -  Indicative Active Travel Routes & Connections
 -  Indicative Location for Residential Development
 -  Indicative Location for Areas of Blue-Green Infrastructure

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2.10.1 The plan confirms “indicative vehicular access points”. This does not include the vehicular access point from the spine road to development parcels which will depend on it for access. The plan therefore needs updating to reflect this.

2.10.2 In addition, the “active travel access points” should be refined to reflect that these will most appropriately connect via the main road infrastructure. The connection on the southeast corner is not deliverable within the allocation land control and should be removed.

Proximity to services and facilities to meet people’s needs and avoid isolation

2.11 Appropriately the site is scored **Green** in this respect. The commentary provided on this aspect however represents the opportunities afforded to future residents in terms of walking, cycling and public transport. As set out in **Appendix A**, the site is well located in terms of access to key local facilities.

2.11.1 The site is well served to the local community with bus services to Cannock and nearby local facilities and amenities, all within a suitable walking and cycling distance from the site.

2.11.2 A summary of the local amenities and facilities including walk and cycle times is provided in **Table 1**. The distances are measured from the centre of the site, as a straight-line distance.

Table 1 – Summary of services and facilities and the walk and cycle times

Facility	Distance	Walk Time (1.4 m/s)	Cycle Time (4.2 m/s)
Heath Hayes Academy	250m	3 minutes	1 minute
Bains Pharmacy	730m	9 minutes	3 minutes
Heath Hayes Post Office	730m	9 minutes	3 minutes
Inspire Dental Centre	1.1km	13 minutes	4 minutes
Heath Hayes Medical Centre	1.2km	14 minutes	5 minutes
Tesco	1.6km	19 minutes	6 minutes
Five Ways Primary School	1.8km	21 minutes	7 minutes
Kingsmead Secondary School	2.0km	24 minutes	8 minutes
McArthur Glen Designer Outlet West Midlands	2.9km	35 minutes	12 minutes

3.0 SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

3.1 The SA includes at Table 5.17 a summary of the sustainability effects of Policy SH2. For Sustainable Transport (SA8) the scoring provided is +/- which suggests that “The option is likely to have an equal mixture of both minor or both significant positive and negative effects on the SA objective(s).”

3.2 The reason for this ranking is given thus (at Para 5.239):

“The policy requires that the development considers the cumulative impact of Local Plan allocations through a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan and mitigates adverse impacts relating to air quality in the context of the Five Ways junction. The development of the site is to incorporate the delivery of the new Wimblebury Relief Road to help address congestion at this location. The provision of a new relief road will have benefits in terms of addressing local congestion, but may also result in induced demand and increased car use in the area, unless it is delivered to incorporate substantial sustainable transport improvements, such as bus lanes and cycle routes.”

3.3 The need for a comprehensive Transport Assessment and Travel Plan is noted and agreed.

3.4 The position in respect of the improvements that can be delivered in terms of a link road through the SH2 site is discussed below. That has a clear and positive impact on the deliverability of the local plan.

3.5 However, the suggestion that this might result in induced demand and increased car usage in area is wholly unevicenced. The link road would remove trips from the roundabout, thus reducing capacity and reducing any mitigation required at the roundabout, which is constrained and would most likely require third party land.

3.6 The new link road would remove the need for nearly all trips travelling between Wimblebury Road and A5190 (E) to travel through Five Ways. In addition, a number of trips travelling between Hednesford Road and A5190 (E) would benefit from transferring to the new link, whereas trips from areas of Hawks Green to Burntwood would not.

3.7 A series of counts at and around Five Way roundabout were undertaken in September 2021 to understand the volumes of traffic going through the junction, and also the Wimblebury Road/ Brickworks Road junction. Staffordshire County Council (SCC) has

undertaken an assessment of trips that would transfer to the new link road through the use of DfT's Trafficmaster dataset. This includes an OD level dataset, with the latest available being from 2018.

- 3.8 Through the analysis of the data, it was forecast by SCC that 100% of trips travelling between Wimblebury Road and A5190 (E) (i.e. in both directions) would move to the new link road and therefore could be removed from the Five Ways junction. For trips travelling between Hednesford Road and A5190 (E) the analysis of the Trafficmaster OD dataset uncovered that between 55.1% and 62.4% of trips (depending on the peak hour and direction of travel) could be removed from the Five Ways count. In absolute terms this equates to around 400 two-way trips per hour.
- 3.9 Furthermore, no new or induced traffic was forecast as a result of this detailed process.
- 3.10 It is clear from the traffic modelling undertaken in collaboration with the Highway Authority that whilst the scheme will alleviate congestion impacts arising from the proposed development it will not create additional unconstrained demand on the network. There can therefore be no induced or additional car usage in the area.
- 3.11 In that respect the SA Objective 8 the score of 'x/-' is not soundly-based (not justified) and should be + that the "the option is likely to have a minor positive effect on the SA objective".

4.0 TRAFFIC IMPACT ISSUES AND EVIDENCE BASE

Context

- 4.1 To date, no up to date strategic transport assessment has been prepared by the LPA to assess the overall impacts of the Local Plan.
- 4.2 It is noted that the policy text for SH2 confirms that "*A Transport Assessment and Travel Plan will be required to support the application and will need to consider the cumulative impact of Local Plan allocations, with particular to impact on the Five Ways junction and mitigation of any adverse impact on air quality and traffic congestion.*"
- 4.3 The need for a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan is agreed and consistent with the requirements of the NPPF. Notwithstanding that a significant amount of

assessment has already been undertaken in this regard.

- 4.4 At present the IDP includes works at Five Ways junction, and these include the link road through the SH2 site, improvements to Five Ways junction and accessibility improvements in the vicinity of the site, including improvements to walk and cycle accessibility. These are costed at in the IDP at circa £5m and contributions are anticipated from SCC, CIL and proposed allocations SH1 & SH2. Costs will need to be refined and agreed in due course.
- 4.5 SCC and developers of two proposed allocation sites (Taylor Wimpey (SH2) and Richborough (SH1)) have worked together to review the impact of the two sites on the local highway network. This work culminated in the SCC report “The Impact of Preferred Option Developments on Five Ways Roundabout – Revised Report with Lower Levels of Housing (Draft Regulation 19 Local Plan Sites)” dated 3rd October 2022.
- 4.6 As part of that assessment work Taylor Wimpey, working collaboratively with SCC and the LPA identified the opportunity to provide a link road through their land holding to aid mitigation of cumulative development impacts at Five Ways junction. The findings and outcome of that report are supported by Taylor Wimpey.
- 4.7 The report confirms that the traffic impacts of the cumulative development included in the Local Plan can be accommodated locally.
- 4.8 Further afield SH2 is unlikely to have any material impact on the wider network. Residential trip rates have previously been agreed with SCC and these are summarised in **Table 2** with the resulting traffic generation for up to 410 dwellings.

Table 2 – Trip Rates for Houses Privately Owned

Time Period	Vehicle Trip Rate			Vehicle Trip Generation		
	ARR	DEP	TOTAL	ARR	DEP	TOTAL
AM Peak (08:00-09:00)	0.125	0.375	0.500	51	154	205
PM Peak (17:00-18:00)	0.339	0.142	0.481	139	58	197

- 4.9 The distribution and assignment of development related traffic has been based on the 2011 Census Journey to Work using the Middle Super Output Area (MSOA) of Cannock Chase 009 in which the site is located.

4.10 The traffic has been assigned to the local road network using the most direct route (shortest journey time) informed by the Google journey planner. It is however noted that there are various alternative connecting roads that would likely be used by local traffic to avoid congestion issues.

4.11 The traffic has been distributed to the following routes set out in **Table 3** below.

Table 3 – Traffic Generation

Destination	Percentage	Trips AM Peak Two-Way	Trips PM Peak Two-Way
Wimblebury Road North	19%	39	37
• Brickworks Road	13%	27	26
• Wimblebury Road North	6%	12	12
Wimblebury Road South	81%	166	160
• A5190 East	18%	37	35
• A5190 West	40%	82	79
- A460 Eastern Way N	3%	6	6
- A460 Eastern Way S	18%	37	35
- A5190 Lichfield Road	17%	35	33
• B4154	4%	10	10
• Hednesford Road	18%	37	35

4.12 The development is forecast to generate the majority of vehicle trips towards the Five Ways junction (81%) and the A5190 West (40%) towards the A460 and Cannock. It can be seen in **Table 3** that the development trips on the A460 Eastern Way and A5190 are modest. It is anticipated that an assessment of the A460 Eastern Way/ A5190 would be undertaken as part of planning submission, but otherwise with the overall dispersion of traffic across the network no wider improvements are likely to be required.

5.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 This report has considered the suitability of the site for residential development as proposed in the Local Plan.

5.2 This review confirms that the site is clearly and demonstrably appropriate for residential development. A significant amount of technical assessment has already been undertaken by the promoter, in consultation with the Statutory Highway Authority (Staffordshire County Council) to consider site specific impacts of the proposals. This confirms that:

- a) Safe and Suitable access can be achieved to the site.
- b) The provision of a link road through the site will mitigate the cumulative impacts of the proposed allocation, considered cumulatively with others and that.
- c) Overall, the allocation and subsequent development of the site would be in full accordance with the requirements of Chapter 9 of the NPPF.
- d) The allocation of the land would therefore be sound and the development wholly deliverable in an acceptable manner.

5.3 This statement does however identify a number of soundness concerns with the Council's approach on transport and accessibility matters as follows:

- a) The Site Selection Methodology, appropriately scores the site green in respect of Access and Proximity to Services. However, the approach to considering access to Public Transport and the scoring methodology is irrational when considering strategy housing development sites. It therefore incorrectly scores the site as an Amber whereas it should be scored "Green".
- b) The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorrectly identifies the impact of the proposed link road through the site as having potential negative impacts. That conclusion is not consistent with the evidence base. It is clear from the traffic modelling undertaken in collaboration with the Highway Authority that whilst the scheme will alleviate congestion impacts arising from the proposed development it will not

create additional unconstrained demand on the network. There can therefore be no induced or additional car usage in the area. The SA should therefore score the site as be + that the “the option is likely to have a minor positive effect on the SA objective”.

APPENDIX A

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by DTA Transportation (DTA) on behalf of Taylor Wimpey, to support proposed residential development (Proposed Allocation Site SH2) as part of the Cannock Local Plan.
- 1.2 It sets out the accessibility of the site by walking, cycling and public transport.
- 1.3 The site is well served to the local community with bus services to Cannock and nearby local facilities and amenities, all within a suitable walking and cycling distance from the site.
- 1.4 The site is very well connected to existing bus services with two services running in close proximity to the site, one of which has a half hourly frequency and one on an hourly frequency. In particular the No. 60 runs from Lichfield to Cannock centres and serves the railway station at Cannock. This provides a direct and appropriate link to the railway station.
- 1.5 The local area has two primary schools, a secondary school, post office, medical centre, convenience store, and pharmacy all within 2km of the site. These facilities and services are accessible on foot or cycle for local residents. The accessibility of these facilities close to the site means that a number of day-to-day needs could be met without the reliance on a private car.

2.0 SITE ACCESSIBILITY

2.1 Site Location

2.1.1 The development is located to the east of Wimblebury Road on the eastern edge of Heath Hayes and Wimblebury.

2.1.2 The site is bound to the west of Wimblebury Road and to the north, east and south by agricultural land, sitting adjacent to Wimblebury Hill.

2.1.3 Cannock town centre is located around 4km to the west.

2.2 Local Road Network

2.2.1 Wimblebury Road is a single carriageway road and subject to a 30mph speed limit throughout. It runs north-south along the western edge of the site.

2.2.2 To the south Wimblebury Road connects to Cannock Road (A5190), Hednesford Road, and Norton Road via the Five Ways roundabout.

2.2.3 There are several traffic calming measures along Wimblebury Road in the vicinity of Heath Hayes Academy School. These measures are primarily in the form of speed cushions.

2.2.4 The A5190 Cannock Road runs in an east-west direction and connects to the centre of Cannock in the west and to Lichfield in the east. The road is a single carriageway and is subject to a national speed limit in the vicinity of the site.

2.3 Walking and Cycling

2.3.1 There is a good network of pedestrian footpaths in the area connecting to local amenities and facilities. There is a footway on the western side of Wimblebury Road. There is no footway along the majority of the site frontage, but a footway does extend south of the site on the eastern side of the road from the primary school to the junction with Heath Hayes Park.

2.3.2 There are also footways on both sides of the carriageway along the B4154 as well as dropped kerbing and signalised pedestrian crossings.

2.3.3 The site is approximately 2.5km from Route 5 of the National Cycle Network (NCN) which can be reached via Wimblebury Road and Cannock Road (A5190). NCN Route 5 is a long-distance route which connects Reading and Holyhead via Oxford, Banbury, Stratford-upon-Avon, Redditch, Bromsgrove, Birmingham, Walsall, Stafford, Stoke-on-Trent, Chester, Colwyn Bay and Bangor.

2.3.4 The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2021-2031 published in April 2021 identifies Wimblebury Road as a cycle route prioritisation whereby over 101 cycle to work journeys are forecast per day. The proposals for the section of road between the Brickworks Road/ Wimblebury Road roundabout and Bank Street include a 20mph speed limit and additional crossing points.

2.4 Public Transport

Bus

2.4.1 The nearest bus stops to the site are located on Wimblebury Road on the western boundary of the site. The bus stops are served by bus routes 23. There is a further bus stop located on the B4154 Hednesford Road approximately 950m to the south of the site and this is served by bus route 60.

2.4.2 A summary of the services and the frequencies are provided in **Table 1** below.

Table 1 – Bus Services and frequencies

Bus No.	Route	Frequency		
		Mon-Fri	Saturday	Sunday
23	Cannock – Wimblebury - Hednesford	5 outbound services and 5 inbound services	No Service	No Service
60	Cannock – Lichfield	30 minutes	30 minutes	No Service

2.4.3 Bus service 60 provides connections to Cannock railway station. The journey time from Five Ways to the railway station is around 12 minutes. The bus service stops on the A5190 Lichfield Road and from here it is a 4-minute walk to the station platform. The first departing service from Five Ways is at 06:42 and last departing service is at 20:47. The first departing service from the A5190 Lichfield Road near the station is at 05:09 and last departing service is at 19:14.

Rail

- 2.4.4 Hednesford Station is approximately 3km from the site and Cannock Station is approximately 3.7km away.
- 2.4.5 Hednesford Station benefits from ticket machines, customer help points, a shelter with seating on each platform and a car park. From Hednesford there are regular services to London Euston, Rugeley Trent Valley and Birmingham International.
- 2.4.6 Cannock Railway Station is served by the same services as Hednesford Railway Station. The station has ticket office and machines and a car park (90 spaces).

2.5 Local Facilities and Amenities

- 2.5.1 Paragraph 4.4.1 of Manual for Streets (Dft, 2007) confirms that:

“Walkable neighbourhoods are typically characterised by having a range of facilities within 10 minutes’ (up to about 800 m) walking distance of residential areas which residents may access comfortably on foot. However, this is not an upper limit and PPS13 states that walking offers the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly those under 2km. MfS encourages a reduction in the need to travel by car through the creation of mixed-use neighbourhoods with interconnected street patterns, where daily needs are within walking distance of most residents.”

- 2.5.2 Page 20 of the National Design Guide clarifies that as a definition “walkable” is where local facilities are within walking distance, generally to be no more than a 10-minute walk (800m radius).
- 2.5.3 Table 3.2 of IHT’s Providing for Journeys on Foot confirms that journeys on foot suggest that for commuting, walking to school and recreational journeys, distances of 2 km can be considered acceptable. This guidance dates from 2000 and it is generally accepted that the MfS approach of 2km walkable neighbourhoods is the most appropriate benchmark.

Employment

- 2.5.4 Accessibility to a range of employment opportunities locally and by different modes is important to ensure residents can fulfil their potential without an unduly high intensity of car travel. This will be dependent on the distribution of employment areas within the region and the structure of the transport system.
- 2.5.5 The site is located within the geographic middle super output area (MSOA) of Cannock Chase 009. The modal split for this area is summarised in **Table 2** below.

Table 2 – Journey to work mode share (Cannock Chase 009)

Mode of Transport	Percentage
Train	2%
Bus, Minibus or Coach	3%
Taxi	0%
Motorcycle, Scooter or Moped	1%
Driving a Car or Van	81%
Passenger in a Car or Van	6%
Bicycle	1%
On Foot	6%
Other Method of Travel to Work	0%

Education

- 2.5.6 The proposed residential development will generate demand for education with the resulting trips to access the local schools. The closest primary school to the proposed development is Heath Hayes Academy located approximately 250m to the western boundary of the site. Five Ways Primary School is located 1.8km to the west of the site.
- 2.5.7 The nearest secondary school is Kingsmead located 2km to the west of the site.
- 2.5.8 The national travel survey (2022) states that for primary school aged children 86% of journeys to school are by walking if the distance is less than 1.6km. For secondary school children who travel 1.6-3.2km, 62% were recorded as walking with a further 4% cycling.

Retail

- 2.5.9 McArthur Glen Designer Outlet West Midlands is located around 2.9km to the west of the site near Cannock. Tesco supermarket is located 1.6km to the west of the site.

2.5.10 There are a number of independent shops on the B4154.

Doctor's Surgery and Dental Practice

2.5.11 In terms of access to health provision, the closest GP Surgery is Heath Hayes Medical Centre located approximately 1.2km to the west of the site. There is also a pharmacy on the B4154.

2.5.12 The nearest Dental Practice is Inspire Dental Centre located 1.1km to the west of the site.

2.6 Summary

2.6.1 The site is well served to the local community with bus services to Cannock and nearby local facilities and amenities, all within a suitable walking and cycling distance from the site.

2.6.2 The allocation of the site is appropriate in terms of accessibility to a range of travel modes and facilities and emerging proposals for the site will accord with Policy SO5.1 (Accessible Development) and the requirements of Chapter 9 of the NPPF.

2.6.3 A summary of the local amenities and facilities including walk and cycle times is provided in **Table 3**. The distances are measured from the centre of the site, as a straight-line distance.

Table 3 – Summary of services and facilities and the walk and cycle times


Facility	Distance	Walk Time (1.4 m/s)	Cycle Time (4.2 m/s)
Heath Hayes Academy	250m	3 minutes	1 minute
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APPENDIX B

Five Ways, Cannock

New Signalled Crossing Facilities




 Signalled Crossing Facilities

Scale: 1:1561

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