



Sustainability Appraisal of the Lichfield District Local Plan Scoping Report

Lichfield District Council

Final report

Prepared by LUC

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Lichfield District Council commissioned LUC in June 2024 to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the new Local Plan. For simplicity in this report, we refer to just the SA of the Lichfield Local Plan, which should be taken as incorporating SEA (as explained below).

1.2 SA is an assessment process designed to consider and report upon the significant sustainability issues and effects of emerging plans and policies, including their reasonable alternatives. SA/SEA iteratively informs the plan-making process by helping to refine the contents of such documents, so that they maximise the benefits of sustainable development and avoid, or at least minimise, the potential for adverse effects. The purpose of this Scoping Report is to provide the context for, and determine the scope of, the SA of the Lichfield Local Plan, and to set out the framework for assessing the sustainability of the new Local Plan.

1.3 It should be noted that this report is in an ‘Accessible format’, which means it has been formatted to meet the requirements of the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations (2018), as set out in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1). This means it must have larger font, larger spacing between lines and headings, less information presented in tables, ‘alt text’ provided for all figures and it is able to be read by screen-reading software.

The Plan Area

1.4 Lichfield District is located in the south-east of Staffordshire, and is adjacent to the wider West Midlands urban conurbation (shown in **Figure 1.1**). Apart from the City of Lichfield and town of Burntwood, it is a predominantly rural

District covering some 331.3 km². The 2021 Census reported the district as having a population of 106,900 people [See reference 1], with the highest proportion of people between the ages of 50 and 64 [See reference 2].

1.5 Lichfield is bordered by the local authorities of Cannock Chase to the west, Stafford and East Staffordshire to the north, South Derbyshire and North West Leicestershire, to the east, and North Warwickshire, Tamworth, Birmingham and Walsall to the south. More urban areas are located around Lichfield District's western, southern and southeastern boundaries, with more rural areas along the northern and eastern edges of the district.

1.6 The largest settlement in Lichfield District is Lichfield, located in the centre of the district. Burntwood is the second largest settlement that has been formed by more recent growth and is the amalgamation of several smaller settlements. The rural landscape forms the setting for the rural settlements and villages which characterise much of Lichfield's settlements.

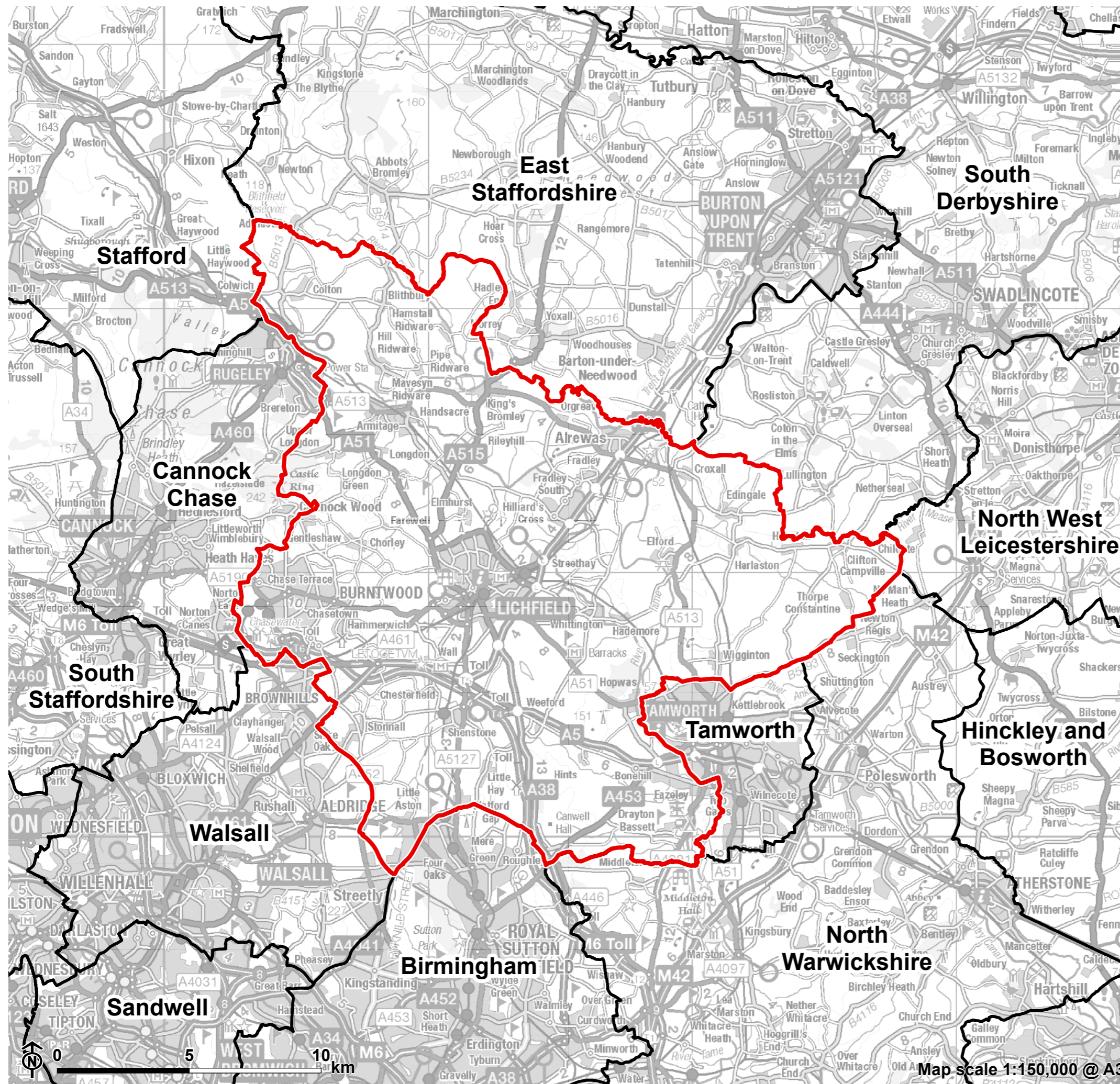
1.7 There are areas of high landscape and nature conservation quality within and around the district, in particular the River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which supports internationally important heathland. The Cannock Chase SAC covers approximately 20% of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which is mostly located to the west of Lichfield District, extending slightly into the district itself just north of Burntwood. Sutton Park, a National Nature Reserve, which covers 970 ha, lies to the south of Lichfield District. The district falls within four National Character Areas (Cannock Chase and Cank Wood, Needwood and South Derbyshire Claylands, Trent Valley Washlands and Mease/Sence Lowlands), and also contains four designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

1.8 Lichfield District has good transport connectivity, particularly to the West Midlands Conurbation, by a range of transport modes. There are four railway stations that serve Lichfield District: Lichfield City, Lichfield Trent Valley, Rugeley Trent Valley and Shenstone within the District. Lichfield District residents are also served by Four Oaks and Blake Street stations just outside

Chapter 1 Introduction

the district. National Express services also operate in Lichfield District, and the district is well-served by bus stops. Additionally, the A38 and A5 meet in Lichfield and provide direct access to the Midlands motorway network. The M6 Toll runs down the western side of the district and links the M6 with the M42, providing strong road connectivity within the area.

Figure 1.1: Location of Lichfield District



- Lichfield District
- Neighbouring local authority

Lichfield Local Plan

1.9 The Council's adopted local plan consists of the local plan strategy document, local plan allocations document and the local plan policies maps. These two documents cover the period up to 2029:

- Local Plan Strategy 2008 – 2029 (2015); and
- Local Plan Allocations 2008 – 2029 (2019).

1.10 Lichfield District Council initially submitted a proposed new Local Plan 2040 for examination in June 2022. However, this was subsequently withdrawn from its examination in October 2023, with the Council commencing preparatory work for a new plan shortly after.

1.11 The new Local Plan will replace the existing Local Plan documents. The Lichfield Local Plan is being prepared in accordance with the approved Local Development Scheme. The Local Plan is a district-wide plan that will coordinate the development and growth requirements of the district over a period of 15 to 20 years.

1.12 The Council is at an early stage in the development of the new Local Plan and thus far have undertaken a call for sites between January and March 2024 to help identify potential sites that may be able to help meet the district's development needs in the future. Evidence collection for the new Local Plan is underway and public consultation for the new Local Plan is planned for later this year.

Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

1.13 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 [See reference 3] requires Local Plans to be subject to SA. SA is designed to ensure that the plan preparation process maximises the contribution that a plan makes to sustainable development and minimises any potential adverse impacts. The SA process involves appraising the likely environmental, social and economic effects of the policies and proposals within a plan from the outset of its development.

1.14 SEA is also a statutory assessment process, originally required under the European SEA Directive [See reference 4], transposed in the UK by the SEA Regulations and amended by the Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1232). As set out in the explanatory Memorandum accompanying the Brexit amendments [See reference 5], they are necessary to ensure that the law functions correctly following the UK's exit from the EU. No substantive changes were made by this instrument to the way the SEA regime currently operates. Therefore, the SEA Regulations remain in force, and it is a legal requirement for the Lichfield Local Plan to be subject to SA and SEA throughout its preparation.

1.15 SEA and SA are separate processes but have similar aims and objectives. Simply put, SEA focuses on the likely environmental effects of a plan whilst SA focuses on the social and economic effects of a plan, in addition to the environment. The Government's Planning Practice Guidance [See reference 6] shows how it is possible to satisfy both requirements by undertaking a joint SA and SEA process, and to present an SA Report that incorporates the requirements of the SEA Regulations. The SA and SEA of the Lichfield Local Plan is being undertaken using this integrated approach and throughout this report the abbreviation 'SA' should therefore be taken to refer to SA incorporating the requirements of SEA'.

1.16 The SA process comprises five stages, with scoping being Stage A as shown below:

- Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope.
- Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects.
- Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report.
- Stage D: Consulting on the Local Plan and the SA Report.
- Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the Local Plan.

1.17 On 26 October 2023, the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill received Royal Assent and became an Act of Parliament [See reference 7]. The Act sets out in detail the Government's proposals for reforming the planning system. Among other things, the Act sets the intention for reform of the current system for strategic environmental assessments by providing instead for "Environmental Outcomes Reports" designed to streamline the process for identifying and assessing the environmental impact of plans and projects. The specific requirements will be set out in forthcoming legislation, along with information about transition arrangements but for now, the requirement for SEA remains, as set out in existing legislation. Any changes to the legal framework for carrying out SA/SEA will be addressed as appropriate as the Local Plan is prepared and documented as required, in either subsequent SA Reports or Environmental Outcomes Reports. It is anticipated that following the 2024 general election, the new government may potentially alter the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act, which could impact the proposed reform of the current system for strategic environmental assessments.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

1.18 The requirement to undertake Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of land-use plans was confirmed by the amendments to The Conservation (Natural

Habitats, &c.) (Amendment) Regulations 2007 [See reference 8]. The currently applicable version is The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended by The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 [See reference 9] (hereafter referred to as the “Habitats Regulations”). When preparing a land-use plan, the competent authority (in this case Lichfield District Council) is therefore required by law to carry out an HRA. The competent authority can commission consultants to undertake HRA work on its behalf which is then reported to and considered by the competent authority.

1.19 The purpose of HRA is to assess the impacts of a land-use plan against the conservation objectives of designated nature conservation sites (such as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar wetlands) and to ascertain whether it would adversely affect the integrity of that site. The competent authority will consider the HRA and may only progress the land-use plan if it considers that it will not adversely affect the integrity of any SAC, SPA or Ramsar site or have a significant effect on qualifying habitats or species for which the sites are designated, or if Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) are identified.

1.20 The HRA will be undertaken separately but the findings, once available, will be considered in the SA where relevant, for example to inform judgements about the likely effects of potential development locations on biodiversity.

Approach to SA Scoping

1.21 The main tasks associated with the scoping stage of the SA (Stage A) are as follows:

- Stage A1: Setting out the policy context for the SA of the Local Plan, i.e. key policies and strategies that influence what the Local Plan and the SA need to consider.

- Stage A2: Setting out the baseline for the SA of the Local Plan, i.e. the current and environmental, social, and economic conditions in Lichfield District and their likely evolution in the absence of the Local Plan.
- Stage A3: Drawing on A1 and A2, identify the sustainability problems and/or opportunities ('issues') that the Local Plan and SA should address.
- Stage A4: Drawing on A1, A2 and A3, develop a framework of SA objectives and assessment criteria against which to appraise the constituent parts of the Local Plan in isolation and in combination.
- Stage A5: Consulting on the intended scope and level of detail of the SA.

1.22 This Scoping Report sets out the intended scope and level of detail of the SA of the Local Plan for consultation with the relevant environmental authorities. It fulfils the requirements set out above and provides the foundations for appraisal of the likely effects of constituent parts of the Local Plan, as plan-making progresses. In accordance with the Government's Planning Practice Guidance on SA/SEA, the Scoping Report is proportionate and relevant to the Local Plan, focussing on what is needed to assess likely significant effects **[See reference 10]**. It also takes account of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the emphasis it places on achieving sustainable development.

1.23 This SA Scoping Report follows key legislation, policy and guidance including:

- Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans, and programmes on the environment i.e. the SEA Directive **[See reference 11]**;
- The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/1633), as amended by the Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1232) **[See reference 12]**;
- Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal National Planning Practice Guidance **[See reference 13]**;
- A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive **[See reference 14]**;

- Guidance on Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity into Strategic Environmental Assessment [See reference 15];
- Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment / Sustainability Appraisal and the Historic Environment [See reference 16];
- Strategic Environmental Assessment: Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of Strategic Environmental Assessment / Sustainability Appraisal for land use plans [See reference 17];
- Draft Guidance on Assessing Health Impacts in Strategic Environmental Assessment [See reference 18]; and
- Health Impact Assessment in spatial planning: A guide for local authority public health and planning teams [See reference 19].

Meeting the requirements of the SEA Regulations

1.24 The section below signposts the relevant sections of the Scoping Report that are considered to meet the SEA Regulations requirements (the remainder will be met during subsequent stages of the SA of the Lichfield Local Plan). This section will be included in the full SA Report at each stage of the SA to show how the requirements of the SEA Regulations have been met throughout the SA process.

SEA Regulations' requirements

Environmental report

- Where an environmental assessment is required by any provision of Part 2 of these Regulations, the responsible authority shall prepare, or secure the preparation of, an environmental report in accordance with paragraphs (2)

and (3) of this regulation. The report shall identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment of:

- implementing the plan or programme; and
- reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan or programme.
- (Regulation 12(1) and (2) and Schedule 2).
 - Covered in this Scoping Report? The full SA Report produced to accompany the Lichfield Local Plan will constitute the 'environmental report' as well and will be produced at a later stage in the SA process.
- An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.
 - Covered in this Scoping Report? Chapter 2 in this SA Scoping Report.
- The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.
 - Covered in this Scoping Report? Chapters 3 and 4 in this SA Scoping Report.
- The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.
 - Covered in this Scoping Report? Chapter 3 in this SA Scoping Report.
- Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds and the Habitats Directive.
 - Covered in this Scoping Report? Chapter 4 in this SA Scoping Report.
- The environmental protection, objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental, considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.

- Covered in this Scoping Report? Chapter 2 and Appendix A in this SA Scoping Report.
- The likely significant effects on the environment, including short, medium and long-term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive effects, and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects, on issues such as:
 - (a) biodiversity;
 - (b) population;
 - (c) human health;
 - (d) fauna;
 - (e) flora;
 - (f) soil;
 - (g) water;
 - (h) air;
 - (i) climatic factors;
 - (j) material assets;
 - (k) cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage;
 - (l) landscape; and
 - (m) the interrelationship between the issues referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) to (l).
- Covered in this Scoping Report? Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process. Chapter 5 of this SA Scoping Report describes the method by which significant effects will be identified.
- The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme.
 - Covered in this Scoping Report? Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.

- An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.
 - Covered in this Scoping Report? Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.
- A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with regulation 17.
 - Covered in this Scoping Report? Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.
- A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 1 to 9.
 - Covered in this Scoping Report? Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.

Consultation

- When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the environmental report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies.

(Regulation 12(5))

- Covered in this Scoping Report? This SA Scoping Report will be published for consultation with the three statutory bodies (the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England).
- Every draft plan or programme for which an environmental report has been prepared in accordance with regulation 12 and its accompanying report (“the relevant documents”) shall be made available for the purposes of consultation in accordance with the following provisions of this regulation.

As soon as reasonably practical after the preparation of the relevant documents, the responsible authority shall:

- send a copy of those documents to each consultation body;

- take such steps as it considers appropriate to bring the preparation of the relevant documents to the attention of the persons who, in the authority's opinion, are affected or likely to be affected by, or have an interest in the decisions involved in the assessment and adoption of the plan or programme concerned, required under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Directive ("the public consultees");
- inform the public consultees of the address (which may include a website) at which a copy of the relevant documents may be viewed, and the period within which, opinions must be sent.

The period referred to in paragraph (2) (d) must be of such length as will ensure that the consultation bodies and the public consultees are given an effective opportunity to express their opinion on the relevant documents.

(Regulation 13 (1), (2), and (3))

- Covered in this Scoping Report? Public consultation on the Lichfield Local Plan and accompanying SA Reports will take place as the Local Plan develops.
- Where a responsible authority, other than the Secretary of State, is of the opinion that a plan or programme for which it is the responsible authority is likely to have significant effects on the environment of another Member State, it shall, as soon as reasonably practicable after forming that opinion:
 - notify the Secretary of State of its opinion and of the reasons for it; and
 - supply the Secretary of State with a copy of the plan or programme concerned, and of the accompanying environmental report.

(Regulation 14 (1))

- Covered in this Scoping Report? Unlikely to be relevant to the Local Plan, as there will be no effects beyond the UK.

Taking the environmental report and the results of the consultations into account in decision-making (relevant extracts of Regulation 16)

- As soon as reasonably practicable after the adoption of a plan or programme for which an environmental assessment has been carried out under these Regulations, the responsible authority shall:

- make a copy of the plan or programme and its accompanying environmental report available at its principal office for inspection by the public at all reasonable times and free of charge.

(Regulation 16(1))

- Covered in this Scoping Report? Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.
- As soon as reasonably practicable after the adoption of a plan or programme the responsible authority shall inform (i) the consultation bodies; (ii) the persons who, in relation to the plan or programme, were public consultees for the purposes of regulation 13; and (iii) where the responsible authority is not the Secretary of State, the Secretary of State,
 - that the plan or programme has been adopted, and a statement containing the following particulars:
 - how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme;
 - how the environmental report has been taken into account;
 - how opinions expressed in response to: (i) the invitation in regulation 13(2)(d); (ii) action taken by the responsible authority in accordance with regulation 13(4), have been taken into account;
 - how the results of any consultations entered into under regulation 14(4) have been taken into account;
 - the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and

- the measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.
- Covered in this Scoping Report? Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.

Monitoring

- The responsible authority shall monitor the significant effects of the implementation of each plan or programme with the purpose of identifying unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and being able to undertake appropriate remedial action.

(Regulation 17(1))

- Covered in this Scoping Report? Requirement will be met after adoption of the new Local Plan.

Structure of the Scoping Report

1.25 This chapter provides a brief introduction to Lichfield District and the new Local Plan, and explains the requirement to undertake SA and other assessment processes. The remainder of this Scoping Report is structured into the following sections:

- **Chapter 2** describes the relationship between the new Lichfield Local Plan and other relevant national, county, local and neighbourhood plans, and summarises the international and national plans and programmes that are relevant to the Local Plan and the SA.
- **Chapter 3** sets out the baseline information and is structured around a set of sustainability topics designed to cover the full range of possible sustainability effects generated by the Lichfield Local Plan, including all the SEA topics listed in Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations:
 - Population, health and wellbeing;
 - Economy and employment;

- Transport and accessibility;
 - Air, land and water quality;
 - Climate change mitigation and adaptation;
 - Biodiversity and geodiversity;
 - Historic environment; and
 - Landscape and townscape.
- **Chapter 4** identifies the key environmental, social and economic issues in Lichfield District of relevance to the Local Plan and considers the likely evolution of those issues without its implementation.
- **Chapter 5** then sets out the SA framework and the proposed method for carrying out the SA. The key sustainability issues and opportunities have been reflected in the SA framework, which the Local Plan will be appraised against.
- **Chapter 6** summarises the consultation questions on the SA Scoping Report and sets out next steps.

Chapter 2

Relevant Plans and Programmes

Introduction

2.1 This chapter addresses Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations, which requires the SA Report to provide:

- an outline of the contents and main objectives of the Plan and its relationship with other relevant plans or programmes; and
- the environmental protection objectives established at International, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.

2.2 In order to establish a clear scope for the SA it is necessary to review and develop an understanding of the environmental, social and economic objectives contained within international and national policies, plans and strategies that are of relevance to the Lichfield Local Plan. Given the SEA Regulations requirements above, it is also necessary to consider the relationship between the Lichfield Local Plan and other relevant plans, policies and programmes.

2.3 This chapter first summarises the relationship of the Lichfield Local Plan to the relevant policies, plans and programmes which should be taken into consideration during preparation of the plan and its SA. It then summarises the key sustainability objectives within the international and national plans and programmes as well as some of those at the County level. **Appendix A** provides more detail on the main sustainability objectives of international, national and plans and programmes which are of most relevance for the Local Plan and the SA. It also summarises the Neighbourhood Plans within Lichfield

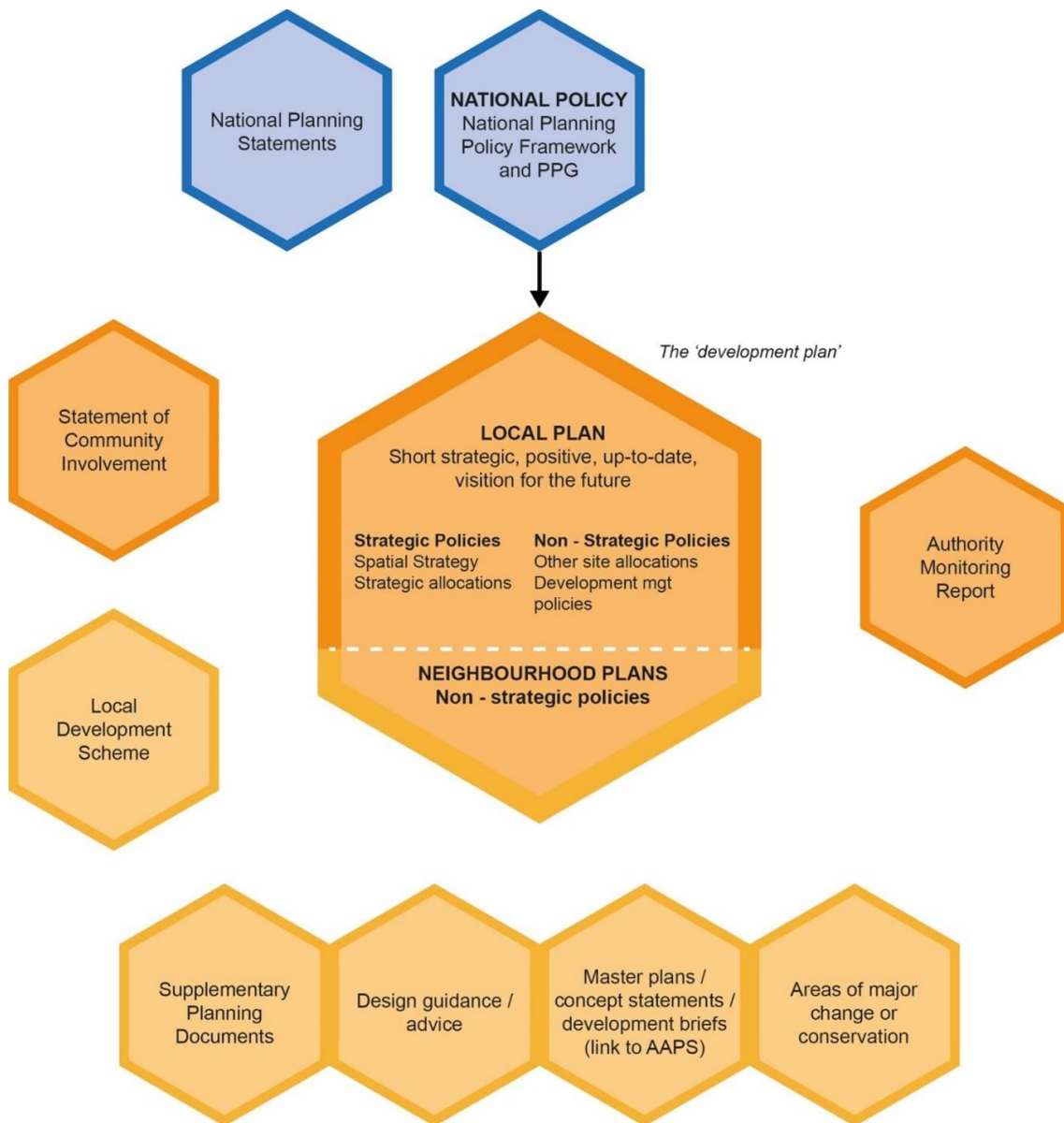
District, as well as provides a summary of the status and planned growth contained in neighbouring authorities Local Plans.

2.4 The objectives of these plans and programmes have been taken into account when drafting the SA framework in **Chapter 5**. An outline of the content and main objectives of the Local Plan will be described in subsequent SA reports, as this emerges through the plan-making process.

Relationship of Lichfield Local Plan with other relevant plans and programmes

2.5 The Lichfield Local Plan is not prepared in isolation and must be in conformity with a range of international and national plans and programmes. The relationship of the Local Plan to relevant planning policy and supporting documents is shown in **Figure 2.1**. The Lichfield Local Plan comprises 'made' Neighbourhood Plans within the district and is supported by other documents such as the Statement of Community Involvement, Local Development Scheme, Authority Monitoring Report and Supplementary Planning Documents, also shown in **Figure 2.1**.

Figure 2.1: Relationship between the Local Plan and other planning documents



The Implications of Brexit

2.6 As of the end of January 2020 the UK has left the EU. Principally, the UK’s environmental law is derived from EU law or was directly effective EU law. As a result of Brexit, the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 converts existing EU

law which applied directly in the UK's legal system (such as EU Regulations and EU Decisions) into UK law and preserves laws made in the UK to implement EU obligations (e.g. the laws which implement EU Directive). This body of law is known as retained EU law and could be subject to future, post-Brexit amendments.

2.7 As set out in the Explanatory Memorandum accompanying the Brexit amendments [See reference 20], the purpose of the Brexit amendments to the SEA Regulations is to ensure that the law functions correctly after the UK has left the EU. No substantive changes are made by this instrument to the way the SEA regime operates.

2.8 Relevant international plans and policy (including those at the EU level) are transposed into national plans, policy and legislation and these have been considered in this chapter and in **Appendix A**.

International

2.9 At the international level, there is a wide range of plans and programmes which act to inform and shape national level legislation. Planning policy in England at a national and local level (i.e. the NPPF and Local Plan) should be aware of and in conformity with the relevant legislation. The main sustainability objectives of international plans and programmes which are of most relevance for the Local Plan and the SA are provided in **Appendix A**.

National

2.10 There is an extensive range of national policies, plans and programmes that are relevant to the Local Plan and the SA process. A pragmatic and proportionate approach has been taken with regards to the identification of key national policies, plans and programmes, focusing on those that are of most relevance. A summary of the main objectives of the National Planning Policy

Framework and Planning Practice Guidance of relevance to the Local Plan and the SA is provided below. In addition, the main sustainability objectives of other national plans and programmes which are of most relevance to the Local Plan and SA are provided in Appendix A.

The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

2.11 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) [\[See reference 21\]](#) is the overarching planning framework which provides national planning policy and principles for the planning system in England. The NPPF was originally published in March 2012 and has since been updated and revised several times. The most recent update to the NPPF contains some changes to the five year housing land supply together with an added emphasis on housing for older people. Authorities are now required to seek opportunities to support small sites to come forward for community-led development for housing, and self-build and custom-build housing. There is also now an emphasis on beautiful buildings and the use of local design codes setting out when the density of development is considered appropriate or not. There is no longer a requirement to review Green Belt boundaries, strengthening their protection. Following the UK General Election in July 2024 the new Government has intimated it will consult on changes to the NPPF in the summer of 2024. It is anticipated that following the 2024 general election, a revised NPPF will be consulted upon or adopted, potentially altering the current position on five year housing land supply as well as Green Belt boundaries.

2.12 The three overarching objectives of the planning system are set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF, which should be pursued in mutually supportive ways so that net gains are achieved across each of the different objectives:

- “an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

- a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and
- an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”

2.13 The New Local Plan must be consistent with the requirements of the NPPF, which states:

“Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings”.

2.14 A local planning authority is also required to have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State when preparing a Local Plan **[See reference 22]**.

2.15 Paragraph 20 of the NPPF states the need for strategic policies in plan making, which set out the overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places, making sufficient provision for:

- “a) housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;
- b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);

- c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
- d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.”

2.16 The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) [\[See reference 23\]](#) provides guidance for how the Government’s planning policies for England are expected to be applied. Sitting alongside the NPPF, it provides an online resource that is updated on a regular basis for the benefit of planning practitioners.

2.17 The overarching nature of the NPPF means that its implications for the SA relate to multiple topics which this report seeks to address. Considering the importance of the NPPF to the English planning system, the relevance of the Framework and its implications for the plan making process and the SA is provided in more detail below. Sustainability topics are separated into environmental, social and economic below, but consideration of issues often cuts across topics. The summary provided below is not absolutely comprehensive and the NPPF is intended to be read and applied as a whole during plan making.

Environmental and Social Considerations

2.18 Climate change adaption and mitigation, energy efficiency and waste minimisation measures for new development including through the promotion of renewable energy schemes are also supported through the NPPF. One of the core planning principles is to “support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure”. Furthermore, local planning authorities should adopt a proactive

approach to mitigate and adapt to climate change, taking full account of flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures.

2.19 The SA can consider the contribution the alternatives make in terms of contribution to climate change mitigation as well as climate change adaptation.

2.20 In relation to health and wellbeing, healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social integration, are safe and accessible, and enable and support healthy lifestyles are supported through the Framework. The Building for a Healthy Life design toolkit [\[See reference 24\]](#) can be used by local authorities to assist in the creation of places that are better for people and nature.

2.21 One of the core planning principles is to “take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community”. It is identified in the document that “a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation is important for the health and well-being of communities”. Furthermore, the retention and enhancement of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports, cultural venues and places of worship is supported. Importantly, Local Plans should also “contain policies to optimise the use of land in their area and meet as much of the identified need for housing as possible”. Additionally, larger scale developments such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns are required by the NPPF to be guided by policies set within a vision that looks at least 30 years ahead [\[See reference 25\]](#). The need for policies to be reflective of this longer time period is to take account of the likely timescale for delivery.

2.22 The delivery of new housing is considered to support local communities by meeting housing needs and addressing shortages. The new Lichfield Local Plan can have a significant influence on addressing inequalities including those relating to health and will need to consider the appropriate siting of new development, particularly large development sites that are likely to include new service and facility provisions. The Local Plan can ensure that new development is located in areas which can improve accessibility for existing as

well as new residents and ensure that future development does not exacerbate existing inequalities. The SA process can support the identification and refinement of options that can contribute to reducing inequalities and support the development of policy approaches that cumulatively improve the wellbeing of local communities.

2.23 The NPPF sets out the approach Local Plans should have in relation to biodiversity and states that Plans should “identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation”. Plans should also promote conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats and species, ecological networks and measurable net gains for biodiversity. A strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure is to be supported through planning policies.

2.24 The Lichfield Local Plan should seek to maximise any opportunities arising for local economies, communities and health as well as biodiversity. This should be inclusive of approaches which are supportive of enhancing the connectivity of green infrastructure and promoting the achievement of biodiversity net gain. The SA process should support the identification and maximisation of potential benefits through the consideration of alternatives and assessment of both negative and positive significant effects.

2.25 In relation to landscape, the NPPF sets the planning principles of recognising the intrinsic beauty and character of the countryside as well as protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. Reference is included with regards to this purpose at National Parks, The Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

2.26 The Local Plan should be supportive of an approach to development which would protect the landscape character of Lichfield District and its surrounds. Where appropriate it should also seek to protect the identity of the Lichfield’

settlements. The SA should identify those alternatives which contribute positively to landscape and townscape character.

2.27 The NPPF states that in relation to the historic environment plans should “set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats”. Where appropriate, plans should seek to sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets and local character and distinctiveness, while viable uses of assets should be considered. Plans should take into account the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring. They should also consider the contribution the historic environment can make to the character of a place.

2.28 Although Local Plans can no longer require levels of the Code for Sustainable Homes, they can promote the Home Quality Mark to support residents in understanding the quality and performance of new build homes and can also set targets for developers to provide for a given percentage of energy used by a new development to come from on-site renewable or low carbon technologies. Revisions were made to the Building Regulations 2022 [\[See reference 26\]](#), setting minimum energy efficiency standards which are increasing the performance values of properties. From 15th June 2022, all new build homes are required to produce at least 31% less carbon emissions. Local Plan policies can further support the development of renewable energy technologies where appropriate, in line with climate change mitigation strategies and targets. The UK Green Building Council has produced a resource pack which is designed to help local authorities improve the sustainability of new homes. The New Homes Policy Playbook [\[See reference 27\]](#) sets out minimum requirements for sustainability in new homes that local authorities should introduce, as well as proposed stretching requirements should local authorities wish to go further. For non-residential uses BREEAM assessments can be used by local authorities to ensure buildings meet sustainability objectives.

2.29 The NPPF states that new and existing development should be prevented from contributing to, being put at an unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, pollutions including water pollution and air quality. Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided. Plans should take a

proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account implications for water supply. Furthermore, strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision of infrastructure for water supply and wastewater.

2.30 The new Lichfield Local Plan presents an opportunity to consider incorporating targets for water efficiency and the level of water consumption and grey water recycling in any new development. The Local Plan also can ensure that development is sited away from areas of high flood probability and that appropriate water drainage is in place in line with flood risk strategies. The SA process should seek to identify and address potential negative effects on the water environment, including implications relating to wastewater.

2.31 The NPPF states that the planning system should protect and enhance soils in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or quality, while also encouraging the reuse of previously developed land.

2.32 The new Local Plan can seek to ensure the appropriate protection of soil quality, including best and most versatile agricultural land. Further to this the Local Plan should ensure that new development does not conflict with current mineral operations, as well as long-term mineral resource plans. The SA process should inform the development of the new Local Plan by helping to identify alternatives which would avoid areas of highest soil quality and best and most versatile agricultural land (in so far as this is relevant to Lichfield District), as well as those which would promote the use of brownfield land.

2.33 The new Local Plan can offer enhanced protection for designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings, including any potential archaeological finds in line with heritage protection and enhancement plans. The SA has a role to play by identifying which alternatives could offer opportunities to secure the protection and enhancement of assets as well as those which might have significant impacts in terms of their appropriate use and setting.

Economic Considerations

2.34 The Framework sets out that in terms of economic growth the role of the planning system is to contribute towards building a “strong, responsive and competitive economy” by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation. There is also a requirement for the planning system to identify and coordinate the provision of infrastructure. Furthermore, planning policies should address the specific locational requirements of different sectors.

2.35 Local planning authorities should incorporate planning policies which “support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation”. Local Plans are required to “set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration”.

2.36 The new Local Plan should seek to maximise the potential benefits of nearby strategic growth, whilst at the same time ensuring the vitality and viability of smaller localised economies. Ensuring that services and facilities within the district’s centres are maintained and enhanced is also important and will also provide support for local communities. The SA process can support the development of the new Local Plan to ensure that its policies are considerate of impacts on the economy in Lichfield. The process can also be used to demonstrate that impacts on the viability of Lichfield city centre and other local centres have been considered.

2.37 The NPPF encourages local planning authorities to consider transport issues from the earliest stages of plan making so that: opportunities to promote sustainable transport are identified and pursued; the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified and assessed; and opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure and changing transport technology and usage are realised. The framework also states that the

planning system should actively manage growth patterns in support of these objectives.

2.38 Growth will inevitably increase traffic on the roads which also has implications for air quality, and the new Local Plan and SA process can seek to minimise effects of this nature through appropriately siting new development, identifying where mitigation may be needed and requiring the necessary transport provisions and contributions from new development. The Local Plan, as supported by the SA, should seek to identify opportunities to maximise the potential for alternative modes of transport to the car and reduce the need to travel, therefore reducing emissions, through the consideration of alternatives and assessment of significant effects. This includes potential opportunities that may arise as a result of the delivery of new infrastructure.

Other National Policies, Plans and Programmes

2.39 Numerous other policies, plans and programmes (PPPs) at a national level are of relevance to the preparation of the Lichfield Local Plan and the SA. Unlike the NPPF, most of the documents are focussed on a specific topic area which the SA will consider. There will be some overlap between SA topics covered by these plans and programmes where those documents contain more overarching objectives. However, the plans and programmes considered of most relevance to the SA have been grouped by the topics they most directly seek to address, and the sections below each topic heading summarise the implications of the national PPPs for the Local Plan and the SA.

Climate Change Adaption and Mitigation, Energy Efficiency and Waste Minimisation

2.40 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

Chapter 2 Relevant Plans and Programmes

- Carbon Budget Delivery Plan (2023)
- Powering up Britain (2023)
- The Environment Improvement Plan (2023)
- British Energy Security Strategy (2022)
- UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (2022)
- The Environment Act (2021)
- The Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (2021)
- The Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy (2021)
- The Heat and Buildings Strategy (2021)
- The UK Hydrogen Strategy (2021)
- Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations (2021)
- National Infrastructure Strategy: Fairer, faster greener (2020)
- The Energy White Paper: Powering our net zero future (2020)
- Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge (2020)
- Sixth Carbon Budget (Climate Change Committee, 2020)
- Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management: Policy Statement (2020)
- The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (2020)
- The Waste (Circular Economy) (Amendment) Regulations (2020)
- Net Zero – The UK’s contribution to stopping global warming (2019)
- The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and The Flood and Water Regulations (2019)
- Climate Change Act (2008) and Climate Change Act 2009 (2050 Target Amendment) Order (2019)

- The National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting: Making the country resilient to a changing climate (2018)
- Our Waste, Our Resources: A strategy for England (2018)
- The Clean Growth Strategy (2017)
- National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW) (2014)
- Waste Management Plan for England (2013)
- The Energy Efficiency Strategy: The Energy Efficiency Opportunity in the UK (2012)
- The Promotion of the Use of Energy from Renewable Sources Regulations (2011)
- The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan: National Strategy for Climate and Energy (2009)
- The UK Renewable Energy Strategy (2009)
- Planning and Energy Act (2008)

Implications for the Local Plan and SA

2.41 The Local Plan should consider setting out policies to achieve climate change and adaptation while also encouraging development which would help to minimise carbon emissions.

2.42 The Local Plan should help to ensure that new development is energy efficient and promotes the use of sustainable construction methods and materials, as well as reduce their carbon emissions. In addition, the Local Plan should seek to allocate development in areas where sustainable transport patterns can be best achieved and encourage development to make use of more sustainable sources of energy, potentially through the delivery of renewable energy development. The Local Plan should also ensure that risk from all sources of flooding as a result of climate change is managed effectively

and should ensure that development is resilient to future flooding. This could include the Local Plan setting out approaches to encourage the appropriate use of SuDS to minimise flood risk. The Local Plan should also consider the handling of waste in line with the waste hierarchy.

2.43 The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to the mitigation of climate change and adaptation to climate change, sustainable construction, flooding and sustainable transport.

Health and Well-being

2.44 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Green Infrastructure Framework (2023)
- White Paper Levelling Up the United Kingdom (2022)
- A fairer private rented sector White Paper (2022)
- National Design Guide (2021)
- The Environment Act (2021)
- The State of the Environment: Health, People and the Environment (2021)
- Build Back Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care (2021)
- COVID-19 Mental Health and Wellbeing Recovery Action Plan (2021)
- Using the planning system to promote healthy weight environments (2020)
Addendum (2021)
- The Charter for Social Housing Residents: Social Housing White Paper (2020)
- Public Health England, PHE Strategy (2020-25)
- Homes England Strategic Plan (2018 to 2023)
- The Housing White Paper 2017: Fixing our broken housing market
- Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2015)

- Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)
- Select Committee on Public Service and Demographic Change Report Ready for Ageing? (2013)
- Laying the foundations: housing strategy for England (2011)
- Fair Society, Healthy Lives (2010)
- Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health in England (2010)
- Environmental Noise Regulations (2006)

Implications for the Local Plan and SA

2.45 The Local Plan needs to consider the requirements for infrastructure as this has the potential to have a significant impact on the environment, and it should be prepared to ensure that the population has access to sustainable low carbon infrastructure and services and facilities and that there is sufficient capacity within them to serve the increased population. This should include healthcare, education and open space.

2.46 Local Plans offer the opportunity to maximise the well-being benefits of well designed local green spaces. The Local Plan should help to ensure that the provision of open space and green infrastructure is of sufficient quantity and quality to meet the needs of the Plan area, encourage healthy and active lifestyles, creates fair, safe and inclusive communities, and improves the sustainable transport network including active travel networks within the Plan area.

2.47 The provision of an appropriate level of housing over the plan period will help address issues of disparity in terms of access to decent housing in the plan area. The provision of new housing should be considerate of local needs with regards to housing size, tenure and type, including the needs of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople.

2.48 The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to health and wellbeing, social inclusion, and sustainable transport.

Environment (biodiversity/geodiversity, landscape and soils)

2.49 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- The Environment Improvement Plan (2023)
- Working with Nature (2022)
- Establishing the Best Available Techniques for the UK (UK BAT) (2022)
- The Environment Act (2021)
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations (2019)
- Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) Regulations (2015)
- Biodiversity offsetting in England Green Paper (2013)
- Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (2011)
- Defra right of way circular (01/09) (2011)
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2010)
- Safeguarding our Soils – A Strategy for England (2009)
- England Biodiversity Strategy Climate Change Adaptation Principles (2008)
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)
- Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)
- National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949)

Implications for the Local Plan and SA

2.50 The Local Plan should be prepared to limit the potential for adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity as well as important landscapes (including those that are designated) and higher value soils. The Local Plan should help to ensure that ecological features and biodiversity are managed, protected and enhanced and that opportunities for habitat restoration or creation are encouraged. The Local Plan should also help to ensure that environmental pollution is minimised in order to protect land and soils and ensure the efficient extraction of minerals. The Local Plan should also help to ensure that designated and valued landscapes are protected and enhanced, and that development should be sympathetic to local character and history including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

2.51 The plan should also take into account non-designated landscapes identified as particularly sensitive to development and non-designated habitats which form part of wider ecological network. The Local Plan also presents opportunities to promote the achievement of net gain in biodiversity.

2.52 In terms of the location of development, the Local Plan can encourage the re-use of brownfield land and protect more valuable agricultural soils from development, in so far as this is relevant to Lichfield District. The allocation of new sites for development and updated planning policy can also be used to achieve better habitat connectivity through the provision of new green infrastructure and the requirement for biodiversity net gain.

2.53 The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, character of landscapes and townscapes, green infrastructure and contaminated land.

Historic Environment

2.54 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Historic England Corporate Plan (2022-23)
- Heritage Statement (2017)
- Sustainability Appraisal and Strategy Environmental Assessment: Historic England Advice Note 8 (2016)
- Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England (2010)
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979)
- Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act (1953)

Implications for the Local Plan and SA

2.55 The potential impact of new development on the historic environment, including local character as well as designated and non-designated heritage assets and their respective settings, should also inform the preparation of the Local Plan. The Local Plan should set out a positive strategy for conserving, enhancing and enjoying heritage assets and their settings, including wider historic townscapes and landscapes. The Local Plan can help to realise the wider benefits of historic environment enhancements which include contributions to well-being and addressing the climate and biodiversity emergencies. Particular regard may be given to protecting heritage assets which have been identified as being 'at risk' (both at the national and local levels). Local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in their Local Plans to address these issues and site options should be considered with regard to the potential for related issues.

2.56 The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to the historic environment and the character of landscapes and townscapes.

Water and Air

2.57 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Environment Act (2021)
- National Chalk Streams Strategy Chalk Stream Strategy (2021)
- Meeting our future water needs: a national framework for water resources (2020)
- Clean Air Strategy (2019)
- Environmental Noise Regulations (2018)
- Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2018
- Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations (2017)
- UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations (2017)
- Drought response: our framework for England (Environment Agency, 2017)
- Managing Water Abstraction (2016)
- Environmental Permitting Regulations (2016)
- Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations (2015)
- Water White Paper (2012)
- National Policy Statement for Waste Water (2012)
- Air Quality Standards Regulations (2010)
- Flood and Water Management Act (2010)
- Groundwater (England and Wales) Regulations (2009)
- Flood Risk Regulations (2009)
- Future Water: The Government's Water Strategy for England (2008)

- Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (2007)
- Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations (2003)
- Environmental Protection Act (1990)

Implications for the Local Plan and SA

2.58 Local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in their Local Plans to promote the efficient use of water and limit all types of pollution including water and air pollution. They should also seek to limit pressure on the wastewater treatment (WwT) infrastructure and water supply. The allocation of sites for development should take account of areas which are of highest sensitivity in relation to these issues, including Source Protection Zones (SPZs) and Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). To limit the potential for air quality issues to be intensified as development is delivered over the plan period, local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in their Local Plan to factor in the contribution that specific site options can make to achieving modal shift and limiting the need for residents to travel.

2.59 The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to air pollution, water quality and waste management.

Economic Growth

2.60 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- The Growth Plan (2022)
- Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth (2021)
- Agricultural Transition Plan (2021 to 2024)
- Agriculture Act (2020)
- UK Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future (2018)

- LEP Network response to the Industrial Strategy Green Paper Consultation (2017)
- National Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2016-2021)

Implications for the Local Plan and SA

2.61 The Local Plan should allocate land to support the projected level of economic growth required over the plan period. Local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in Local Plan policies to promote sustainable economic and employment growth to benefit all members of the community and to reduce disparity in the plan area. This should include support for the infrastructure required for the economy to function successfully. Employment sites should be located to enable local people to be able to access the new employment opportunities. Local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in their Local Plan to promote the viability of Town Centres as well as Local Centres.

2.62 The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to economic growth and employment.

Transport

2.63 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy Report to Parliament (2022)
- Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain (2021)
- Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge (2020)
- The Road to Zero (2018)
- Transport Investment Strategy (2017)
- Highways England Sustainable Development Strategy and Action Plan (2017)

- Door to Door: A strategy for improving sustainable transport integration (2013)

Implications for the Local Plan and SA

2.64 The potential for reducing the need to travel, limiting congestion and associated benefits for air quality and climate change as well as public health should inform the preparation of the policies for the Local Plan and its site allocations. The Local Plan should also encourage walking and cycling as alternative modes of transport by providing safe and attractive walking and cycling infrastructure, as well as recognise the multiple benefits they bring in terms of physical and mental health, reducing carbon emissions and reducing air pollution. Furthermore, the selection of site options for development should be informed by issues such as the potential for access to new and existing public transport nodes and active transport routes and specific highways capacity issues. The selection of individual site options should also be informed by their proximity to essential services and facilities which is likely to reduce the need for residents to regularly travel long distances.

2.65 The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to the mitigation of climate change, improving air quality, public health and wellbeing, and the provision of sustainable transport.

Sub-National

2.66 Below the national level there are further plans and programmes which are relevant to the Local Plan and the SA process. These plans and programmes sit mostly at the sub-regional and district level.

- West Midlands Plan for Growth
- Reimagining transport in the West Midlands: Local Transport Plan Core Strategy
- West Midlands Five Year Plan 2021-26

Chapter 2 Relevant Plans and Programmes

- Staffordshire County Council's Strategic Plan 2022 to 2026
- Staffordshire and Stoke On Trent Mental Health Strategy
- Staffordshire County Council and Staffordshire Integrated Care Board: All Together for Carers - A Carers Strategy for Staffordshire 2019 – 2023
- Staffordshire Local Transport Plan 2011 - Strategy Plan
- Staffordshire's Bus Service Improvement Plan 2021
- Staffordshire's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2021
- Staffordshire Freight Strategy Plan 2019
- Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (HIAMP) 2022
- Staffordshire Rail Strategy 2016
- Living my Best Life - A Joint Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent people in Staffordshire 2023-2028
- Older peoples Commissioning Strategy 2024
- The Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire (2015-2030)
- Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Waste Local Plan (2010 to 2026)
- Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Staffordshire Adaptation Strategy
- Staffordshire County Council Climate Change Annual Report - 2022/23
- Staffordshire County Council Climate Change - Action Plan 2021-2025
- South Staffs Water Resources Management Plan 2024
- Lichfield District 2050 Strategy
- Lichfield District's Enhanced Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Lichfield District Council 2020 Air Quality Annual Status Report
- Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment.
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2024

- Five Year Housing Land Supply 2024
- Organisational Carbon Reduction Plan
- Open Space Assessment 2024

Implications for the Local Plan

2.67 The new Local Plan needs to consider the above sub national plans and evidence for the West Midlands and Lichfield District.

2.68 The Local Plan should support the aim to transition towards net zero and support adaptation to climate change. The Local Plan should meet the commitments that Lichfield District Council made to reduce its own emissions following the declaration of a climate emergency in 2019.

2.69 The Local Plan offers the opportunity to maximise the well-being benefits of well-designed open spaces and areas for recreation. The Local Plan should help to ensure that the provision of open space and areas of recreation is of sufficient quantity and quality to meet the needs of the plan area, encouraging healthy and active lifestyles. The Local Plan should also consider opportunities for biodiversity enhancement within open spaces and across Lichfield District.

2.70 The provision of an appropriate level of housing will help address issues of inequality in relation to housing in the plan area and support economic growth. The provision of new housing should be considerate of local needs, including the needs of Travellers. The new Local Plan should support economic growth within Lichfield District, including supporting the rural economy and infrastructure requirements.

2.71 The Local Plan should encourage the use sustainable forms of transport such as walking and cycling and public transport. The Local Plan should also support the infrastructure requirements to enhance and decarbonise transport within Lichfield District. Transport plans for the West Midlands and the

Staffordshire authorities have been produced and should be taken into consideration.

Surrounding Development Plans

2.72 Development in Lichfield District will not be delivered in isolation from those areas around it. Given the interconnection between Lichfield District and the surrounding areas there is potential for cross-boundary and in-combination effects where development is proposed through development plans in neighbouring authorities. As such, a summary of the plans for the following local authority areas which surround Lichfield District is also provided in **Appendix A**:

- Birmingham City Council
- Cannock Chase District Council
- East Staffordshire Borough Council
- Stafford Borough Council
- North Warwickshire Borough Council
- North West Leicestershire District Council
- South Derbyshire District Council
- Tamworth Borough Council
- Walsall Borough Council

2.73 As the SA progresses, consideration will be given to the extent to which the content of these other plans could lead to in-combination effects with the Lichfield Local Plan, for example as a result of any large-scale new development being proposed in close proximity across the borough boundaries.

Neighbourhood Plans

2.74 Neighbourhood Plans, once adopted, form part of the development plan for a local authority area. There are thirteen 'made' (adopted) Neighbourhood Plans within Lichfield District, the objectives of which have been summarised in **Appendix A:**

- Alrewas Neighbourhood Plan (2018)
- Armitage with Handsacre Neighbourhood Plan (2018)
- Burntwood Neighbourhood Plan (2021)
- Elford Neighbourhood Plan (2019)
- Fradley Neighbourhood Plan (2019)
- Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan (2021)
- Lichfield City Neighbourhood Plan (2018)
- Little Aston Neighbourhood Plan (2016)
- Longdon Neighbourhood Plan (2018)
- Shenstone Neighbourhood Plan (2016)
- Stonnall Neighbourhood Plan (2016)
- Whittington and Fisherwick Neighbourhood Plan (2018)
- Wigginton, Hopwas and Comberford Neighbourhood Plan (2016)

2.75 In addition, six Neighbourhood Plan areas have been designated. The neighbourhood planning groups in each of these areas are currently working on developing a Neighbourhood Plan.

- Colton Neighbourhood Plan area (designated in 2016);
- Fazeley Neighbourhood Plan area (designated in 2018);
- Kings Bromley Neighbourhood Plan area (designated in 2019);
- Mavesyn Ridware Neighbourhood Plan area (designated in 2019);

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- Streethay Neighbourhood Plan area (designated in 2014);
- Wall Neighbourhood Plan area (designated in 2014).

Chapter 3

Baseline Information

3.1 Baseline information provides the basis for predicting and monitoring the likely sustainability effects of a plan and helps to identify key sustainability issues and means of dealing with them.

3.2 Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations requires information to be provided on:

- the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment;
- the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;
- any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 2009/147/EC [the 'Birds Directive'] and 92/43/EEC [the 'Habitats Directive'].

3.3 This section presents the relevant baseline information for Lichfield District. Data referred to have been chosen primarily for regularity and consistency of collection, to enable trends in the baseline situation to be established, and also to enable subsequent monitoring of potential sustainability effects.

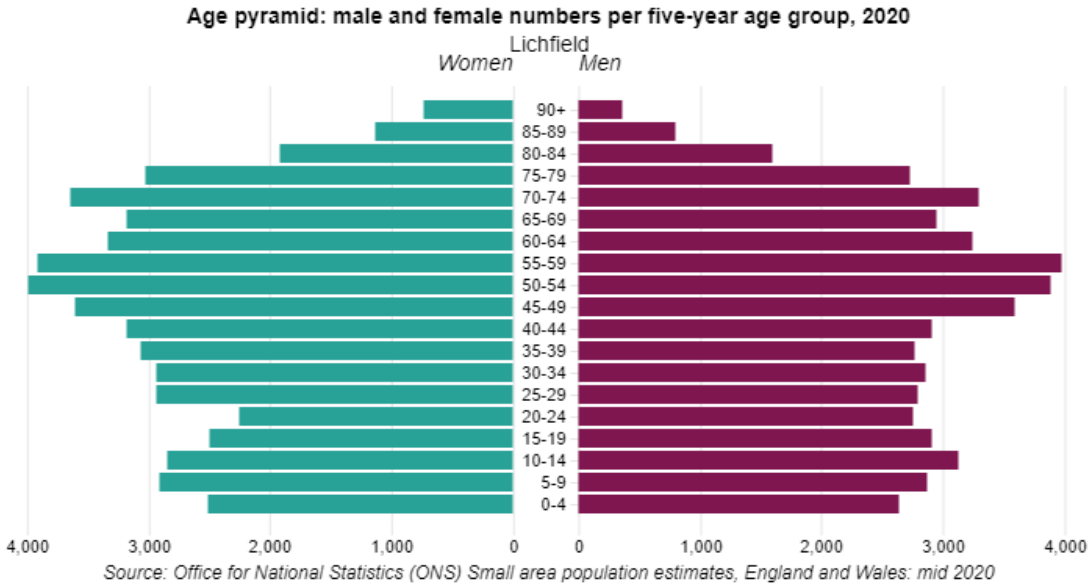
Population, Health and Wellbeing

Population

3.4 The population of Lichfield District was 106,900 in 2021, reflecting a 5.7% increase from 100,700 in 2011 [See reference 28]. This is lower than the overall increase for England (6.6%), and the West Midlands (8.9%). Regionally the largest population increase was in Rugby (14.3%) and the lowest in Herefordshire (2%) [See reference 29]. Lichfield has a population density of 3.2 people per hectare. There are 45,630 households in Lichfield [See reference 30].

3.5 The population of Lichfield is ageing, with the highest proportion of people being between the ages of 50-59, with a comparatively low amount of young people as illustrated by Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Age pyramid for Lichfield (2020) [See reference 31]



3.6 According to the 2021 Census, the largest ethnic group in Lichfield is White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British, with 94.8% of residents identifying as such. This represents a 2% decrease from 2011. In 2021, 2.3% of Lichfield residents identified as ‘Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh’, which is a 0.7% increase from 2011. In 2021, 1.9% of Lichfield residents identified their ethnic group within the "Mixed or Multiple" category, up from 1.0% in 2011. This 0.8% change was the largest increase among high-level ethnic groups in this area. **Table 3.1** below shows the breakdown of Lichfield’s population by ethnic group.

Table 3.1: Lichfield population by ethnic group (2021) [See reference 32]

Ethnic group	% of population
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	2.3
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	0.6
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	1.9
White	94.8
Other ethnic groups	0.4

3.7 In Lichfield, the percentage of households including a couple with dependent children fell from 21.5% in 2011 to 19.5% in 2021. The percentage of households including a couple without children in Lichfield fell from 21.4% to 18.4%, while the percentage of households including a couple with only non-dependent children decreased from 7.8% to 7.4%.

3.8 The population in Lichfield District is spread across 22 wards. Armitage with Handsacre has the highest population of the 22 wards, with 8,016 residents. Whittington & Streethay displays the highest population increase between 2011 and 2021, with an increase of 2,033 people. **Table 3.2** below presents the population change between 2011 and 2021 by ward in Lichfield District. [See reference 33].

Table 3.2: Estimated populations by ward in Lichfield District for 2011 and 2021

Ward	Population in 2011	Population in 2021	Population Change
Armitage with Handsacre	6,498	8,016	1,518
Leomansley	6,819	7,276	457
Whittington & Streethay	5,112	7,145	2,033
Alrewas & Fradley	5,947	6,716	769
Stowe	6,140	6,634	494
Boney Hay & Central	6,481	6,344	-137
Summerfield & All Saints	6,292	6,234	-58
St John's	5,824	5,924	100
Chasetown	3,832	4,964	1,132
Little Aston & Stonnall	4,757	4,907	150
Chase Terrace	4,808	4,665	-143
Chadsmead	4,651	4,621	-30
Fazeley	4,530	4,615	85
Highfield	4,636	4,512	-124
Curborough	4,445	4,273	-172
Hammerwich with Wall	4,251	4,200	-51
Boley Park	4,340	3,852	488
Bourne Vale	2,995	3,006	11

Ward	Population in 2011	Population in 2021	Population Change
Colton & the Ridwares	2,112	2,294	182
Shenstone	2,220	2,195	-25
Longdon	2,026	2,023	-3
Mease Valley	1,938	2,019	81

Housing

3.9 The median house price in Lichfield District as of 2023 is £299,998, reflecting an increase of 67% over the last 10 years. This price makes homes in Lichfield less affordable compared to the West Midlands, where the median house price is £237,500, and to England and Wales, where the median is £285,000 [See reference 34]. Lichfield’s median property price-to-earnings ratio is 7.35, higher than regionally (7.1), though lower than nationally (8) [See reference 35].

3.10 In 2021, 12.7% of Lichfield households rented privately, up from 9.5% in 2011. Meanwhile, 13.0% lived in socially rented housing, slightly down from 13.2% in 2011. Homeownership (outright or with a mortgage) fell from 75.6% to 73.3%. Lichfield had the region’s joint third lowest percentage of privately rented homes, alongside Staffordshire Moorlands, with only South Staffordshire and Bromsgrove having lower percentages (10.6% each) [See reference 36].

3.11 The Lichfield District Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) [See reference 37] provides evidence on the potential supply of housing across Lichfield District and will form a key component of the evidence base that will inform the preparation of the new Local Plan. The 2015 Local Plan Strategy, as referenced in the SHLAA, aimed to deliver at least 10,030 dwellings between 2008 and 2029, including 1,000 homes for neighbouring authorities Cannock Chase and Tamworth (500 homes each). This resulted in an annual requirement of 478 dwellings, with 430 needed to meet Lichfield

District need. However, since the adoption of the Local Plan Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) introduced a standard method for calculating Local Housing Need (LHN). At April 2024 Lichfield District’s LHN is calculated at 289 dwellings per annum. This updated figure will be reflected in the upcoming Local Plan, ensuring that housing targets align with current national guidelines and local needs.

3.12 The 2015 Local Plan Strategy includes a windfall allowance of 55 dwellings per year, reflecting a cautious but robust estimate, as an average of 52.1 windfall homes have been delivered annually since the plan's inception.

3.13 During the period of 2022/2023, 756 dwellings were completed, surpassing the annual requirement of 430 dwellings by 343 units. **Table 3.3** illustrates the housing completion trends over the past 10 years, showing consistent delivery rates that surpass the annual requirement of 478 dwellings, indicating that housing completions may continue to exceed the annual requirement.

Table 3.3: Five-year housing supply trajectory housing completions (2013-2024) [See reference 38]

Year	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
Past completions (Gross)	329	231	204	394	577	766	625	556	745	773	736
Annual Demolitions & Conversions Away	5	5	4	72	25	26	44	8	2	17	20
Total net dwellings	324	226	200	322	552	740	581	548	743	756	727
Total cumulative net dwellings	1,455	1,681	1,881	2,203	2,755	3,495	4,076	4,624	5,367	6,123	6,850

3.14 With regard to affordable housing, between 2023/24, of the 727 net completions, 211 of those were affordable. There are a further 1161 affordable dwellings which are committed within the district which could be completed over the next 5 years.

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

3.15 During the 2021 Census, 0.07% of the people of Lichfield District described themselves as White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller and White: Roma.

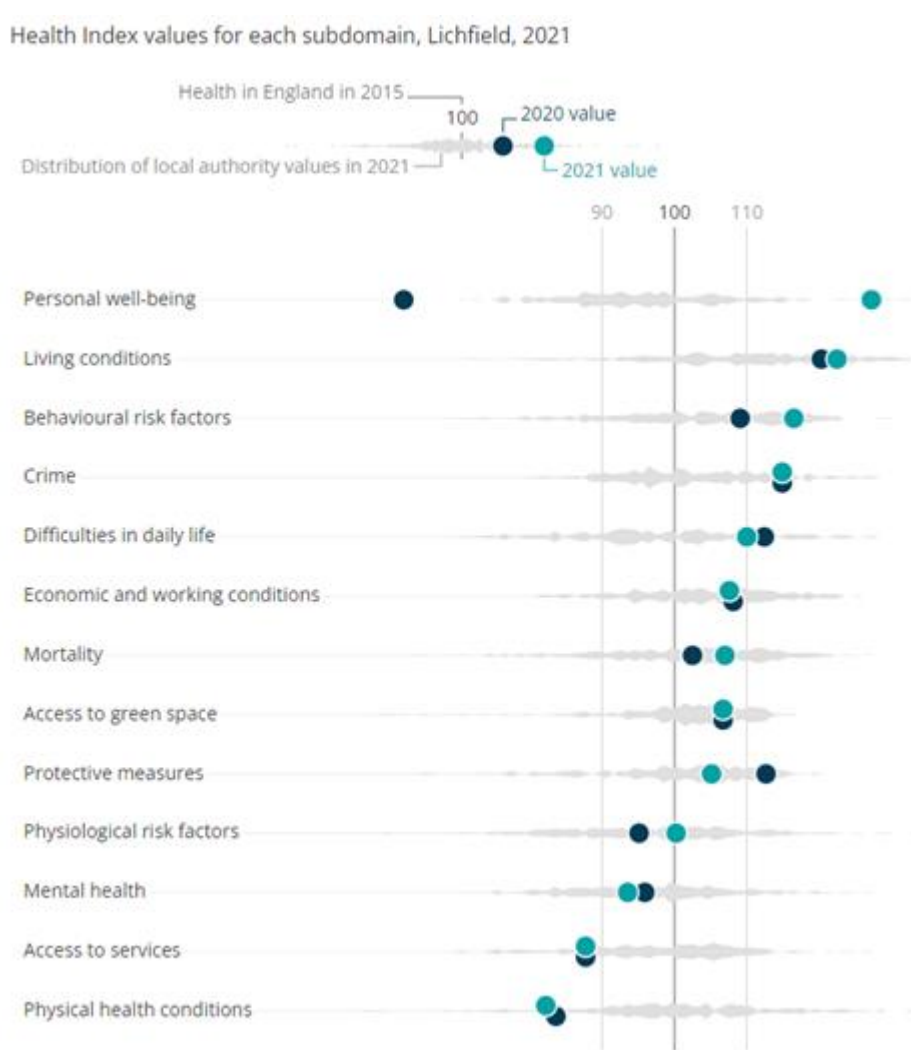
3.16 A Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) for Lichfield and Tamworth was completed in 2012 to provide information and data regarding the needs and requirements of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling, between the period 2012-2028 [See reference 39]. The study identified a residential need for 14 Gypsy and Traveller pitches over the period 2012-2028 and 5 transit pitches. Between 2008 and 2024, 14 additional pitches have been delivered. It is noted that this will need to be updated to help inform the new Local Plan with an accurate assessment of accommodation need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople in the district. A GTAA for the withdrawn local plan was produced in 2019. This identified a minimum need of 7 residential pitches by 2040, with 4 being required to be delivered by 2024. The study concluded that there was no requirement to deliver additional transit pitch provision to 2040.

Health

3.17 The Health Index for England is a new measure of the health of the nation. It uses a broad definition of health to provide a single value for the health of each local authority area that can be broken down into various measures within three broad domains: health outcomes; health-related behaviours and personal circumstances; and wider drivers of health that relate to the places where people live. Lichfield has an overall Health Index of 113.4 which is up 8.3 points compared with the previous year. Lichfield is ranked roughly in the top 20% of

local authority areas in England for health in 2021 [See reference 40]. As presented in **Figure 3.2**, health in Lichfield is strongest for measures relating to the "personal well-being" subdomain, which looks at people's belief that activities in life are worthwhile, feelings of anxiety, happiness, and life satisfaction. Lichfield's worst score is in relation to "physical health conditions".

Figure 3.2: Health Index values for each subdomain in Lichfield (2021) [See reference 41]



3.18 Based on the 2021 Census, 49.3% of Lichfield residents described their health as "very good", signalling an increase from 47.5% in 2011. Those describing their health as "good" fell from 34.5% to 34.3%. In 2021, 6.6% of

Lichfield residents were identified as being "disabled and limited a lot", thereby facing significant restrictions in daily activities and participation due to impairments. This figure decreased from 8.3% in 2011 [\[See reference 42\]](#).

3.19 It should be noted however that the 2021 Census was conducted during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, which may have influenced how people perceived and rated their health, affecting how people chose to respond.

3.20 Life expectancy for males in Lichfield District is 80.5, which is higher than both the regional average (78.7) and national average (79.3). Life expectancy for females in Lichfield District is 84 which is higher than both the regional average (82.6) and national average (83.2) [\[See reference 43\]](#).

3.21 Further to this, Lichfield District's mortality for individuals under 75 years old, stemming from all causes in 2022, was 317.2 per 100,000. This figure is lower than both the regional rate of 367.2 per 100,000 and national rate of 343.3 per 100,000. Additionally, Lichfield District's mortality for individuals under 75 years old, stemming from all circulatory diseases is significantly lower than the national average of 77.8 per 100,000, at 64.1 per 100,000.

3.22 The suicide rate between 2020 and 2022, was 11.6 per 100,000. This figure is lower than both the regional rate of 10.7 per 100,000 and national rate of 10.3 [\[See reference 44\]](#).

Access to services and facilities

3.23 In the Health Index, Lichfield District received a relatively low score of 87.7 compared to other local authorities in the "Access to services" subdomain in 2021. The district scored much higher in the "Access to green spaces" subdomain at 106.7. This is borne out by statistics on the average time taken for Lichfield District residents to reach the nearest key services (employment centres, primary and secondary schools, further education, GPs, hospitals, food stores and town centres) by public transport or on foot. In 2021, the national score for access to services was 100.3, whilst access to green spaces scored

99.9. Lichfield District therefore achieved lower scores than the national average in the ‘Access to services’ subdomain.

Open space, sports and recreation

3.24 Lichfield District Council’s 2024 Open Space Assessment [See reference 45] explored the quality of open spaces in the district. The Assessment notes that the district has 2,882.7 hectares of natural and semi-natural greenspaces, providing 27.7 hectares per 1,000 residents. While access to small woodlands (2+ hectares) within 500 meters is limited, residents have significantly better access to larger woodlands (20+ hectares) within 4 kilometres compared to county and national averages.

3.25 The district contains 278 amenity greenspace sites totalling 213.5 hectares, with quality varying significantly across locations. Although the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) recommends 27.9 hectares of equipped children’s play space, the district currently offers only 0.13 hectares per 1,000 residents. Despite this shortfall, feedback indicates sufficient play space availability, though accessibility issues exist in certain play spaces in Lichfield and Burntwood. The quality of play spaces in Lichfield District is generally good, with recent improvements enhancing the range of play opportunities.

Crime

3.26 The absence of a safe and secure place in which to live can have an extremely negative impact on physical and emotional health and wellbeing.

3.27 Lichfield District has a relatively low crime rate (79 per 1,000 people) compared to the West Midlands’ overall crime rate of 97 per 1,000 people), and England (75.88 per 1,000), as of December 2023 [See reference 46]. The overall crime count between May 2023 and April 2024 was 423. The highest recorded crime count for this period was for violence and sexual offences,

totalling 180 incidents (42.5%). Other crime categories had significantly lower counts, with anti-social behaviour recording 45 incidents (10.6%) and vehicle theft recording 44 incidents (10.4%) recorded [\[See reference 47\]](#).

Education

3.28 16.6% of Lichfield District's population is comprised of students, which is lower than the regional average of 21.3% and national average of 20.4%.

3.29 There are 47 schools within the district, including 6 secondary schools or colleges. Staffordshire University also offers a range of courses from its campus based in Lichfield City.

3.30 Almost half (41%) of Lichfield District's population (aged 16 years and over) have level 1, 2 or 3 qualifications, as their highest level of qualification, 33.6% have level 4 qualifications as their highest level of qualification, 17.1% have no qualifications, and 5.4% have an apprenticeship as their highest level of qualification. In Lichfield District, the percentage of people with Level 4 as their highest qualification is slightly lower compared to the national average of 33.9%, but higher than the regional average 29.4% [\[See reference 48\]](#).

Deprivation

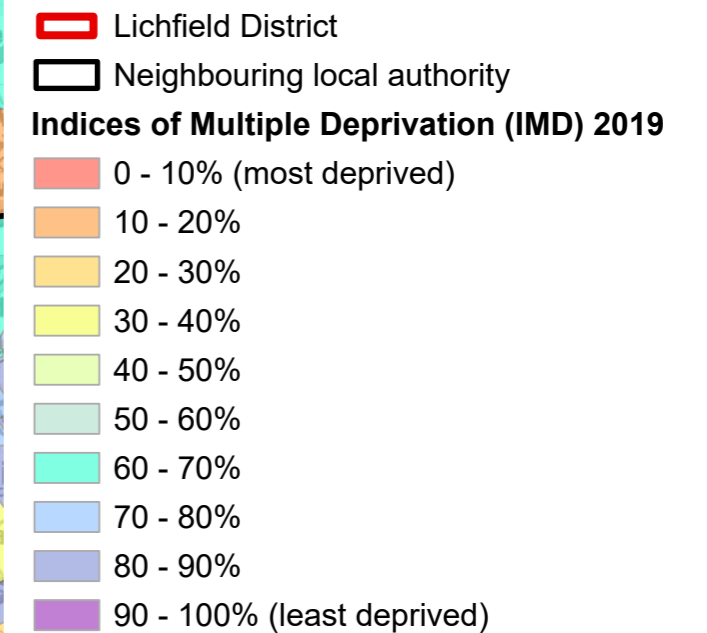
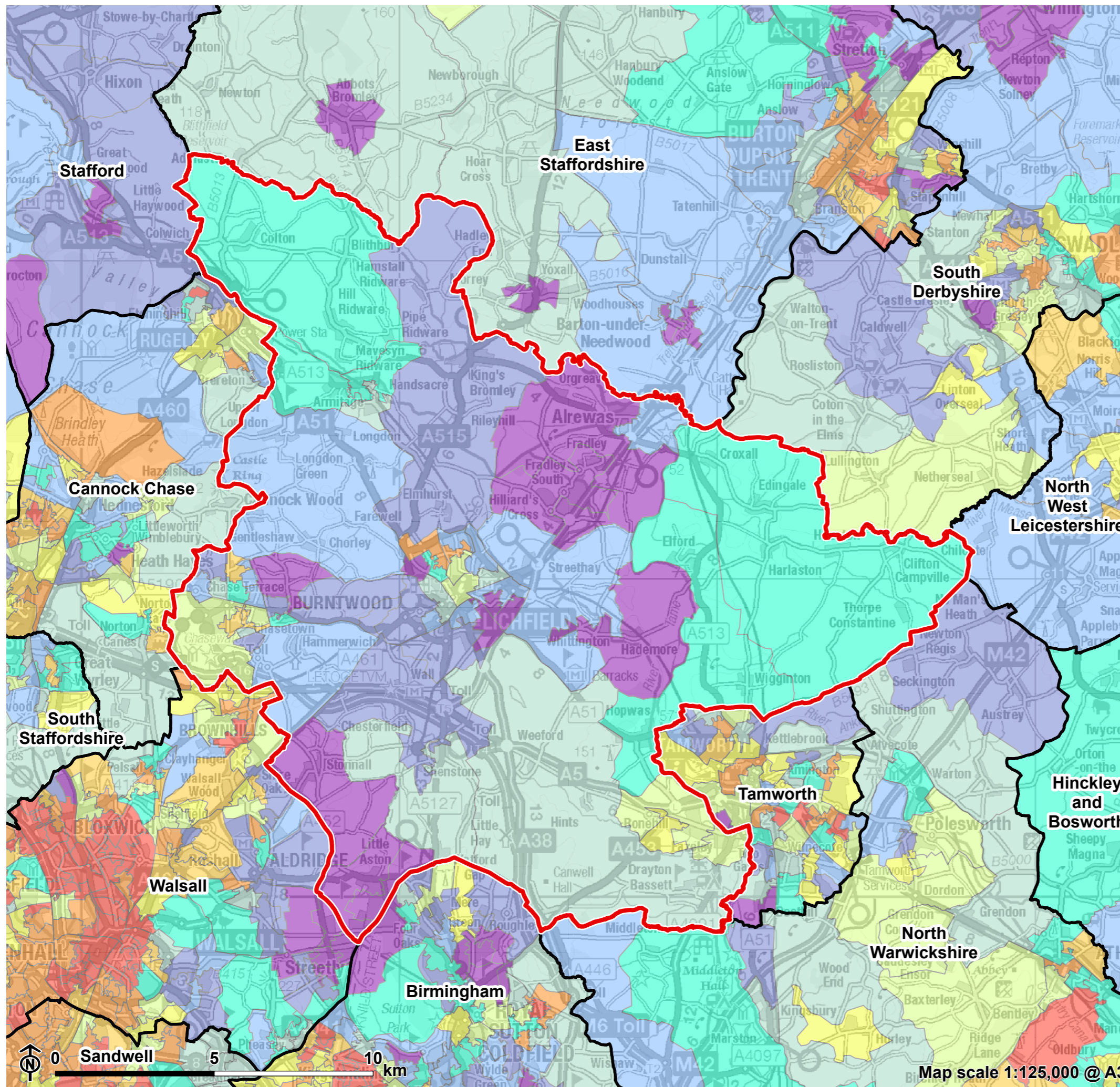
3.31 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) uses Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) to measure deprivation at local authority and county level. The seven distinct domains of deprivation (Income; Employment; Health Deprivation and Disability: Education and Skills Training; Crime: Barriers to Housing and Services: and Living Environment) which when weighted and combined from the IMD 2019 have been mapped for the district (see **Figure 3.3**).

3.32 The 2019 IMD reveals that Lichfield District was the 272nd most deprived local authority area out of 317 local authority areas, which is an increase from

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its rank as 247th in 2015 [See reference 49]. At a District Level with regard to the IMD average rank, Lichfield is within the top 30% least deprived nationally. However, there are pockets of deprivation within Lichfield District. Areas in the wards of Chadsmead and Curborough fall within IMD's 20% most deprived areas nationally.

Figure 3.3: Indices of Multiple Deprivation



Economy and Employment

3.33 In February 2023, Lichfield's economy was projected to be the UK's joint fourth-fastest growing location between 2024 and 2026, with an annual average growth rate of 2.4% driven by strong performances in the Retail and Real Estate sectors [See reference 50]. However, in the February 2024 Regional Economic Forecast, it was noted that the UK experienced a challenging year in 2023 due to high inflation and continued increases in interest rates, with the economy ending the year in a recession. This was reflected in relatively weak performance across the regions and nations of the UK, although the fastest growing region of the UK in 2023 was the West Midlands, achieving Gross Value Added (GVA) growth of just 0.6% benefitting from lagged post-pandemic normalisation in manufacturing, and particularly automotive, supply chains [See reference 51].

3.34 As of December 2023, 85.3% of the population of Lichfield were in employment, 3.6% in unemployment, and 14.7% of the population were economically inactive. The reported figure for those in employment for the West Midlands for the same period was 78.8%, and for England was also 78.8% [See reference 52].

3.35 Lichfield District has a diverse economic profile with several key sectors contributing to local employment. Manufacturing is a significant part of the district's economy, comprising 9.8% of employee jobs. Each of the following sectors – Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles; Transportation and Storage; Administrative and Support Service Activities; and Human Health and Social Work Activities – contributes the largest proportion (11.8%) of employee jobs respectively [See reference 53].

Table 3.4: Employee jobs by industry 2022 [See reference 54]

Employee Jobs by Industry	Lichfield District (%)	West Midlands (%)	Great Britain (%)
Mining and Quarrying	0	0	0.2
Manufacturing	9.8	11.3	7.6
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning	0	0.5	0.4
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	1.0	0.8	0.7
Construction	5.9	4.1	4.9
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	11.8	15.0	14
Transportation and storage	11.8	6.6	5
Accommodation and food service activities	6.9	6.3	8
Information and communication	2.0	2.9	4.6
Financial and insurance activities	1.0	2.5	3.3
Real estate activities	2.5	2.6	1.9
Professional, scientific and technical, activities	6.9	7.4	9.1
Administrative and support service activities	11.8	8.7	9
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	4.4	4.0	4.7
Education	6.9	8.3	8.6

Employee Jobs by Industry	Lichfield District (%)	West Midlands (%)	Great Britain (%)
Human health and social work activities	11.8	14.3	13.5
Arts, entertainment and recreation	3.4	1.9	2.4
Other service activities	2.9	2.7	2.0

3.36 In 2022, 66.7% of total employees were full-time in Lichfield District, and 31.4% were part-time. Full-time employment is lower than the regional average of 68.4%, and national average of 68.8%. The proportion of part-time workers is slightly lower than the regional average of 31.6% and national average of 31.2%.

3.37 In 2023, gross weekly pay in Lichfield District was around £763.00, which is higher than the average for the West Midlands was £651.60, and the national average, £682.60. However, the gross weekly pay for full-time workers based on their place of work within Lichfield District was lower than both the regional and national averages. Specifically, the weekly pay by place of work in Lichfield District was £538.30, compared to £617.50 in the West Midlands and £642.00 nationally [See reference 55]. This highlights a significant number of workers migrating from Lichfield District to higher salaried jobs elsewhere.

3.38 As of 2022, there were 4,885 businesses based in Lichfield. Between 2017 and 2022, the number of businesses decreased by 205, representing a 4% decrease. Significant declines were observed in the Professional, Scientific & Technical sector (-110 businesses), Transportation & Storage (-80 businesses), and Administrative & Support Services (-65 businesses).

3.39 In terms of business start-ups and closures, Lichfield had a strong business survival rate of 59% in 2021. This rate is higher than the regional average of 51% and the national average of 58%, but slightly below the county average of 62% [See reference 56].

3.40 A variety of programs operate across Lichfield District and Staffordshire to support local businesses and promote sustainable job creation. The Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, which includes Lichfield District, provides resources to help businesses grow and innovate, fostering job creation and economic opportunities. The Growth Hub, a notable initiative, has supported over 1,550 small to medium enterprises (SMEs) and unlocked more than £2 million in private sector investment [See reference 57]. Specifically in Lichfield District, a Business Support Hub was opened at the district Council House in 2022, offering space and resources for small businesses. Additionally, significant developments and key projects are underway, such as the Burntwood Town Deal, which aims to enhance Burntwood’s shopping potential, health services, and transport infrastructure [See reference 58].

3.41 In relation to employment space, there is 78 hectares of 'available' employment land within Lichfield District. The Employment Land Availability Assessment (ELAA) 2024 [See reference 59] indicated that there was a sufficient supply of available employment land to meet the requirements set within the Local Plan Strategy (2015).

3.42 Between 2022-2024, a total of 2.8 employment land which provides 6,965m² of employment floorspace was completed. This land is divided between various use classes as indicated in **Table 3.5**. The use classes detailed in **Table 3.5** are E: commercial, business and service; g: light industry; B2: general industrial; and B8: storage and distribution.

Table 3.5: Annual employment land completions 2023-2024 [See reference 60]

Use classes	Total area in hectares (gross/net)	Total floor space (m ²) (gross/net)
B1/Eg, B2, B8	2.8 (gross) 2.8 (net)	6,965 (gross) 6,965 (net)
B1a/Eg (offices)	0.6 (gross and net)	570 (gross and net)

Use classes	Total area in hectares (gross/net)	Total floor space (m ²) (gross/net)
Total	2.86 (gross) 2.8 (net)	7,535 (gross) 6,965 (net)

3.43 There has also been a net increase in employment floor space of approximately 86 hectares of employment development between 2008 and 2024 set against a need of 79.1 hectares required by the adopted Local Plan. Trends indicate that a majority of these developments have been for B2 and B8 uses with a much lower level of developments specifically for offices taking place, as displayed in **Table 3.6**.

Table 3.6: Plan period (2008-2029) employment land completions 2008-2024 [See reference 61]

Use classes	Total area in hectares (gross/net)	Total floor space (m ²) (gross/net)
B1/Eg, B2, B8	104.27 (gross) 83.45 (net)	323,602 (gross) 260,669 (net)
B1a/Eg (offices)	2.87 (gross and net)	16,344 (gross and net)
Total	106.6 (gross) 85.72 (net)	340,176 (gross) 276,443 (net)

3.44 The vacancy rates in Lichfield City Centre have remained relatively stable over the past six years, as presented in **Table 3.7**. As of May 2024, the vacancy rate in Lichfield City Centre was 6.51% and 8.45% in Burntwood Town Centre. This consistency in occupancy rates reflects a certain resilience in the local economy and suggests a steady demand for commercial spaces. However, despite this stability, the current vacancy rate in Lichfield City Centre is still a concern. At 6.51%, it indicates a notable portion of unoccupied commercial properties, which can impact the vibrancy and attractiveness of the area for businesses and consumers alike. Comparatively, the regional vacancy rate in

the West Midlands is higher at 6.5%, highlighting Lichfield's divergence from broader regional trends towards lower vacancy rates [See reference 62]. In contrast, Burntwood Town Centre faces a more pronounced challenge, with a higher vacancy rate of 8.19%, signalling greater economic strain [See reference 63].

Table 3.7: Lichfield District town centre vacancy rates (2017 – 2024)

Months	Vacancy Rate (Lichfield City) (%)	Vacancy Rate (Burntwood Town) (%)
July 2017	6.64	9.23
July 2018	5.55	6.06
March 2019	6.21	4.54
January 2020	4.00	2.94
April 2021	8.00	5.00
March 2022	7.00	6.00
July 2023	6.13	10.14
May 2024	6.51	8.45

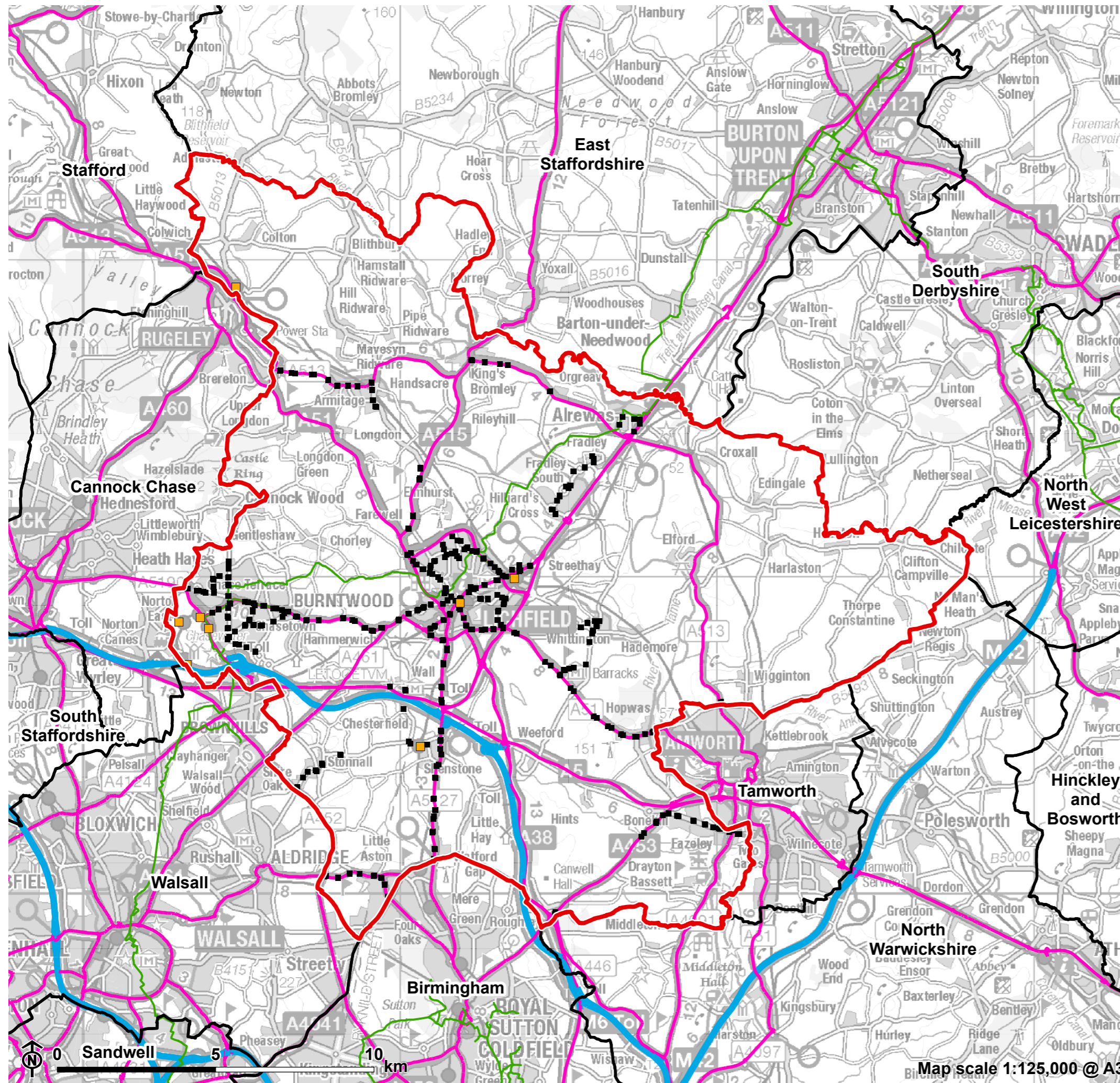
Transport and Accessibility

3.45 Lichfield District has good connectivity to the national transport network, including the M6 Toll, A38 (T), A5148 (T), and A5 (T) passing through its boundaries, as displayed in **Figure 3.4**. These routes are crucial on a national scale, enhancing the district's appeal to employers and supporting economic growth in key employment hubs such as Lichfield City, Burntwood, and Fradley. Moreover, these major routes play an important role in connecting the district's outlying communities to essential local services and products available within Lichfield city centre and Burntwood town centre, as well as neighbouring

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centres like Sutton Coldfield, Tamworth, and Rugeley. Proximity to services and facilities within the district is displayed in **Figure 3.5**.

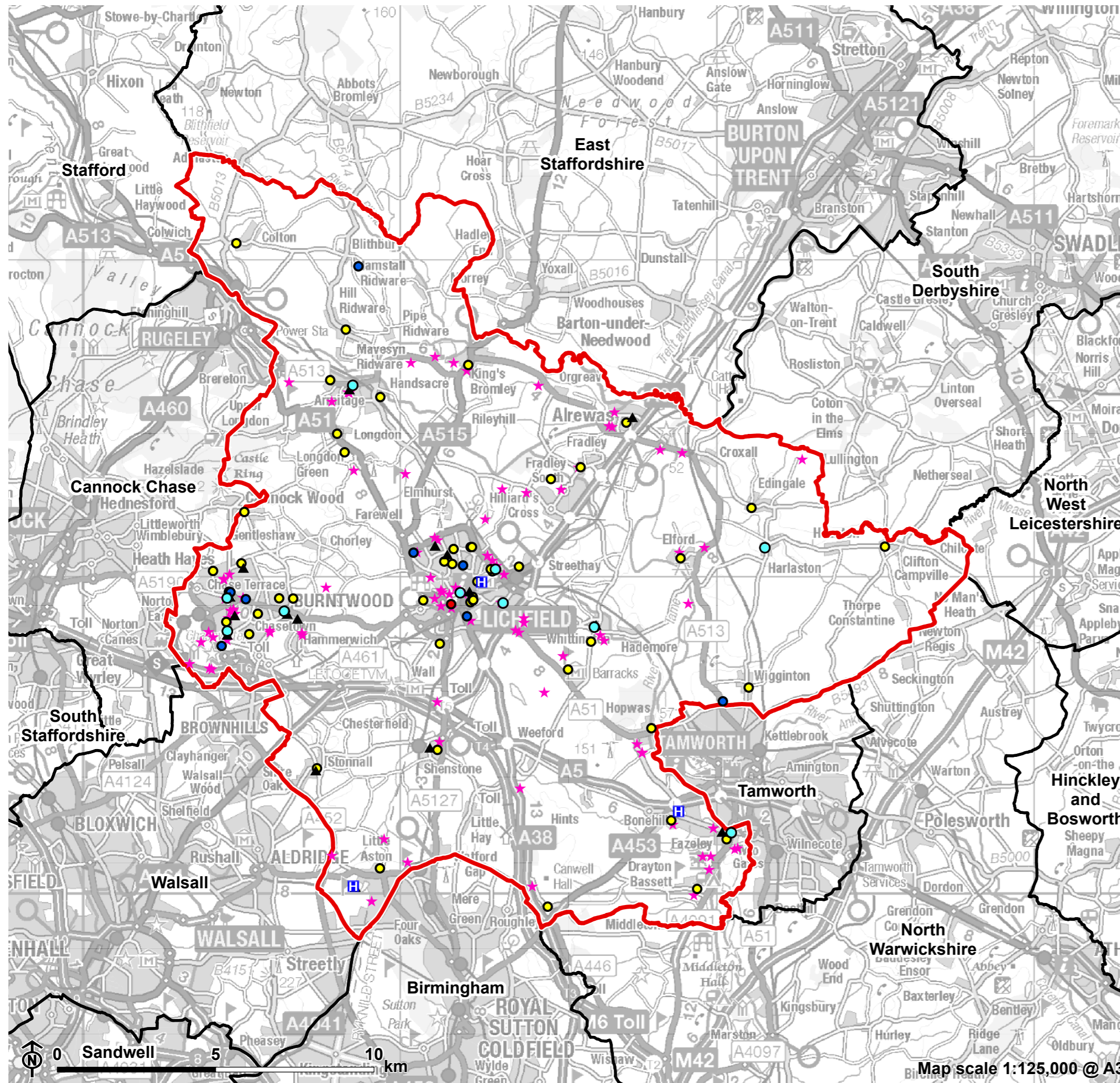
Figure 3.4: Transport Network



- Lichfield District
- Neighbouring local authority
- Bus stop
- Railway station
- National Cycle Network
- Motorway
- A Road



Figure 3.5: Services and Facilities in Lichfield



- Lichfield District
- Neighbouring local authority
- ▲ GP surgery
- Hospital
- Post office
- Primary school
- Secondary school
- College
- ★ Sport facility



Map scale 1:125,000 @ A3

3.46 The HS2, a government-backed scheme to develop a high-speed rail line between Euston and Birmingham, has been partially cancelled. While Phases 2a and 2b of the project have been scrapped, allowing the government to "reinvest" £36 billion in 'Network North' transport projects, Phase 1 will proceed as planned. This phase includes new stations at Old Oak Common, Birmingham Interchange, and Birmingham Curzon Street, along with a link to the existing West Coast Main Line near Lichfield in Staffordshire [\[See reference 64\]](#).

3.47 No recent data is available about the breakdown of all journeys made in Lichfield District in terms of the modes used (this was last recorded in the 2011 Census). However, the travel to work data available is considered to be representative of the situation for trips made in the district. The high rate of commuting to work by car, reflects the more rural nature of the district and the dependency of residents in more rural locations on higher order centres for access to jobs and services and facilities.

3.48 Travel to work data taken from the 2021 Census (**Figure 3.6**) indicates that 1.0% of the resident population of Lichfield District travel to work by bus, which is much lower than the national average of 4.3% and regional average of 4.2%. The commuting figures (**Figure 3.7**) show that 27.2% of the resident population choose to work in the district, with many travelling less than 10km, and there has been a noticeable shift towards working from home during and in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, with 31.6% of the resident population in employment in Lichfield District working mainly from home, much higher than the regional average of 25.7% [\[See reference 65\]](#).

3.49 However, as shown in **Figure 3.7**, 22.7% of the resident population in Lichfield District travel between 10km and 30km to work, significantly higher than the national average of 14.4%. This indicates that many residents commute longer distances for employment. The district's strong connectivity to neighbouring authorities, as illustrated in **Figure 3.8**, facilitates these longer commutes.

Figure 3.6: Method of travel to workplace in Lichfield District
[See reference 66]

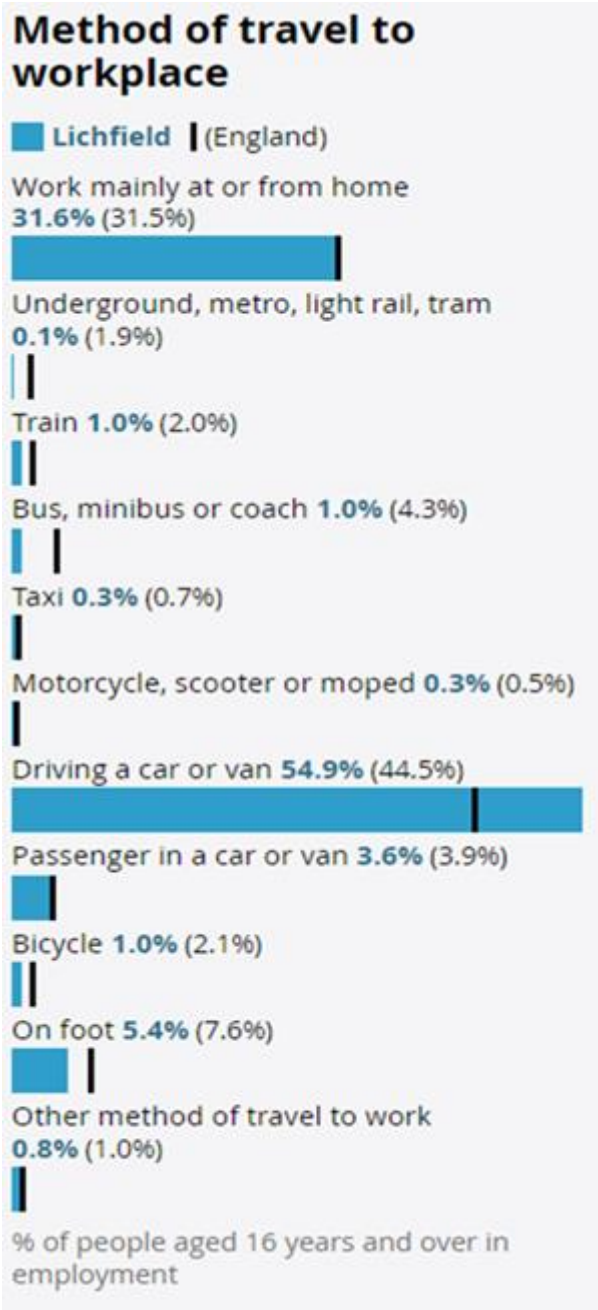
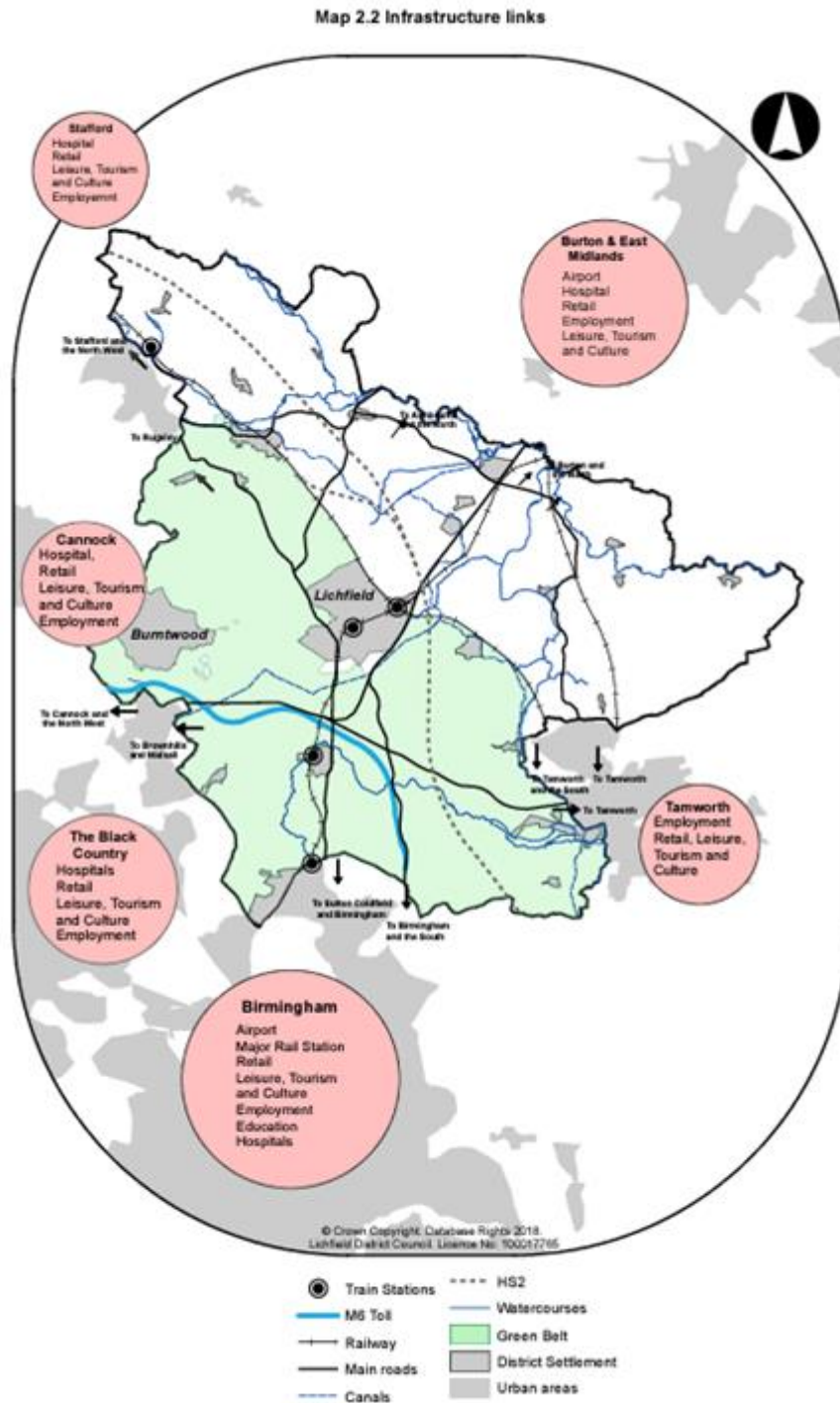


Figure 3.7: Distance travelled to work in Lichfield District [See reference 67]



Figure 3.8: Infrastructure links Lichfield District [See reference 68]



Air, Land and Water

Air Quality

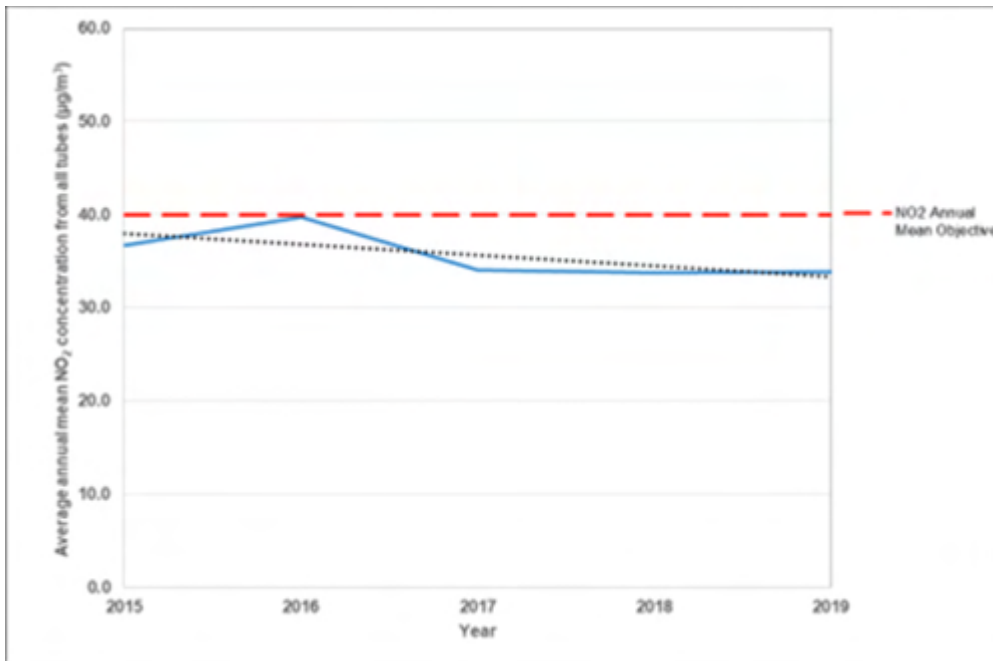
3.50 The most significant source of air pollution is from transport. The main pollutant of concern is nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) which comes from road traffic emissions and monitoring has been conducted to measure concentrations. There are also 23 NO₂ diffusion tubes scattered across the district, the results of which are collected monthly **[See reference 69]**.

3.51 Lichfield District has two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) that were declared due to exceedances of the annual mean NO₂ objective. AQMA No.1 was declared in August 2008 and encompasses the A5 Muckley Corner Roundabout (to the southwest of Lichfield), together with fourteen sensitive receptors (mainly residential dwellings) around this junction.

3.52 AQMA No.2 was declared in August 2016, due to exceedances of the annual mean NO₂ objective at six isolated locations along the A38, from the junction with the A5127 Burton Road on the edge of Lichfield to the district's northern boundary.

3.53 Data based on the last five years from 2019, as presented in **Figure 3.9**, shows that the average annual mean NO₂ concentration calculated from all established 23 diffusion tube sites is below the 40µg/m³ objective, with general downward trend in NO₂ concentrations across the whole Lichfield District over the past five years **[See reference 70]**.

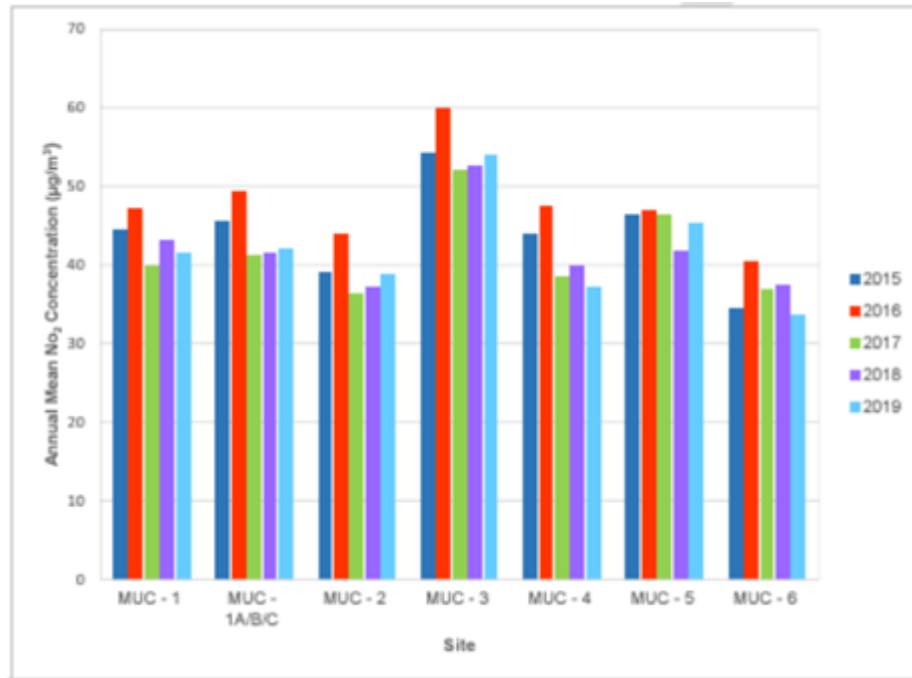
Figure 3.9: Trends in calculated average annual mean NO₂ concentrations from all diffusion tube sites across the district
[See reference 71]



3.54 However, air quality monitoring within the A5 Muckley Corner AQMA No.1 showed that four out of seven diffusion tube sites recorded an exceedance of the annual mean NO₂ objective during 2019 (see **Figure 3.10**). These were as follows:

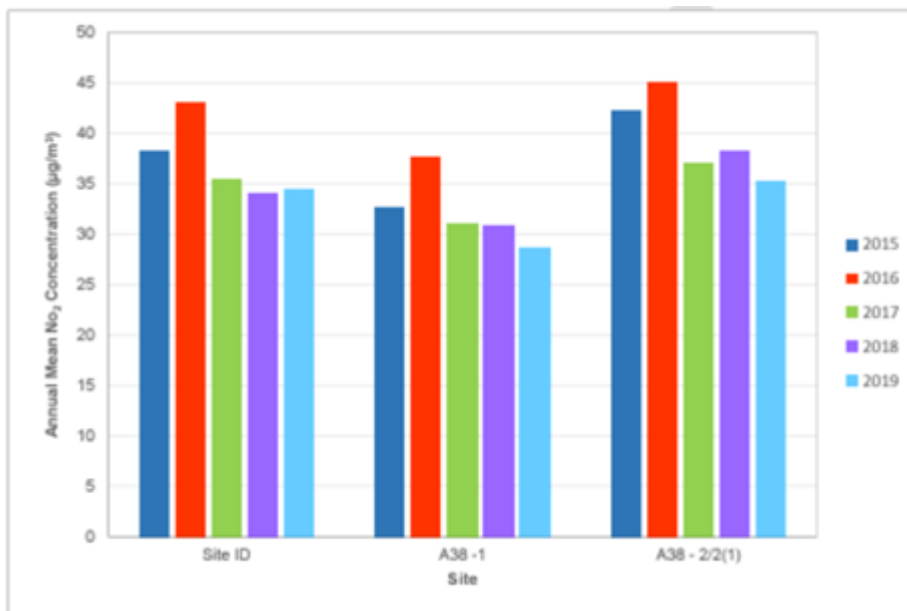
- MUC-1: Muckley Corner Hotel Ground Floor (41.5µg/m³);
- MUC-1A/B/C: Muckley Corner Hotel First Floor (42.1µg/m³);
- MUC-3: Muckley Corner A461 Southbound (54.0µg/m³); and
- MUC-5: Muckley Corner A5 Eastbound (45.1µg/m³).

Figure 3.10: Trends in Annual Mean Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations Measured at Diffusion Tube Monitoring Sites within the A5 Muckley Corner AQMA [See reference 72]



3.55 NO₂ concentrations for the individual diffusion tube sites within A38 AQMA No.2 display a continued improvement as shown in **Figure 3.11**. Air quality monitoring at three diffusion tube sites within this AQMA dropped below the annual mean NO₂ objective for the first time in 2017 and has remained below the objective in 2018 and 2019.

Figure 3.11: Trends in Annual Mean Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations Measured at Diffusion Tube Monitoring Sites within the A38 AQMA



3.56 In an effort to address air quality exceedances in Lichfield District, an Air Quality Action Plan in 2019 was published, which developed actions to improve air quality in the district, and specifically the AQMAs [See reference 73]. These included:

- Increase the volume of through traffic using M6 Toll; which was completed in 2020 and has seen a rise in numbers from 2019 to 2022 [See reference 74];
- Upgrading Trunk A-Roads to Expressways;
- Replacing older vehicles; and
- Education initiatives including website information updates.

3.57 AQMAs are also present in the neighbouring authorities to Lichfield District:

- Birmingham City Council:

- Birmingham AQMA – this encompasses the whole Borough.
- Cannock Chase District Council:
 - Cannock Chase AQMA - an area encompassing the A5 Watling Street between the junction with the A34 Walsall Road and the district boundary with South Staffordshire, and the stretch of the A460 Wolverhampton Road between the junction with the A5 Watling Street and the district boundary.
 - CCDC AQMA 2 – an area comprising A5 Watling Street between Churchbridge Traffic Islands and the district boundary with Walsall. Effectively continuing the existing AQMA to include all of the A5 within the district.
- East Staffordshire Borough Council:
 - Burton-Upon-Trent AQMA No.1 – an area of Burton-Upon-Trent along Derby Rd, Derby St, part of Princess Way Roundabout, Horninglow St, Horninglow Rd, Bridge St, Wellington St, part of Borough Rd, part of Wellington St roundabout, part of Waterloo St and part of Byrkley St.
 - Burton-Upon-Trent AQMA No.2 – an area encompassing St Peters Bridge roundabout and part of St Peters St in Stapenhill in Burton-upon-Trent.
- North West Leicestershire District Council:
 - Castle Donington AQMA – an area encompassing the High Street and Bondgate area of Castle Donington. The northern extent of the AQMA has been amended to include the junction of Bondgate with The Spittal and the southern extent shall extend to the Moira Arms.
 - Copt Oak AQMA – an area encompassing 10 properties in the part of the village of Copt Oak that lies within the boundaries of NW Leicestershire District Council.
- North Warwickshire Borough Council
 - Coleshill AQMA – an area of Coleshill bounded by Stonebridge Road, Coleshill Heath Road, the M42 Motorway, M6 Motorway and junction 4 of the M6.

- Walsall Borough Council:
 - Walsall AQMA – this encompasses the whole Borough.

3.58 It is recognised that air quality does not respect administrative or political boundaries and that there is potential for the occurrence of cross boundary impacts on neighbouring AQMAs. Development in Lichfield District is likely to impact the AQMAs present in neighbouring authorities as a result of traffic growth, particularly the ones located within close proximity to Lichfield such as the Cannock Chase AQMA in Cannock Chase, which has been designated as a result of NO₂ levels or that are on the key commuting routes.

Geology and minerals

3.59 The Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire (2015 - 2030) [See reference 75] estimates the quantity of minerals across the county, and plans for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates over the coming years to help meet housing and infrastructure needs.

3.60 The assessment identifies that the aggregate supply to the administrative area comprises various minerals, including:

- Aggregate minerals such as sand, gravel, and limestone;
- Industrial minerals, including cement minerals (limestone, clay, shale, and anhydrite) and brick clay;
- Hydrocarbons, specifically methane gas;
- Sandstone, which encompasses building stone and silica sand; and
- Opencast coal.

3.61 Figure 3.12 illustrates the distribution of aggregate minerals in Staffordshire. Sand and gravel resources are abundant throughout the county. As of 2013, there were 23 permitted quarries, 17 of which were operational, with five of those in Lichfield (one exclusively producing building sands). Limestone

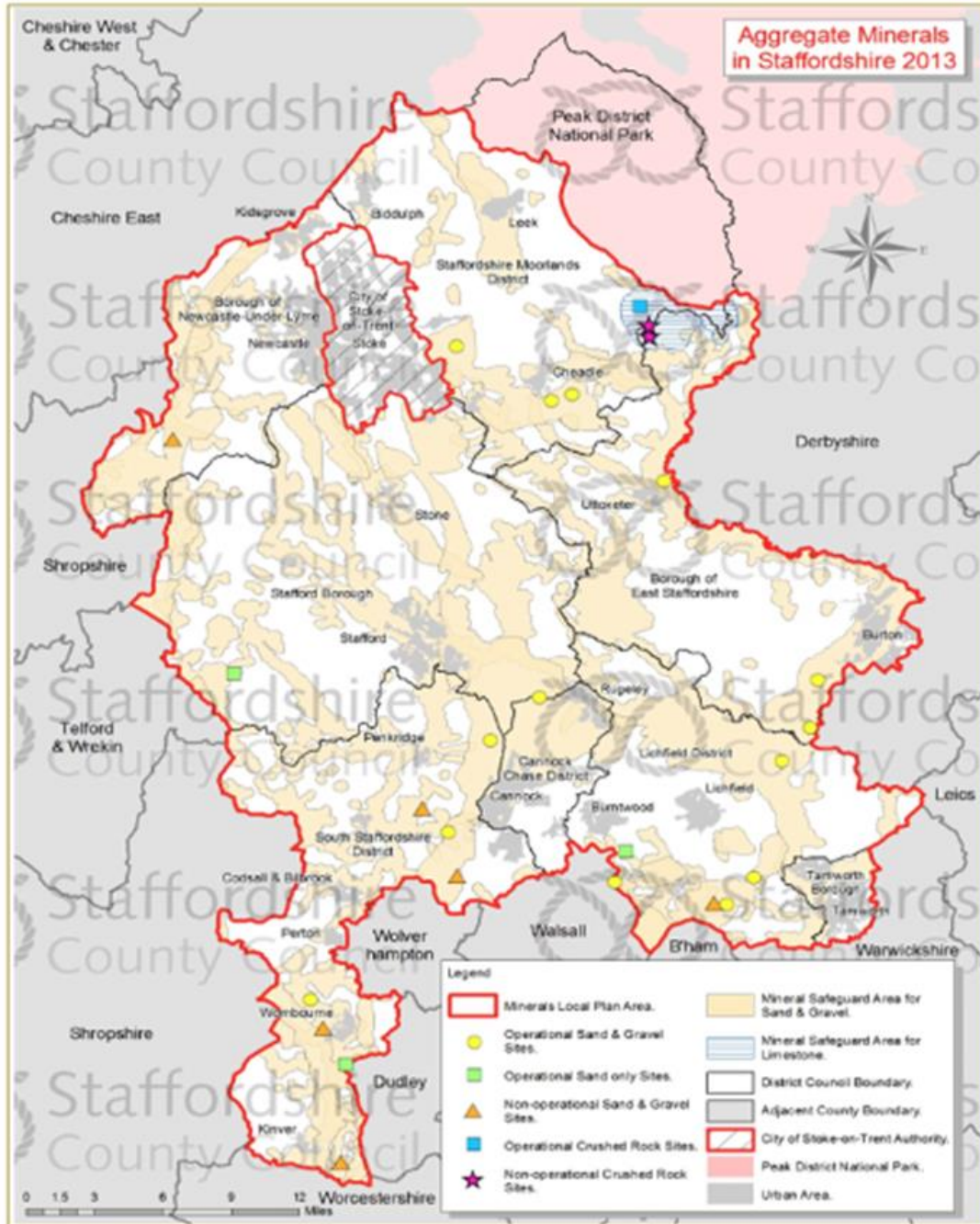
is extracted from a single area in the northeast of the county but not in Lichfield. These aggregate minerals supply both local markets, including Stoke-on-Trent, and external markets, particularly in the West Midlands conurbation. Currently, all aggregates are transported by road, though there is potential to re-use a rail line for crushed rock from the Cauldon Low Quarry.

3.62 In relation to sand and gravel, during the period 2004 to 2013 the average sales of sand and gravel were 5.0 million tonnes per annum, within a range from 3.7 million tonnes to 6.8 million tonnes. Based on this 10-year average figure, current permitted reserves would be depleted by 2026. To maintain the capacity to produce at least 5.0 million tonnes per annum requires additional reserves to be permitted during the next 10 years.

3.63 Limestone reserves used for crushed rock are more than sufficient to meet the anticipated requirements for crushed rock aggregate over the Plan period.

3.64 There are no industrial minerals quarries in Lichfield District (i.e. brick works or clay works).

Figure 3.12: Aggregate minerals in Staffordshire 2013 [See reference 76]



Soil

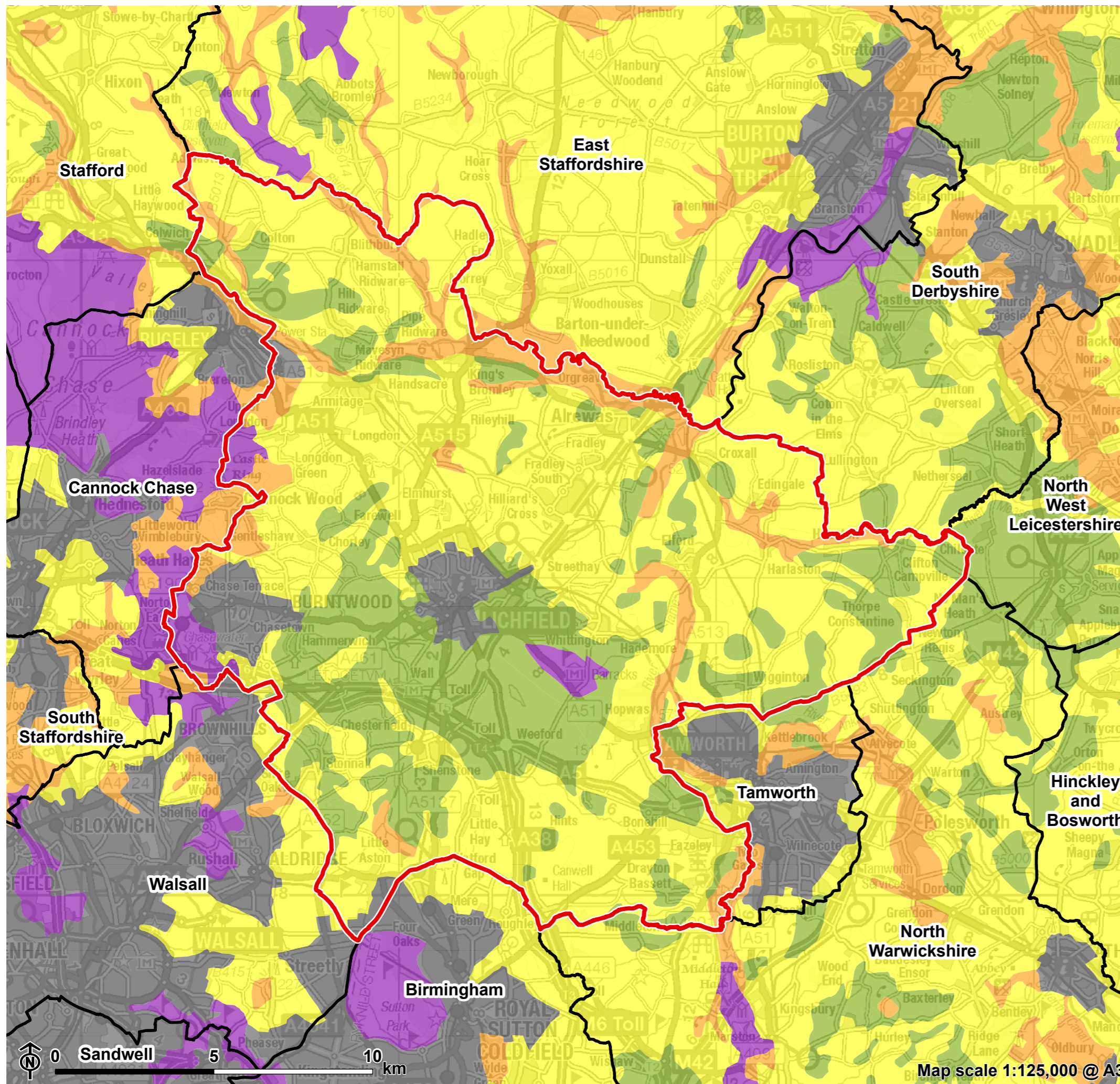
3.65 Soil provides a multitude of important functions and ecosystem services for society, including climate change mitigation (e.g. carbon retention) and adaptation (e.g. reducing flood risk) opportunities, food production and supporting biodiversity. However, soil is very often damaged, compacted and disposed of during construction and urban development.

3.66 The central southern part of Lichfield District sits on Triassic sandstones, which form a major aquifer. The soils here have high leaching potential, meaning they cannot effectively filter out pollutants. This allows pollutants and liquid discharges to quickly move through the soil to the underlying rock layers or shallow groundwater [\[See reference 77\]](#).

3.67 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system [\[See reference 78\]](#) provides a framework for classifying land according to the extent to which its physical or chemical characteristics impose long-term limitations to agricultural use. The principal factors influencing agricultural production are soil wetness, drought and erosion. These factors, together with interactions between them, form the basis for classifying land use into one of five Grades, where 1 describes land as excellent (land of high agricultural quality and potential) and 5 describes land as very poor (land of low agricultural quality and potential). Land falling outside these scores is deemed to be 'primarily in non-agricultural use', or 'predominantly in urban use'. Grade 3 can be further separated into grades 3a and 3b, although this requires further local surveys and therefore such data is only available for small areas. Grades 1, 2 and 3a are considered to be the best and most versatile agricultural land.

3.68 The Agricultural Land Classifications of the district are presented in **Figure 3.13** below. The predominant land classification in Lancaster District is Grade 3 agricultural land, although there are large areas of land classified as Grade 2, particularly around Lichfield City, and Burntwood, as well as near the outskirts of the district.

Figure 3.13: Agricultural Land Classification



- Lichfield District
- Neighbouring local authority
- Agricultural Land Classification**
 - Grade 2 (Very good)
 - Grade 3 (Good to moderate)
 - Grade 4 (Poor)
 - Non Agricultural
 - Urban

Contaminated land

3.69 For a site to meet the definition of contaminated land, a pollutant linkage must be established. A pollutant linkage consists of three parts: a source of contamination in, on or under the ground; a pathway by which the contaminant is causing significant harm or harm (or which presents a significant possibility of such harm being caused); and a receptor of a type specified in the regulations.

3.70 Lichfield District Council is required to maintain a Public Register of Contaminated Land under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. However, there are currently no entries on the Register as there is no contaminated land in the District.

Waste

3.71 Responsibility for the management of municipal waste in Staffordshire is divided between the waste collection authorities and the waste disposal authorities. The duties and responsibilities for each authority are set out within the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Lichfield District Council is a waste collection authority while Staffordshire County Council is a waste disposal authority.

3.72 The Waste Local Plan for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent (2010 - 2026) [See reference 79] stipulates that in relation to landfill and void capacity, there are 21 permitted landfill sites, 10 of which are currently operational. In relation to Lichfield, there are two materials recycling facilities. There are new organic waste treatment facilities throughout Staffordshire, although Lichfield currently uses facilities in South Staffordshire (Shareshill) and at Derbyshire (Etwall) [See reference 80].

3.73 In Lichfield District, about 39,457 tonnes of household waste was recorded per person last year – down from 44,876 tonnes in 2021-22. Of this, about 18,056 tonnes were sent for reuse, recycling or composting – meaning the area

had a recycling rate of 45.8%. This is an increase of 1.3% from the previous year, and higher than the national rate of 43.4% [See reference 81].

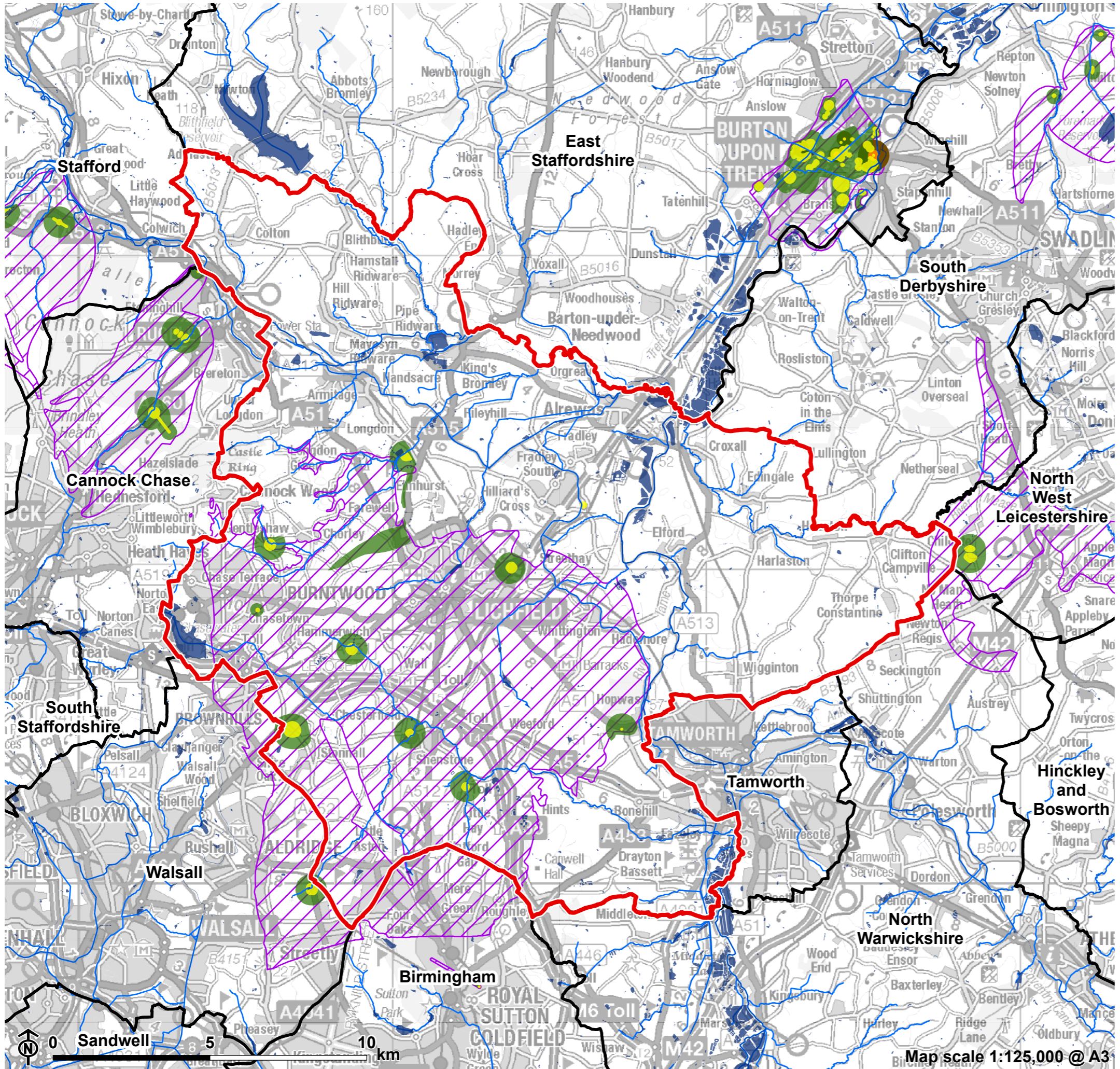
Water

3.74 The main rivers in Lichfield District are the River Tame, River Trent and River Mease. Other watercourses with Lichfield include the Curborough Brook, Leamonsley Brook, Pyford Brook, Bourne Brook, River Blythe, Mare Brook and Comberford Brook. This is presented in **Figure 3.14**.

3.75 Many of the district's watercourses are suffering from low water quality, with the overall water body quality having decreased in 2019, and all chemical quality conditions having failed in 2019. Under the Water Framework Directive water quality must not deteriorate, and should aim to be of at least 'good' quality [See reference 82].

3.76 Source Protection Zones (SPZs) are defined around large and public potable groundwater abstraction sites, and they provide additional protection to safeguard drinking water quality by constraining the proximity of an activity that can impact the quality of drinking water. Lichfield District falls within a Ground Water Protection Zone. Further to this, the entirety of Lichfield is located with a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone, which are defined as areas designated as being at risk from agricultural nitrate pollution [See reference 83]. Lichfield District encompasses a large area of Source Protection Zone III (Total Catchment) in the southwest of the district, although there is also a small amount of SPZs I (Inner Protection Zones), and SPZs II (Outer Protection Zones) within the southwest of the district. The Total Catchment Zone refers to the complete area that feeds the water source, and may extend across a considerable distance from the source. The Source Protection Zones (SPZs) are also shown in **Figure 3.14**.

Figure 3.14: Watercourses in Lichfield



- Lichfield District
- Neighbouring local authority
- Watercourses
- Waterbodies
- Source Protection Zones**
- Zone I - Inner Protection Zone
- Zone IC - Inner Protection Zone
- Zone II - Outer Protection Zone
- Zone IIC - Outer Protection Zone
- Zone III - Total Catchment

Map scale 1:125,000 @ A3

3.77 South Staffs Water provides for Lichfield's water supply and wastewater treatment. South Staffs Water published their revised draft Water Resources Management Plan in 2024. The Plan details how the predicted demands for water will be met over the next 25 years, identifying the main challenges as a growing population, a changing climate and an environmental need. The plan aims to:

- reduce total leakage on our network by 12 MI/day from the 2019/20 performance commitment level of 70.5 MI/day in 2024/25;
- encourage an average of more than 8,000 households a year to switch to a water meter over the lifetime of this WRMP;
- reduce baseline PCC by 1l/p/d by the end of the five year period from 2020 to 2025; and
- explore a bulk supply trade to provide additional resilience to our water supply system.

Flood risk

3.78 There are a number of areas within the district which are at risk of flooding, due to the rivers (River Mease, River Trent, River Tame and River Blithe) which flow through it, as shown in **Figure 3.15**.

- The following areas have been identified through the Lichfield District Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) as at risk of surface water flooding [[See reference 84](#)]: Lichfield City;
- Armitage;
- Burntwood;
- Longdons;
- Little Aston;
- Mile Oak;
- Fazeley and;

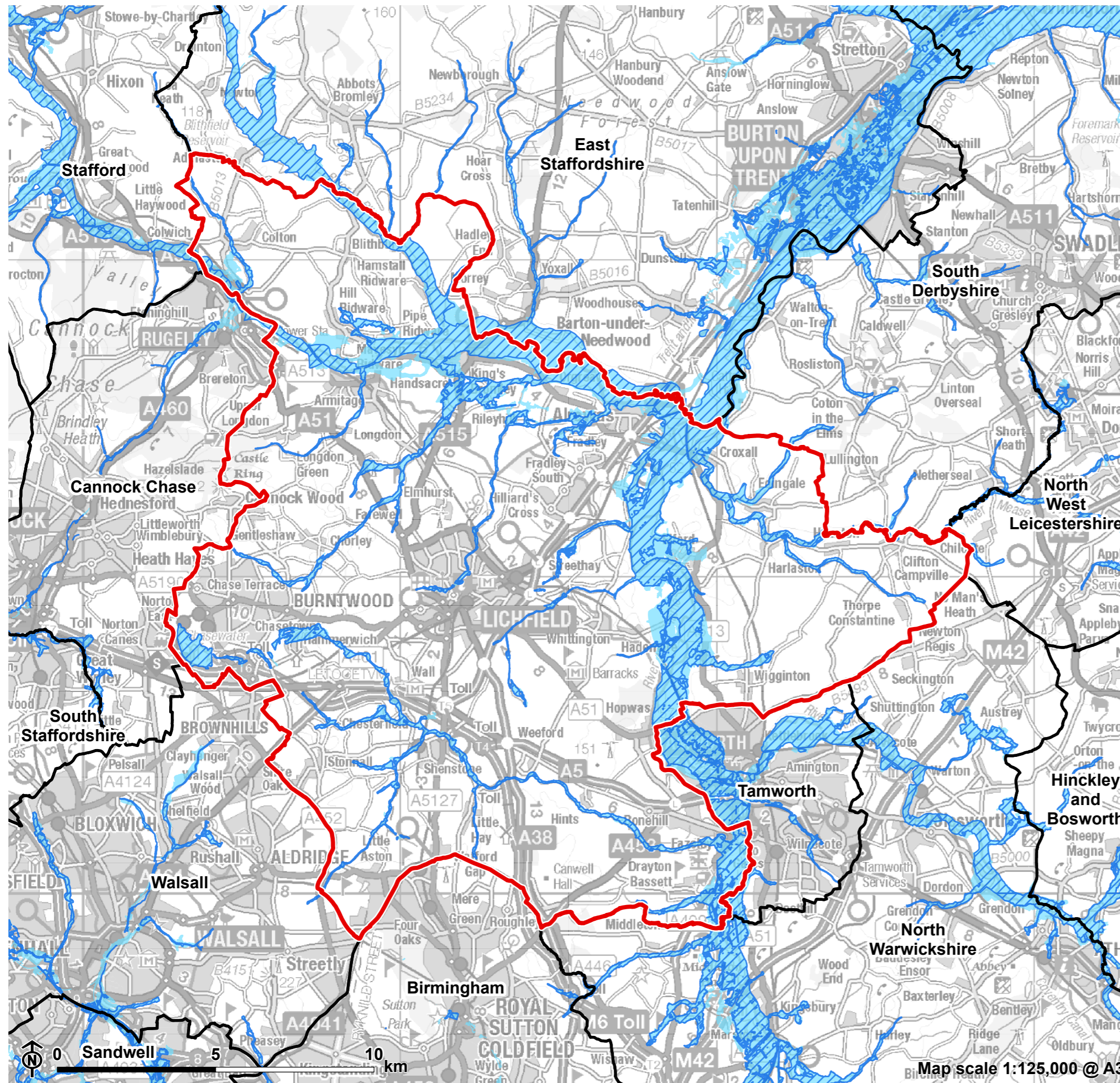
- Whittington.

3.79

3.80 Lichfield District has experienced numerous historical surface water flooding events, primarily reported by Local Authority sources. These events are mostly concentrated in the central part of the district, affecting properties, especially in Burntwood, Lichfield, Armitage/Handsacre, and Alrewas (though Alrewas is more affected by fluvial flooding). Burntwood, Lichfield, and Armitage/Handsacre see high-frequency floods every 1-2 years. Future flood risk analysis by the Environment Agency highlights Burntwood, Lichfield, Edingale, Shenstone, and Little Aston as key areas at risk, with Burntwood and Lichfield ranked 148 and 166 out of 219 in national cluster analysis [See reference 85].

3.81 Based on the 2015 Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, Lichfield was identified as the urban area at the 4th highest risk of surface water flooding in Staffordshire, with 760 properties at risk [See reference 86].

Figure 3.15: Flood Risk



- Lichfield District
- Neighbouring local authority
- Flood zone 2
- Flood zone 3

Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

3.82 Climate change presents a global risk, with a range of different social, economic and environmental impacts that are likely to be felt within Lichfield District across numerous receptors. A key challenge in protecting the environment is to tackle the causes and consequences of climate change. The consequences include predictions of warmer, drier summers and wetter winters with more severe weather events all year as well resulting in higher sea levels and increased river flooding. A strong reaction is required from planning to ensure appropriate action can be taken to help species and habitats adapt and to enable the agricultural sector to continue to deliver diverse, affordable and good quality produce.

3.83 There has been a general trend towards warmer average temperatures in recent years with the most recent decade (2012–2021) being on average 0.2°C warmer than the 1991–2020 average and 1.0°C warmer than 1961–1990. All the top ten warmest years for the UK in the series from 1884 have occurred this century [\[See reference 87\]](#).

3.84 Heavy rainfall and flooding events have been demonstrated to have increased potential to occur in the UK as the climate has generally become wetter. For example, for the most recent decade (2012–2021) UK summers have been on average 6% wetter than 1991–2020 and 15% wetter than 1961–1990 whilst winters have been 10%/26% wetter [\[See reference 88\]](#).

3.85 With 2022 recorded as the warmest year on record, July and August experienced especially dry months and drought conditions were declared across parts of England and Wales. In total, the rainfall for 2022 was 1,051 mm – this is 90% of the 1991–2020 decade average [\[See reference 89\]](#). The UK encountered more sun across 2022 than the average year. England experienced the sunniest January in 2023 [\[See reference 90\]](#).

3.86 The IPCC AR6 Synthesis Report (2023) highlights that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are predicted to continue into 2030 making it likely that global warming will exceed 1.5°C, which in turn means that GHG emissions will become harder to maintain below 2°C. As a result of this, increased global warming will occur and elicit climate hazards such as increased incidences of heatwaves, droughts, increased global monsoon precipitation, tropical storms, very wet and very dry weather. Our natural land and ocean carbon sinks will become less effective, sea levels will rise, become more acidic and experience deoxygenation amongst other climate events [See reference 91]. The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty involving 196 Parties. The overarching goal of this agreement is to limit global warming increasing to 1.5°C by the end of the century. Achieving this goal still requires a lot of action but since 2016 when the agreement was established, low – carbon solutions and new markets for climate resilience have been sparked.

3.87 The Tyndall Centre has undertaken work to calculate the ‘fair’ contribution of local authorities towards the Paris Climate Change Agreement. Based on the analysis undertaken the following recommendations have been made for Lichfield District [See reference 92]:

- Stay within a maximum cumulative carbon dioxide emissions budget of 4.1 million tonnes (MtCO₂) for the period of 2020 to 2100. At 2017 CO₂ emission levels, Lichfield would use this entire budget within 6 years from 2020.
- Initiate an immediate programme of CO₂ mitigation to deliver cuts in emissions averaging a minimum of -14.0% per year to deliver a Paris aligned carbon budget. These annual reductions in emissions require national and local action, and could be part of a wider collaboration with other local authorities.
- Reach zero or near zero carbon no later than 2040. The report provides an indicative CO₂ reduction pathway that stays within the recommended maximum carbon budget of 4.1 MtCO₂. At 2040 5% of the budget remains. This represents very low levels of residual CO₂ emissions by this time, or the Authority may opt to forgo these residual emissions and cut emissions to zero at this point. Earlier years for reaching zero CO₂ emissions are also

within the recommended budget, provided that interim budgets with lower cumulative CO₂ emissions are also adopted.

3.88 Lichfield District Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, setting a commitment to becoming net-zero by 2035. In 2021, Lichfield District Council adopted its Organisational Carbon Reduction Plan, which describes the actions the council will take to reduce carbon emissions. It also includes actions relating to Lichfield’s governance, procurement and investment to improve the consideration given to the carbon impact of the decisions made [\[See reference 93\]](#).

Carbon dioxide emissions

3.89 The Government regularly publishes Local Authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics. Emissions for Lichfield District between 2005-2022 have fallen from 8.9t per capita to 5.4t per capita [\[See reference 94\]](#). Per capita emissions in the plan area within the scope of influence of the local authority show that emissions generally declined each year, with the exceptions of 2009-2010 and 2020-2021, when emissions increased. This is shown in **Table 3.8**.

Table 3.8: Carbon dioxide emissions estimates in Lichfield District [\[See reference 95\]](#)

Year	Total Emissions (kt)	Per Capita Emissions (t)
2005	857.1	8.9
2006	872.7	9.0
2007	871.1	8.8
2008	850.5	8.5
2009	777.8	7.8

Year	Total Emissions (kt)	Per Capita Emissions (t)
2010	800.3	8.0
2011	759.6	7.5
2012	783.9	7.7
2013	777.4	7.7
2014	723.2	7.1
2015	713.8	7.0
2016	691.3	6.7
2017	681.9	6.6
2018	668.4	6.5
2019	646.4	6.2
2020	550.6	5.2
2021	615.1	5.8
2022	579.8	5.4

3.90 In Lichfield District the main contributor of emissions was from domestic and transport. However, between 2005 and 2022, the levels of emissions from domestic and transport have dropped significantly for the district, by 45.8% and 13.6% respectively. This is shown in **Table 3.9**.

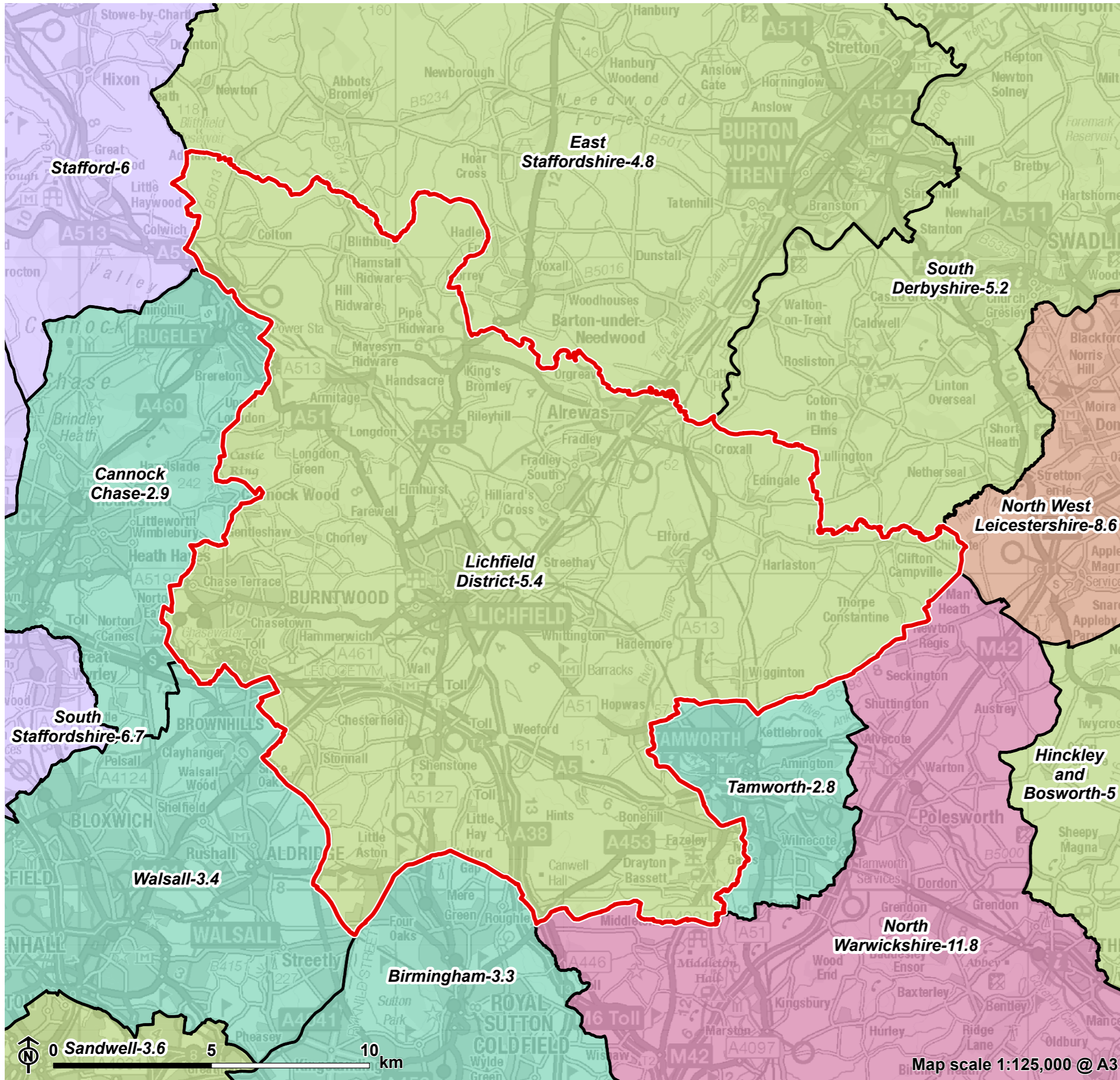
Table 3.9: Changes in carbon dioxide emissions by sector for Lichfield District between 2005 and 2022 [See reference 96]

Source of emissions	2005	2022
Industry	84.9	60.2
Commercial	96.0	35.2
Public Sector	36.7	13.1

Source of emissions	2005	2022
Domestic	255.0	139.3
Transport	355.2	306.9
Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry	13.6	11.9
Agriculture	15.5	13.0
Grand Total	857.1	579.8

3.91 In relation to neighbouring Local Authorities, Lichfield District demonstrates similar per capita CO₂ emissions to South Derbyshire and East Staffordshire, but displays much higher per capita CO₂ emissions compared to Cannock Chase, Walsall, Birmingham, and Tamworth, as presented in **Figure 3.16**.

Figure 3.16: Per Capita CO2 Emissions Compared to Neighbouring Authorities



UK local authority CO2 emissions 2022 (tonnes per person)

- 2.5 - 3.5
- 3.5 - 5.5
- 5.5 - 7.5
- 7.5 - 9.5
- > 9.5

Note: Label refers to per capita emissions (tonnes per person) for a local authority



Map scale 1:125,000 @ A3

Overall energy consumption

3.92 The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy produced the following consumption figures for Lichfield District in 2020. These figures are presented as Ktoe (kilotonnes of oil equivalent):

- All fuels – A total of 203.1 Ktoe across domestic, transport and industrial and commercial use.
- Coal – A total of 0.4 Ktoe predominantly through industrial and domestic use.
- Manufactured fuels – A total of 1.0 Ktoe through domestic and industrial use.
- Petroleum – A total of 91.9 Ktoe predominantly from road transport.
- Gas – A total of 67.6 Ktoe predominantly through domestic use.
- Electricity – A total of 36.3 Ktoe through domestic and industrial and commercial use.
- Bioenergy and wastes – A total of 5.8 Ktoe predominantly from road transport.

3.93 **Table 3.10** below highlights the energy consumption for Lichfield District between 2005 to 2020 by type. With the exception of energy from biomass and wastes, the consumption of coal, petroleum, manufactured fuels, gas and electricity fell between 2005 and 2020 [\[See reference 97\]](#).

Table 3.10: Energy Consumption in Lichfield District by Type
[\[See reference 98\]](#)

Energy Type	Energy Consumption in Ktoe (2005)	Energy Consumption in Ktoe (2020)
Coal	0.4	0.4
Manufactured Fuels	1.2	1.0

Energy Type	Energy Consumption in Ktoe (2005)	Energy Consumption in Ktoe (2020)
Petroleum	121.5	91.9
Gas	85.5	67.6
Electricity	39.2	36.3
Bioenergy and Wastes	0.7	5.8
Total	248.5	203.1

Renewable energy

3.94 Renewable energy is recognised as an important contributor to reducing reliance on fossil fuels and adapting to climate change.

3.95 Within the West Midlands, there was a total of 94,853 sites that were capable of generating renewable energy across wind, solar, wave, hydro and biomass renewable sources in 2022. This represents 7.5% of all the sites within the UK that generate renewable energy. In 2022, the West Midlands generated a total of 2,308.1 GWh (Gigawatt hours) of renewable energy. This is a 168.9% increase in renewable energy generation since 2011. In 2022, a total of 1,781 photovoltaic panels and 8 onshore wind turbines were installed in Lichfield. This is an increase on 2014 when 1,053 photovoltaic panels and 5 onshore wind turbines were installed [\[See reference 99\]](#).

3.96 Lichfield’s Organisational Carbon Reduction Plan highlights the importance of renewable energy, stating that the Council will increase utilisation of renewable energies [\[See reference 100\]](#). The plan outlines a goal to transition the current fleet to entirely electric vehicles (EVs) by 2030. Additionally, Lichfield’s Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Report notes that as of 2020, the area had 9.5 MW of Solar PV and 2 MW of onshore wind power. The report sets a target for meeting 100% of its energy needs from renewable sources by 2050 [\[See reference 101\]](#).

3.97 Further to this, six planning permissions were approved for renewable energy generation installations in 2023, which include an application for the installation of a solar farm comprising ground mounted solar PV panels (143,000) with a net generating capacity (AC) of up to 49.9MW. This marks a 50% increase from 2022 [\[See reference 102\]](#).

3.98 In order to offset carbon emissions, Lichfield initiated the Tiny Forest Programme, planting five tiny forests in January 2022 across the Lichfield District. These forests are located at St Michael Road, Mesnes Green, Burntwood Park, Redwood Park, and Eastern Avenue/Curborough Road [\[See reference 103\]](#).

Green Infrastructure

3.99 Green infrastructure has a range of benefits, for example: promoting healthier living, improving air quality and water quality, encouraging walking and cycling, but in particular it can help with climate change mitigation and adaptation by storing carbon, improving biodiversity and ecological resilience to climate change and lessening the impacts of climate change such as flooding, extreme heat and drought.

3.100 Lichfield District Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan [\[See reference 104\]](#) outlines the existing green infrastructure within the district, highlighting its significance for biodiversity and habitat networks. Key components include the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC), as well as the National Forest, a landscape orientated initiative working across 200 square miles of the Midlands.

3.101 Lichfield District is important for heathland habitats due to its proximity to notable areas like Cannock Chase SAC/SSSI, Sutton Park SSSI, and the lowland heaths around Highgate Common and Enville in South Staffordshire. The Nature Recovery Network Mapping document [\[See reference 105\]](#) emphasises the need to enhance green infrastructure, particularly by improving connectivity between sites. By 2050, Lichfield District aims to restore the

lowland heathland and associated habitats, which form a connection between Cannock Chase and Sutton Park. Furthermore, heathland management schemes have been secured at Muckley Corner (Wall Butts Common), Pipehill Crossroads (pipe Hill Heathlands or Pipe Marsh Common) and Ironstone Road heathland. These schemes seek to increase as well as enhance green infrastructure links in relation to heathland across the district.

3.102 Lichfield District also seeks to enhance green infrastructure networks particularly with regard to Chasewater Country Park, a designated SSSI. Previously part of Defra's Environmental Stewardship scheme from 2007 to 2017, the scheme focused on maintaining and enhancing landscape quality and character of the County Park. Building on this foundation, an £18 million investment will be directed towards Cannock Chase and Chasewater Country Parks, as well as the 92-mile Staffordshire Way. Key projects include redeveloping visitor facilities at Marquis Drive to reflect Cannock Chase's National Landscape status, and upgrading the Innovation Centre and south shore area of Chasewater Country Park to improve the facilities for the local community and visitors [\[See reference 106\]](#).

Biodiversity

3.103 Lichfield District is renowned for the quality and diversity of its natural environment, with many of its assets protected by local, national, and international designations. There is a need to maintain and develop Lichfield District's network of high-quality habitats. The location of Lichfield District's designated Biodiversity and Geodiversity assets is presented in **Figure 3.17**.

3.104 There is one international and European statutory nature site within the district. This is the River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The River Mease is an important lowland clay river, which provide the conditions necessary to sustain populations of fish including the spined loach *Cobitis taenia*, and Bullhead *Cottus gobio* [\[See reference 107\]](#).

3.105 The River Mease currently faces significant environmental pressures from ongoing development and housing projects, insufficient wastewater treatment capacity and quality, and diffuse pollution sources. These factors collectively contribute to high phosphate levels in the River Mease SAC, threatening its ecological health and biodiversity. The chemical status exceeds the phosphate target of 0.06mg/l throughout the SAC, although the levels entering the River Mease have started to decline since 2009 **[See reference 108]**.

3.106 Two other international and European SACs are within the vicinity of the Lichfield. These are:

- Cannock Chase SAC – which is located to the north of Lichfield, in Cannock Chase District. The SAC is designated for its European dry heathland and;
- Cannock Extension Canal SAC – which is located to the west of Lichfield, and runs from Pelsall Junction on the Wyrley and Essington Canal, north to Norton Canes Docks. The SAC is designated due to the presence of floating water-plantain (*Luronium natans*), a species native to anthropogenic, lowland environments.

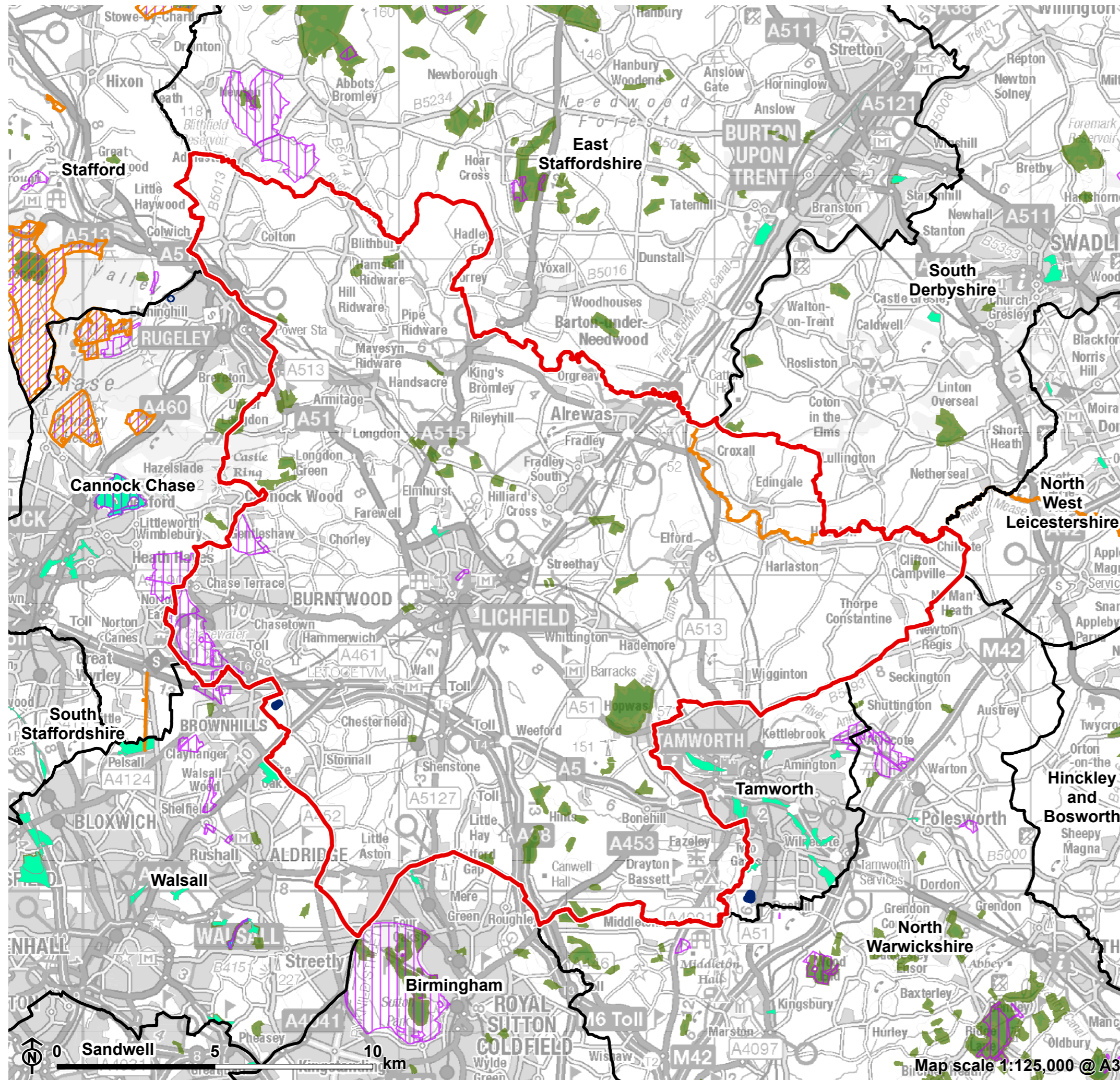
3.107 With regard to sites of national importance, there are 4 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which cover 330ha of the district. These are as follows:

- Chasewater and Southern Staffordshire Coalfields SSSI;
- Gentleshaw Common SSSI;
- Stowe Pool and Walkmill Claypit SSSI and;
- River Mease SSSI **[See reference 109]**.

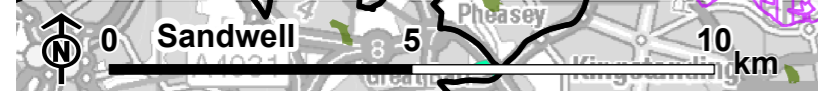
3.108 **Table 3.11** summarises the condition of each SSSI, which shows a large proportion of them are currently in unfavourable condition (albeit some is 'unfavourable recovering').



Figure 3.17: Designated Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assets



- Lichfield District
- Neighbouring local authority
- Ancient woodland
- Special Area of Conservation
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Regionally Important Geological Site
- Local Nature Reserve



Map scale 1:125,000 @ A3

Table 3.11: Summary of SSSI in Lichfield District [See reference 110]

SSSI Name	Condition	Area (ha)
Chasewater and The Southern Staffordshire Coalfield Heaths SSSI	Favourable – 16.67% Unfavourable – recovering – 50% Unfavourable – declining – 16.67% Not recorded – 16.67%	530.23
Gentleshaw Common SSSI	Unfavourable – recovering – 66.67% Not recorded – 33.33%	80.47
Stowe Pool and Walk Mill Clay Pit SSSI	Unfavourable – declining – 100%	8.40
River Mease SSSI	Not recorded – 100%	23.03

3.109 There are also 78 Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) within Lichfield, although the total number of sites changes periodically.

3.110 There is currently one Local Nature Reserve (LNR) in Lichfield District. This is Christian Fields Local Nature Reserve, which covers 60,000sqm of natural land in the north of Lichfield [See reference 111].

3.111 Although exact tree coverage for the Lichfield District is currently unknown, it is understood that as of 2022/23, there are 18 new individual trees with a Tree Preservation Order, a 50% increase from 12 in 2021/22 [See reference 112].

3.112 With regard to geodiversity, the Staffordshire Geodiversity Action Plan [See reference 113], provides a countywide strategy for the conservation of geological diversity and the sustainable use of geological resources. The Action Plan is overseen by a Steering Group which includes Lichfield District Council. The Plan provides a summary of the current Regionally Important Geodiversity

Sites (RIGS) locations in Staffordshire. In relation specifically to Lichfield, the district contains one RIGS, Barrack Lane Quarry, which is an example of Triassic sandstone.

3.113 In 2022, Lichfield District Council declared a commitment to nature recovery, providing short and long-term targets to reverse the decline and increase wildlife species, which will be outlined in the 2050 Lichfield District Strategy [See reference 114]. The 2050 Strategy will sit within the national Nature Recovery Network and underpin all planning, development and land management decisions including the Local Plan. Targets include management of at least 30% of council-owned land for the benefit of wildlife by 2030 (in line with the UK Government's commitments) and achieving a net-gain to biodiversity across all development.

3.114 Additionally, Lichfield District Council actively supports local programs to protect and enhance biologically significant sites within the district. The council is a key stakeholder in the 'Purple Horizons' project, one of five national nature recovery projects launched by Natural England. This project, which began in August 2021 with £200,000 in funding for habitat management and other initiatives, aims to restore and connect fragmented habitats such as heathland, wetland, grassland, and woodland between Cannock Chase and Sutton Park [See reference 115]. The council collaborates with Natural England, Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council, and other partners to enhance, restore, and create these habitats, facilitating wildlife movement and thriving populations. Additionally, Lichfield District Council participates in the Midlands Heathland Heartland (MHH) program, contributing through Nature Recovery Network mapping and biodiversity offsetting schemes.

3.115 The Lichfield District 2050 Strategy [See reference 116] aims to restore the district by 2050, focusing on reintroducing lowland heathland and associated habitats to connect Cannock Chase to Sutton Park. The Strategy includes the establishment of two new nature reserves, several pocket parks, and wildlife ponds. Additionally, the Strategy promotes living green spaces on roofs, walls, and bus stops, along with expanding the tree canopy across urban areas with more street trees.

3.116 The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) [See reference 117], which will be published in March 2025, will set out priorities for action to support nature recovery in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, and identify locations across these areas to create or improve habitats like woodlands, rivers and meadows. Lichfield District Council forms one of the supporting authorities involved in developing the LNRS.

3.117 Lichfield District Council is also an active partner of the Staffordshire Wildlife Sites Partnership which monitor these sites (over a five year period). There are currently 78 sites being monitored within the district [See reference 118].

Historic Environment

3.118 Lichfield District has a range of unique assets that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the area. These assets include:

- Conservation Areas
- Historic Parks and Gardens
- Listed buildings
- Scheduled Monuments

3.119 Some heritage assets, non-designated heritage assets, archaeological sites, historic buildings, parks, formal gardens or battlefields, are considered to be of national importance. Non-designated heritage assets include a list of local heritage assets that do not meet the strict criteria for national designation but are of local importance.

3.120 Lichfield District contains 766 listed buildings, 22 conservation areas, 15 scheduled monuments and one registered parks and gardens. These are presented in **Figure 3.18**. According to Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register, there are 19 heritage assets a risk within Lichfield District, as listed and described below [See reference 119].

- Church of St John the Baptist
 - Type: Grade II* listed building
 - Condition: D – Slow decay; solution agreed but not yet implemented.
- Manor House
 - Type: Grade II* listed building
 - Condition: D – Slow decay; solution agreed but not yet implemented.
- Church Tower north of Church of St John
 - Type: Conservation area
 - Condition: D – Slow decay; solution agreed but not yet implemented.
- Engine House at Sandfields Pumping Station
 - Type: Grade II* listed building
 - Condition: C – Slow decay; no solution agreed.
- Church of St Michael and All Angels
 - Type: Grade I listed building
 - Condition: D – Slow decay; solution agreed but not yet implemented.
- Chetwynd Bridge
 - Type: Grade II* listed building
 - Condition: D – Slow decay; solution agreed but not yet implemented.
- Armitage URC
 - Type: Grade II* listed building
 - Condition: C – Slow decay; no solution agreed.
- Stonehouse Cottages
 - Type: Grade II* listed building
 - Condition: C – Slow decay; no solution agreed.
- Remains of Bellamour Old Hall

Chapter 3 Baseline Information

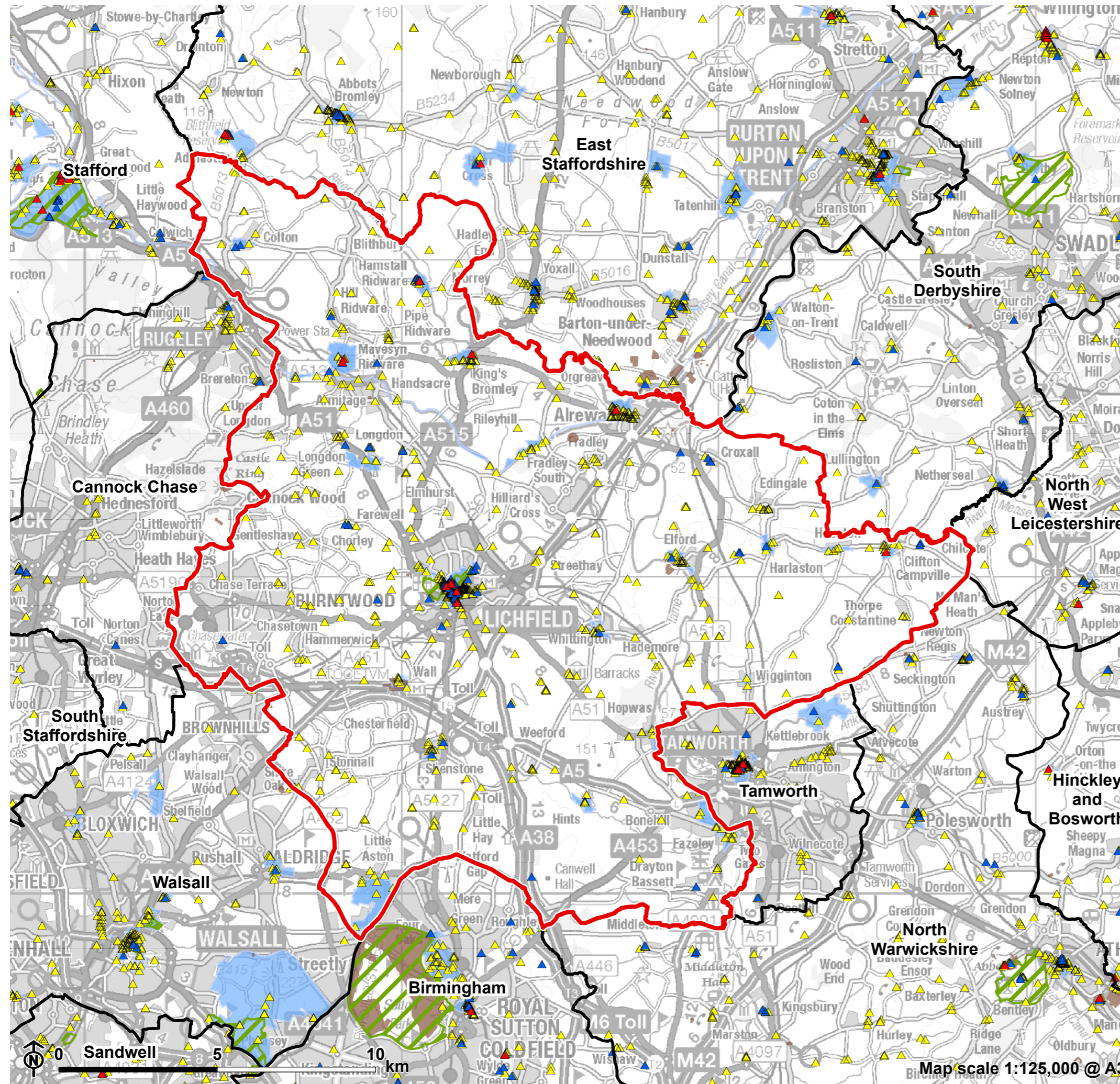
- Type: Grade II* listed building
- Condition: A – Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric; no solution agreed.
- Bonehill Mill
 - Type: Grade II* listed building
 - Condition: A – Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric; no solution agreed.
- 116 to 120 Lichfield Street
 - Type: Conservation area
 - Condition: C – Slow decay; no solution agreed.
- 122 Lichfield Street
 - Type: Conservation area
 - Condition: A – Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric; no solution agreed.
- L-shaped out buildings, Bucks Head Farm
 - Type: Grade II* listed building
 - Condition: A – Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric; no solution agreed.
- Kings Bromley Manor Garden walls and pavilion,
 - Type: Grade II* listed building
 - Condition: A – Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric; no solution agreed.
- Tithe Barn
 - Type: Not applicable
 - Condition: E – Under repair or in fair to good repair, but no user identified; or under threat of vacancy with no obvious new user (applicable only to buildings capable of beneficial use).

Chapter 3 Baseline Information

- Packington Hall
 - Type: Grade II* listed building
 - Condition: F – Repair scheme in progress and (where applicable) end use or user identified; functionally redundant buildings with new use agreed but not yet implemented.
- 4 Bore Street
 - Type: Grade II* listed building
 - Condition: C – Slow decay; no solution agreed.
- Davidson House
 - Type: Grade II* listed building
 - Condition: C – Slow decay; no solution agreed.
- Seedy Mill Farmhouse
 - Type: Grade II* listed building
 - Condition: C – Slow decay; no solution agreed.



Figure 3.18: Heritage Assets



- Lichfield District
- Neighbouring local authority
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Conservation Area
- Listed Building**
- ▲ Grade I
- ▲ Grade II*
- ▲ Grade II

The Historic England GIS Data contained in this map was obtained on 27/06/2024. The most publicly available up to date Historic England GIS Data can be obtained from [HistoricEngland.org.uk](https://historicengland.org.uk).

Landscape and Townscape

3.121 Lichfield District covers an area of 331.3 km². The principal centres of population are the City of Lichfield, a cathedral city located in the centre of the district, and Burntwood is a former mining town in the west of the district. The remaining areas are mainly pastoral, heathland, and farmland.

3.122 The landscape of Lichfield District is shaped by underlying variations in geology and the presence of two major river valleys: the River Trent and River Tame. To the north and north-east of the district lies the Trent Valley washlands, and significant levels of quality agricultural land that make up the Mease lowlands. The city of Lichfield is set within an area of rich farmland on good soils with a long and established cultural history. The city lies in a natural bowl containing three different types of landscape, the most extensive being the Ancient Settled Farmlands to the north and west of the city, merging into a more open Village Farmlands landscape to the east and an area of Sandstone Estatelands to the south.

3.123 Along the western edge of the district, including Burntwood, the landscape has been extensively disturbed and worked for coal resulting in a post- industrial setting of restored scrubby heathlands within a Coalfield Farmlands landscape. This area contrasts sharply with the adjoining Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) [See reference 120], and with the ancient woodlands as well as farmland occurring to the south-east of Lichfield [See reference 121].

3.124 Lichfield District falls within four National Character Areas (NCAs) [See reference 122], as shown in **Figure 3.19**. These are:

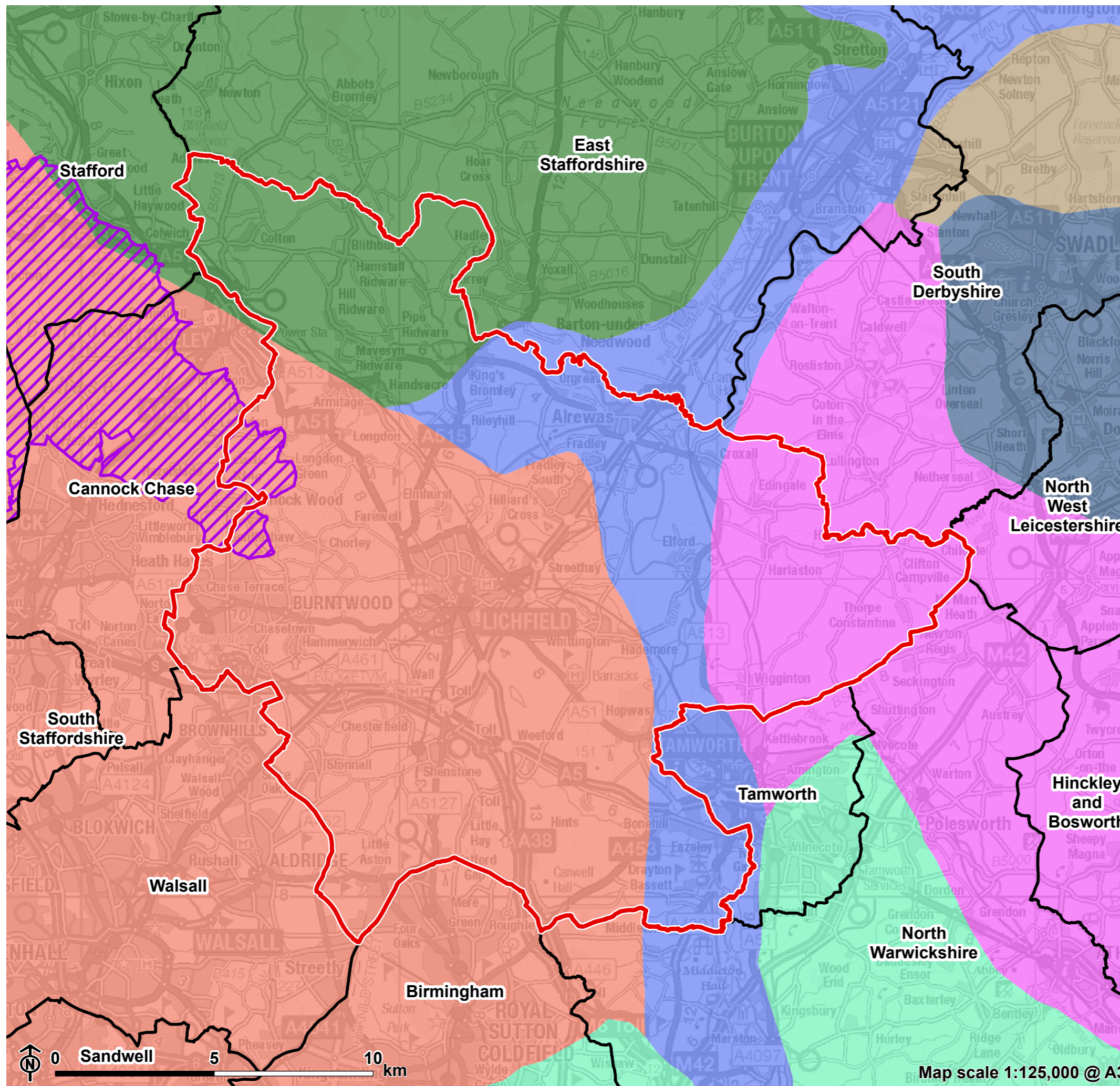
- (67) Cannock Chase and Cank Wood – this NCA principally coincides with the historical hunting forest of Cannock Chase, with major remnants surviving within the Cannock Chase AONB.
- (68) Needwood and South Derbyshire Claylands – this NCA is predominately a rolling plateau that slopes from the southern edge of the Peak District to the valley of the River Trent in the south-west. Part of the

Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site and The National Forest are situated on the eastern side of the NCA. To the north and west respectively are found small parts of the Peak District National Park and Cannock Chase AONB.

- (69) Trent Valley Washlands – this NCA comprises the river flood plain corridors of the middle reaches of the River Trent’s catchment in the heart of England. It is a distinctly narrow, linear and low-lying landscape, often clearly delineated at its edges by higher ground, and it is largely comprised of the flat flood plains and gravel terraces of the rivers.
- (72) Mease/ Sence Lowlands – this NCA comprises a gently rolling agricultural landscape centred around the rivers Mease, Sence and Anker. The NCA contains the River Mease SAC, which is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – and has 139 ha of nationally designated SSSI, including the Ashby Canal SSSI.

3.125 The NCA profiles indicate the drivers for change as well as opportunities for environmental improvement. Typical drivers of change include development pressure, noise and light pollution, recreational pressure, changes in farming practices and intensive agriculture, mineral extraction, declines in biodiversity, loss or neglect of historic features, pressure on the water environment, and climate change.

Figure 3.19: Landscape Character



- Lichfield District
- Neighbouring local authority
- National Landscape
- National Character Area**
- 67: Cannock Chase and Cank Wood
- 68: Needwood and South Derbyshire Claylands
- 69: Trent Valley Washlands
- 70: Melbourne Parklands
- 71: Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield
- 72: Mease/Sence Lowlands
- 97: Arden



Map scale 1:125,000 @ A3

3.126 The Lichfield District Landscape Character Assessment [See reference 123] identifies eight Landscape Character Types within the district, as shown in **Figure 3.20**. The Landscape Character Assessment provides a summary of forces of change for the landscape character of the district. These include:

- Hedgerows and hedgerow trees are a particular feature of the ancient settled farmlands around Lichfield. Lack of management of traditional field boundaries, however, or their replacement with wire fences, is often a problem;
- Over abstraction of water from rivers for public use, or agricultural irrigation, can alter river ecology and this can be exacerbated by an increase in pesticides, or run off pollution, which exist at greater concentrations when over abstraction is occurring;
- Extraction industries such as mineral quarrying or sand extraction have a significant impact on landscape and landscape character. The Transforming the Trent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme has been successful in securing funding to conserve and restore land within the Trent and Tame valleys affected by gravel extraction.

Figure 3.20: Landscape Character Types in Lichfield District
[See reference 124]

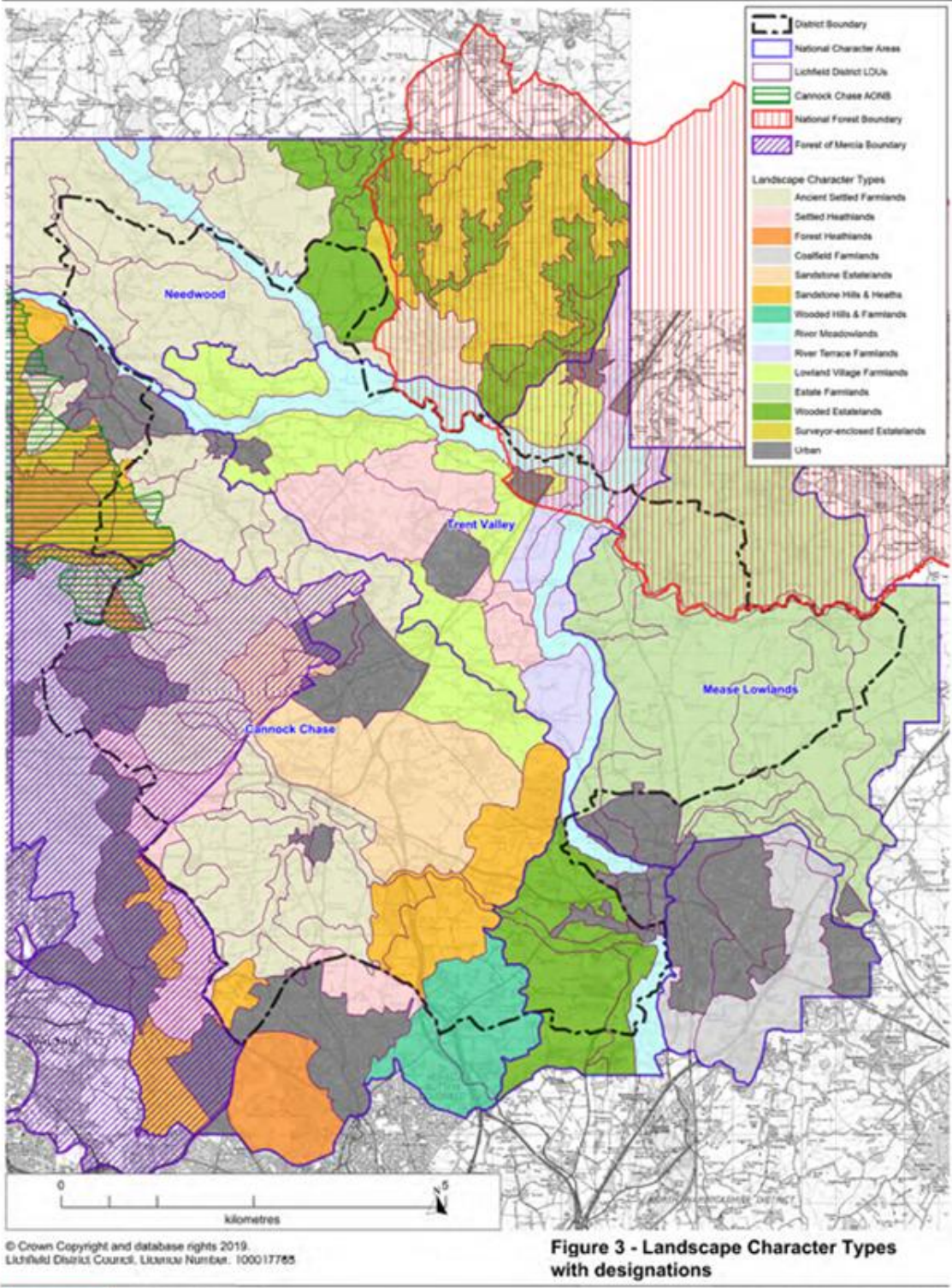


Figure 3 - Landscape Character Types with designations

Difficulties and Data Limitations

3.127 The SEA Regulations, Schedule 2(8) require the Environmental Report to include:

- "...a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information".

3.128 At this stage, given the content and purpose of the SA Scoping Report, it is considered appropriate to note the following data limitations which were identified as the report was prepared:

- Some data is out of date as it was prepared to support the adopted or withdrawn Local Plan and will be updated as part of the evidence base for the new Plan, but is not yet available.
- No recent data was available about the breakdown of all journeys made in Lichfield District in terms of the modes used (this was last recorded in the 2011 Census).
- GIS data was not available on existing services and facilities outside of / close to Lichfield.
- Priority habitats and species data is 18 years old.
- Some information is only available at the county or regional scale.

3.129 Where data limitations have been identified, if relevant updates sources become available at a later stage of the SA process, they will be used to update the baseline information informing the appraisal work.

Chapter 4

Key Sustainability Issues and Likely Evolution without the Local Plan

4.1 Analysis of the baseline information in **Chapter 3** has enabled a number of key sustainability issues facing Lichfield District to be identified. Identification of the key sustainability issues and consideration of how these issues might develop over time if the new Local Plan is not implemented help to meet Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations which requires information to be provided on:

- "the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment [*baseline information presented in Chapter 3*] and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan" [*summarised in this chapter*]
- "any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan" [*interpreted as 'key sustainability issues' and summarised in this chapter*]

4.2 Key sustainability issues for Lichfield were previously identified through the SA Sustainability Appraisal in 2018 for the adopted Local Plan. These issues have been considered as a starting point but have been fully reviewed and updated during the preparation of this SA Scoping Report for the new Local Plan, in light of the updated policy review and latest baseline information. The current set of key sustainability issues for Lichfield is presented below.

4.3 The requirement of the SEA Regulations for consideration to be given to the likely evolution of the environment (as well as society and economy) in the plan area (i.e. Lichfield District) if the new Local Plan was not to be implemented, is also presented in relation to each of the key sustainability issues.

Chapter 4 Key Sustainability Issues and Likely Evolution without the Local Plan

4.4 In general, the current trends in relation to the various social, economic and environmental issues affecting Lichfield would be more likely to continue without the implementation of the new Local Plan, although the policies in the adopted Lichfield Local Plan would still go some way towards addressing many of the issues. In most cases, the new Local Plan offers opportunities to directly and strongly affect existing trends in a positive way, through an up-to-date plan which reflects the requirements of the NPPF.

4.5 Key sustainability issues in Lichfield (including environmental problems as required by the SEA Regulations) are set out below:

- Hotter, drier summers are expected as a result of ongoing and **accelerating climate change**, which have the potential for adverse effects on human health and the natural environment. The new Local Plan offers an opportunity to update the district's approach to managing the effects of the changing climate and associated weather events, particularly in the design of new buildings, whole developments and green infrastructure. Therefore, without the new Local Plan, this issue is likely to be less well addressed.
- Lichfield has **an ageing population**, with a higher number of older people, particularly over 50. This can result in **pressure on the capacity of local services and facilities**, such as GP surgeries and hospitals. This is particularly concerning given the district's relatively low score of 87.7 in the 2021 "Access to services" subdomain in relation to the Heath Index, highlighting the difficulty residents face in reaching essential services such as employment centres, schools, healthcare providers, and retail centres via public transport or walking. The new Local Plan offers an opportunity to improve access to and increase availability of such services and facilities. Without the new Local Plan there is likely to be an increasing strain on services and facilities which do not meet local demand.
- There is a **need for affordable housing** in Lichfield District because at present, the mean price of dwellings is higher than the regional and national average. The new Local Plan offers an opportunity to facilitate and expedite the delivery of affordable housing as well as support the provision of a more appropriate mix of new homes to meet the needs of a growing population. Without the new Local Plan local house prices in

Chapter 4 Key Sustainability Issues and Likely Evolution without the Local Plan

Lichfield District are likely to continue to increase, exacerbating the affordability crisis for residents, especially older people.

- The number of people who have a Level 4 qualification (Degree, Higher Degree, NWQ Level 4-5, Higher National Certificate and Higher National Diploma) and above is lower than the national average. The new Local Plan presents the opportunity to improve the **accessibility and provision of high-quality education and training facilities** in the district. Without the new Local Plan, these educational and training improvements may not be realised, potentially perpetuating the current disparities.
- Although Lichfield District is not generally deprived, **pockets of deprivation** exist across the district, with area in the wards of Chadsmead and Curborough falling within IMD's 20% of most deprived areas nationally. The new Local Plan offers an opportunity to reduce the level of deprivation in areas through appropriately planned growth and regeneration. Therefore, without the new Local Plan, deprivation is less likely to be effectively tackled.
- Weekly pay by place of work in Lichfield District is much lower than regionally and nationally, highlighting a significant number of **workers commuting from the district to higher salaried jobs elsewhere**. The new Local Plan offers the opportunity to attract higher-paying employers to the area, improving local job opportunities and increasing weekly pay. Without the new Local Plan, these improvements may not occur, and the trend of workers out-commuting for better-paying jobs will likely continue.
- There has been a decline in shopping consumer patterns, with **high vacancy rates present in Lichfield City Centre and Burntwood Town Centre**. The new Local Plan offers the opportunity to revitalise these commercial areas by encouraging new businesses. Without the new Local Plan, these areas may continue to suffer from high vacancy rates and reduced consumer activity.
- Lichfield District benefits from some public transport provision. However, due to the district being predominantly rural, a lot of **residents are dependent on the private car** to access services, facilities and leisure activities. The new Local Plan presents an opportunity to address the issue of car dependency by promoting sustainable development locations,

Chapter 4 Key Sustainability Issues and Likely Evolution without the Local Plan

and prioritising areas that are well-connected by public transport and active travel infrastructure. Without the new Local Plan, development is more likely to come forward at less connected locations and locations where there is limited potential to support improvements for sustainable transport.

- There are a number of areas within Lichfield District which are at **risk of flooding** (particularly in the north and east of the district). Without the new Local Plan, flood risk will continue to affect the district through increased and higher intensity flooding. The new Plan offers an opportunity to plan strategically to locate new development in areas at lower risk from flooding, therefore reducing the number of properties and economic assets at risk from flooding.
- Many of the district's watercourses are suffering from **low water quality**, with the overall water body quality having decreased in 2019, and all chemical quality conditions having failed in 2019. The River Mease SAC is currently assessed as being in unfavourable condition, due to high phosphate levels, which threaten its ecological health and biodiversity. Without the new Local Plan, water quality is likely to continue declining, further harming ecosystems and biodiversity, and posing significant health risks to the community. The new Plan offers an opportunity to implement targeted measures to improve water quality.
- The main air pollutant of concern in Lichfield District, **nitrogen dioxide from road traffic emissions, has increased**. Without the new Local Plan this trend may continue. The new Plan offers the opportunity to address this issue by promoting sustainable travel and ensuring that the potential air quality impacts associated with new development are assessed and managed accordingly.
- Although Lichfield District has a **higher average recycling rate** than nationally, a growing population will place increased pressure on waste management facilities and there will be a requirement to meet these growing needs. The new Local Plan provides some opportunity to adopt up to date policies seeking to minimise waste, increase re-use and recycling (although this is mostly achieved via the Waste Local Plan). It will also provide an opportunity to deliver adequate space in new

developments for waste facilities capable of accommodating recyclable waste.

- The majority of the district is **comprised of Grade 3 agricultural land, with large pockets of Grade 2 agricultural land**. Without the new Local Plan, there is a risk that these valuable agricultural lands will be developed, limiting continued agricultural activities and food production. The new Plan offers an opportunity to protect these high-quality agricultural lands from development, ensuring the preservation of land for farming, food production, and maintaining the agricultural heritage of the district.
- Lichfield District **contains and is in close proximity to a number of both designated and non-designated natural habitats and biodiversity**. This includes those designated for their national (SSSIs and Ancient Woodland) and international importance (one Special Area of Conservation). Not all SSSIs in the district are in favourable condition. The new Local Plan provides an opportunity for new development to come forward at the most appropriate locations in order to avoid detrimental impacts on biodiversity assets, and in some cases enhance biodiversity through retention and creation of greenspaces within developments.
- Lichfield District has a number of heritage assets (including Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Registered Parks and Gardens) with **19 assets on the Heritage at Risk Register**. The new Local Plan provides an opportunity to draw on the most up to date evidence to ensure that new development is sited and designed so as to conserve, enhance and encourage enjoyment of the historic environment as well as improve accessibility and interpretation of it. Therefore, without the new Local Plan, the historic environment is less likely to be protected and enhanced and the condition of assets may worsen.
- Lichfield District falls within four National Character Areas (NCAs) and **part of the Cannock Chase National Landscape extends into the northwestern boundary** of the district. The new Local Plan offers an opportunity to take into account the most recent landscape-related evidence and to ensure that sensitive landscapes and townscapes are protected and enhanced, with development being located and designed to take account of the variation in character and sensitivity across Lichfield

Chapter 4 Key Sustainability Issues and Likely Evolution without the Local Plan

District. Without the new Local Plan, this issue is less likely to be addressed as it is more likely that piecemeal and ad-hoc developments would come forward.

Chapter 5

SA framework and method

5.1 The approach being taken to the SA of the Lichfield Local Plan is based on current good practice and the guidance on SA/SEA set out in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

5.2 The development of a set of SA objectives (known as the SA framework) is a recognised way in which the likely environmental and sustainability effects of a plan can be described, analysed and compared.

5.3 The proposed SA framework for the Lichfield Local Plan is presented below. The previous SA framework for the adopted Lichfield Local Plan was used as a starting point to inform the preparation of this SA framework, although it has been amended and updated to take into account the analysis of international, national and local policy objectives, the baseline information, and the current key sustainability issues identified for Lichfield.

5.4 The SA framework comprises a series of SA objectives against which the sustainability of the Local Plan will be appraised. The appraisal of the Local Plan options, policies and site allocations against these SA objectives will be guided in part by the appraisal questions accompanying each objective. The appraisal of site options could be carried out using site-specific assessment criteria that can be developed in relation to each SA objective in order to ensure consistency. The questions included in the framework are not exhaustive, and some may be more relevant to certain elements of the Local Plan than others.

5.5 All of the topics specifically required by the SEA Regulations (set out in Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations) are clearly addressed by the headline SA objectives, as listed under each SA objective below.

SA Objective 1: Improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities

Appraisal Questions

- Will it [i.e. the Local Plan option, policy, site allocation] improve accessibility to health care for existing residents (including older residents) and provide additional facilities for new residents?
- Will it support a healthy lifestyle including opportunities for recreational/physical activity?
- Will it provide new accessible green space?
- Will it ensure that there is access to greenspace, countryside, public spaces, rights of way and play areas for people to enjoy / improve public health and encourage healthier lifestyles?
- Is the site within close proximity to key services (e.g. schools, food shop, public transport, health centres etc.)?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Human Health

SA Objective 2: Provide decent, affordable and safe homes for all

Appraisal Questions

- Will it provide sufficient housing to meet existing and future housing need?
- Will it increase the range and affordability of housing for all social groups?

- Will it reduce the number of households waiting for accommodation or accepted as homeless?
- Will it meet the needs of the travelling community and show people?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Population
- Human health

SA Objective 3: Reduce poverty and inequality and promote social inclusion

Appraisal Questions

- Will it integrate new neighbourhoods with existing neighbourhoods?
- Will it promote diversity?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Population

SA Objective 4: Reduce the need to travel and encourage active travel and sustainable transport

Appraisal Questions

- Will it promote the use of sustainable modes of transport and reduce dependence on the private car?
- Is the site location well-related to jobs and services to reduce travel distances?
- Does the site location encourage the use of existing sustainable modes of travel?
- Will it help develop walking, cycling rail and bus networks to enable residents access to employment, services and facilities?
- Will it reduce the overall impact on traffic sensitive areas?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Climatic factors
- Air
- Human health

SA Objective 5: Improve opportunities for prosperity and economic growth

Appraisal Questions

- Will it encourage higher skilled economic sectors in the district?
- Will it encourage new employment that is consistent with local needs?
- Will it encourage growth of existing businesses?
- Will it encourage small businesses to grow?
- Will it encourage rural diversification?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Population
- Material assets

SA Objective 6: Enhance the vitality and viability of city, town and village centres within the district

Appraisal Questions

- Will it improve existing facilities within Lichfield City and Burntwood Town Centre?
- Will it protect and enhance the ability of our key rural settlements to meet the day to day needs arising with these settlements and from the wider rural areas they serve?

- Will it support and protect neighbourhood centres serving the local needs of our urban communities?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Population
- Human health
- Material assets

SA Objective 7: Increase participation and improve access to education, training and lifelong learning

Appraisal Questions

- Will it increase educational attainment amongst young people?
- Will it reduce the number of working age residents who have no, or lower level qualifications?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Population
- Material assets

SA Objective 8: Protect and enhance air quality

Appraisal Questions

- Will it improve air quality?
- Will it help to achieve the objectives of the Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs)?
- Is the site within or directly connected to road that passes through an AQMA?
- Will it reduce emissions of key pollutants?
- Will it promote more sustainable transport and reduce the need to travel?
- Will it contain measures which will help to reduce congestion?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Air

SA Objective 9: Protect and enhance soils

Appraisal Questions

- Will it result in the loss of land that has not previously been developed?
- Will it result in the loss of quality agricultural land?
- Is the site capable of supporting higher density development and/or a mix of uses?
- Does the site allow for the re-use of existing buildings?
- Will it reduce the amount of derelict degraded and underused land within the district?

- Will it ensure contaminated land is remediated where appropriate?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Soil

SA Objective 10: Protect and enhance water resources

Appraisal Questions

- Will it protect and improve water quality?
- Is the site close to the River Mease SAC and could it have an effect on its water quality?
- Will it ensure there is sufficient waste water treatment capacity to accommodate the new development?
- Will it promote development which would avoid water pollution due to contaminated runoff from development?
- Will it minimise inappropriate development in Source Protection Zones?
- Will the policy/option support the efficient use of water?
- Will it ensure that there is sufficient water resource available to support new development?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Water

SA Objective 11: Reduce and manage flood risk

Appraisal Questions

- Is the site located outside an area at risk from flooding?
- Will there be an opportunity for flood risk reduction?
- Will it limit the amount of development in areas of high flood risk and areas which may increase flood risk elsewhere, taking into account the impacts of climate change?
- Will it promote the use of SuDS and other flood resilient design?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Water
- Climatic features

SA Objective 12: Minimise waste and increase resource efficiency

Appraisal Questions

- Will it reduce household and commercial waste?
- Will it maximise the recovery, re-use and recycling of waste?
- Will it reduce the proportion of waste sent to landfill?
- Will it encourage the prudent use of mineral resources?
- Will it safeguard Lichfield's material resources for future use?

- Will it lead to reduced consumption of materials and resources?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Material assets

SA Objective 13: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Appraisal Questions

- Will it reduce the causes of climate change?
- Will it reduce greenhouse gas emissions from domestic, commercial and industrial sources?
- Will it ensure new development is low carbon / carbon neutral?
- Will it promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport and reduce dependence on the private car?
- Will it increase energy efficiency?
- Will it increase the use and development of renewable energy?
- Will it promote the use of nature-based solutions (e.g. woodland creation and peatland restoration) to contribute towards climate change mitigation?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Climatic factors

SA Objective 14: Adapt to climate change

Appraisal Questions

- Will it ensure new developments and residents are able to withstand extreme weather events (e.g. heatwaves, drought, intense storms)?
- Will it encourage more green infrastructure including street trees, green roofs and walls in urban areas?
- Will it promote the use of nature-based solutions (e.g. wetland restoration) to contribute towards climate change adaptation?
- Will it support the delivery of climate adaptation services through green infrastructure?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Climatic features

SA Objective 15: Maintain, restore, enhance and avoid impacts where possible on biodiversity and geodiversity

Appraisal Questions

- Will it conserve protected / priority species?
- Will it protect and enhance designated sites of nature conservation and/or geological importance?
- Will it encourage the development of new biodiversity assets and ecological linkages to existing habitats within/alongside development including the delivery of Local Nature Recovery Strategies?

- Will it provide opportunities for people to access wildlife and open green spaces?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Biodiversity
- Geodiversity
- Flora and Fauna

SA Objective 16: Protect and enhance heritage assets and their settings

Appraisal Questions

- Will it result in the loss of historic landscape features?
- Will it safeguard sites of archaeological importance (scheduled or unscheduled) and their setting?
- Will it preserve and enhance buildings, structures, conservation areas and their setting and contribute to the district's heritage?
- Will it improve and broaden access to, and understanding of, local heritage, historic sites, areas and buildings?
- Will it offer opportunities to bring heritage assets back into active use?
- Does it safeguard historic views and valuable skylines of settlements?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage

SA Objective 17: Protect and enhance landscape and townscape character and quality

Appraisal Questions

- Will it safeguard and enhance the character of sensitive landscapes and local distinctiveness and identity?
- Will it help to further the purposes of the National Character Areas?
- Will it promote sensitive design in development?
- Will it achieve high quality and sustainable design for buildings, spaces and the public realm sensitive to the locality?
- Does it value and protect diverse and locally distinctive settlement and townscape character?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Landscape

Use of the SA Framework

5.6 The SA will be undertaken in close collaboration with the Lichfield District Council officers responsible for drafting the new Local Plan in order to fully integrate the SA process with the production of the plan.

5.7 Strategic policies and site allocations, including the reasonable alternative options, will be appraised against the SA objectives in the SA framework, with symbols being attributed to each policy or site option to indicate their likely effects on each SA objective. Where a potential positive or negative effect is uncertain, a question mark will be added to the relevant symbol (e.g. +? or -?)

and the symbol will be colour coded in line with the potential positive, negligible or negative effect (e.g. green, yellow, orange, etc.).

5.8 The likely effects of options need to be determined and their significance assessed, which inevitably requires a series of judgments to be made. The appraisal will attempt to differentiate between the most significant effects and other more minor effects through the use of the symbols. The dividing line in making a decision about the significance of an effect is often quite small. Where either (++) or (--) will be used to distinguish significant effects from more minor effects (+ or -) this will be because the effect of an option or policy on the SA objective in question is considered to be of such magnitude that it will have a noticeable and measurable effect taking into account other factors that may influence the achievement of that objective.

5.9 The findings of the SA will be presented using colour coded symbols showing the likely effect of each option against each of the SA objectives along with a concise justification for the effect identified. It may be possible to group the appraisal of strategic and development management policies by theme. The key to the SA symbols is shown in **Table 5.1** below.

Table 5.1: SA Framework symbols and colour coding

Symbol and colour code	Description
++	Significant positive effect likely
++/-	Mixed significant positive and minor negative effects likely
+	Minor positive effect likely
++/--	Mixed significant positive and negative effects likely
+/-	Mixed minor positive and negative effects likely
-	Minor negative effect likely
--/+	Mixed significant negative and minor positive effects likely

Symbol and colour code	Description
--	Significant negative effect likely
0	Negligible effect likely
?	Uncertain effect

5.10 In relation to the appraisal of the site options, detailed sets of site assessment criteria have been developed and will be applied during the next stage of the SA. The criteria will relate specifically to each type of site option (i.e. residential, employment, mixed use etc.). The site assessment criteria will set out clear parameters within which certain SA effects would be identified, based on factors such as the distance of site options from features such as biodiversity designations, public transport links and areas of high landscape sensitivity. The criteria, where required, may be updated at future stages on the SA to draw on the most recent evidence sources. The site assessment criteria can be applied through the use of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) data where appropriate.

5.11 In determining the significance of the effects of the options for potential inclusion in the new Local Plan it will be important to bear in mind the relationship of the Local Plan with the other documents in the planning system such as the NPPF and other national policy approaches, and regulatory requirements, as these may provide additional safeguards or mitigation of potentially significant adverse effects.

Reasonable Alternatives

5.12 The SA must appraise not only the preferred options for inclusion in the Local Plan but also ‘reasonable alternatives’ to these options. This implies that alternatives that are not reasonable do not need to be subject to appraisal. Part (b) of Regulation 12(2) of the SEA Regulations notes that reasonable alternatives will take into account the objectives of the plan, as well as its geographical scope. Therefore, alternatives that do not meet the objectives of

national policy, local objectives or are outside the plan area are unlikely to be reasonable.

5.13 Developing options for a plan is an iterative process, usually involving a number of consultations with the public and stakeholders. Consultation responses and the SA can help to identify where there may be other 'reasonable alternatives' to the options being considered for a plan.

5.14 The SA findings are not the only factors taken into account when determining a preferred option to take forward in a plan. Indeed, there will often be an equal number of positive or negative effects identified by the SA for each option, such that it is not possible to rank them based on sustainability performance in order to select a preferred option. Factors such as public opinion, deliverability and conformity with national policy will also be taken into account. Future iterations of the SA will describe how the appraisal of options has been taken into consideration when developing the draft Lichfield Local Plan.

Chapter 6

Consultation and next steps

6.1 In order to meet the requirements of the SEA Regulations, the views of the three statutory consultees (Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England) are being sought in relation to the scope and level of detail to be included in this SA Scoping Report.

1.1 Consultees are in particular requested to consider the following:

- Whether the scope of the SA is appropriate as set out considering the role of the Lichfield Local Plan to help meet and manage Lichfield's needs.
- Whether there are any additional plans, policies or programmes that are relevant to the SA that should be included (see **Chapter 2** and **Appendix A**).
- Whether the baseline information provided is robust and comprehensive and provides a suitable baseline for the SA of the new Local Plan (see **Chapter 3**).
- Whether there are any additional key sustainability issues relevant to the new Local Plan that should be included (see **Chapter 4**).
- Whether the SA framework (see **Chapter 5**) is appropriate and includes a suitable set of SA objectives for assessing the effects of the options included within the new Local Plan as well as reasonable alternatives.

1.2 Responses from consultees will be reviewed and appropriate amendments made to the information contained in the Scoping Report, including the baseline information, policy context and SA framework where necessary.

1.3 As the Local Plan is drafted, it will be subject to SA using the SA framework presented in **Chapter 5**. A full SA Report (incorporating the next stages of the SA process) will then be produced and made available to other stakeholders and the general public for wider consultation alongside the emerging Local

Chapter 6 Consultation and next steps

Plan. This will include any amendments to the Scoping work arising from the consultation with statutory bodies on this report.

LUC

July 2024

Appendix A

Review of Plans, Policies and Programmes

International Plans and Programmes of most relevance for the Local Plan

A.1 2022 Convention on Biological Diversity [See reference 125] – COP15 Kunming-Montreal adopted the “Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework” (GBF), including four goals and 23 targets for achievement by 2030.

A.2 The Glasgow Pact (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, 2021) - Nations adopted the Glasgow Climate Pact [See reference 126]. The package of decisions consists of a range of agreed items, including strengthened efforts to build resilience to climate change, to curb greenhouse gas emissions and to provide the necessary finance for both. Nations reaffirmed their duty to fulfil the pledge of providing \$100 billion annually from developed to developing countries. And they collectively agreed to work to reduce the gap between existing emission reduction plans and what is required to reduce emissions. They also agreed to phase down unabated coal power and inefficient subsidies for fossil fuels.

A.3 United Nations Declaration on Forests and Land Use (COP26 Declaration) (2021) [See reference 127]: international commitment to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030 while delivering sustainable development and promoting an inclusive rural transformation.

A.4 The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015) [See reference 128], adopted by all United Nations Member States, provides a shared blueprint

Appendix A Review of Plans, Policies and Programmes

for peace and prosperity for people and the planet and includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), designed to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.

A.5 The United Nations Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (the 'Aarhus Convention') (1998) **[See reference 129]** establishes a number of rights of the public (individuals and their associations) with regard to the environment. The Parties to the Convention are required to make the necessary provisions so that public authorities (at national, regional or local level) will contribute to these rights to become effective.

A.6 The United Nations Declaration on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Declaration) (2002) **[See reference 130]** sets a broad framework for international sustainable development, including building a humane, equitable and caring global society aware of the need for human dignity for all, renewable energy and energy efficiency, sustainable consumption and production and resource efficiency.

A.7 The United Nations Paris Climate Change Agreement (2015) **[See reference 131]** is an international agreement to keep global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

A.8 The International Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention) (1976) **[See reference 132]** is an international agreement with the aim of conserving and managing the use of wetlands and their resources.

A.9 The European Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) (1979) **[See reference 133]** aims to ensure conservation and protection of wild plant and animal species and their natural habitats, to increase cooperation between contracting parties, and to regulate the exploitation of those species (including migratory species).

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A.10 The International Convention on Biological Diversity (1992) **[See reference 134]** is an international commitment to biodiversity conservation through national strategies and action plans.

A.11 The European Habitats Directive (1992) **[See reference 135]**, together with the Birds Directive, sets the standard for nature conservation across the EU and enables all 27 Member States to work together within the same strong legislative framework in order to protect the most vulnerable species and habitat types across their entire natural range within the EU. It also established the Natura 2000 network.

A.12 The European Birds Directive (2009) **[See reference 136]** requires the maintenance of all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state in the European territory at a level which corresponds in particular to ecological, scientific and cultural requirements, while taking account of economic and recreational requirements.

A.13 The United Nations Declaration on Forests (New York Declaration) (2014) **[See reference 137]** sets out international commitment to cut natural forest loss by 2020 and end loss by 2030.

A.14 The Valletta Treaty (1992) **[See reference 138]**, formerly the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Revisited), aims to protect the European archaeological heritage “as a source of European collective memory and as an instrument for historical and scientific study”.

A.15 The United Nations (UNESCO) World Heritage Convention (1972) **[See reference 139]** promotes co-operation among nations to protect heritage around the world that is of such outstanding universal value that its conservation is important for current and future generations.

A.16 The European Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (1985) **[See reference 140]** defines ‘architectural heritage’ and requires that the signatories maintain an inventory of it and take statutory measures to ensure its protection. Conservation policies are also required to be

integrated into planning systems and other spheres of government influence as per the text of the convention.

A.17 The European Landscape Convention (2002) [See reference 141] promotes landscape protection, management and planning. The Convention is aimed at the protection, management and planning of all landscapes and raising awareness of the value of a living landscape.

National Plans and Programmes (beyond the NPPF) of Most Relevance for the Local Plan

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

A.18 The Carbon Budget Delivery Plan (2023) [See reference 142] explains how the government intends to meet its legally-binding climate goals, setting out a package of quantified and unquantified proposals and policies, and associated timescales and delivery risks this also includes:

- wider matters in connection with carbon budgets
- the contribution of these proposals and policies to sustainable development
- the impact the package has on sectors of the economy

A.19 Powering up Britain (2023) [See reference 143] sets out the department's approach to energy security and net zero, and acts as an introduction to Powering Up Britain: Energy Security Plan, and Powering Up Britain: Net Zero Growth Plan.

A.20 The Environment Improvement Plan 2023 [See reference 144] for England is the first revision of the 25YEP. It builds on the 25YEP vision with a new plan setting out how they will work with landowners, communities and businesses to deliver each of our goals for improving the environment, matched with interim targets to measure progress. Taking these actions will help us restore nature, reduce environmental pollution, and increase the prosperity of our country.

A.21 UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022 [See reference 145] outlines the UK government and devolved administrations' position on the key climate change risks and opportunities that the UK faces today. The risk assessment considers sixty-one UK-wide climate risks and opportunities cutting across multiple sectors of the economy and prioritises the following eight risk areas for action in the next two years:

- risks to the viability and diversity of terrestrial and freshwater habitats and species from multiple hazards
- risks to soil health from increased flooding and drought
- risks to natural carbon stores and sequestration from multiple hazards
- risks to crops, livestock and commercial trees from multiple climate hazards
- risks to supply of food, goods and vital services due to climate-related collapse of supply chains and distribution networks
- risks to people and the economy from climate-related failure of the power system
- risks to human health, wellbeing and productivity from increased exposure to heat in homes and other buildings
- multiple risks to the UK from climate change impacts overseas

A.22 The British Energy Security Strategy (2022) [See reference 146] sets out how the UK will enhance its energy security, setting out plans for future deployment of wind, new nuclear, solar and hydrogen, and for supporting the production of domestic oil and gas in the nearer term. The strategy builds on the

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Prime Minister's 'Ten point plan for a green industrial revolution', and the 'Net zero strategy'. Key aims and commitments include:

- New commitments to supercharge clean energy and accelerate deployment, which could see 95% of Great Britain's electricity set to be low carbon by 2030.
- Supporting over 40,000 more jobs in clean industries, totalling 480,000 jobs by 2030.
- Accelerated expansion of nuclear, wind, solar, hydrogen, oil and gas, including delivering the equivalent to one nuclear reactor a year instead of one a decade.
- Offshore wind – Aim of providing up to 50GW by 2030, of which 5GW is planned to be from floating offshore wind in deeper seas. This is aimed to be underpinned by new planning reforms to cut the approval times for new offshore wind farms from 4 years to 1 year and an overall streamlining which will aims to reduce the time it takes for new projects to reach construction stages while improving the environment.
- Oil and gas – A licensing round for new North Sea oil and gas projects is planned to launch in Autumn, with a new taskforce providing bespoke support to new developments.
- Onshore wind – The Government plans to consult on developing partnerships with a limited number of supportive communities who wish to host new onshore wind infrastructure in return for guaranteed lower energy bills.
- Heat pump manufacturing – The Government aim to run a Heat Pump Investment Accelerator Competition in 2022 worth up to £30 million to make British heat pumps, with hopes to reduce demand for gas.

A.23 It is anticipated that following the 2024 general election, the British Energy Security Strategy, based on the former Prime Minister's 'Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution' and the 'Net Zero Strategy' may undergo several changes influenced by the new government's priorities, and evolving economic and technological conditions.

A.24 The Environment Act 2021 [\[See reference 147\]](#) sets statutory targets for the recovery of the natural world in four priority areas: air quality, biodiversity, water, and resource efficiency and waste reduction. The Environment Act will deliver:

- Long-term targets to improve air quality biodiversity, water, and waste reduction and resource efficiency.
- A target on ambient PM2.5 concentrations.
- A target to halt the decline of nature by 2030.
- Environmental Improvement Plans, including interim targets.
- A cycle of environmental monitoring and reporting.
- Environmental Principles embedded in domestic policy making.
- Office for Environmental Protection to uphold environmental law.

A.25 The Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (2021) [\[See reference 148\]](#) sets out policies and proposals for decarbonising all sectors of the UK economy to meet net zero targets by 2050. It sets out strategies to keep the UK on track with carbon budgets, outlines the National Determined Contribution (NDC) and sets out the vision for a decarbonised economy in 2050. Its focus includes:

- Policies and proposals for reducing emissions across the economy in key sectors (power, fuel supply and hydrogen, industry, heat and buildings, transport, natural gas and waste).
- Policies and proposals for supporting transition across the economy through innovation, green investment, green jobs, embedding net-zero in government, local climate action, empowering people and businesses, and international leadership and collaboration.

A.26 The Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy (2021) [\[See reference 149\]](#) aims to support existing industry to decarbonise and encourage the growth of new, low carbon industries to protect and create skilled jobs and businesses in the UK encouraging long-term investment in home-grown decarbonisation technology. The strategy builds in the Prime Minister's 10 Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution and sets out the government's vision for building a

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competitive, greener future for the manufacturing and construction sector and is part of the government's path to net zero by 2050. The strategy aims to reduce emissions by two-thirds in just 15 years and support up to 80,000 jobs over the next thirty years and includes measures to produce 20 terawatt hours of the UK industry's energy supply from low carbon alternatives by 2030. It also aims to introduce new rules on measuring the energy and carbon performance of the UK's largest commercial and industrial buildings, providing potential savings to businesses of around £2 billion per year in energy costs in 2030 and aiming to reduce annual carbon emissions by over 2 million tonnes - approximately 10% of their current emissions. Other key commitments within the Strategy include:

- The use of carbon pricing to drive changes in industry to focus on emissions in business and investment decisions.
- To establish a policy framework to accelerate the switch from fossil fuels to low carbon alternatives such as hydrogen, electricity, or biomass.
- New product standards, enabling manufacturers to clearly distinguish their products from high carbon competitors.
- To ensure the land planning regime is fit for building low carbon infrastructure.
- Support the skills transition so that the UK workforce benefits from the creation of new green jobs.
- An expectation that at least 3 megatons of CO₂ is captured within industry per year by 2030.
- That by 2050, there will be zero avoidable waste of materials across heavy industries.

A.27 The Heat and Buildings Strategy (2021) [[See reference 150](#)] sets out the government's plan to significantly cut carbon emissions from the UK's 30 million homes and workplaces. This strategy aims to provide a clear direction of travel for the 2020s, set out the strategic decisions that need to be taken this decade, and demonstrate how the UK plans to meet its carbon targets and remain on track for net zero by 2050. Key aims of the strategy include:

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- Reduce direct emissions from public sector buildings by 75% against a 2017 baseline by the end of carbon budget 6.
- Significantly reduce energy consumption of commercial, and industrial buildings by 2030.
- Phase out the installation of new natural gas boilers beyond 2035.
- Significantly grow the supply chain for heat pumps to 2028: from installing around 35,000 hydronic heat pumps a year to a minimum market capacity of 600,000 per year by 2028.
- Reduce the costs of installing a heat pump by at least 25-50% by 2025 and to ensure heat pumps are no more expensive to buy and run than gas boilers by 2030.
- Achieve 30-fold increase in heat pumps manufactured and sold within the UK by the end of the decade.
- Grow the market for heat pumps notably via a £450 million Boiler Upgrade Scheme to support households who want to switch with £5,000 grants.
- Improve heat pump appeal by continuing to invest in research and innovation, with the £60 million Net Zero Innovation Portfolio 'Heat Pump Ready' Programme supporting the development of innovation across the sector.
- Ensure all new buildings in England are ready for Net Zero from 2025. To enable this, new standards will be introduced through legislation to ensure new homes and buildings will be fitted with low-carbon heating and high levels of energy efficiency.
- Establish large-scale trials of hydrogen for heating, including a neighbourhood trial by 2023.
- Ensure as many fuel poor homes in England, as reasonably practicable, achieve a minimum energy efficiency rating of band C by the end of 2030.
- Support social housing, low income and fuel poor households via boosting funding for the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and Home Upgrade Grant, which aim to improve the energy performance of low income

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households' homes, support low carbon heat installations and build the green retrofitting sector to benefit all homeowners.

- Scale up low-carbon heat network deployment and to enable local areas to deploy heat network zoning- Heat Network Transformation Programme of £338 million (over 2022/23 to 2024/25).

A.28 The UK Hydrogen Strategy (2021) [See reference 151] sets out the approach to developing a substantial low carbon hydrogen sector in the UK and to meet the ambition for 5GW of low carbon hydrogen production capacity by 2030. The Strategy outlines the role of hydrogen in meeting net zero targets, the existing opportunity within the UK, a strategic framework, a roadmap for the economy, and the UK Government's commitments for a hydrogen economy. The Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations (2021).

A.29 The Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations (2021) [See reference 152] seek to improve the energy efficiency of buildings, reducing their carbon emissions and lessening the impact of climate change. The Regulations require the adoption of a standard methodology for calculating energy performance and minimum requirements for energy performance, reported through Energy Performance Certificates and Display Energy Certificates.

A.30 The Energy white paper: Powering our net zero future (2020) [See reference 153] builds on the Prime Minister's Ten point plan for a green industrial revolution. The white paper addresses the transformation of the UK's energy system, promoting high-skilled jobs and clean, resilient economic growth during its transition to net-zero emissions by 2050. Key aims of the paper include:

- Supporting green jobs – The government aims to support up to 220,000 jobs in the next 10 years.
- Transforming the energy system – To transform its electricity grid for net-zero, the white paper highlights how this will involve changing the way the country heats its homes, how people travel, doubling the electricity use, and harnessing renewable energy supplies.

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- Keeping bills affordable – The government aims to do this by making the energy retail market “truly competitive”. This will include offering people a method of switching to a cheaper energy tariff and testing automatically switching consumers to fairer deals to tackle “loyalty penalties”.
- Generating emission-free electricity by 2050 – The government aims to have “overwhelmingly decarbonised power” in the 2030s in order to generate emission-free electricity by 2050.
- Establishing UK Emissions Trading Scheme – The government aims to establish a UK Emissions Trading Scheme (UK ETS) from 1 January 2021 to replace the current EU ETS at the end of the Brexit Transition Period.
- Exploring new nuclear financing options – The government is continuing to explore a range of financing options for new nuclear with developers including the Regulated Asset Base (RAB) funding model.
- Further commitments to offshore wind – The white paper lays out plans to scale up its offshore wind fleet to 40 gigawatts (GW) by 2030, including 1GW of floating wind, enough to power every home in the country.
- Carbon capture and storage investments – Including £1bn worth of investments in state-of-the-art CCS in four industrial clusters by 2030. With four low-carbon clusters set up by 2030, and at least one fully net-zero cluster by 2040.
- Kick-starting the hydrogen economy – The government plans to work with industry to aim for 5GW of production by 2030, backed up by a new £240m net-zero Hydrogen Fund for low-carbon hydrogen production.
- Investing in electric vehicle charge points – The government plans to invest £1.3bn to accelerate the rollout of charge points for electric vehicles as well as up to £1bn to support the electrification of cars.
- Supporting the lowest paid with their bills – The government aims to support those with lower incomes through a £6.7bn package of measures that could save families in old inefficient homes up to £400.
- Moving away from fossil fuel boilers – The government aims, by the mid-2030s, for all newly installed heating systems to be low-carbon or to be appliances that it is confident can be converted to a clean fuel supply.

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- Supporting North Sea oil and gas transition – The white paper notes the importance of supporting the North Sea oil and gas transition for the people and communities most affected by the move away from fossil fuels. The government aims to achieve this by ensuring that the expertise of the oil and gas sector be drawn on in developing CCS and hydrogen production to provide new green jobs for the future.

A.31 National Infrastructure Strategy: Fairer, faster greener (2020) [See reference 154] sets out plans to transform UK infrastructure in order to level up the country, strengthen the Union and achieve net zero emissions by 2050. This will be enabled by clear support for private investment and through a comprehensive set of reforms to the way infrastructure is delivered.

A.32 The Sixth Carbon Budget report (2020) [See reference 155] is based on an extensive programme of analysis, consultation and consideration by the Committee and its staff, building on the evidence published last year for our Net Zero advice. Our recommended pathway requires a 78% reduction in UK territorial emissions between 1990 and 2035. In effect, bringing forward the UK's previous 80% target by nearly 15 years.

A.33 Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge (2020) [See reference 156] sets out the strategic priorities for the new Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP), published in July 2021. It sets out in detail what government, business and society will need to do to deliver the significant emissions reduction needed across all modes of transport, putting us on a pathway to achieving carbon budgets and net zero emissions across every single mode of transport by 2050. This document acknowledges that while there have been recently published strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in individual transport modes, transport as a whole sector needs to go further and more quickly, therefore the TDP takes a coordinated, cross-modal approach to deliver the transport sector's contribution to both carbon budgets and net zero.

A.34 Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management: Policy Statement (2020) [See reference 157] sets out the government's long-term ambition to create a nation more resilient to future flood and coastal erosion risk, and in doing so,

reduce the risk of harm to people, the environment and the economy. The Policy Statement sets out five policy areas which will drive this ambition. These are:

- Upgrading and expanding our national flood defences and infrastructure;
- Managing the flow of water more effectively;
- Harnessing the power of nature to reduce flood and coastal erosion risk and achieve multiple benefits;
- Better preparing our communities; and
- Enabling more resilient places through a catchment-based approach.

A.35 Net Zero – The UK’s contribution to stopping global warming (Climate Change Committee, 2019) [\[See reference 158\]](#) responds to a request from the Governments of the UK, Wales and Scotland, asking the Committee to reassess the UK’s long-term emissions targets. Our new emissions scenarios draw on ten new research projects, three expert advisory groups, and reviews of the work of the IPCC and others. The report’s key findings are that:

- The Committee on Climate Change recommends a new emissions target for the UK: net-zero greenhouse gases by 2050.
- In Scotland, we recommend a net-zero date of 2045, reflecting Scotland’s greater relative capacity to remove emissions than the UK as a whole.
- In Wales, we recommend a 95% reduction in greenhouse gases by 2050.

A.36 The Promotion of the Use of Energy from Renewables Sources

Regulations 2011 [\[See reference 159\]](#) required the government to ensure that renewable energy comprised 15% of the UK’s total energy mix by 2020. The Renewable Energy Directive has now been superseded by Directive (EU) 2018/2001 (RED II). Although the UK has now been released from the renewable energy targets under RED II following Brexit, the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement includes a commitment to promote energy efficiency and the use of energy from renewable sources and reaffirmation of the EU’s 2030 “targets” and the UK’s 2030 “ambitions” for renewable energy and energy efficiency.

A.37 The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England 2011 [See reference 160] sets out the national framework for managing the risk of flooding and coastal erosion. It sets out the roles for risk management authorities and communities to help them understand their responsibilities. The strategic aims and objectives of the Strategy are to:

- Manage the risk to people and their property;
- Facilitate decision-making and action at the appropriate level – individual, community or Local Authority, river catchment, coastal cell or national; and
- Achieve environmental, social and economic benefits, consistent with the principles of sustainable development.

A.38 The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 [See reference 161] and The Flood and Water Regulations 2019 [See reference 162] sets out measures to ensure that risk from all sources of flooding is managed more effectively. This includes incorporating greater resilience measures into the design of new buildings; utilising the environment in order to reduce flooding; identifying areas suitable for inundation and water storage to reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere; rolling back development in coastal areas to avoid damage from flooding or coastal erosion; and creating sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).

A.39 The National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting: Making the country resilient to a changing climate [See reference 163] sets out visions for the following sectors:

- People and the Built Environment – “to promote the development of a healthy, equitable and resilient population, well placed to reduce the harmful health impacts of climate change...buildings and places (including built heritage) and the people who live and work in them are resilient and organisations in the built environment sector have an increased capacity to address the risks and make the most of the opportunities of a changing climate.”
- Infrastructure – “an infrastructure network that is resilient to today’s natural hazards and prepared for the future changing climate.”

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- Natural Environment – “the natural environment, with diverse and healthy ecosystems, is resilient to climate change, able to accommodate change and valued for the adaptation services it provides.”
- Business and Industry – “UK businesses are resilient to extreme weather and prepared for future risks and opportunities from climate change.”
- Local Government – “Local Government plays a central role in leading and supporting local places to become more resilient to a range of future risks and to be prepared for the opportunities from a changing climate.”

A.40 Our Waste, Our Resources: A strategy for England (2018) [See reference 164] aims to increase resource productivity and eliminate avoidable waste by 2050. The Strategy sets out key targets which include: a 50% recycling rate for household waste by 2020, a 75% recycling rate for packaging by 2030, 65% recycling rate for municipal solid waste by 2035 and municipal waste to landfill 10% or less by 2035.

A.41 The Clean Growth Strategy (2017) [See reference 165] sets out the approach of the government to secure growth of the national income while cutting greenhouse gas emissions. The key policies and proposals of the Strategy sit below a number of overarching principles: acceleration of clean growth including through recommendations for private and public investment to meet carbon budgets; providing support to improve business and industry energy efficiency; improving energy efficiency in the housing stock including through low carbon heating; accelerating the shift to low carbon transport; delivering clean, smart, flexible power; enhancing the benefits and value of our natural resources; leading in the public sector to meet emissions targets; and ensure Government leadership to drive clean growth.

A.42 The National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW) (2014) [See reference 166] identifies key planning objectives, requiring planning Authorities to:

- Help deliver sustainable development through driving waste management up the waste hierarchy;
- Ensure waste management is considered alongside other spatial planning concerns;

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- Provide a framework in which communities take more responsibility for their own waste;
- Help secure the recovery or disposal of waste without endangering human health and without harming the environment; and
- Ensure the design and layout of new development supports sustainable waste management.

A.43 The Waste Management Plan for England (2013) [\[See reference 167\]](#) sets out the measures for England to work towards a zero waste economy.

A.44 The Energy Efficiency Strategy: The Energy Efficiency Opportunity in the UK 2012 [\[See reference 168\]](#) aims to realise the wider energy efficiency potential that is available in the UK economy by maximising the potential of existing dwellings by implementing 21st century energy management initiatives on 19th century homes.

A.45 The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan: National Strategy for Climate and Energy (2009) [\[See reference 169\]](#) sets out a five-point plan to tackle climate change. The points are as follows: protecting the public from immediate risk, preparing for the future, limiting the severity of future climate change through a new international climate agreement, building a low carbon UK and supporting individuals, communities and businesses to play their part.

A.46 The UK Renewable Energy Strategy (2009) [\[See reference 170\]](#) sets out the ways in which we will tackle climate change by reducing our CO₂ emissions through the generation of a renewable electricity, heat and transport technologies.

A.47 The Climate Change Act 2008 [\[See reference 171\]](#) sets targets for UK greenhouse gas emission reductions of at least 100% by 2050, against a 1990 baseline (this was previously 80% but was updated to a net zero target in June 2019).

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A.48 The Planning and Energy Act (2008) [See reference 172] enables local planning authorities to set requirements for carbon reduction and renewable energy provision. It should be noted that while the Housing Standards Review proposed to repeal some of these provisions, at the time of writing there have been no amendments to the Planning and Energy Act.

A.49 The Waste (Circular Economy) (Amendment) Regulations [See reference 173] seek to prevent waste generation and to monitor and assess the implementation of measures included in waste prevention programmes. They set out requirements to justify not separating waste streams close to source for re-use, recycling or other recovery operations, prohibit incineration and landfilling of waste unless such treatment process represent the best environmental outcome in accordance with the waste hierarchy. The Regulations set out when waste management plans and in waste prevention programmes are required. The Regulations focus on the circular economy as a means for businesses to maximise the value of waste and waste treatment.

Health and Well-being

A.50 The Green Infrastructure Framework (2023) [See reference 174] by Natural England will help increase the amount of green cover to 40% in urban residential areas. The Green Infrastructure Framework provides a structure to analyse where greenspace in urban environments is needed most. It aims to support equitable access to greenspace across the country, with an overarching target for everyone being able to reach good quality greenspace in their local area. From parks to green roofs, and increased tree cover, the Green Infrastructure Framework will make a significant contribution to nature recovery by embedding nature into new developments. Increasing the extent and connectivity of nature-rich habitats will also help increase wildlife populations, build resilience to the impacts of climate change, and ensure our cities are habitable for the future

A.51 The White Paper Levelling Up the United Kingdom (2022) [See reference 175] sets out how the UK Government will spread opportunity more equally

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across the UK. It comprises 12 UK-wide missions to achieve by 2030. Missions which relate to population, health and wellbeing state that by 2030:

- The gap in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) between local areas where it is highest and lowest will have narrowed, and by 2035 HLE will rise by five years.
- Well-being will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.
- Homicide, serious violence, and neighbourhood crime will have fallen, focused on the worst-affected areas.
- Pride in place, such as people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.
- The number of primary school children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths will have significantly increased. In England, this will mean 90% of children will achieve the expected standard, and the percentage of children meeting the expected standard in the worst performing areas will have increased by over a third.
- Renters will have a secure path to ownership with the number of first-time buyers increasing in all areas; and the Government's ambition is for the number of non-decent rented homes to have fallen by 50%, with the biggest improvements in the lowest performing areas.

A.52 A fairer private rented sector White Paper (2022) [\[See reference 176\]](#) aims to build upon the vision of the Levelling Up White Paper and reform the Private Rented Sector and improve housing quality. It outlines that everyone deserves a secure and decent home and outlines measures to improve the experience of renters in the Private Rented Sector.

A.53 The State of the Environment: Health, People and the Environment (2021) [\[See reference 177\]](#) focuses on the relationship between human health and people's access to and connection with a clean, high quality natural environment. It presents information on England's environment, and people's

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exposure to environmental pollutants, flooding and climate change in relation to human health. It highlights environmental inequalities that contribute to differences in health outcomes for people in England.

A.54 The National Design Guide (2021) [\[See reference 178\]](#) sets out the Government's priorities for well-designed places in the form of ten characteristics: context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes and buildings, resources and lifespan.

A.55 Build Back Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care (2021) [\[See reference 179\]](#) sets out the government's new plan for health and social care. It provides an overview of how this plan will tackle the elective backlog in the NHS and put the NHS on a sustainable footing. It sets out details of the plan for adult social care in England, including a cap on social care costs and how financial assistance will work for those without substantial assets. It covers wider support that the government will provide for the social care system, and how the government will improve the integration of health and social care. It explains the government's plan to introduce a new Health and Social Care Levy.

A.56 The COVID-19 Mental Health and Wellbeing Recovery Action Plan (2021) [\[See reference 180\]](#) sets out the Government's plan to prevent, mitigate and respond to the mental health impacts of the pandemic during 2021 and 2022. Its main objectives are to support the general population to take action and look after their own mental wellbeing; to take action to address factors which play a crucial role in shaping mental health and wellbeing outcomes; and, to support services to meet the need for specialist support.

A.57 The Charter for Social Housing Residents: Social Housing White Paper (2020) [\[See reference 181\]](#) sets out the Government's actions to ensure residents in social housing are safe, listened to, live in good quality homes and have access to redress when things go wrong.

A.58 Using the planning system to promote healthy weight environments (2020), Addendum (2021) [\[See reference 182\]](#) provides a framework and

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starting point for local authorities to clearly set out in local planning guidance how best to achieve healthy weight environments based on local evidence and needs, by focusing on environments that enable healthier eating and help promote more physical activity as the default. The Addendum provides updates on the implications for planning for a healthier food environment, specifically on the hot food takeaways retail uses, and sets out recommended actions in light of changes to the Use Class Order (UCO) in England from 1 September 2020.

A.59 The Public Health England, PHE Strategy 2020-25 (2019) [\[See reference 183\]](#) identifies PHE's priorities upon which to focus over this five-year period to protect people and help people to live longer in good health.

A.60 The Homes England Strategic Plan 2018 to 2023 [\[See reference 184\]](#) sets out a vision to ensure more homes are built in areas of greatest need, to improve affordability, and make a more resilient and diverse housing market.

A.61 The Housing White Paper 2017 (Fixing our broken housing market) [\[See reference 185\]](#) sets out ways to address the shortfall in affordable homes and boost housing supply. The White Paper focuses on the following:

- Planning for the right homes in the right places – Higher densities in appropriate areas, protecting the Green Belt while making more land available for housing by maximising the contribution from brownfield and surplus public land, regenerating estates, releasing more small and medium-sized sites, allowing rural communities to grow and making it easier to build new settlements.
- Building homes faster – Improved speed of planning cases, ensuring infrastructure is provided and supporting developers to build out more quickly.
- Diversifying the Market – Backing small and medium-sized house builders, custom-build, institutional investors, new contractors, housing associations.
- Helping people now – supporting home ownership and providing affordable housing for all types of people, including the most vulnerable.

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A.62 The Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2015 [See reference 186] sets out the Government's planning policy for traveller sites, replacing the older version published in March 2012. The Government's overarching aim is to ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers, in a way that facilitates the traditional and nomadic way of life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community.

A.63 The Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015) [See reference 187] sets out the Government's new nationally described space standard. The standard deals with internal space within new dwellings and sets out requirements for the Gross Internal (floor) Area of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy, as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home.

A.64 The Select Committee on Public Service and Demographic Change Report Ready for Ageing? (2013) [See reference 188] warns that society is underprepared for the ageing population. The report states "longer lives can be a great benefit, but there has been a collective failure to address the implications and without urgent action this great boon could turn into a series of miserable crises". The report highlights the under provision of specialist housing for older people and the need to plan for the housing needs of the older population as well as younger people.

A.65 Fair Society, Healthy Lives (2011) [See reference 189] 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".

A.66 Laying the foundations: A housing strategy for England [See reference 190] aims to provide support to deliver new homes and improve social mobility.

A.67 Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health in England 2010 [See reference 191] sets out how the Government's approach to public health challenges will:

- Protect the population from health threats – led by central Government, with a strong system to the frontline;
- Empower local leadership and encourage wide responsibility across society to improve everyone's health and wellbeing and tackle the wider factors that influence it;
- Focus on key outcomes, doing what works to deliver them, with transparency of outcomes to enable accountability through a proposed new public health outcomes framework;
- Reflect the Government's core values of freedom, fairness and responsibility by strengthening self-esteem, confidence and personal responsibility; positively promoting healthy behaviours and lifestyles; and adapting the environment to make healthy choices easier; and
- Balance the freedoms of individuals and organisations with the need to avoid harm to others, use a 'ladder' of interventions to determine the least intrusive approach necessary to achieve the desired effect and aim to make voluntary approaches work before resorting to regulation.

A.68 The Environmental Noise Regulations 2006 [See reference 192] apply to environmental noise, mainly from transport. The regulations require regular noise mapping and action planning for road, rail and aviation noise and noise in large urban areas. They also require Noise Action Plans based on the maps for road and rail noise and noise in large urban areas. The Action Plans identify Important Areas (areas exposed to the highest levels of noise) and suggest ways the relevant authorities can reduce these. Major airports and those which affect large urban areas are also required to produce and publish their own Noise Action Plans separately. The Regulations do not apply to noise from domestic activities such as noise created by neighbours; at workplaces; inside means of transport; or military activities in military areas.

Environment (biodiversity/geodiversity, landscape and soils)

A.69 The Environment Improvement Plan 2023 [See reference 193] for England is the first revision of the 25YEP. It builds on the 25YEP vision with a new plan setting out how we will work with landowners, communities and businesses to deliver each of our goals for improving the environment, matched with interim targets to measure progress. Taking these actions will help us restore nature, reduce environmental pollution, and increase the prosperity of our country. To achieve its vision, the 25YEP set out 10 goals. We have used those 10 goals set out in the 25YEP as the basis for this document: setting out the progress made against all 10, the specific targets and commitments made in relation to each goal, and our plan to continue to deliver these targets and the overarching goals. The environmental goals are:

- Goal 1: Thriving plants and wildlife
- Goal 2: Clean air
- Goal 3: Clean and plentiful water
- Goal 4: Managing exposure to chemicals and pesticides
- Goal 5: Maximise our resources, minimise our waste
- Goal 6: Using resources from nature sustainably
- Goal 7: Mitigating and adapting to climate change
- Goal 8: Reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards
- Goal 9: Enhancing biosecurity
- Goal 10: Enhanced beauty, heritage, and engagement with the natural environment

A.70 Working with nature (2022) [See reference 194] discusses the importance of nature in providing ecosystem services and presents recent and historical trends in biodiversity. It outlines some of the main pressures affecting England's

habitats, wildlife and ecosystems: land use; climate change; pollution; invasive non-native species; and hydrological change.

A.71 Establishing the Best Available Techniques for the UK (UK BAT) (2022) [See reference 195] sets out a new framework that aims to improve industrial emissions and protect the environment through the introduction of a UK BAT regime. It aims to set up a new structure of governance with a new independent body in the form of Standards Council and the Regulators Group, consisting of government officials and expert regulators from all UK nations. It aims to also establish a new UK Air Quality Governance Group to oversee the work of the Standards Council and the delivery of the requirements under this new framework. It is anticipated that the BATC for the first four industry sectors will be published in the second half of 2023.

A.72 The Environment Act 2021 [See reference 196] sets statutory targets for the recovery of the natural world in four priority areas: air quality, biodiversity, water, and resource efficiency and waste reduction. Biodiversity elements in the Act include:

- Strengthened biodiversity duty. Both onsite and offsite enhancements must be maintained for at least 30 years after completion of a development.
- Biodiversity net gain to ensure developments deliver at least 10% increase in biodiversity
- Local Nature Recovery Strategies to support a Nature Recovery Network.
- Duty upon Local Authorities to consult on street tree felling.
- Strengthen woodland protection enforcement measures.
- Conservation Covenants.
- Protected Site Strategies and Species Conservation Strategies to support the design and delivery of strategic approaches to deliver better outcomes for nature.
- Prohibit larger UK businesses from using commodities associated with wide-scale deforestation.

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- Requires regulated businesses to establish a system of due diligence for each regulated commodity used in their supply chain, requires regulated businesses to report on their due diligence, introduces a due diligence enforcement system.

A.73 The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 [See reference 197] protect biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora, including birds. The Regulations lay down rules for the protection, management and exploitation of such habitats and species, including how adverse effects on such habitats and species should be avoided, minimised and reported.

A.74 Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) Regulations 2015 [See reference 198] are wide-ranging government regulations that can potentially apply to many businesses. The regulations oblige those who create environmental damage, whether by water pollution, adversely affecting protected species or sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs), or by land pollution that causes risks to human health, to not only cease the damage, but also to implement a wide variety of remedial measures to restore affected areas.

A.75 Biodiversity offsetting in England Green Paper (2013) [See reference 199]. Biodiversity offsets are conservation activities designed to compensate for residual losses. The Green Paper sets out a framework for offsetting.

A.76 Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (2011) [See reference 200] guides conservation efforts in England up to 2020 by requiring a national halt to biodiversity loss, supporting healthy ecosystems and establishing ecological networks.

A.77 Defra Right of Way Circular (1/09) (2011) [See reference 201] gives advice to local authorities on recording, managing and maintaining, protecting and changing public rights of way.

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A.78 The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2010 [See reference 202] is an Act of Parliament to make new provision for public access to the countryside.

A.79 Safeguarding our Soils – A Strategy for England (2009) [See reference 203] sets out how England's soils will be managed sustainably. It highlights those areas which Defra will prioritise and focus attention on tackling degradation threats, including better protection for agricultural soils; protecting and enhancing stores of soil carbon; building the resilience of soils to a changing climate; preventing soil pollution; effective soil protection during construction and dealing with contaminated land.

A.80 England Biodiversity Strategy Climate Change Adaptation Principles (2008) [See reference 204] sets out principles to guide adaptation to climate change. The principles are take: practical action now, maintain and increase ecological resilience, accommodate change, integrate action across all sectors and develop knowledge and plan strategically. The precautionary principle underpin all of these. Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

A.81 The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 [See reference 205] places a duty on public bodies to conserve biodiversity.

A.82 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) [See reference 206] was enacted primarily to implement the Birds Directive and Bern Convention in Great Britain. The Act received royal assent on 30 October 1981 and was brought into force in incremental steps. It is supplemented by the Wildlife and Countryside (Service of Notices) Act 1985, which relates to notices served under the 1981 Act. The act contains four parts and 17 schedules, which cover:

- Part 1: Wildlife (includes protection of birds, animals and plants; and measures to prevent the establishment of non-native species which may be detrimental to native wildlife).
- Part 2: Nature conservation, the countryside and National Parks (including the designation of protected areas).
- Part 3: Public rights of way.

- Part 4: Miscellaneous provisions of the act.

A.83 The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 [See reference 207] is an Act of Parliament to make provision for National Parks and the establishment of a National Parks Commission; to confer on the Nature Conservancy and local authorities' powers for the establishment and maintenance of nature reserves; to make further provision for the recording, creation, maintenance and improvement of public paths and for securing access to open country.

Historic Environment

A.84 Historic England, Corporate Plan 2022-23 [See reference 208] contains the action plan which sets out how the aims of the corporate plan will be delivered. The plan includes priorities to demonstrate how Historic England will continue to work towards delivering the heritage sector's priorities for the historic environment.

A.85 The Heritage Statement 2017 [See reference 209] sets out how the Government will support the heritage sector and help it to protect and care for our heritage and historic environment, in order to maximise the economic and social impact of heritage and to ensure that everyone can enjoy and benefit from it.

A.86 Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment, Historic England Advice Note 8 (2016) [See reference 210] sets out requirements for the consideration and appraisal of effects on the historic environment as part of the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment process.

A.87 The Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England 2010 [See reference 211] sets out the Government's 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.

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Includes reference to promoting the role of the historic environment within the Government's response to climate change and the wider sustainable development agenda.

A.88 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 **[See reference 212]** is an Act of Parliament that changed the laws for granting of planning permission for building works, with a particular focus on listed buildings and conservation areas.

A.89 The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 **[See reference 213]** is a law passed by the UK government to protect the archaeological heritage of England and Wales and Scotland. Under this Act, the Secretary of State has a duty to compile and maintain a schedule of ancient monuments of national importance, in order to help preserve them. It also creates criminal offences for unauthorised works to, or damage of, these monuments.

A.90 The Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 **[See reference 214]** is an Act of Parliament that makes provision for the compilation of a register of gardens and other land (parks and gardens, and battlefields).

Water and Air

A.91 Managing Water Abstraction (2021) **[See reference 215]** is the overarching document for managing water resources in England and Wales and links together the abstraction licensing strategies.

A.92 The Environment Act 2021 **[See reference 216]** sets statutory targets for the recovery of the natural world in four priority areas: air quality, biodiversity, water, and resource efficiency and waste reduction. It also establishes the Office for Environmental Protection which will act as an impartial and objective body for the protection and improvement of the environment. The Act sets out legislation which covers:

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- Resource efficiency, producer responsibility, and the management, enforcement and regulation of waste;
- Local air quality management frameworks and the recall of motor vehicles etc; and
- Plans and proposals for water resources, drainage and sewerage management, storm overflows, water quality and land drainage.

A.93 National Chalk Streams Strategy (2021) [See reference 217] was built around the “trinity of ecological health”: water quantity, water quality and habitat quality and included 30+ recommendations to Defra, the Environment Agency, Natural England, the water companies, NGOs and stakeholders.

A.94 Meeting our future water needs: a national framework for water resources (2020) [See reference 218] set the strategic direction for long term regional water resources planning. The framework is built on a shared vision to:

- leave the environment in a better state than we found it
- improve the nation’s resilience to drought and minimise interruptions to all water users

A.95 The national framework [See reference 219] marks a step change in water resources planning. The 5 regional water resources groups will produce a set of co-ordinated, cross-sector plans. These plans will:

- address the scale of challenges we face by identifying the options needed in their region to manage demand and increase supply
- realise opportunities from water resources planning by working collaboratively

A.96 The Clean Air Strategy 2019 [See reference 220] sets out the comprehensive action that is required from across all parts of Government and society to meet these goals. This will be underpinned by new England-wide powers to control major sources of air pollution, in line with the risk they pose to public health and the environment, plus new local powers to take action in areas

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with an air pollution problem. These will support the creation of Clean Air Zones to lower emissions from all sources of air pollution, backed up with clear enforcement mechanisms. The UK has set stringent targets to cut emissions by 2020 and 2030.

A.97 The Environment Agency's Approach for Groundwater Protection (2018) [\[See reference 221\]](#) contains position statements which provide information about the Environment Agency's approach to managing and protecting groundwater. They detail how the Environment Agency delivers government policy for groundwater and adopts a risk-based approach where legislation allows. Many of the approaches set out in the position statements are not statutory but may be included in, or referenced by, statutory guidance and legislation.

A.98 The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 [\[See reference 222\]](#) protect inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater, and outlines the associated river basin management process. These Regulations establish the need to prevent deterioration of waterbodies and to protect, enhance and restore waterbodies with the aim of achieving good ecological and chemical status.

A.99 The UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations 2017 [\[See reference 223\]](#) sets out the Government's ambition and actions for delivering a better environment and cleaner air, including £1 billion investment in ultra-low emission vehicles, a £290 million National Productivity Investment Fund, a £11 million Air Quality Grant Fund and £255 million Implementation Fund to help Local Authorities to prepare Air Quality Action Plans and improve air quality, an £89 million Green Bus Fund, £1.2 billion Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy and £100 million to help improve air quality on the National road network.

A.100 Drought response: our framework for England (2017) [\[See reference 224\]](#) tells you how drought affects England and how the Environment Agency works with government, water companies and others to manage the effects on

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people, business and the environment. It aims to ensure consistency in the way we co-ordinate drought management across England. It sets out:

- how drought affects different parts of England
- who is involved in managing drought and how we work together
- how we and others take action to manage drought
- how we monitor and measure the impacts of drought to advise senior management and government on the prospects and possible action
- how we report on drought and communicate with others

A.101 The Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations 2016 [\[See reference 225\]](#) provides for the designation of land as nitrate vulnerable zones and imposes annual limits on the amount of nitrogen from organic manure that may be applied or spread in a holding in a nitrate vulnerable zone. The Regulations also specify the amount of nitrogen to be spread on a crop and how, where and when to spread nitrogen fertiliser, and how it should be stored. It also establishes closed periods during which the spreading of nitrogen fertiliser is prohibited.

A.102 The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2016 [\[See reference 226\]](#) focus on the quality of water for drinking, washing, cooking and food preparation, and for food production. Their purpose is to protect human health from the adverse effects of any contamination of water intended for human consumption by ensuring it is wholesome and clean.

A.103 The Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016 [\[See reference 227\]](#) streamline the legislative system for industrial and waste installations into a single permitting structure for those activities which have the potential to cause harm to human health or the environment. They set out how to prevent or, where that is not practicable, to reduce emissions into air, water and land and to prevent the generation of waste, in order to achieve a high level of protection of the environment and human health.

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A.104 The Air Quality Standards Regulations 2016 [See reference 228] set out limits on concentrations of outdoor air pollutants that impact public health, most notably particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). It also sets out the procedure and requirements for the designation of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).

A.105 The Water White Paper (2012) [See reference 229] sets out the Government's vision for the water sector including proposals on protecting water resources and reforming the water supply industry. It states outlines the measures that will be taken to tackle issues such as poorly performing ecosystem, and the combined impacts of climate change and population growth on stressed water resources.

A.106 The National Policy Statement for Waste Water (2012) [See reference 230] sets out Government policy for the provision of major waste water infrastructure. The policy set out in this NPS is, for the most part, intended to make existing policy and practice in consenting nationally significant waste water infrastructure clearer and more transparent.

A.107 The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 [See reference 231] and The Flood and Water Regulations (2019) [See reference 232] sets out measures to ensure that risk from all sources of flooding is managed more effectively. This includes incorporating greater resilience measures into the design of new buildings; utilising the environment in order to reduce flooding; identifying areas suitable for inundation and water storage to reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere; rolling back development in coastal areas to avoid damage from flooding or coastal erosion; and creating sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).

A.108 Groundwater (England and Wales) Regulations 2009 [See reference 233] implement in England and Wales Community legislation on pollution of groundwater. They provide rules for the granting by the Environment Agency of a permit under these Regulations, consent under section 91(8) of the Water Resources Act 1991 and (with exceptions) an environmental permit under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations. In addition, the

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Regulations create an offence of discharge of a hazardous substance or non-hazardous pollutant without a permit, provide for powers of enforcement of the Environment Agency and prescribe penalties for offences committed under these Regulations.

A.109 Flood Risk Regulations 2009 [\[See reference 234\]](#) regulations were enacted in December 2009. They outline a set of tasks, which the county council is required to follow between now and approximately 2015. The regulations also implement the 2007 EU Floods Directive. In accordance with the regulations the council has a series of new responsibilities, these are:

- The preparation of a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) Report, including the identification of flood risk areas
- The preparation of Flood Hazard Maps and Flood Risk Maps
- The preparation of Flood Risk Management Plans
- Cooperating with the Environment Agency and other Lead Local Flood Authorities.

A.110 Future Water: The Government's Water Strategy for England (2008) [\[See reference 235\]](#) sets out how the Government wants the water sector to look by 2030, providing an outline of steps which need to be taken to get there. These steps include improving the supply of water; agreeing on important new infrastructure such as reservoirs; proposals to time limit abstraction licences; and reducing leakage. The document also states that pollution to rivers will be tackled, whilst discharge from sewers will be reduced.

A.111 The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (2007) [\[See reference 236\]](#) sets out a way forward for work and planning on air quality issues by setting out the air quality standards and objectives to be achieved. It introduces a new policy framework for tackling fine particles and identifies potential new national policy measures which modelling indicates could give further health benefits and move closer towards meeting the Strategy's objectives. The objectives of the Strategy are to:

- Further improve air quality in the UK from today and long term; and

- Provide benefits to health quality of life and the environment.

A.112 The Environmental Noise Regulations 2006 [See reference 237] apply to environmental noise, mainly from transport. The regulations require regular noise mapping and action planning for road, rail and aviation noise and noise in large urban areas. They also require Noise Action Plans based on the maps for road and rail noise and noise in large urban areas. The Action Plans identify Important Areas (areas exposed to the highest levels of noise) and suggest ways the relevant authorities can reduce these. Major airports and those which affect large urban areas are also required to produce and publish their own Noise Action Plans separately. The Regulations do not apply to noise from domestic activities such as noise created by neighbours; at workplaces; inside means of transport; or military activities in military areas.

A.113 The Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations (2003) [See reference 238] protect the environment from the adverse effects of urban waste water discharges and certain industrial sectors, notably domestic and industrial waste water. The regulations require the collection of waste water and specifies how different types of waste water should be treated, disposed and reused.

A.114 The Environmental Protection Act 1990 [See reference 239] makes provision for the improved control of pollution to the air, water and land by regulating the management of waste and the control of emissions. Seeks to ensure that decisions pertaining to the environment are made in an integrated manner, in collaboration with appropriate authorities, non-governmental organisations and other persons.

Economic Growth

A.115 The Growth Plan 2022 [See reference 240] makes growth the government's central economic mission, setting a target of reaching a 2.5% trend rate. Sustainable growth will lead to higher wages, greater opportunities and provide sustainable funding for public services. The Chancellor of the

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Exchequer's "growth plan" contained a raft of significant tax measures, with major changes being announced for both individuals and businesses.

A.116 Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth (2021) [See reference 241] sets out a plan to 'build back better' tackling long-term problems to deliver growth that delivers high-quality jobs across the UK while supporting the transition to net zero. This will build on three core pillars of growth: infrastructure, skills and innovation.

A.117 The Agricultural Transition Plan 2021 to 2024 [See reference 242] aims to drive competitiveness, increase productivity, reduce carbon emissions, and generate fairer returns across the agricultural industry. The Transition Plan introduces several new schemes to improve the environment, animal health and welfare, and farm resilience and productivity (e.g., grants will be available for sustainable farming practices, creating habitats for nature recovery and making landscape-scale changes such as establishing new woodland and other ecosystem services).

A.118 The Agriculture Act 2020 [See reference 243] sets out how farmers and land managers in England will be rewarded in the future with public money for "public goods" – such as better air and water quality, thriving wildlife, soil health, or measures to reduce flooding and tackle the effects of climate change, under the Environmental Land Management Scheme. The Act will help farmers to stay competitive, increase productivity, invest in new technology and seek a fairer return from the marketplace. Agricultural Transition Plan 2021 to 2024.

A.119 UK Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future (2018) [See reference 244] lays down a vision and foundations for a transformed economy. Areas including artificial intelligence and big data; clean growth; the future of mobility; and meeting the needs of an ageing society are identified as the four 'Grand Challenges' of the future.

A.120 The National Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2016-2021 [See reference 245] brings together the Government's plans for economic infrastructure over

this five year period with those to support delivery of housing and social infrastructure.

A.121 The LEP Network Response to the Industrial Strategy Green Paper Consultation (2017) [See reference 246] seeks to ensure that all relevant local action and investment is used in a way that maximises the impact it has across the Government's strategy. Consultation responses set out how the 38 Local Enterprise Partnerships will work with Government using existing and additional resources to develop and implement a long-term Industrial Strategy.

Transport

A.122 The Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy Report to Parliament (2022) [See reference 247] sets out the objectives and financial resources for cycling and walking infrastructure. It states the Government's long-term ambition is to make walking and cycling the natural choices for shorter journeys. It aims to double cycling by 2025, increase walking activity, increase the percentage of children that usually walk to school and reduce the number of cyclists killed or seriously injured on England's roads.

A.123 Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain (2021) (Decarbonising Transport Plan (DTP)) [See reference 248] sets out the Government's commitments and the actions needed to decarbonise the entire transport system in the UK. It follows on from the Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge report published in 2020. The DTP commits the UK to phasing out the sale of new diesel and petrol heavy goods vehicles by 2040, subject to consultation, in addition to phasing out the sale of polluting cars and vans by 2035. The DTP also sets out how the government will improve public transport and increase support for active travel, as well as creating a net zero rail network by 2050, ensuring net zero domestic aviation emissions by 2040, and a transition to green shipping.

A.124 Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge (2020) [See reference 249] sets out the strategic priorities for the new Transport Decarbonisation Plan

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(TDP), published in July 2021. It sets out in detail what government, business and society will need to do to deliver the significant emissions reduction needed across all modes of transport, putting us on a pathway to achieving carbon budgets and net zero emissions across every single mode of transport by 2050. This document acknowledges that while there have been recently published strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in individual transport modes, transport as a whole sector needs to go further and more quickly, therefore the TDP takes a coordinated, cross-modal approach to deliver the transport sector's contribution to both carbon budgets and net zero.

A.125 The Road to Zero (2018) [\[See reference 250\]](#) sets out new measures towards cleaner road transport, aiming to put the UK at the forefront of the design and manufacturing of zero emission vehicles. It explains how cleaner air, a better environment, zero emission vehicles and a strong, clean economy will be achieved. One of the main aims of the document is for all new cars and vans to be effectively zero emission by 2040.

A.126 The Transport Investment Strategy 2017 [\[See reference 251\]](#) sets out four objectives that the strategy aims to achieve:

- Create a more reliable, less congested, and better connected transport network that works for the users who rely on it;
- Build a stronger, more balanced economy by enhancing productivity and responding to local growth priorities;
- Enhance our global competitiveness by making Britain a more attractive place to trade and invest; and
- Support the creation of new housing.

A.127 The Highways England Sustainable Development Strategy and Action Plan (2017) [\[See reference 252\]](#) is designed to communicate the company's approach and priorities for sustainable development to its key stakeholders. Highways England aims to ensure its action in the future will further reduce the impact of its activities seeking a long-term and sustainable benefit to the environment and the communities it serves. The action plan describes how Highways England will progress the aspirations of their Sustainable

Development and Environment Strategies. It describes actions that will enable the company to deliver sustainable development and to help protect and improve the environment.

A.128 Door to Door: A strategy for improving sustainable transport integration (2013) [See reference 253] focuses on four core areas which need to be addressed so that people can be confident in choosing greener modes of transport. There are as follows:

- Accurate, accessible and reliable information about different transport options;
- Convenient and affordable tickets;
- Regular and straightforward connections at all stages of the journey and between different modes of transport; and
- Safe and comfortable transport facilities.

A.129 The strategy also includes details on how the Government is using behavioural change methods to reduce or remove barriers to the use of sustainable transport and working closely with stakeholders to deliver a better-connected transport system.

Staffordshire County Council Plans

Minerals Local Plan

A.130 The Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire (2015 - 2030) was adopted in February 2017. The Plan stipulates that Staffordshire is rich in mineral resources, has a significant history of quarrying and mining, producing two-thirds of the sand and gravel for the West Midlands and the highest output of clay and shale in England.

A.131 The plan indicates that sand and gravel resources are widely distributed across 23 quarries in Staffordshire. Limestone is worked from a single area in the north-east of the county, and there are three limestone quarries with reserves for aggregate use. These are:

- Caudon Low;
- Wardlow; and
- Wredon and Kevin.

A.132 However, only Caudon Low is operational.

A.133 The plan ensures a seven-year landbank of sand and gravel and a fifteen-year reserve of limestone and shale for Caudon Cement Works, and anhydrite and gypsum from Fauld Mine, achieved through existing reserves and new permissions for site extensions.

Waste Local Plan

A.134 The Waste Local Plan for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent (2010 - 2026) was adopted by Staffordshire County Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council in March 2013. The plan stipulates that in relation to landfill and void capacity, there are 21 permitted landfill sites, 10 of which are currently operational. Evidence suggests that currently, based on forecasts for waste produced in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, there is sufficient void capacity over the next 15 years to accommodate the 'secondary' landfill of MSW and C&I waste, and the disposal of CD&E waste to restore mineral sites.

A.135 It was concluded for both the Minerals and Waste Local Plans that they work well, and that there is no immediate need for either plan to be revised. As a result, no programme for the local plans to be revised has been prepared.

Local Transport Plan

A.136 The most recent version of Staffordshire's Local Transport Plan was published in 2011. However, as of 2024, a new Local Transport Plan for Staffordshire is being developed. There are district integrated transport strategies which cover the eight District and Borough councils. The Lichfield District Integrated Transport Strategy, published in 2015, covers the period between 2015 – 2029.

A.137 The Lichfield District Integrated Transport Strategy provides for key strategic infrastructure to be developed by 2029, including the completion of the Lichfield Southern Bypass and transport improvements associated with Lichfield City centre. The Strategy notes that there were particular concerns about safety and congestion on the A5127, levels of car parking in the City centre, proposals for Lichfield City bus station, the local impact of HS2 and the need for the Lichfield Southern Bypass and its impact on local neighbourhoods. As such, the Strategy stipulates that it is a priority to manage peak hour congestion in Lichfield and at junctions with the trunk road network.

Neighbouring authorities' Local Plans

A.138 Development in Lichfield District will not be delivered in isolation from neighbouring areas. The effect of new development and supporting infrastructure on neighbouring authority areas (and vice versa) must therefore be considered as part of the SA. Lichfield District is bordered by the following local authority areas, for which the below mentioned Local Plan documents are adopted or in preparation.

Cannock Chase District Council

A.139 The Cannock Chase Local Plan (Part 1) 2014 is the statutory development plan for Cannock Chase Council and forms the principal basis for

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which development is promoted and controlled. It includes the Core Strategy (section 1), which contains the strategic context and core policies, and the Rugeley Town Centre Area Action Plan (section 2).

A.140 The Council is currently in the process of reviewing their Local plan. The Regulation 19 public consultation for the new Local Plan took place between February to March 2024, and constitutes the final stage of preparation before the plan is submitted in summer 2024 for examination by a Planning Inspector. The new Local Plan is intended to replace the existing Cannock Chase Local Plan (Part 1) 2014 upon adoption by the Council, and will contain local planning policies and site allocations to meet the development needs of the district over the plan period to 2040.

A.141 The Cannock Chase Local Plan (Part 1) 2014 states that 5,300 (net) new homes will be delivered within Cannock Chase District in the plan period. 1,625 new houses have been completed in Cannock Chase District in the first six years since 2006, reducing the district requirement to 3,675 in the remaining 16 years, an annual delivery rate of 230. The Cannock Chase Local Plan (Part 1) draws on the 2012 Cannock Chase SHLAA, which identifies a supply of developable sites excluding urban extensions, in the following proportions; 66% in Cannock, Hednesford, and Heath Hayes; 29% in Rugeley and Brereton; and 5% in Norton Canes. With regard to urban extensions, the plan distributes 750 houses west of Pye Green Road, 670 houses south of Norton Canes, and potential for 900 dwellings west of Pye Green Road, totaling 3,770 sites.

A.142 Regarding economic development, a requirement of 88ha of employment land for the district based around past trends has been identified for the plan period. The plan identified 91ha of available employment land to be distributed as follows:

- Cannock/Hednesford/Heath Hayes 62ha (68%);
- Rugeley and Brereton 26ha (29%) and;
- Norton Canes 3ha (3%).

Stafford Borough Council

A.143 The Local Plan 2011-2031 covering Stafford Borough comprises the following adopted documents:-

- The Plan for Stafford Borough adopted 19 June 2014);
- The Plan for Stafford Borough - Part 2 (adopted 31 January 2017)

A.144 The Council is currently in the process of developing a new Local Plan, which will cover the period 2020-2040, and when completed, will update and replace the Plan currently in use.

A.145 The Stafford Borough Council Local Plan (2011-2031) builds on the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) from 2004, which set a housing requirement of 2,900 new houses annually for Staffordshire County. For Stafford Borough, this equates to 5,602 houses from 2001 to 2021, at 280 houses per year. The plan accommodates growth by providing 500 new dwellings annually, excluding military and gypsy housing, and allocates around 8 hectares of employment land per year to support residents' future needs and prosperity.

East Staffordshire Borough Council

A.146 East Staffordshire Borough Council's Local Plan was reviewed at an Extraordinary Council meeting on October 19, 2020, following policy SP6 and Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2017. It was agreed to delay the update for up to five years, so the adopted Local Plan remains in use as part of the Development Plan for East Staffordshire. East Staffordshire Borough Council's adopted Local Plan covers the period from 2012 to 2031.

A.147 The Local Plan provides for 11,648 dwellings between 2012 and 2031, with an annual rate of 466 dwellings for the first six years and 682 for the next

thirteen years. Although it is noted in Strategic Policy 4 that 10,384 houses will be delivered during the plan period, supplemented by existing permissions to meet the total requirement. By April 2012, there were 1,379 permissions, and by March 2014, 1,467 permissions, totalling 11,851 dwellings when combined with the policy's target. Additional contributions will come from neighbourhood plans and windfall sites.

A.148 With regard to employment land, the plan provides for 40ha of employment land, including 30ha of new and 10 hectares of continued B1, B2, and B8 land.

South Derbyshire District Council

A.149 The Adopted Local Plan for South Derbyshire, which covers the period 2011-2028, is divided into two parts:

- Local Plan Part 1, adopted in June 2016;
- Local Plan Part 2, adopted in November 2017.

A.150 The Council is currently reviewing the Local Plan, with consultation on the 'Issues and Options' document and the Local Plan Sustainability Draft Scoping Report between October and December 2022.

A.151 November 2, 2017. The Local Plan covers the period 2011 to 2028. The Council is in the process of reviewing the Local Plan; Between 10th October to 5th December 2022 the District Council consulted on its 'Issues and Options' document and the Local Plan Sustainability Draft Scoping Report. This was the first formal consultation as part of the update to the Local Plan. Its purpose was to ensure that the Local Plan Review covers the right issues and suitable options, and that the approaches the Plan could take are considered.

A.152 As stipulated in Policy S4 in Part 1 of the Local Plan, 600 dwellings are required to be allocated as non-strategic sites within the overall target of at least 12,618 dwellings by 2028. This target includes 9,605 dwellings for South

Derbyshire's housing need and 3,013 for Derby City's unmet need. Housing will be built on both brownfield and greenfield sites, with a focus on reusing developed land. Strategic sites (over 99 dwellings) are allocated in urban areas and key service villages, while 600 dwellings are reserved for non-strategic sites (under 100 dwellings) in Part 2 of the Local Plan. The Council will ensure a five-year rolling supply of deliverable sites with additional buffers per NPPF guidelines.

A.153 With regard to employment land, the plan allocates a minimum of 53ha for industrial and business development to support the Council's Economic Strategies and the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership. There is a total need for 276ha of B1, B2, and B8 employment land across the HMA, including compensation for anticipated losses. This requirement is divided proportionally between:

- Derby Urban Area (including adjacent developments);
- remainder of South Derbyshire; and the
- remainder of Amber Valley.

North West Leicestershire District Council

A.154 The North West Leicestershire Local Plan 2011 to 2031 provides the current planning policies for the district. The Local Plan was adopted in November 2017. The Council then began a partial review of the Local Plan in February 2018. The North West Leicestershire Local Plan (as amended by the Partial Review) was adopted at Council in March 2021. However, the Council are currently, as of 2024, consulting on their new Local Plan.

A.155 The adopted North West Leicestershire Local Plan references the HENDA which identified an Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) of 481 dwellings per year for North West Leicestershire over the plan period. The Local Plan ensures a minimum of 9,620 dwellings will be delivered within this period. It also provides for 66ha of employment land and 7,300 square meters for shopping purposes.

North Warwickshire Borough Council

A.156 The North Warwickshire Borough Council Local Plan 2021 is the current adopted Local Plan for the Council and sets out the vision and spatial planning strategy for North Warwickshire and allocates sites for new homes and employment land to meet local community and business needs up to 2033. The Local Plan was adopted at full council in September 2021.

A.157 The Borough Council, through the Core Strategy, has agreed to deliver 500 dwellings for Tamworth Borough Council, part of the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area. Additionally, the Local Plan commits to providing another 413 homes for Tamworth, totalling 913 dwellings. As such, the updated housing requirement for the Local Plan is 9,598 dwellings between 2011 and 2033.

A.158 The 2013 Employment Land Review (ELR) identified a need for 60ha of employment land, which is reflected in the 2014 Core Strategy, although 2ha at Spring Hill Industrial Estate, Arley, remained fully utilised for employment land within the Borough. As such, a need for 58ha of employment land was identified.

A.159 This requirement is adequate for supporting the minimum growth of 5,280 dwellings. However, if housing growth reaches 9,600 dwellings, around 100 hectares of employment land will be necessary between 2011 and 2033.

A.160 The Borough Council, through the Core Strategy, has agreed to deliver 500 dwellings for Tamworth Borough Council, part of the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area. Additionally, the Local Plan commits to providing another 413 homes for Tamworth, totaling 913 dwellings. Consequently, the updated housing requirement for the Local Plan is 9,598 dwellings between 2011 and 2033.

Tamworth Borough Council

A.161 Tamworth Council is currently in process of updating a new Local Plan to guide Tamworth's development until 2043. The Local Plan will cover the period 2022-2043. At present, the Local Plan is at the evidence gathering stage.

A.162 The current adopted Local Plan (2006-2031), adopted in February 2016, outlines the vision and strategy for Tamworth, allocating land for homes and employment. This plan mandates a minimum of 4,425 dwellings by 2031, requiring 177 new homes annually. Due to unmet housing needs, 1,825 homes will be built outside the Borough, with ongoing cooperation with neighbouring authorities to address the remaining 825 dwellings and 14 hectares of employment land.

A.163 Tamworth Town Centre will focus on new retail, leisure, tourism, and residential development, aiming for 7,800 sq meters of new retail space and 2,900 sq meters of convenience retail space by 2031.

Birmingham City Council

A.164 The Birmingham Development Plan (BDP) 2031 was adopted by Birmingham City Council on 10 January 2017. The BDP sets out a spatial vision and strategy for the sustainable growth of Birmingham for the period 2011 to 2031.

A.165 Birmingham City Council is currently in process of formulating a new Local Plan for Birmingham to guide the city's development and inform decisions on development proposals and planning applications up to 2042. Presently, consultation the initial 'Issues and Options' stage of the Local Plan has now concluded. This ran between October and December 2022.

A.166 The City Council is committed to creating a sustainable development pattern, prioritizing the availability of previously developed sites, infrastructure

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capacity, community balance, and addressing physical and environmental constraints. Despite the comprehensive Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), additional development opportunities will inevitably arise due to Birmingham's built-up nature, and these will be assessed according to established principles.

A.167 The majority of new housing (a minimum of 80%) will be located on previously developed land within the existing urban area. Nonetheless, to accommodate Birmingham's growing population, some greenfield land will also be designated for housing development.

A.168 To support the city's economic growth and reduce unemployment, the plan targets the creation of 100,000 new jobs. Employment land provisions are based on the Employment Land and Office Targets Study and the Employment Land Study for Economic Zones and Key Sectors. A premium 71ha employment site at Peddimore, Minworth, will be developed, necessitating its removal from the Green Belt to meet the demand for high-quality employment land, thereby supporting Birmingham's economic prosperity.

Walsall Borough Council

A.169 Walsall Borough Council's current adopted plan consists of:

- Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS);
- Walsall Site Allocations Document;
- Unitary Development Plan;
- Walsall Town Centre Area Action Plan.

A.170 The Council is currently in the process of preparing the Walsall Borough Local Plan, which would end work on the Black Country Plan. The Council has opened a call for sites to consider for the new plan.

A.171 The Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) is a comprehensive planning and regeneration framework for the entire Black Country region. It guides planning and development decisions across Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall, and Wolverhampton. Adopted by the four councils in 2011, the BCCS outlines the vision, objectives, and strategy for the region's development through to 2026.

A.172 The BCCS aims to balance housing and employment. The strategy proposes redeveloping 1,003 hectares of low-quality employment land to meet housing requirements while retaining enough land for job forecasts. Policy DEL2 manages this surplus land release. The local authorities, in partnership with developers and the Homes and Communities Agency, aim to provide at least 11,000 new affordable dwellings between 2006 and 2026. Additionally, the strategy targets land for 75,000 industrial and warehouse jobs and plans for 2,900 hectares of employment land to ensure economic growth and market flexibility. The Black Country also requires 1,031 hectares of Strategic High Quality Employment Land, with Walsall's target set at 317 hectares by 2026.

Neighbourhood Plans

A.173 Neighbourhood Plans, once adopted, form part of the development plan for a local authority area. There are thirteen 'made' (adopted) Neighbourhood Plans within Lichfield District:

- **Alrewas Neighbourhood Plan (2018):** The Neighbourhood Plan supports development within the Village Settlement Boundary. With regard to Alrewas village, infill development and the development of brownfield sites is supported. The plan seeks to preserve, maintain, and enhance local services and community facilities.
- **Armitage with Handsacre Neighbourhood Plan (2018):** The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to conserve 24 non-designated local heritage assets. The plan also notes that a landscape capacity approach will be taken to development due to the character of the historic village centre, and proximity and accessible to the Trent and Mersey Canal Conservation

Area. As such, the plan supports development which no more than two-storeys in height.

- **Burntwood Neighbourhood Plan (2021):** The Neighbourhood Plan states that mixed use development proposals within Burntwood Town Centre will be supported. Acceptable uses include new, redeveloped or enhanced retail, employment, community leisure, residential, recreational, health, education, car parking and a transport hub. Further to supporting measures to reinforcing Burntwood's role as the main Town Centre in the neighbourhood area, the plan also supports the creation of a new Town Square at Sankey's Corner, with new retail, food and drink, community and residential uses.

- **Elford Neighbourhood Plan (2019):** The Neighbourhood Plan supports development within the village settlement boundary, provided it respects the village's character and meets local needs. Development outside this boundary is generally not supported, except for appropriate agricultural activities and rural exception sites per relevant policies. The community and Parish Council endorse limited development to ensure the village's vitality and provide needed housing. Traditional agricultural activities that align with Elford's character and do not cause significant environmental issues are also supported.

- **Fradley Neighbourhood Plan (2019):** The Neighbourhood Plan aims to support the community's aging population by promoting the provision of adaptable housing, particularly 2- and 3-bed units, to meet the needs of older residents. Additionally, facilities that support elderly care are encouraged. As stipulated in the Neighbourhood Plan, the Parish Council will strongly resist any loss of existing community facilities due to the limited number and capacity. While Fradley is not within any recognised landscape areas, new developments must respect important natural and heritage features and aim to enhance biodiversity. The retention and enhancement of riverbanks and the protection of six local green spaces are also supported.

- **Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan (2021):** The Neighbourhood Plan designates a Village Boundary, separating it from the Green Belt, to manage future development without altering the village's character or overwhelming local infrastructure. Infill development within this boundary is supported, provided it complies with both the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan. The plan also emphasises protecting and enhancing both designated and non-designated heritage assets impacted by new development.

- **Lichfield City Neighbourhood Plan (2018):** The Neighbourhood Plan states that the provision of managed employment space that is generally viable for occupation by business start-ups will be supported. Lichfield City is poised to enhance its economic base due to its skilled workforce and excellent road and rail links. As such, it is stipulated in the plan that the City Council plans to collaborate with developers and landowners to develop the employment area of the Cricket Lane Strategic Development Allocation. This development aims to maximise local economic and employment benefits, ensure good connections to nearby residential areas and the City Centre, and avoid hindering the Lichfield Canal's reinstatement.

- **Little Aston Neighbourhood Plan (2016):** The Neighbourhood Plan states that a landscape-capacity approach will be taken to development due to the position in part of the Green Belt, and close proximity to the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC). It states that development within Little Aston will be supported where it closely reflects the needs of the parish. Development outside or on the edge of these settlements will only be permitted where there is no adverse impact on integrity of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Development Management DPD.

- **Longdon Neighbourhood Plan (2018):** The Neighbourhood Plan adopts a landscape-capacity approach in relation to development because the Parish is located adjacent to the Cannock Chase AONB and Gentleshaw Common SSSI, and has numerous Tree Preservation Orders. Development enhancing wildlife habitats and preserving hedgerows are

supported. New public paths are encouraged if they don't conflict with existing policies. Generally, built development outside village boundaries is not supported, except for specific rural exceptions. New developments must respect traditional village design and integrate into the landscape. Converting non-residential properties and developing brownfield land are supported if they maintain local design principles and protect Green Belt openness.

- **Shenstone Neighbourhood Plan (2016):** The Neighbourhood Plan states that a landscape-capacity approach will be taken to development due to location in part of the Green Belt and proximity to Cannock Chase SAC. As such, development within the Green Belt in the neighbourhood area is generally deemed inappropriate, except for uses specified by the National Planning Policy Framework, such as facilities for outdoor sport and recreation. Proposals enhancing access to the Green Belt and opportunities for recreation are supported. All developments must demonstrate they won't harm the SAC's integrity, considering potential cumulative impacts. In relation to employment, the plan allocated 2.4hectares at Shenstone Business Park and Birchbrook Industrial Estate for mixed-use development, including 50 dwellings.
- **Stonnall Neighbourhood Plan (2016):** The Neighbourhood Plan permits infill development within the settlement boundary that meets local needs and aligns with the Village Design Statement, maintaining the village's character. Small-scale affordable housing on exception sites is supported if it respects the surrounding area's character and density, and complies with the Village Design Statement. Affordable housing must also adhere to a local lettings plan in line with Lichfield District Council's Allocation Policy.
- **Whittington and Fisherwick Neighbourhood Plan (2018):** The Neighbourhood Plan notes that the potential for flooding in Whittington is considerable, and therefore development should not increase the risk of flooding and/or exacerbate existing drainage problems. The plan supports small-scale development, although will prioritise the development of sites within the village or appropriate brownfield land where this can meet other policies on design character, residential amenity and highway safety.

- **Wigginton, Hopwas and Comberford Neighbourhood Plan (2016):** The Neighbourhood Plan adopts landscape capacity-led approach to development. The plan aims to maintain the rural character of the area, ensuring a clear distinction between the villages of Wigginton, Hopwas, and Comberford, and the urban area of Tamworth. Development proposals must preserve this distinction and provide evidence that they do not harm the area's distinctiveness. Coalescence with Tamworth is not permitted.

A.174 In addition, six Neighbourhood Plan areas have been designated. The neighbourhood planning groups in each of these areas are currently working on developing a Neighbourhood Plan.

- Colton Neighbourhood Plan area (designated in 2016);
- Fazeley Neighbourhood Plan area (designated in 2018);
- Kings Bromley Neighbourhood Plan area (designated in 2019);
- Mavesyn Ridware Neighbourhood Plan area (designated in 2019);
- Streethay Neighbourhood Plan area (designated in 2014);
- Wall Neighbourhood Plan area (designated in 2014).

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