

Neighbourhood Plan
Shenstone | Stonnall | Little Aston



Shenstone Neighbourhood Plan Review, 2024-2040

Submission Consultation (Regulation 16) Version

March 2025

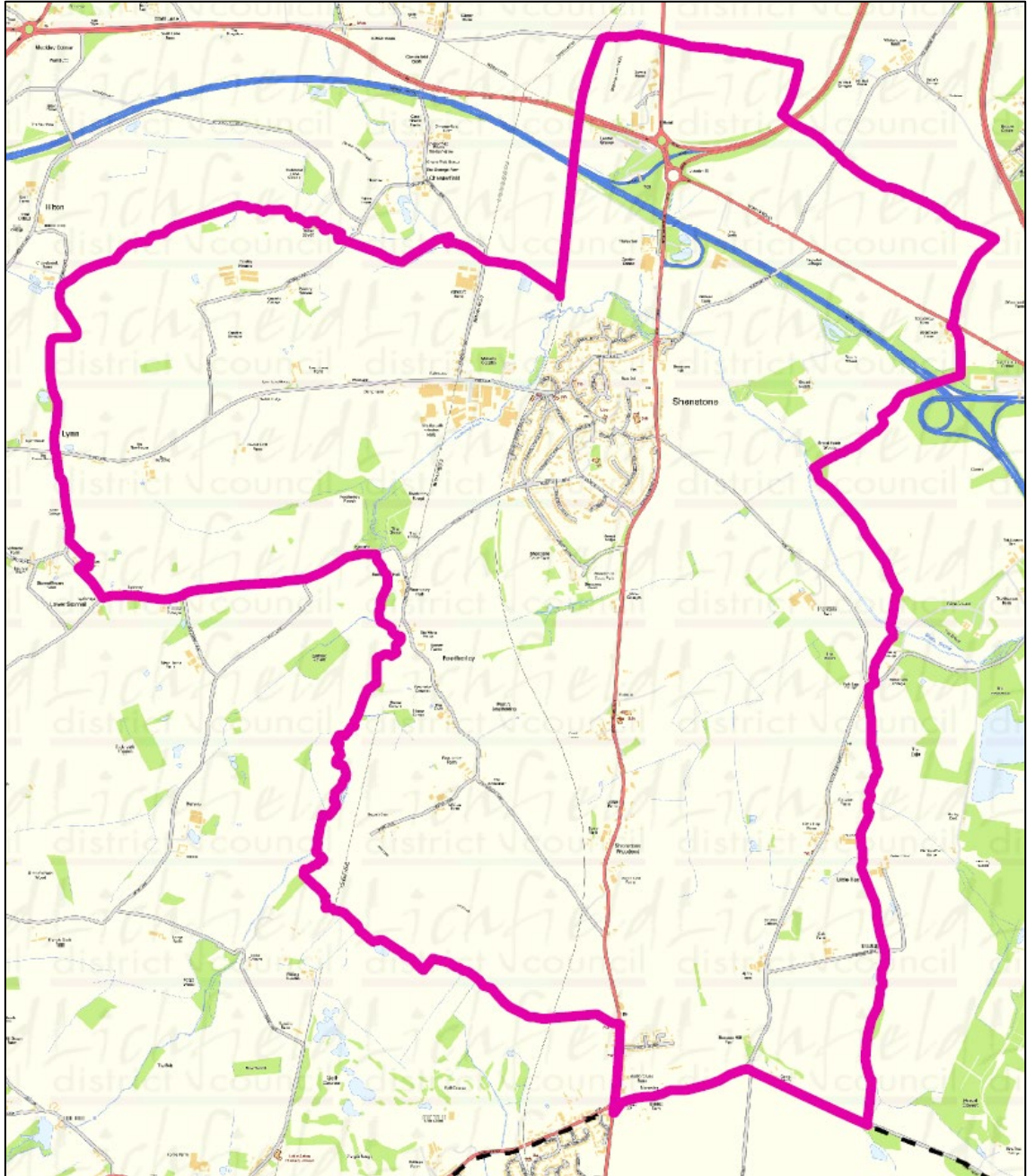
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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document represents the Neighbourhood Plan Review for Shenstone. It represents one part of the development plan for the neighbourhood area over the period 2024 to 2040, the other part being the adopted Lichfield District Plan which consists of the Local Plan Strategy (2015) and Local Plan Allocations (2019) documents.
- 1.2 Lichfield District Council, as the local planning authority, designated the Shenstone Neighbourhood Area in February 2013 to enable Shenstone Parish Council to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan and this subsequent review. The Neighbourhood Plan passed referendum in November 2016 and was made in December 2016. The Plan, and this review, have been prepared by the community through the Shenstone Neighbourhood Plan (SNP) Group.
- 1.3 The SNP is being prepared in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended). The SNP Group has prepared the plan to establish a vision for the future of the neighbourhood area and to set out how that vision will be realised through planning and controlling land use and development change over the plan period 2024 to 2040.
- 1.4 The map below shows the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area.



- 1.5 The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to guide development and provide guidance to any interested parties wishing to submit planning applications for development within the designated Neighbourhood Area. The process of producing a plan has sought to involve the community as widely as possible and the different topic areas are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance to Shenstone, its residents, businesses and community groups. It has therefore given the community the opportunity to guide development within their neighbourhood.
- 1.6 Each section of the plan covers a different topic. Under each heading there is the justification for the policies presented which provides the necessary understanding of the policy and what it is seeking to achieve. The policies themselves are presented in the blue boxes. It is these policies against which planning applications will be assessed. It is advisable that, in order to understand the full context for any individual policy, it is read in conjunction with the supporting text.

National policy

1.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states:

'Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies¹. (para 30)

Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.' (para 31).

1.8 The local plan with which this neighbourhood plan must be in general conformity is the Local Plan Strategy and Local Plan Allocations documents. The relevant Lichfield District Local Plan was adopted in February 2015 and covers the period to 2029. It has provided the strategic context for the neighbourhood plan.

Consultation

1.9 The SNP Group developed the 2016 Neighbourhood Plan through extensive engagement with the community. Working Parties were set up to focus on particular issues and themes.

1.10 To inform the 2016 Neighbourhood Plan, three engagement events were held:

- A launch event in April 2013 to introduce the Neighbourhood Plan and understand the issues – at this event the Working Groups were also formed;
- An engagement event in September 2013 to present the key issues emerging from the Working Groups and to see feedback on these;
- A survey was undertaken in January 2014 which had responses from over 350 households and in March 2014 an engagement event was held to present the findings of the survey work and to explore options for the Neighbourhood Plan.

1.11 The views of young people were sought through a consultation undertaken with pupils at Greysbrooke School.

1.12 Additional consultations were undertaken throughout the process by the Working Groups with key stakeholders.

1.13 The review of the 2016 Neighbourhood Plan was commenced in 2023. An engagement event in March 2024 presented the proposed amendments to the Neighbourhood Plan. Following feedback, the plan was amended.

Neighbourhood Plan Review

1.14 A Review Working Group was formed with six members (three residents and three Parish Councillors, two of whom are Shenstone residents). Two members had been actively involved with the creation of the original Neighbourhood Plan. These members consulted with several other

¹ Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area

Shenstone groups in the process of assembling the draft revised Neighbourhood Plan Review for consultation. Groups consulted were the village church, environmental, school, utility, play organisations as well as, from inception, Lichfield District Council, Staffordshire County Council Highways.

- 1.15 The Shenstone village consultation, undertaken in March 2024, consisted of three complementary strands - an interactive, open public consultation event; an online response option and paper consultation form. In total 37 people visited the public event and provided feedback through the consultation boards and maps, 2 written responses were received online and 11 forms were returned.

2 LOCAL CONTEXT

History of Shenstone

Population

- 2.1 The recorded population of Shenstone at the time of Domesday was 21 villeins and 4 bordarii, perhaps representing a population in the order of 125 people.
- 2.2 There has been a steady increase in the number of people living in the ward:
- 125 in the eleventh century;
 - 500 in the fourteenth century;
 - 800 in the seventeenth century;
 - 1,339 in 1801; and
 - then a very rapid increase to 2,043 in 1851.
- 2.3 Today there are over 3,300 people now living in the ward of Shenstone.

Shenstone Village

- 2.4 The village is now defined by the railway in the west, the Birmingham Road in east, the Lammas Lands in the north and Shenstone Court in the south. Historical maps show that the village streets retained a very similar pattern from 1800 to 1950 and the numbers of buildings, indicated by solid marks on the maps, remained consistent. Within this period newer buildings replaced older ones but the number of buildings did not change significantly. After 1950, rapid development took place and by 1980 the number of buildings within the village had increased substantially.
- 2.5 Today, within the village boundary are two churches, four public houses, a railway station, a community library and coffee shop, four village halls, a country club, a primary school, and a number of local shops. Most of these functional buildings were available in the past but some were found in different positions within the village.

Farms around the ward

- 2.6 The ancient parish of Shenstone has some fifty farms, or their remnants. The decline, as in most areas, has been significant. In 2000, there were only 20 agricultural businesses left in the ward² and in 2011, less than 50 residents worked in the agricultural sector, some 3% of the workforce.

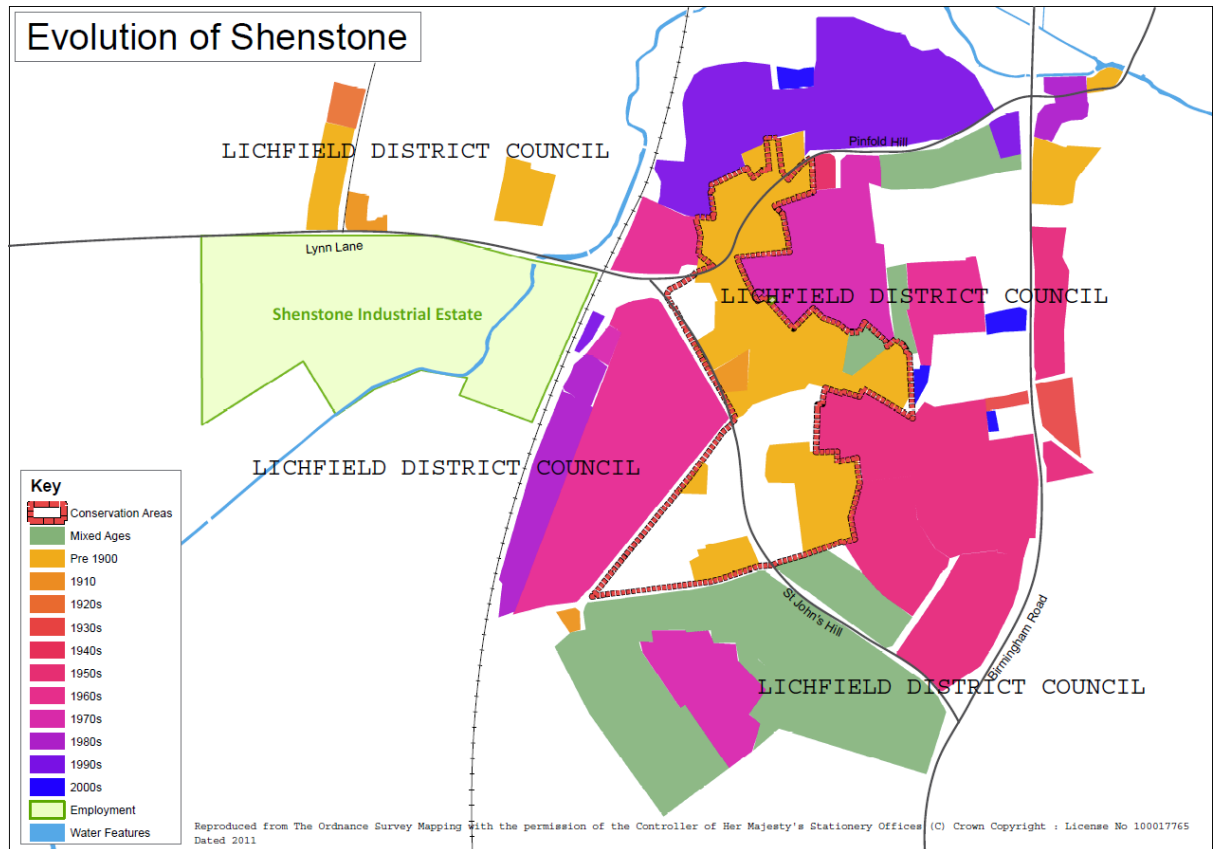
Development

- 2.7 A small amount of development took place in Shenstone Village in the 1940s, in the aftermath of World War II, but the majority of new building took place after 1960, as can be seen by studying the Ordnance Survey maps of the period. There are a number of Victorian and Edwardian developments in Shenstone Village. Some of these are infill between existing properties and some are developments of existing properties. The major development was New Road, close to the railway station and the centre of the village, on what was then previously undeveloped land. The later development (post-1960) of the Millbrook Estate used farmland, orchards and allotments either in the heart of the village or hugging the perimeter, keeping a tight profile of the village as can be seen from the Ordnance Survey maps.

² Source: Office for National Statistics

2.8 Figure 2.1 shows how Shenstone has grown and how its land use pattern has evolved over history.

Figure 2.1: Evolution of Shenstone



Source: Lichfield District Council (2011) *Lichfield District Rural Planning Project: Shenstone*

Industry

2.9 Shenstone was and still is primarily an agricultural ward by land area but there have been some commercial industrial enterprises come into the village. This is focused on the Shenstone Industrial Estate, situated immediately to the west of the railway line and of the village itself. This has contributed to the significant number of heavy goods vehicle (HGV) and light goods vehicle movements through the centre of the village, which has been a particular issue raised by local residents. This route for HGVs is largely unavoidable because it is the quickest way to access the strategic road network and specifically the A5, A38 and M6 toll road.

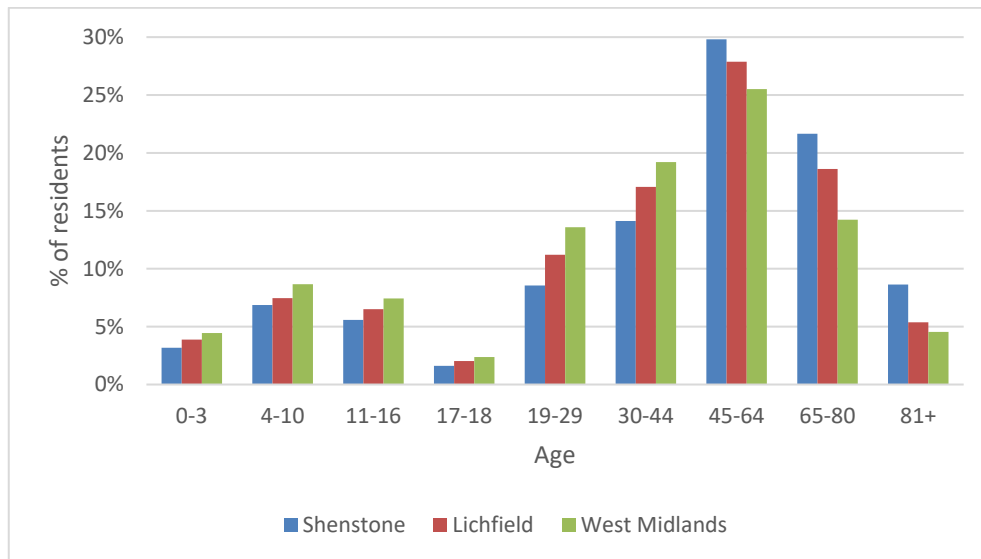
Profile of the community today

2.10 Unless stated otherwise, the profile of the community has come from the 2021 Census.

Population

2.11 In 2021, the population of the ward was 3,335. Compared to Lichfield district, it has a high proportion of older people - 31% were aged 65 or over in Shenstone compared to 24% across the district (see Figure 2.1).

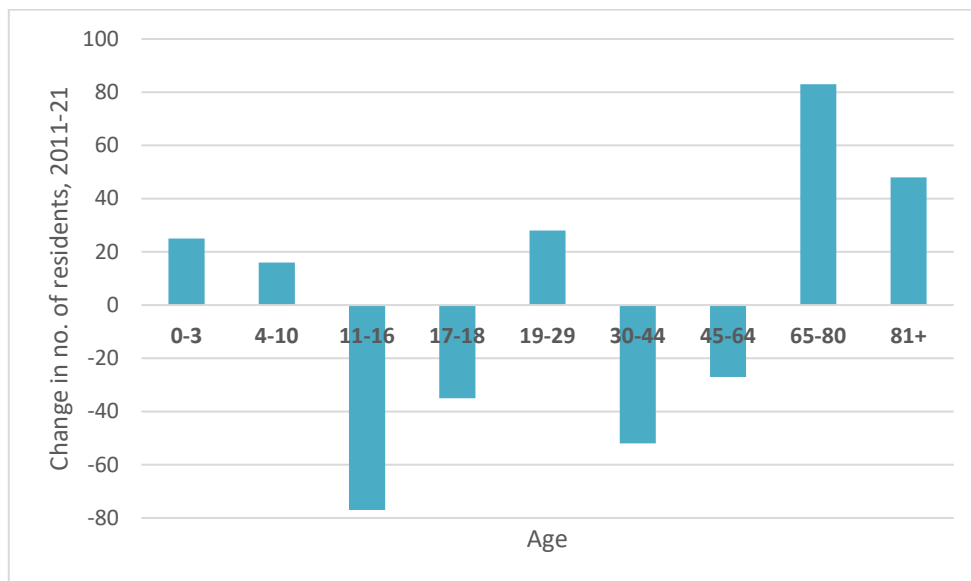
Figure 2.1: Population profile, 2021



Source: 2021 Census

2.12 Since 2011, the population of the ward has only grown by 9 persons, a 0.3% change compared to 5.8% growth across Lichfield district as a whole. This is reflective of the restrictions on growth in Shenstone due to the presence of the green belt. What is particularly interesting is the change in population by age group.

Figure 2.2: Change in population, 2011-2021



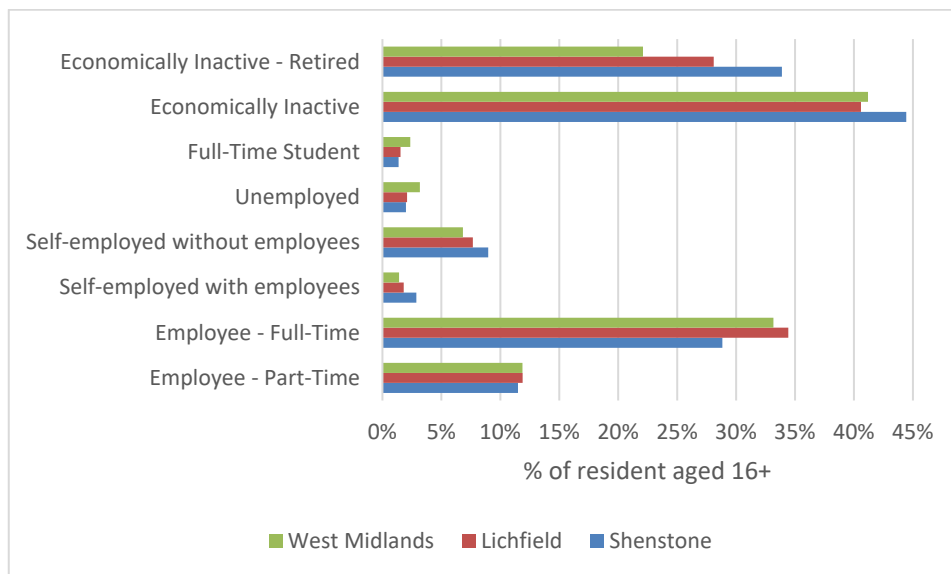
Source: 2011 and 2021 Census

2.13 Shenstone experienced very strong growth in its retirement population (aged 65 and older) whilst also experiencing a decline in much of its population of working age (aged 30 to 64). This demonstrates not only an ageing population structure but also a declining workforce, although this could be partially offset by the increase in young people aged 19 to 29. There has been a small growth in young children (aged 0 to 10). This is shown in Figure 2.2.

Work

- 2.14 What is noticeable about Shenstone’s population aged 16 and over is that it has a comparatively low proportion of people in full-time employment. Those that are economically inactive are comparatively high, reinforcing the high number of retirees in the ward.
- 2.15 What Shenstone does have a strong representation in is self-employed people, both with and without employees. This demonstrates that there is a strong entrepreneurial aspect to the working population.
- 2.16 This is shown in Figure 2.3.

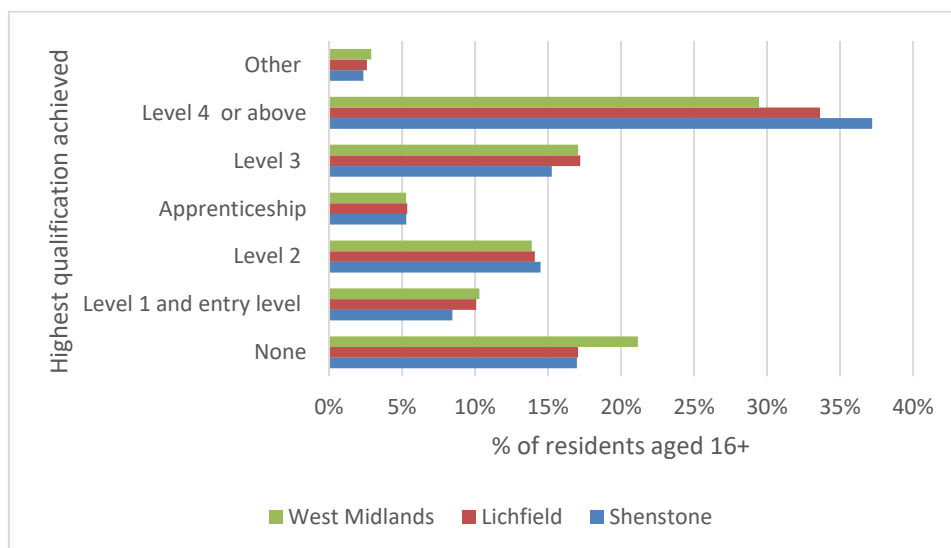
Figure 2.3: Economic activity, 2021



Source: 2021 Census

- 2.17 Figure 2.5 reinforces this, showing that about 40% of the population is educated to Level 4 or above, i.e. degree level. By contrast, the proportion of those with no qualifications is well below the regional average.

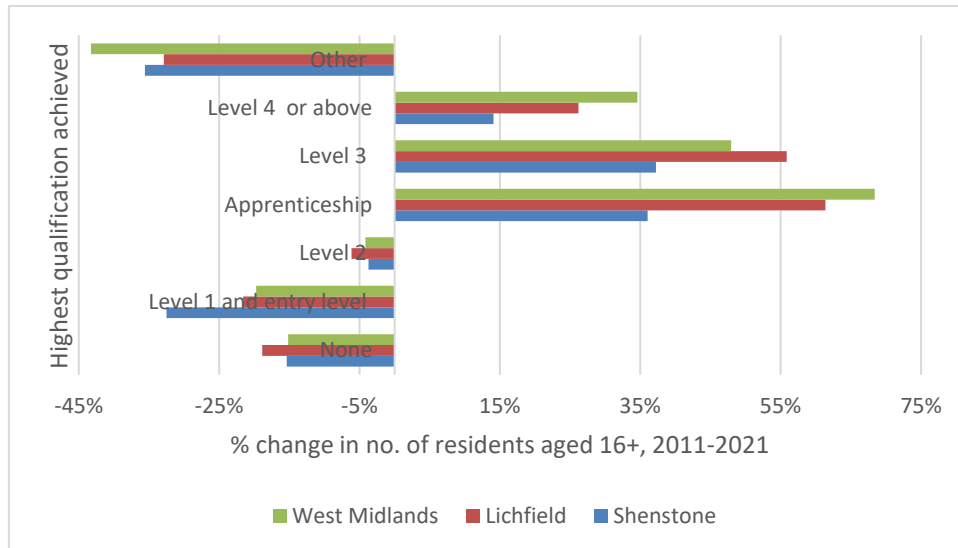
Figure 2.4: Qualifications of residents aged 16 and over



Source: 2021 Census

2.18 Since 2011, the change in qualification levels has been striking. Figure 2.5 shows that whilst those with the highest qualifications have grown (albeit at a slower rate than the district or region), there has been a strong decline in those with the lowest levels of qualification. Whether this is because qualification levels have gone up or because people with lower qualification levels have left Shenstone and been replaced by people with higher qualification levels is not known.

Figure 2.5: Change in qualifications of residents aged 16 and over



Source: 2011 and 2021 Census

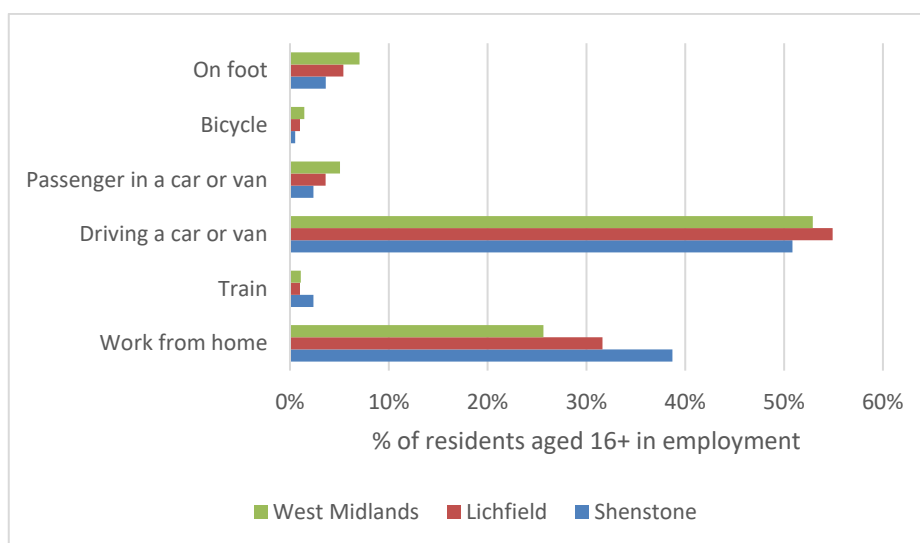
2.19 The large majority of those in work travel to work by car, and do so as the driver of that car. This is supported by Census figures on access to a car within households.

2.20 Despite the area being well served by rail links to several major employment centres, Shenstone has low levels that travel by train, albeit above the district and regional average.

2.21 A significant proportion of people (38%) work from home, up from 8% in 2011. This supports the high proportion of self-employment amongst those of working age.

2.22 This is shown in Figure 2.6.

Figure 2.6: Mode of transport to work



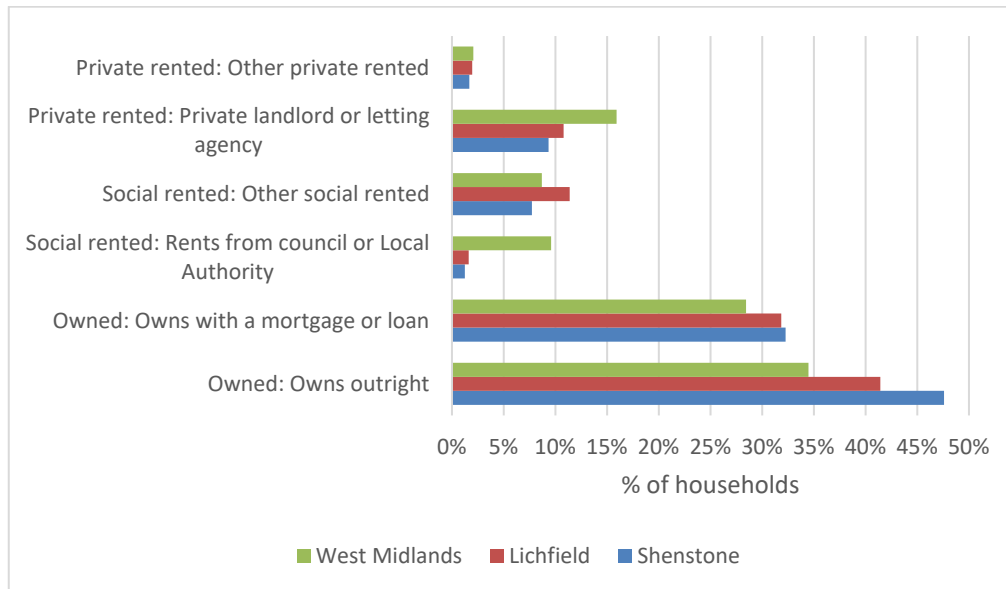
Source: 2021 Census

Housing

2.23 Shenstone is dominated by owned properties. In particular, nearly 50% of households own their property outright which is well above the district average. This has increased by over 25% since 2011. Whilst the proportion of households that rent is low, those renting from a private landlord has increased by over 40% since 2011.

2.24 This is shown in Figure 2.7.

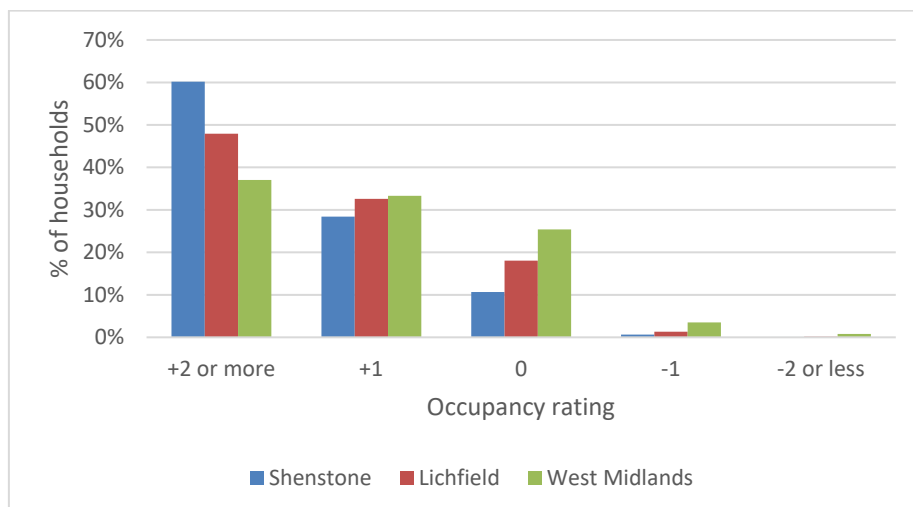
Figure 2.7: Housing tenure



Source: 2021 Census

2.25 This is reinforced when looking at the occupancy rating that properties in Shenstone have. The occupancy rating measures the number of spare bedrooms based on the number of people in the household and the number of bedrooms that the property has. So a rating of +2 means that a property has two spare bedrooms whereas -2 means it has two bedrooms fewer than needed for that household. Figure 2.8 shows that it has a far higher proportion of properties with at least two spare bedrooms than the district.

Figure 2.8: Occupancy rating



Source: 2021 Census

Local infrastructure

Education

- 2.26 Greysbrooke Primary School is located in Shenstone village and is the sole local catchment school. As of April 2024, it has a pupil roll of 205, close to its capacity of 210 pupils. It is understood however that a significant number of children come from outside of the catchment, therefore additional children in Shenstone over the plan period are expected to be capable of being accommodated.
- 2.27 Also in Shenstone is the Shenstone Lodge School, a community special school for boarders.
- 2.28 For secondary school, the majority of local children attend The Friary School or King Edward VI School, both of which are in Lichfield.

Healthcare

- 2.29 Local GP services for the Lichfield area covering Shenstone are provided by the Westgate Practice, of which the main practice site is based at Greenhill Health Centre in Lichfield. All patients are registered at the main practice site. The Westgate Practice also has a branch surgery in Shenstone which is open to all residents of Lichfield to attend. No particular issues relating to difficulties accessing healthcare have been identified. Following the Covid pandemic the Westgate Practice reviewed its service provision and access arrangements to ensure all registered patients have access to appointments, via a range of clinicians operating from both the main Lichfield site and the branch surgery. This includes Practice Nurse appointments, Advanced Nurse Practitioner appointments, Phlebotomy and GP appointments. All appointments can be booked via the main Lichfield practice.

Retailing and commerce

- 2.30 There is a small retail centre in the middle of Shenstone village, which includes a small convenience store, butchers, hairdressers, interior designers, doctors' surgery, dental practice, pharmacy and a post office. Parking at this centre has been identified as an issue.
- 2.31 On Birmingham Road, there is a small parade of shops with a Tesco Express and a fast food takeaway.

Public transport

- 2.32 The main Lichfield-to-Birmingham cross-city rail line stops at Shenstone rail station. One previous issue was trains running north to Shenstone frequently being terminated early at Blake Street. Changes to the timetable have largely addressed this. There is parking available at Shenstone railway station although there is now a charge for this which has resulted in increasing levels of parking on local streets by train users.
- 2.33 There are three bus routes serving Shenstone village – the 36 which runs on a route from Lichfield to Walsall hourly (6 days a week except Sundays), the X3 which runs from Lichfield to Birmingham twice hourly (6 days a week except Sundays) and the 3 which runs between Streetly and Lichfield but only one bus in the morning and one in the afternoon (Monday to Friday).
- 2.34 There is no dedicated school bus so secondary school pupils must rely on trains or public buses to Lichfield and Sutton Coldfield in order to get to school or college.

Road networks

- 2.35 The major issue on the road network is the use of roads through Shenstone village by heavy goods vehicles (HGVs). The presence of Birchbrook Industrial Estate and the Shenstone Business Park means that a number of businesses operate HGVs that require regular access to the strategic road network, specifically the A5, A38 and M6 toll road.

Walking and cycling

- 2.36 Accessibility by pedestrians and cyclists has not been identified as a major issue. However, movement by these modes is considered to need improvement, particularly between new developments and the village centre in order to improve the vitality of the centre.

Local Plan policy

- 2.37 The Local Plan Strategy adopted in 2015 for Lichfield District provides the strategic framework for growth in Shenstone. This covers the period to 2029. It identifies Shenstone as a 'Key Rural Settlement' and the vision for such rural settlements is that they "provide essential services and facilities to their communities and the wider rural hinterland including the smaller outlying villages and hamlets. The historic character and local distinctiveness of these key rural settlements and other villages will be protected and enhanced" (p.121).
- 2.38 The adopted Local Plan has a specific series of policies for Shenstone:
- Core Strategy Policy Shen1 focuses on the Environment:
 - Shenstone will maintain its role as a separate, freestanding, healthy and stable community offering a high quality local living environment and functioning as a local service centre offering a range of services and facilities.
 - The significance of the Conservation Area will be recognised and protected in all potential change and improvements supported. New buildings will be of a high quality design reflecting the character and range of vernacular house types and architectural sites and ensuring a positive contribution to the Conservation Area where appropriate.
 - Measures to manage traffic more effectively and safely in the village, additional parking and environmental enhancements at the station and improved walking and cycling routes will be supported.
 - Core Strategy Policy Shen2 focuses on Shenstone's Services and Facilities:
 - The loss of existing services and facilities will be resisted unless an equivalent facility can be provided which offers an equal or improved service to the community;
 - Initiatives to improve, enhance and deliver local facilities and amenities will be supported, specifically but not exclusively including pedestrian and cycle routes, allotments and improvements to traffic management and to rail services where they accord with other policies in the Local Plan;
 - Initiatives to increase accessibility to services and facilities and reduce the severance caused by the Birmingham Road will be supported where consistent with other policies in the Local Plan;
 - Provision of additional equipped play and amenity green space, space for informal play and sport, and links to open space will be supported, particularly in the southern part of Shenstone to improve local accessibility;

- The provision of an additional playing pitch will be supported if unmet demand can be clearly demonstrated.
 - Core Strategy Policy Shen3 focuses on the Economy:
 - Measures to improve rail services and facilities in the village will be supported;
 - The future role and function of the Birchbrook Industrial Estate and Shenstone Business Park will be fully considered through the adopted Local Plan to ensure that the site's full potential is maximised in terms of its contribution to the long term sustainability of the village³.
 - Core Strategy Policy Shen4 focuses on Housing:
 - A range of around 50 – 150 homes⁴ will be provided with final numbers and locations to be determined via the Local Plan Allocations document;
 - The quality of the built and natural environment will be enhanced and protected. Small-scale redevelopment within the village will be supported to provide for new housing and a modest and proportionate level of village growth, whilst maintaining a self-contained community with clear physical boundaries and which complements the character of the existing settlement.;
 - Infill development and re-use of brownfield land will be prioritised provided this does not result in a loss of services and facilities which contribute to the function of the settlement as a Key Rural Centre;
 - Housing in Shenstone will provide for the needs of the local community, particularly providing a range of affordable homes, starter homes and smaller homes to address downsizing need and the needs of the ageing population.
 - Local Plan Allocations Policy S1: Shenstone Housing Land Allocations focuses on Housing and Employment:
 - Allocates land at Lynn Lane, Shenstone for mixed-use residential development to provide approximately 50 dwellings and 1000m² of office/light industrial floor space (identified as Class B1 but now under Class E).
- 2.39 Since the 'making' of the 2016 Shenstone Neighbourhood Plan, 61 net additional dwellings have been completed between 2008 and 2024. These completions, in addition to further committed developments of approximately 8 dwellings and the allocation identified within the Local Plan Allocations document, demonstrate that significant housing provision toward the 50-150 dwelling requirement identified within the adopted local plan has been or will be provided.

³ The Neighbourhood Plan has addressed this through the strategy and allocations presented in the plan. The justification for the allocation of the Shenstone Business Park for housing is presented in Section 7.

⁴ The range of 50-150 homes is considered to be a minimum figure.

3 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Challenges for Shenstone

- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address, as far as is possible, the challenges that face the community of Shenstone. In summary these challenges are:
- An ageing population that has particular demands in terms of their accessibility to services and appropriate recreational facilities.
 - A declining population of working age, with many unable to afford the high house prices which are partly a function of the stock of large, detached properties. This equally relates to young first-time buyers.
 - Maintaining Shenstone's identity as a distinct, stand-alone settlement and protecting its existing facilities and services.
 - Addressing the problems of HGV traffic and overall traffic volumes and speeds through the middle of Shenstone village.
 - Addressing problems related to parking in the centre of Shenstone village.
 - Providing the appropriate balance of local jobs with improved accessibility to larger centres of employment.
 - Improving the frequency and reliability of public transport.

Vision for Shenstone

- 3.2 The adopted Local Plan has a vision for Shenstone which focuses on:
- Maintaining Shenstone's high quality living environment and ambiance, including in the Conservation Area and through the wooded areas in the centre of the village;
 - Good design quality;
 - Environmental enhancement of the village;
 - Traffic management and improved links for pedestrians and cyclists;
 - Offering a range of good quality services and facilities, reflecting the demographics of the community, in the village and to its hinterland;
 - Accommodating a proportionate level of growth which addresses local need whilst maintaining a self-contained community with clear physical boundaries.
- 3.3 The Neighbourhood Plan has also sought to expand on this vision through engagement with the local community. At the first public engagement event, the community was asked 'What will a future Shenstone feel like?' A range of words were presented as options for people to choose from. Out of this list of words, the most commonly used were:
- 'Rural'
 - 'Friendly'
 - 'Traditional'
- 3.4 A survey was undertaken with pupils at Greysbrooke School and children were very clear that they considered Shenstone village to be a 'friendly' place.

- 3.5 It is evident that the community wishes for Shenstone to stay very much as it is today, with a particular focus on maintaining community spirit. Given this, the Neighbourhood Plan vision for Shenstone at the end of the plan period (in 2040) is as follows:

"In 2040, Shenstone is a still a quiet, desirable and attractive rural village which is popular with families but has a friendly community made up of a mix of generations. The village has continued to expand over time through a number of residential developments. This has enabled a significant number of residents with larger properties whose families have grown up and left the area to downsize and stay in Shenstone, moving to smaller properties within walking distance of the shops and services in the village.

New development has helped to provide smaller, affordable properties for first-time buyers, helping to keep more young people in the village. Improved access to cycle lanes, bus and rail services has helped them to access job opportunities in the larger centres of Birmingham, Sutton Coldfield and Lichfield.

Land at Shenstone Business Park (allocated as land at Lynn Lane in the Lichfield Site Allocations document) has been developed for a mix of residential and employment uses. The residential development will provide excellent access to the countryside and people will also have step-free access to the station. The offices and light industrial uses provide jobs more aligned with the skills profile of the local community, meaning that more people live and work locally. The development has also meant that growth in the number of HGVs accessing the strategic road network through the village has been reduced.

Development helped to fund improved access to the countryside and for cycling and walking generally. It has also funded the improvement of community infrastructure to provide for the range of needs of all the community. Shenstone has become a destination, where people can come to walk or cycle into the surrounding countryside and then return to enjoy a meal or a coffee in one of the eateries in the centre of the village.

In short, when compared to 2015, Shenstone has seen change as being 'more of the same' – an increase in housing and residents allowing the evolution of a successful place rather than a radical shift in being. This has helped to maintain the mix of generations while continuing to support a strong retail offer and community ethos."

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

- 3.6 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan as identified through engagement with the community are as follows:

Development

- Provide for a minimum of 50 to 150 new dwellings over the period to 2029 in accordance with the adopted Local Plan and ensuring that the overall quantum of development does not put an unacceptable strain on infrastructure capacity.
- Allocate the most appropriate sites to accommodate the levels of growth proposed.

- Ensure that new developments include a mix of housing to meet the needs principally of local people, taking into account the current and predicted social demographic of the neighbourhood area.
- Ensure that new housing developments are designed to be in keeping with the existing character of Shenstone, particularly in terms of their design and the provision of private amenity space.
- Ensure that development, including heritage buildings, where appropriate, possible and with appropriate consents, maximises its energy efficiency and the potential for biodiversity to thrive.

Environment and Community Facilities

- Protect and maintain existing green spaces of value to the community.
- Provide new and improved community facilities to address the needs of the local population.
- Enhance the village by improving the appearance and safety of the village centre and other hotspots.
- Protect the existing village facilities of value to the community.
- Protect the health of residents by creating a cleaner environment in Shenstone.
- Preserve the dark skies in the area.

Movement

- Minimise and ideally reduce the impact of commercial traffic movements through the village.
- Improve access to Shenstone Railway Station.
- Improve movement by non-car modes (walking and cycling).
- Improve the level and quality of public transport services.
- Improve highway safety, both for vehicular users and pedestrians.
- Ensure that new commercial activity does not create parking problems.
- Improve the level and quality of signage in the village.

Commerce

- Protect Shenstone's existing services and facilities and support measures to maintain and improve them.
- Provide opportunities for small businesses to locate and thrive in Shenstone.

4 CANNOCK CHASE SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION

- 4.1 Part of the designated Neighbourhood Plan area is within 15 kilometres of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC). This is a nationally important designation which reflects the considerable ecological value of the area and the need to protect it. Development within the 15km radius could increase the number of people wanting to visit the SAC area and therefore potentially have a detrimental impact on the sensitive ecological network.
- 4.2 It is therefore necessary to have a policy which recognises that all development must be capable of demonstrating that it will not have a detrimental impact.

POLICY SAC1: CANNOCK CHASE SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION

Before development is permitted it must be demonstrated that alone or in combination with other development it will not have an adverse effect whether direct or indirect upon the integrity of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) having regard to avoidance or mitigation measures.

5 HOUSING

- 5.1 Meeting housing needs, particularly needs for affordable housing, is a strategic objective in Lichfield district. Delivery of the new housing development in the quantity and form necessary is fundamental to the policies of the District Local Plan. Key drivers for these policies are the demographic trends at work in the district, the evidence of need for affordable housing set out in the strategic housing market assessment, and the needs of individual towns and villages for additional housing of a range of costs and tenures as part of their development as communities and more sustainable places.
- 5.2 For Shenstone, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to contribute towards this by addressing the housing needs of the neighbourhood area whilst ensuring that development does not have an unacceptable impact on the local infrastructure. This will be achieved by:
- providing for a minimum of 50 to 150 new dwellings between 2008 and 2029 in accordance with Lichfield District Council's District Local Plan and ensuring that the overall quantum of development does not put an unacceptable strain on infrastructure capacity;
 - ensuring that the built-up area boundary is maintained and provides appropriate safeguards to Shenstone's village identity;
 - prioritising the use of brownfield sites and permitting greenfield development only in very special circumstances, with clear and strict guidance on what is appropriate;
 - ensuring that new developments include a mix of housing to meet the needs of local people, taking into account the current and projected demographic of the neighbourhood area; and
 - providing well-designed dwellings that are sympathetic to the character of the village and where relevant, to the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area

Dwelling mix

Policy Justification

- 5.3 The NPPF states at paragraph 63 that within the context of establishing need, "the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies". A Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA), prepared for Lichfield and Tamworth districts in 2020⁵, found that affordable housing need is heavily skewed towards smaller dwellings (1- and 2-bed properties account for up to 65% of both rented affordable housing and affordable home ownership), with market housing also showing significant need for the smallest properties (at up to 45% although approximately half the need is for 3-bed properties).
- 5.4 Policies H1 and Shen4 of the adopted Local Plan recognise the need for a greater proportion of smaller dwellings, both as starter homes for first-time buyers and for older people looking to downsize. The Southern Staffordshire SHMA Update 2012 noted at Table 6.2 that over 55% of existing households in the Rural South & East Sub area of Lichfield District (which includes Shenstone) were unable to afford to buy a property and over 34% were unable to afford to rent. For newly forming households – which may well include young couples looking to buy their first property – the percentages increase to over 75% unable to afford to buy and over 56% unable to afford to rent. Whilst this data is quite dated, the HEDNA notes that affordability ratios have

⁵ GL Hearn (2020) *Housing and Economic Development Need Assessment – Update*, for Lichfield District Council and Tamworth Borough Council

improved in recent years but not to any significant degree. The same intractable problems of affordability remain.

5.5 It is evident that there is a need for smaller properties to be made more affordable and therefore one part of the solution is to increase the supply of these properties. The table on p86 of the HEDNA shows the mix of house sizes needed by housing type. This is shown in Table 5.1 below:

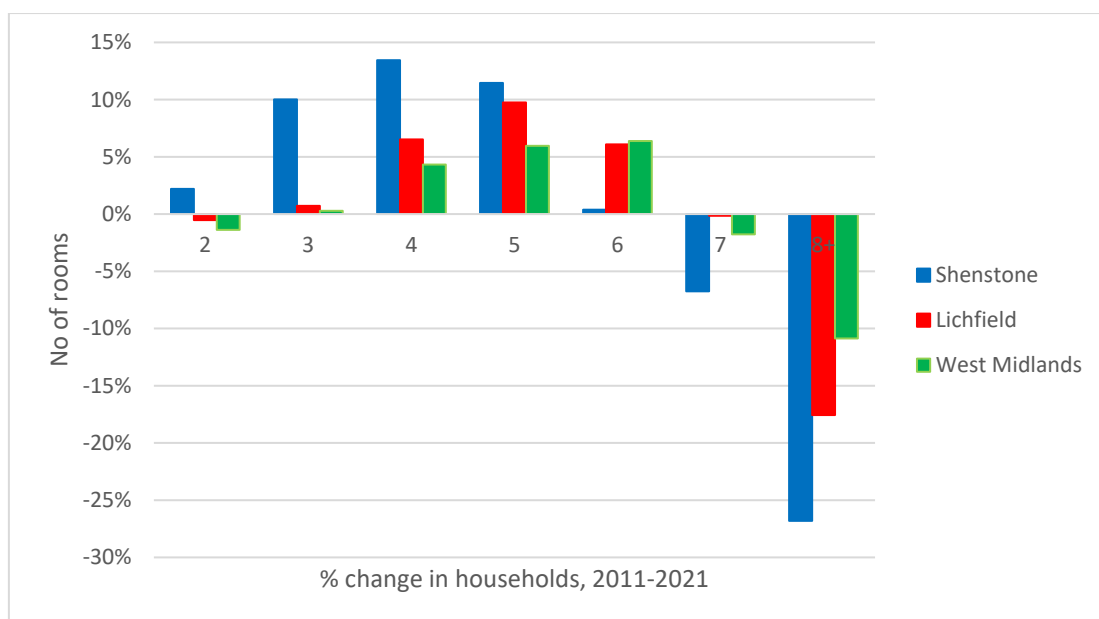
Table 5.1: Mix of housing needed by housing type in Lichfield district

Tenure	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+ - bed	Proportion of tenure assumed by HEDNA
Market	5 -10%	30-35%	45-55%	5-15%	70%
Affordable housing ownership	10-20%	40-45%	30-40%	5-15%	10%
Affordable housing (rented)	20-30%	25-35%	35-40%	5-10%	20%

Source: Lichfield and Tamworth Housing and Economic Development Need Assessment – Update 2020

- 5.6 This shows that the predominant need for market and affordable home ownership is for 2- and 3-bed properties whilst for affordable housing (rent) it is 3-bed homes.
- 5.7 The proportion of each tenure has been applied to the ranges in Table 6.1 to produce the figures shown in Policy H1. The policy therefore provides flexibility by not identifying specific tenures.
- 5.8 This is supported by the community engagement undertaken in Shenstone Neighbourhood Area through the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. Significant numbers of existing residents identified that there was a lack of smaller properties in Shenstone to provide for the needs of both the older generation and young, first-time buyers. The socio-economic profile in Section 2 endorses this; Shenstone has a high proportion of people at or approaching retirement age and this proportion has been increasing rapidly over the period since 2001.

Figure 5.1: Change in dwelling size by number of rooms, 2011-2021



Source: 2011 and 2021 Census

- 5.9 Figure 5.1 shows what has been happening over the most recent 10-year period. It shows the change in the number of rooms⁶ that dwellings within Shenstone ward have over the period 2011 to 2021. This shows that there has been growth in some of the smallest dwellings (3-, 4- and 5-room properties) whereas there has been a decline in the largest properties (8 or more rooms). This shows that the policy seeking smaller properties in Shenstone has been having an effect. However, the demographic make-up of Shenstone is clear that there is a continuing need for more smaller properties in the Neighbourhood Area.
- 5.10 Smaller properties are required to address the needs of the older generation but also to provide the potential for younger people to live in Shenstone, so avoiding it becoming largely a retirement community.
- 5.11 As the majority of new build housing development since the making of the first Neighbourhood Plan in 2016 has been below the size threshold required to deliver a regenerative mix, the deficit in smaller homes has continued.

POLICY H1: DWELLING MIX

A. Residential developments must provide a mix of dwelling sizes (market, affordable ownership and affordable rent) that fall within the following ranges:

- **1-bed dwellings: 10-15% of all dwellings**
- **2-bed dwellings: 30-35% of all dwellings**
- **3-bed dwellings: 40-50% of all dwellings**
- **4+-bed dwellings: 5-15% of all dwellings**

B. An alternative dwelling mix will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that the above mix would fundamentally compromise the viability of the scheme, taking into account other requirements of the scheme.

Residential infill and backland development

- 5.12 Backland development is defined as development on land behind the rear building line of existing housing or other development, and is usually land that has previously been used as gardens, or is partially enclosed by gardens.
- 5.13 Infill development involves the development of a small gap in an otherwise built up frontage. It usually consists of frontage plots only and often comprises side gardens of existing houses. This can include the development of ancillary buildings, particularly garages.

Policy Justification

- 5.14 One of the particular issues raised by the community of Shenstone has been the concern that infill development in particular could serve to inappropriately increase the density of development in the village. With the presence of the green belt across much of the ward, coupled with the large gardens that many existing properties enjoy, a significant amount of new housing could come through infill development. In the past there have been several examples of infill developments in

⁶ The total number of rooms does not include bathrooms, toilets, halls or landings, or rooms that can only be used for storage.

Shenstone which local residents consider have created issues in terms of amenity for neighbouring properties.

5.15 Adverse impacts of inappropriate developments can include the following:

- Loss of amenity, overshadowing, overlooking
- Loss of sunlight/ daylight
- Noise
- Loss of green links/ trees /hedgerows/vegetation
- Visual intrusion
- Loss of space between buildings
- Loss of parking
- Multiple long driveways serving a single property
- Difficulties with recycling and waste collections/bin storage
- Increased surface water run-off and associated flooding.

5.16 Paragraph 75 of the NPPF states that:

"Local planning authorities should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area."

5.17 It is considered important that infill development, whilst generally acceptable within the built-up area, must be designed so that it sits appropriately within its surroundings. It is acknowledged that, if development is of a different mix of housing, e.g. 2- and 3-bed dwellings in a predominantly 4- and 5-bed dwelling area, then densities may differ slightly. However, it is vital that the design of such developments does not have a negative impact on the amenity of existing residents in the neighbouring properties. In particular, it should be ensured that such properties have reasonably sized gardens, based on the size of the property.

5.18 The objectives of this policy are to ensure that:

- infill development respects and reflects the character of the area and the existing street scene;
- safe and attractive residential layouts are promoted; and
- local distinctiveness and identity are promoted.

5.19 The particular issues that must be considered in demonstrating that a backland or infill scheme is acceptable are as follows:

5.20 **Plot width** – plots must be of sufficient width to allow a building(s) to be sited with adequate separation between dwellings. The width of the remaining and the new plot should be similar to that prevailing in the immediate area. This should also take into account any proposed ancillary buildings such as garages.

5.21 **Building line** – where the prevailing depth of existing dwellings is a feature of the area new development should respect that building line. This includes the positioning of ancillary buildings, e.g. garages, which must also respect the building line.

- 5.22 **Visual separation** – new dwellings must have similar spacing between buildings to that commonly found on the street frontage. Where houses are terraced the new development should normally adjoin the adjacent property(s).
- 5.23 **Building height** – new buildings should reflect the height of existing buildings. Where existing buildings are of a uniform height, new buildings should respect that height.
- 5.24 **Daylight and sunlight** – new buildings should not adversely affect neighbouring properties by seriously reducing the amount of daylight available through windows or by obstructing the path of direct sunlight to a once sunny garden or window. Blocking direct sunlight from reaching neighbouring properties can cause overshadowing and is not acceptable.
- 5.25 **Parking and access arrangements** – satisfactory arrangements will be required for parking and access. Generally parking areas to the front of the property using the front garden will not be acceptable unless, this is the prevailing pattern of parking in the locality.
- 5.26 **Boundary treatment** – boundary treatment along the frontage should reflect that prevailing in the area. Proposals for open frontages or the use of the frontage for parking will not be acceptable in areas where enclosed front boundaries prevail.

POLICY H2: RESIDENTIAL INFILL AND BACKLAND DEVELOPMENT

- A. All residential infill and backland development within the built-up area of Shenstone should reflect the character of the surrounding area and protect the amenity of neighbours. It should reinforce the uniformity of the street by reflecting the scale, mass, height and form of its neighbours.**
- B. Development proposals, including ancillary buildings that would infill a gap between existing properties, will be expected to:**
- **ensure that they do not lead to over-development of a site; and**
 - **avoid the appearance of cramming; and**
 - **demonstrate that development is of a similar density to properties in the immediate surrounding area (this is particularly the case for applications for two or more dwellings on a site currently or previously occupied by a single property); and**
 - **ensure that new buildings do not adversely affect the residential amenity of neighbouring properties by virtue of overshadowing; and**
 - **ensure that it does not unacceptably reduce the level of existing private amenity space provision for existing residential properties; and**
 - **provide appropriate parking and access arrangements, both for the new development and existing properties where they would be affected.**

Design of residential development

Policy Justification

- 5.27 The proliferation of large dwellings that have been built in Shenstone village over recent years has also resulted in some designs that are considered to not be in keeping with the prevailing vernacular of other residential development. Whilst there is not a wish to stifle design innovation, it is considered that the architectural heritage of Shenstone village should be observed in the design of new dwellings.
- 5.28 It is therefore considered that any development which creates at least one new dwelling or extends an existing dwelling (where a planning application is required), should demonstrate how the design of the dwellings are in keeping with the architecture of the properties in the immediate surrounding area.
- 5.29 Development should also be informed by the Lichfield Design Code, prepared by Lichfield District Council, which has been adopted as supplementary planning guidance.

POLICY H3: DESIGN OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Housing development which creates at least one new dwelling or extends an existing dwelling (where a planning application is required), must demonstrate how the design of the dwelling(s), guided by the Lichfield District Design Code is in keeping with the predominant architectural style of the residential properties in the immediate surrounding area.

Residential amenity space

Policy Justification

- 5.30 Shenstone village is characterised by its low density nature. The development that has built up over generations has consistently providing significant amounts of amenity space. It is only recent development of infill and backland development where this trend has been broken, which is why Policy H2 seeks to address this.
- 5.31 This low density development with large amounts of private amenity space can be seen on satellite imagery.

Holly Hill Road/Chestnut Drive/St Johns Hill



New Road/Footerley Road/Richard Cooper Road



5.32 Even the most modern development, at Millbrook Drive and Oakwood Close (from the 1990s), whilst at higher densities than other areas in the village, still has a good level of private amenity space.

Millbrook Drive/Oakwood Close



It is therefore important that new developments of dwellings are designed to ensure that sufficient amenity space is provided. Lichfield District Council adopted the Sustainable Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in 2016 which contains guidance on garden/amenity space required with dwellings. Additionally, the Council adopted the Lichfield District Design Code SPD in December 2024. All developments should therefore ensure that they provide adequate amenity space in line with the councils relevant adopted SPDs.

- 5.33 The policy equally applies to the layout of the site allocation Site S1 (Land at Lynn Lane) which was allocated in the Lichfield Site Allocations DPD 2019. This is in order to ensure that the site, along with windfall developments, are in keeping with the existing character of Shenstone.

POLICY H4: PROVISION OF PRIVATE AMENITY SPACE TO SERVE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Residential development proposals shall be expected to provide adequate private amenity space to serve each property. Such proposals must demonstrate that they have complied with any district-wide design code policy or Supplementary Planning Document on design matters that has been prepared by Lichfield District Council.

Housing requirements

- 5.34 The Lichfield Local Plan requires a minimum of between 50 and 150 dwellings to be delivered in Shenstone over the period 2008 to 2029. This is principally expected to be delivered through the Lichfield Site Allocations Site S1 (land at Lynn Lane) which is allocated for approximately 50 dwellings. Whilst this site has yet to come forward, since the 'making' of the 2016 Shenstone Neighbourhood Plan, 61 net additional dwellings have been completed between 2008 and 2024.

These completions, in addition to further committed developments of approximately 8 dwellings, demonstrate that significant housing provision towards the 50-150 dwelling requirement identified within the adopted Local Plan has already been achieved without any contribution from the land at Lynn Lane.

6 MOVEMENT

- 6.1 Policy Shen2 of the adopted Local Plan focuses on Shenstone’s services and facilities. It states that initiatives to improve, enhance and deliver local facilities and amenities will be supported. It specifically refers to pedestrian and cycle routes, parking and rail station improvements.
- 6.2 In consultation with the community, many of the issues that were raised are difficult to deal with directly through the Neighbourhood Plan. These include:
- The need to encourage a more reliable bus service in order to increase patronage.
 - Introduce parking management measures to maximise short term use at the shops in the village centre and also along Birmingham Road.
 - Development of a strategy for reducing the volume of HGVs passing through Shenstone village. The Neighbourhood Plan has been unable to identify any solutions that will ensure HGVs take an alternative route towards the strategic road network.
 - Development of a traffic management plan focused on safety enhancement. This should address matters such as safety at junctions and roundabouts, pedestrian safety generally, parking on pavements, vehicle speed and parking problems.
 - Improved cycle access and signage and improved footpath access with updated waymarkers.
 - The need for improved road surfaces, including where HGVs create noise pollution for local residents.
- 6.3 These matters are discussed in the section at the end of the Neighbourhood Plan which addresses non-land use matters.

Pedestrian access to Shenstone Railway Station

Policy Justification

- 6.4 One particular issue that has been raised by the community is the lack of step-free access at Shenstone Railway Station to the Lichfield-bound platform. West Midland Trains, the train operating company, has stated it is amenable to step-free access being provided from the Shenstone Business Park site, particularly given the allocation of this site for redevelopment (see Lichfield Site Allocations document Site S1: Land at Lynn Lane). The allocation also gives the opportunity to provide additional parking on this side of the station for users that require step-free access.
- 6.5 Whilst West Midland Trains has stated, at this stage, that it is will not able fund the provision of step-free access, it is considered that the funding of such improvements could be delivered through a combination of development contributions (most likely through CIL if in place) and grant funding. In consultation with the Parish Council, their meaningful proportion of CIL could facilitate part funding the step free access.

POLICY MO1: PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO SHENSTONE RAILWAY STATION

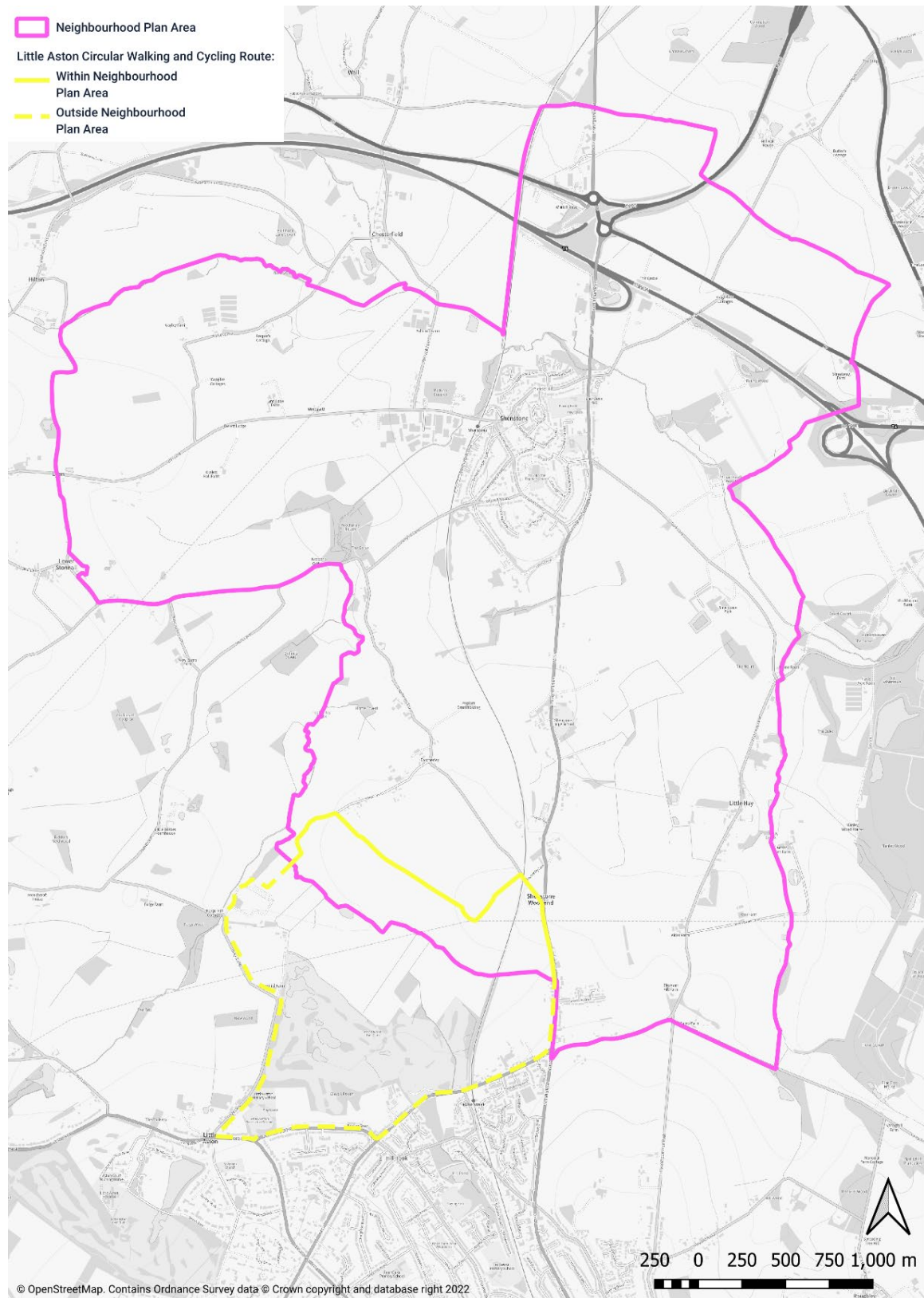
Development proposals that provide step-free access to the Lichfield-bound platform at Shenstone Railway Station shall be strongly supported. This access shall be from the land allocated at Lichfield Site Allocations document Site S1 (Land at Lynn Lane).

Walking and cycling

Policy Justification

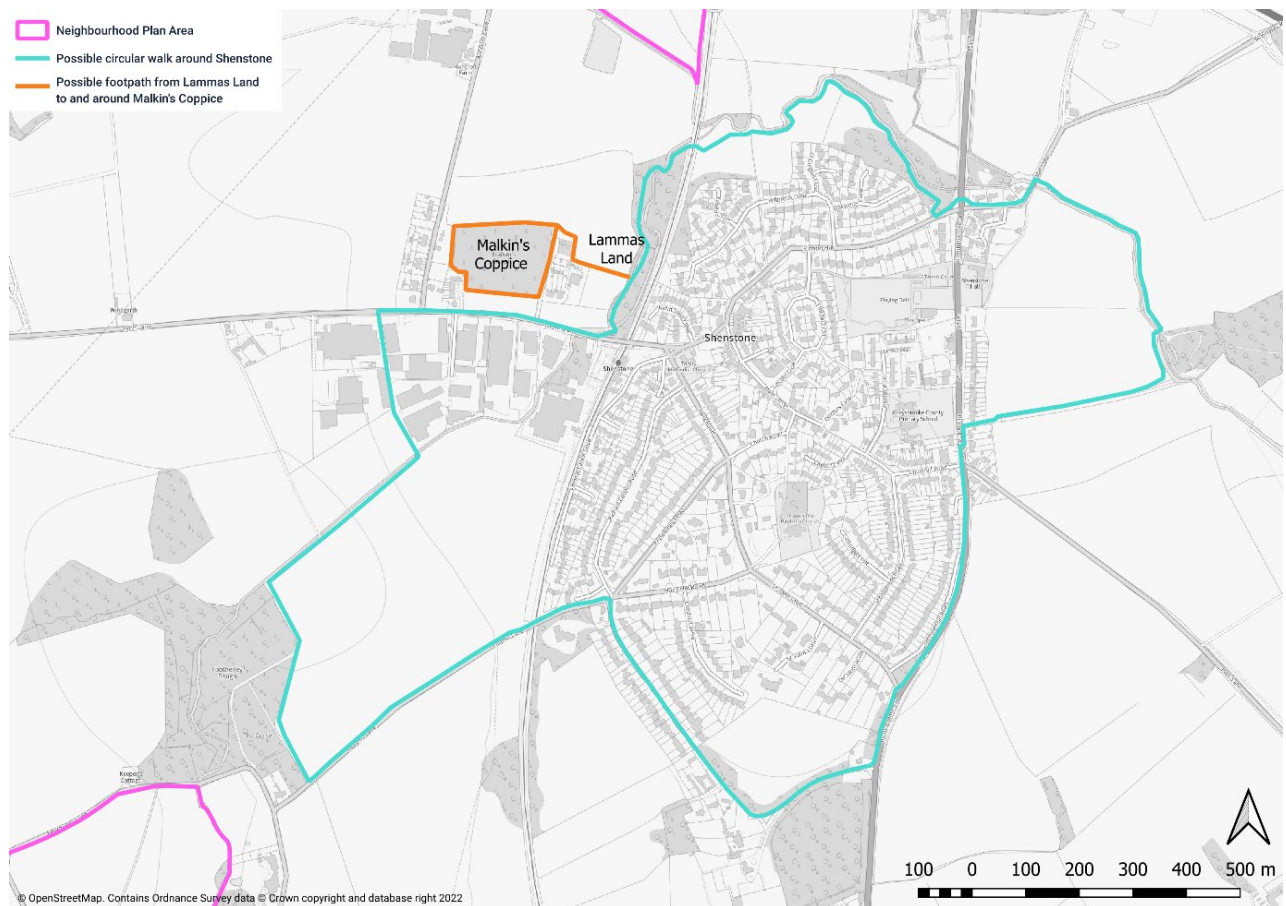
- 6.6 As identified in the adopted Local Plan, the provision of improved pedestrian and cycle routes will be welcomed. The Greysbrooke School survey revealed that children are particularly concerned about the regularity with which they have to walk into the road because cars are parked on the pavement. In the Neighbourhood Plan consultations, a requirement for increasing pathways and trails in and around the village was identified. These principles and requirements are welcomed in order to retain the compact nature of the village.
- 6.7 With the site allocation S1 (Land at Lynn Lane) creating new residential development to the west of the railway line, improvements to the existing pedestrian and cycle access across the railway bridge at Lynn Lane are desirable. This will maximise the numbers of residents that walk or cycle to the shops and services in the centre of the village. There is a need to provide more space on the southern side for pedestrians, ideally to share with cyclists, along with the need to make this stretch of pavement safer given the proximity of traffic using the bridge. However, this may be difficult to achieve. Nevertheless, it is still an important aspiration that should be sought to be addressed if possible.
- 6.8 The Little Aston Neighbourhood Plan Review has identified a circular walking and cycling route which would help its community to access the countryside and increase walking and cycling. Part of this route is within the Shenstone Neighbourhood Area, therefore it cannot be addressed by the Little Aston Neighbourhood Plan Review. In order to increase the potential for the full circular route to be secured, the section that is within the Shenstone Neighbourhood Area is included in the Shenstone Neighbourhood Plan Review. This is shown on Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1: Route for completion of Little Aston circular walk



6.9 It may be possible over the plan period to deliver other recreational walking routes. The Playing Fields Committee identified a series of walks around Shenstone village for people to follow and enjoy the local heritage and the surrounding countryside. These utilise existing footpaths and rights of way and the provision of improved access to these will be welcomed. This could include the provision of more footpaths in order to provide better linkages between areas in Shenstone village or between the village and the surrounding countryside. One particular opportunity would be to provide a circular walking route around the village. A possible route is shown in Figure 8.2 although this does represent only one possibility and other routes may prove preferable or easier to deliver. A second walking route that was identified which could provide benefits for the community was a footpath linking the Lammas Land with Malkins Coppice. An indicative potential route is also shown in Figure 6.2. In light of the reduced certainty regarding the potential to deliver these routes as shown, they are only indicative and are therefore not specifically identified in Policy MO2.

Figure 6.2: Other possible circular walks



POLICY MO2: IMPROVEMENTS TO PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE ROUTES

- A. Development proposals that provide improved access to Shenstone village and the surrounding countryside for pedestrians, cyclists and people with mobility issues will be strongly supported. Such access should seek, where possible, to provide a shared space between pedestrians, cyclists and people with mobility issues, ideally with the physical separation of such space from road traffic.**
- B. In particular, the following improvements will be strongly supported:**
- **Provision of improved or new pedestrian, bicycle and impaired mobility access across the railway bridge at Lynn Lane will be strongly supported. This will improve access for the new residential development on land at Lynn Lane (see Lichfield Site Allocations document Policy S1).**
 - **Provision of the northern section of the Little Aston walking and cycling route that is within the Shenstone Neighbourhood Area.**
 - **Provision of circular walks around Shenstone village for recreational activity.**

Parking

Policy Justification

- 6.10 The Parking Survey 2014 identified that day-long parking was an issue in the village centre, particularly around Main Street and Lincoln Croft. In 2019 charges were introduced for parking at Shenstone Station, resulting in increased levels of parking on local roads. Feedback from the community has highlighted that parking in the village generally continues to be an issue. All new commercial activities, whether retail businesses or more traditional light manufacturing businesses do have the potential to create additional parking needs for its workers. For many of these workers, they will need to park close to their workplace for the whole working day, which can create congestion and safety issues for pedestrians.
- 6.11 Any proposed commercial development, either for an E-class (retail, financial and professional services, restaurants, cafes, offices or light industrial) use or a pub, takeaway, industrial or storage and distribution use must therefore ensure that the expected levels of parking that will be created by its workforce can adequately be accommodated. This should ideally be off-street as part of the new development but it could be on-street, provided it will not create unacceptable levels of parking that will serve to impact on the amenity of neighbouring residential properties or existing businesses.
- 6.12 All new commercial activities are encouraged to put in place a Green Travel Plan in order to maximise the potential for its staff to travel to work by non-car modes of transport.

POLICY MO3: COMMERCIAL PARKING

- A. Proposals for new commercial development (within Use Classes E, B2 or B8, pubs or takeaways) must demonstrate that the additional vehicle parking created by its workforce will not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring residential properties or existing businesses.**
- B. New commercial developments will be required to provide off-street parking for their workforce—and on-street parking will be strongly discouraged due to its detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring residential properties or existing businesses.**
- C. Proposals for new commercial activity that include for the provision of a Green Travel Plan will be supported, subject to the other requirements of the policy having been satisfied.**

6.13 An issue related raised by the community is the need to improve parking around Main Street and Lincoln Croft in Shenstone village centre. Whist this is partly about the availability of spaces for users of the shops, a more significant concern is the haphazard nature of parking which creates difficulties for traffic movement through the area. This creates a danger for pedestrians and cyclists as car drivers have reduced sightlines.

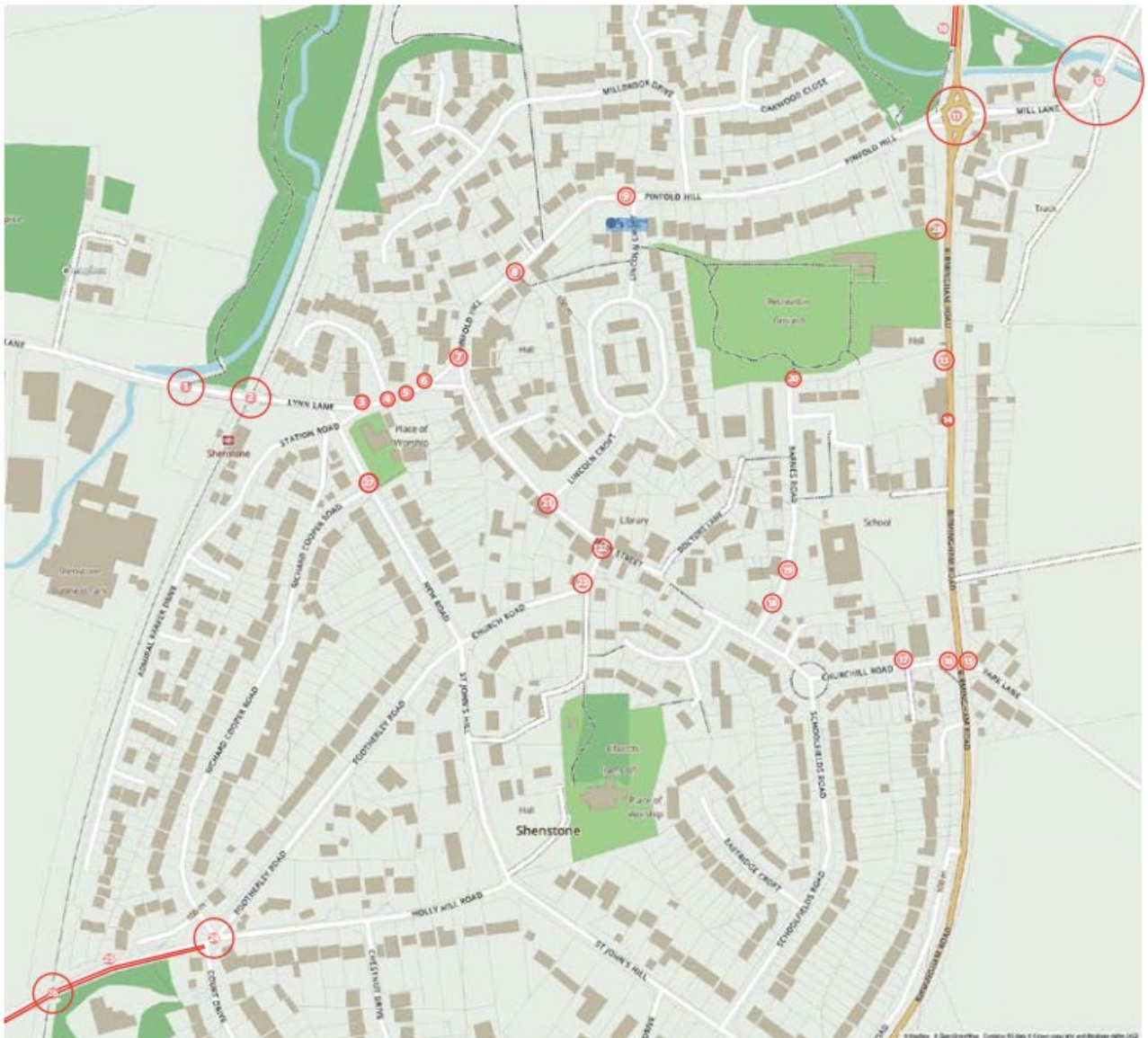


- 6.14 Problem parking also occurs on Barnes Road, Schoolfields Road and Churchill Road at school drop-off/pick-up times, as well as throughout the day at the eastern end of Churchill Road due to patronage of the Tesco convenience store and takeaway that front onto Birmingham Road.
- 6.15 The problem of traffic has been addressed in some roads with the use of traffic management orders (TMOs). Since May 2021, a TMO has been in place restricting parking in parts or all of Admiral Parker Drive, Station Road, Lynn Lane, Holm View Close, New Road and Richard Cooper Road and this has improved the situation.
- 6.16 The solution of better parking management is dealt with in the non-land use issues section of the Plan.

Traffic calming

- 6.17 With the allocation of Site S1 (Land at Lynn Lane) in the Lichfield Site Allocations document for residential development, there will be increased non-commercial traffic accessing the roads in and around Shenstone village. The community raised concerns regarding the speed of vehicles generally around the village and increased traffic levels will only heighten these concerns.
- 6.18 It is necessary to devise a suitable traffic management and action plan for addressing these issues. Where this includes traffic calming, both digital and physical measures should be looked at. In particular, the following issues have been identified:
- The need for improved enforcement of speed restrictions.
 - The need for traffic calming to restrict the use of Ashcroft Lane, Mill Lane, Lynn Lane/Pinfold Hill, Lynn Lane/New Road/St John's Hill, Fotherley Lane/Holly Hill/St John's Hill and Claypit Lane as rat-runs.
- 6.19 Figures 6.3 and 6.4 shows the respective traffic hazards and parking issues identified by the community.

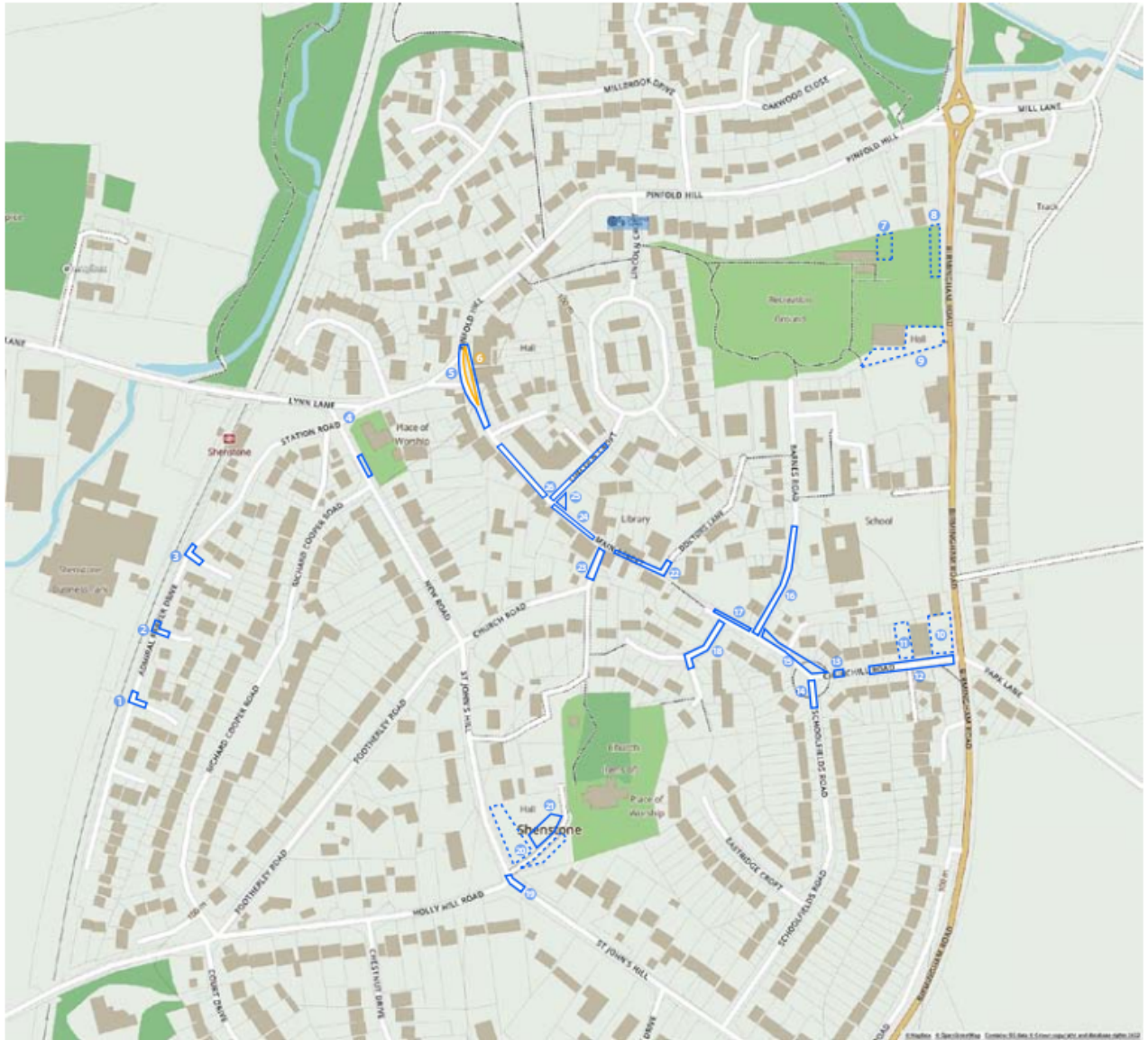
Figure 6.3: Traffic hazards



KEY: 1 Perceived Traffic Hazard Areas

1	Dangerous crossing due to speed & low visibility over bridge.	7	Dangerous crossing due to vehicle speed & low visibility.	13	Low visibility at pub entrance/exit.	19	Parking congestion makes crossing to school entrance hazardous.	25	Lack of pavement is an impediment to pedestrian access to green walks.
2	Narrow pavement over bridge. Traffic calming needed.	8	Accident site. Speed restrictions needed to make crossing to footpath safer.	14	Narrow pavement. Especially dangerous for pushchair/wheelchair users.	20	Lack of visibility at road corner for pedestrians. Mirror may be needed.	26	High vehicle speeds + narrow bridge cause cycle & pedestrian hazards here.
3	Narrow pavement / lack of space at bus stop.	9	Dangerous, low visibility crossing. High vehicle speeds. Blind bend.	15	Lack of visibility at road corner for pedestrians. Mirror may be needed.	21	On road / pavement parking causes crossing hazards for pedestrians.	27	Parking on New Road can cause congestion & speeding at the junction with Richard cooper Road.
4	Blind spot. High vehicle speeds. Traffic calming needed after bridge.	10	Narrow pavement. Especially dangerous for pushchair/wheelchair users. High vehicle speeds.	16	Parking congestion on double yellow lines makes turning hazardous.	22	On road / pavement parking + narrow turning causes hazards.	28	Country Club sign causes lack of visibility when turning out of and into car park here.
5	Accident site. Safer crossing point needed for children & older residents.	11	Crossing points too close to island.	17	Turning delivery lorries & agricultural vehicles makes area hazardous.	23	High vehicle speeds, tight bend and narrow road cause hazards in this area.		
6	Dangerous crossing due to vehicle speeds & low visibility.	12	Access to potential green walk impeded by lack of pavement. National speed limit close to public footpath entrance..	18	Parking congestion makes crossing to nursery entrance hazardous.	24	High speeds, agricultural vehicles & low visibility over bridge cause hazards here.		

Figure 6.4: Parking issues



KEY: Observed Parking Issues Car Parks Potentially In Need Of Improvement
 Potential 'No Parking' Zone

1	Overspill from train station car park on Admiral Parker Drive.	7	Country Club car park may benefit from re-surfacing & designated parking bays.	13	'School Run' parking on pavement along upper Churchill Rd can cause congestion.	19	On-road parking during events at St John's Church & Church Hall can cause congestion & turning difficulties.	25	On-pavement parking at the corner of Main St & Lincoln Croft can cause pedestrian safety issues.
2	Overspill from train station car park on Admiral Parker Drive.	8	Tennis court car park may benefit from designated parking bays.	14	'School Run' parking along entrance to Schoolfields Rd can cause congestion.	20	St John's Church & Church Hall car parks may benefit from designated parking bays.	26	On-road parking in Main St shopping area & along Lincoln Croft can cause congestion & pedestrian safety issues.
3	Overspill from train station car park on Admiral Parker Drive.	9	Village hall car park may benefit from re-painting of designated parking bays.	15	'School Run' parking on verges & pavements along upper Churchill Rd.	21	Overspill from car parks can cause parking on the grass area of the Glebe.		
4	Parking on New Road can cause congestion & speeding at the junction with Richard Cooper Road.	10	Tesco car park may benefit from long wheel-base vehicle bays to alleviate double yellow line parking on Churchill Rd.	16	'School Run' parking along Barnes Road causes congestion & visibility / road crossing issues.	22	On-road parking at the corner of Doctor's Lane & Main St can cause turning issues and inconvenience for residents.		
5	Parking on corner of Main St & Pinfold Hill can cause congestion & block bus stop.	11	Tesco delivery yard may benefit from clearing & optimising to accommodate simultaneous deliveries.	17	'School Run' parking along upper Churchill Rd can cause congestion.	23	On-pavement parking along lower Church Road can cause congestion at narrow points & turning issues onto Main St.		
6	Potential 'No Parking' zone may solve some parking issues in this area.	12	Double yellow line, pavement & dropped curb parking along lower Churchill Road.	18	'School Run' parking along Church Close can cause congestion.	24	On-road parking along Main St can cause congestion & pedestrian safety issues.		

Commercial traffic

- 6.20 One of the big issues for the community is the impact of heavy goods vehicle (HGV) traffic through the village. This has predominantly been created by businesses at the Birchbrook Industrial Estate but commercial traffic serving the Tesco Express site and agricultural vehicles coming from Park Lane and turning in Churchill Road have added to these issues. This has a detrimental impact on the wellbeing of residents. With limited alternative routes to access the strategic road network – particularly the A5, the A38 and the M6 toll road – the volume of HGV traffic serves to create issues of noise, congestion and pedestrian safety.
- 6.21 It is acknowledged that there are no obvious solutions, but it is important that all options are considered as part of a detail study of traffic movements. The section of the Plan on non-land use matters identifies this as a priority.
- 6.22 In respect of any individual planning applications for commercial development, any potential impact on the road network is considered through the planning process. It is therefore not possible to have a policy addressing this matter but the Neighbourhood Plan has clearly identified this as a community priority which the local planning authority and highway authority (Staffordshire County Council) should take into consideration when examining development proposals.

7 ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- 7.1 Lichfield District Council evidence⁷ shows that local people love the green and open spaces in the neighbourhood area and they are well used for leisure and recreation. As a result, the local community wants them to be protected. Shenstone has been identified as being deficient in providing enough green spaces relative to the number of residents⁸.
- 7.2 Policy Shen2 of the adopted Local Plan recognises that Shenstone is deficient in amenity green space for informal play and sport. It also identifies the need to provide additional equipped play space and potentially an additional playing pitch if unmet demand can be clearly demonstrated.

Local Green Spaces

Policy Justification

- 7.3 Under the NPPF, Neighbourhood Plans have the opportunity to designate Local Green Spaces which are of particular importance to them. This will afford protection from development other than in very special circumstances. Paragraph 107 of the NPPF says that Local Green Spaces should only be designated where they are:
- *"in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;;*
 - *demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
 - *local in character and is not an extensive tract of land*
- 7.4 Currently there are mainly three areas which Shenstone residents see as green spaces of particular value to them – Shenstone Playing Fields, the Lammas Land and Malkins Coppice. This is also acknowledged in the adopted Local Plan.

Shenstone Playing Fields

- 7.5 Shenstone Playing Fields are a Queen Elizabeth II field. This is the main sports/recreation area within Shenstone village, providing a multi-use leisure facility for people of all ages. It includes a childrens' play area, multi-use games area (MUGA), fitness equipment, circular paths, two tennis courts and a large playing area which is used for formal and informal football.

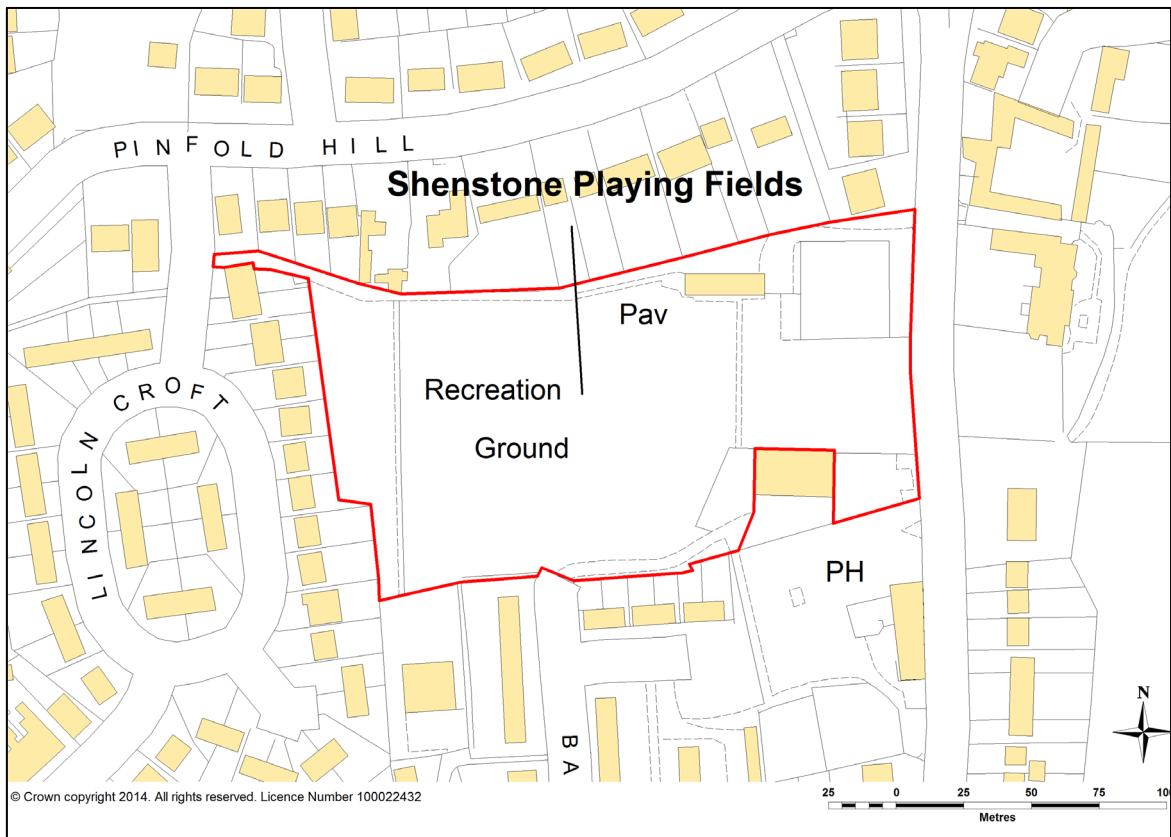
⁷ Source: Lichfield District Council (2011) *Lichfield District Rural Planning Project: Shenstone*

⁸ Source: Lichfield District Council (2024) *Open Space Assessment*



7.6 It is located towards the north eastern edge of the village so is easily accessible by foot from the majority of Shenstone village (see Figure 7.1).

Figure 7.1: Shenstone Playing Fields Local Green Space





7.7 The Playing Fields are to be retained for community uses, and associated built development if necessary to enhance this role (see Policy GSC2). Given this, it is important that redevelopment proposals to provide for the uses identified in Policy GSC2 are permitted, whilst retaining the Playing Fields as a Local Green Space of value to the community.

Lammas Land and Malkins Coppice

7.8 Shenstone does have a significant area of semi natural greenspace in the form of the area known as the Lammas Land to the north and Malkins Coppice to the west. However, there is no public access to Malkins Coppice which explains the deficiencies in useable green space identified by Lichfield District Council.

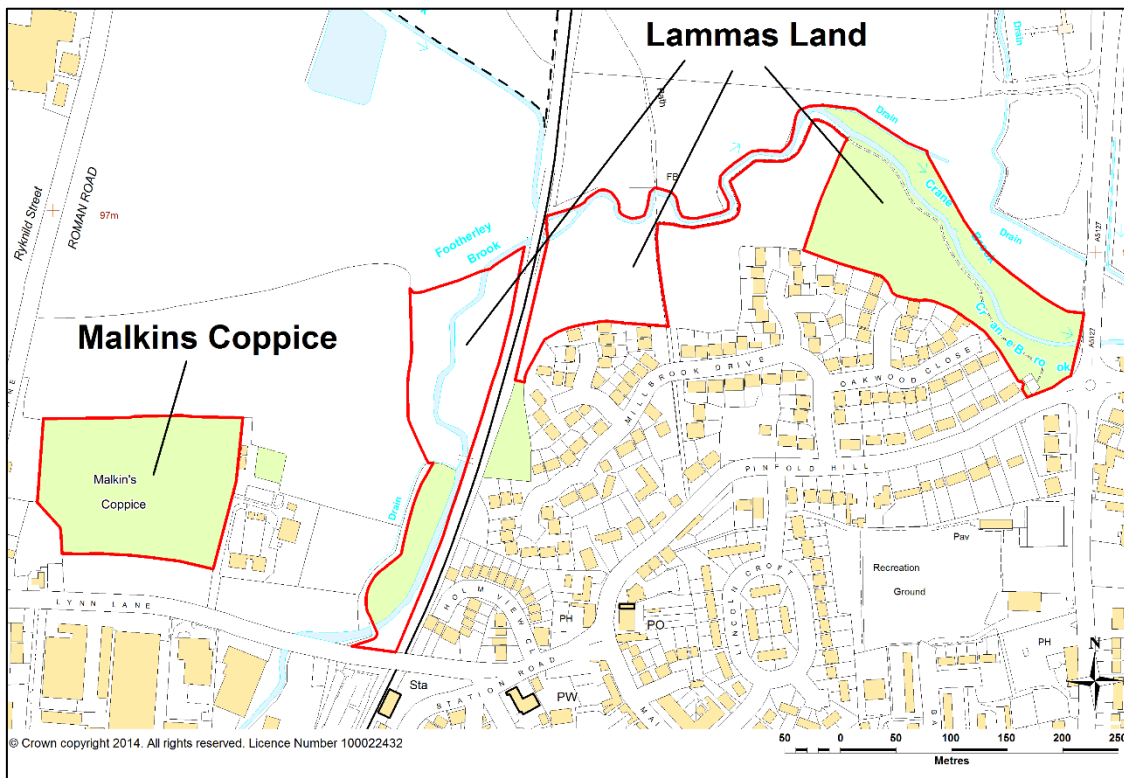
7.9 In late 1998 Shenstone Parish Council sought the community's views on the future of the Lammas Land. The overwhelming view was to retain it as a lightly managed natural area. This has been done with regular grass cutting, some tree planting and provision of a stone path through the site.

The Shining Stone, Lammas Land, Shenstone



7.10 Across the Lammas Land a number of areas with different characters have been created. Starting at the Birmingham Road end, the first section is a lightly wooded area, passing into an open area in which a waterside flower meadow is trying to be created, then passing on to a narrow, winding, stream-side path. This then opens out to an open hay meadow, which extends up to the railway line. Passing under the railway leads to the Little Holmes, an area of a wilder and overgrown nature extending to Lynne Lane opposite the railway station.

Figure 7.2: Malkins Coppice and Lammas Land Local Green Spaces



- 7.11 The Lammas Land as a whole is a Biodiversity Alert Site (BAS), entitled Little Holmes BAS. The western part of the Lammas Land – referred to itself as Little Holmes – is associated with Fotherley Brook and is mainly semi improved grassland also containing a footpath. The north bank is lined with alder, crack willow and poplars and survey work undertaken by Staffordshire Ecological Services⁹ notes that the brook appears suitable for water voles. The significant habitats in the area lie mainly within these two designated sites, where there is potential habitat for a range of protected or Biodiversity Action Plan species, including kingfisher, water vole, whiskered bat and sky lark. The two areas are linked by privately owned fields of poor semi-improved grassland.
- 7.12 Malkin’s Coppice, a Site of Biological Interest, is a small pocket of woodland listed on the ancient woodland inventory, mainly of oak and birch with a ground layer dominated by bracken, although bluebells are frequent along the edges.
- 7.13 The Lammas Land is now mainly used for walking and dog walkers. Residents wish to preserve and protect it as an unspoilt natural environment. This will also give the opportunity to ensure that the brook improves its ecological value.
- 7.14 The location of these local green spaces is shown in Figure 7.2.

POLICY GSC1: LOCAL GREEN SPACES

A. The following areas as shown on the Policies Map are designated as Local Green Spaces:

- **Shenstone Playing Fields**
- **The Lammas Land**
- **Malkins Coppice**

B. Proposals for built development on these Local Green Spaces will not be permitted unless:

- **the proposal is of a limited nature and it can be clearly demonstrated that it is required to enhance the role and function of an identified Local Green Space; or**
- **the proposal would result in the development of local community infrastructure/recreational facilities. This includes the requirements of Policy GSC2 in respect of Shenstone Playing Fields.**

Provision of community recreational facilities

Policy Justification

- 7.15 As a result of the consultation with residents that was part of the 2011 Rural Planning Project, Lichfield District Council identified the need to refurbish Shenstone Sports and Social Club and to provide more play equipment on Shenstone Playing Fields. This was raised again as part of the early engagement with the community to inform the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

⁹ Staffordshire Ecological Services (2009) *An Ecological Study of Lichfield District*

- 7.16 At the subsequent March 2014 engagement event, the community was specifically asked about community recreation facilities that were required. The following areas were identified by significant numbers of residents:
- The need for the Sports and Social Club to be rebuilt and to include changing rooms, toilets and a coffee shop along with the potential for youth groups to use the building. This work has since been undertaken and completed.
 - The need for more activities on the Playing Fields particularly for young people including team sports coaching and skate park improvements.
 - The need for the Playing Fields to have a wall for ball games, an all-weather sports surface, floodlights at Shenstone Tennis Club (since undertaken and completed) and a bigger play area for children.
- 7.17 Potential designs of redevelopment at Shenstone Playing Fields have been considered by the community as part of the Neighbourhood Plan engagement process. Further work is needed to refine this and the list of actions is included in the section on non-land use matters in this Plan. However, it will be important that the design and the range of activities that any redevelopment facilitates is able to provide, as best as it can, for the needs of the whole community, old and young.
- 7.18 An Open Space Assessment undertaken by Lichfield District Council¹⁰ in 2020 identified that the southern part of Shenstone has a shortfall in equipped play provision when compared with recognised standards (being within a 10-minute walk or 480m). An opportunity has been identified to provide a Local Area for Play (LAP) on land adjacent to St John's Church Hall (see Figure 7.3). A LAP provides play equipment specifically designated and primarily laid out for very young children and toddlers to play close to where they live. This will help to address this shortfall in provision.
- 7.19 Given the fact that during many functions, parking at St John's Church Hall can be an issue, it is important that this does not create a conflict with users of the play area in terms of the safety of children. This would be assisted by more formal parking bays being laid out so that movement of vehicles is more efficient and does not create parking 'overspill' towards the play area.
- 7.20 Contributions from development could be used to support the funding of these improvements, along with grant funding from sources such as the Heritage Lottery Fund, Lichfield District Council and Staffordshire County Council. Lichfield District Council has a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charge in place which means that 25% of all contributions from development from within the neighbourhood area go directly to Shenstone Parish Council to spend on such improvements. Decisions on the spending of these funds therefore rest with the Parish Council.

¹⁰ Lichfield District Council (2024) *Open Space Assessment 2024*

Figure 7.3: Location of Local Area for Play



POLICY GSC2: PROVISION OF COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

A. The provision of improved or additional recreational and community facilities at Shenstone Playing Fields will be supported, including:

- **Further play equipment**
- **Building of a wall for climbing and ball games**
- **Extension of the skateboard park (with the involvement of local young people on its design)**
- **An appropriate all-weather surface on the training area**
- **Further improvements to the Shenstone Country Club services or building so that it continues to support the needs of the community.**

B. Improvements and new provision at Shenstone Playing Fields should seek to provide for the range of needs of all sectors of the community.

C. Delivery of a new local area for play (LAP) facility adjacent to St Johns Church Hall (as shown in Figure 7.3 and on the Policies Map) will be supported.”

Minimising the environmental impact of development

Policy Justification

- 7.21 Shenstone is not especially rich in landscape areas of recognised value but this does not mean that the community of Shenstone does not appreciate the value of the landscape that it has. Whilst much of the land around Shenstone village has been well-established for farming over the centuries, there are examples of small-scale features which are particularly distinct within this landscape. These include mature trees, hedgerows and ponds. With a relatively flat topography, these features are particularly visible within the wider landscape. Such features should be retained as part of any development.
- 7.22 The Staffordshire Landscape Assessment¹¹ identifies that the majority of the neighbourhood area falls within the landscape character type 'Sandstone Estatelands in Cannock Chase and Cankwood', with the resulting landscape policy objective as 'landscape enhancement'.
- 7.23 The impact of development on the landscape of the neighbourhood area should therefore be considered carefully. Development on the edge of the built-up area should demonstrate that it will not have a detrimental impact on the landscape setting of Shenstone. It should be sustainably designed to a high quality with a requirement for environmental and biodiversity enhancement to maintain and improve the quality of the landscape.
- 7.24 Generally, in order to ensure the long term sustainability of development in Shenstone, it is important that developments carefully consider how best to address issues such as noise and air pollution and also surface water flooding which has become an increasing problem in recent years.
- 7.25 Young people, through the Greysbrooke School survey, in particular stated that Shenstone should be an eco-friendly village. New development should therefore seek to take advantage of the range of energy saving measures that can be applied to modern buildings, including solar PV panels, heat pumps, reed beds, etc. Community investment in such provision will also help to ensure that considerable gains can be achieved in a manner that will provide financial returns for the community. Therefore, if investment in schemes such as community solar PV provision was forthcoming, there may be wider benefits to development supporting such schemes in lieu of direct provision on the new development which would not provide the wider benefit to the community.

¹¹ Staffordshire County Council (2001) *Staffordshire Landscape Assessment*

POLICY GSC3: MINIMISING THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT

- A. Development proposals should be sustainably designed to a high quality with a requirement for environmental and biodiversity enhancement to maintain and improve the quality of the landscape.**
- B. Proposals which affect well-established features of the landscape, including mature trees, species-rich hedgerows, streams, banks and ponds must demonstrate how any impact has been minimised and include appropriate mitigation measures.**
- C. If there is significant loss of other trees and shrubs as part of development, then new provision will be expected elsewhere on the site.**
- D. Development adjacent to the existing built-up area boundary of Shenstone must demonstrate that it will not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding landscape.**
- E. All developments must demonstrate that they would not have other detrimental environmental effects, specifically in relation to noise and air pollution and surface water flooding (see Policy GSC6).**
- F. Developments that demonstrate the provision of energy saving measures in the design of buildings will be supported. This could include contributions towards the provision of community energy projects.**

Wildlife-friendly development and wildlife corridors

Policy Justification

- 7.26 The design of individual buildings and of neighbourhood scale green and open spaces, including private gardens, will help to ensure that existing habitats present in Shenstone can thrive and a range of new habitats can be created. This is in line with the requirement of the Environment Act 2021 for all new development (excluding small householder proposals) to achieve net biodiversity gain of at least 10%.
- 7.27 Planting is an important aspect of development and habitat creation. Not only does a well-considered planting scheme provide high quality landscaping, it is a fundamental aspect of enhancing biodiversity that otherwise would be lost. Planting schemes should ensure that tree species should be carefully selected to be responsive to landscape and historic character and to suit the planting location. Planting should not simply consist of trees but a range of shrubs and grasses too and should seek to include a mix of native and climate-change resilient species.
- 7.28 Protecting species present in the area is also important. Examples of the simple solutions that well-thought out design can easily incorporate are:
- Integral bird and bat boxes under the eaves of the new houses, or artificial nests sited in places away from windows and doors, can create vital new roosting sites to support populations of birds and bats.
 - Boundaries between dwellings can be made hedgehog friendly by including pre-cut holes for hedgehogs to more effectively move across neighbourhoods to forage.
 - New planting schemes can support bees and other pollinators by including nectar-rich plants.



Bricks that allow birds to nest

Credit: actionforswifts.com



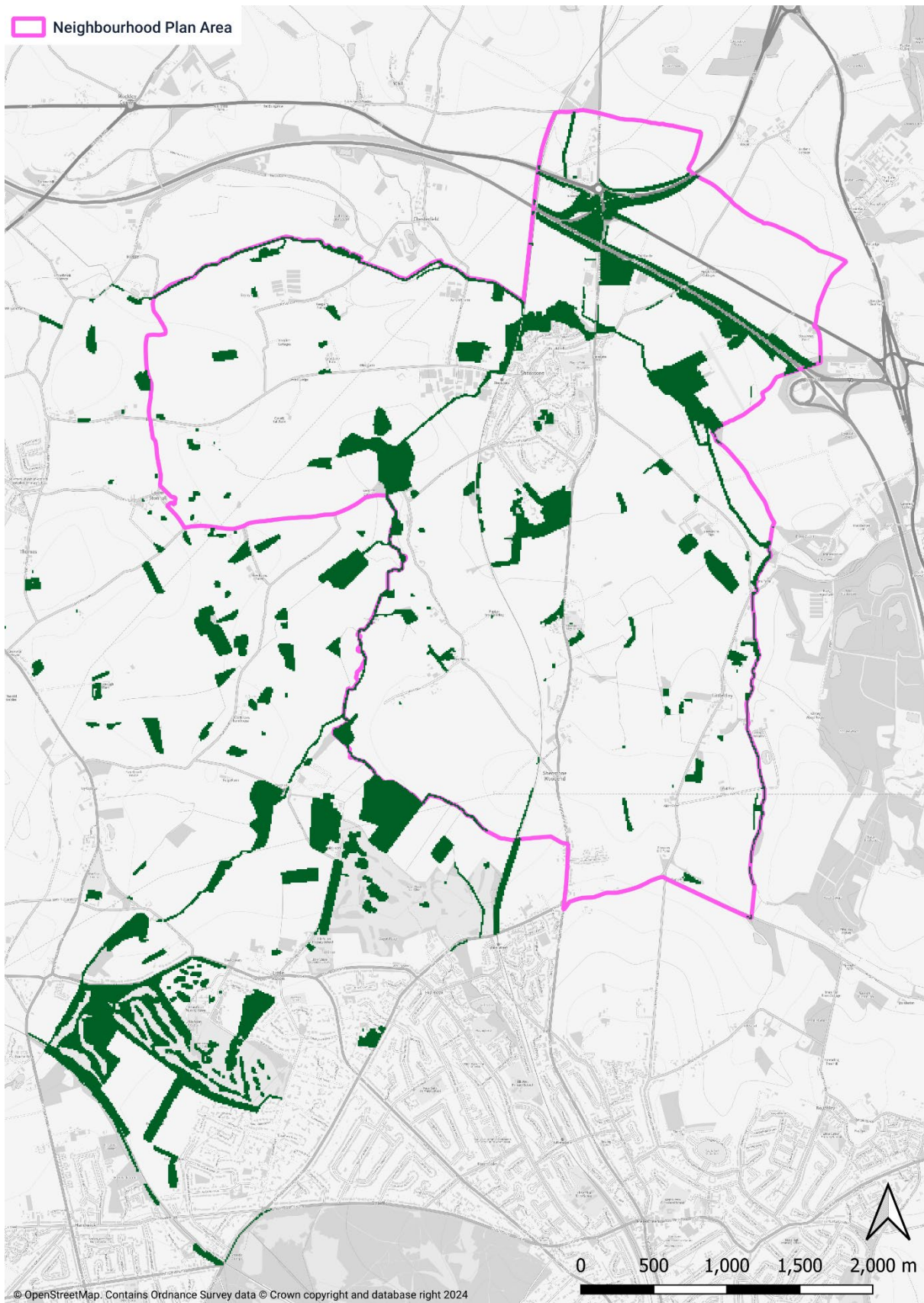
Hedgehog-friendly fencing

Credit: The Landscaper Magazine

- 7.29 Development is encouraged to be informed by the full list of considerations in Natural England's 'Green Infrastructure Framework 2023'¹².
- 7.30 Wildlife corridors are avenues of habitat, such as hedgerows, streams, road margins and rail embankments, connecting wildlife populations that could potentially be separated by human structures, agricultural and other practice. They allow the interchange of flora and fauna between disparate locations thereby maintaining the genetic diversity of populations. They also mitigate the effects of habitat fragmentation and help to re-establish populations.
- 7.31 Analysis by the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust has identified a series of semi-natural habitats that existing species are most likely to travel through. The movement between these habitat areas is along wildlife corridors. Development should seek to protect and, where possible, better join up these habitats as corridors so that wildlife can move safely to access the habitats it requires.
- 7.32 Figure 7.4 shows the identified location of the wildlife corridors in the neighbourhood area. It is an aspiration to create and improve connections between the major pathways to consolidate the network.

¹² <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Home.aspx>

Figure 7.4: Location of wildlife corridors



Source: Staffordshire Wildlife Trust

POLICY GSC4: WILDLIFE-FRIENDLY DEVELOPMENT

- A. All development proposals should aim to protect existing habitats and species, including hedgerows and mature trees. In particular, developments required to deliver measurable biodiversity net gain (a minimum of 10%) and that require the removal or reduction of existing habitats will be expected to deliver biodiversity net gain on site or the use of off-site approaches where appropriate.**
- B. Development proposals on or adjacent to the wildlife habitats identified within the Neighbourhood Area in Figure 7.4 must demonstrate a layout and design which ensures that wildlife is not impeded in its movement between habitats along wildlife corridors. Proposals to consolidate and enhance this network of wildlife corridors will be particularly supported.**
- C. The incorporation of design features into new development that encourages local wildlife and biodiversity to thrive will be supported.**
- D. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should be designed to retain trees, shrubs and hedgerows of arboricultural, habitat¹³ and amenity value on-site. Where it has been clearly demonstrated that there are no reasonable alternatives to the removal of one or more mature trees, direct replacements of appropriate tree species should, where possible, be planted on the same site. Where practicable, any new planting should consist of species of trees, hedging, shrubs and grasses that will be resilient to climate change and can be incorporated in a way that would ensure they provide a habitat that allows wildlife to thrive.**

Low energy and energy efficient development

Policy justification

- 7.33 The Climate Change Act 2008 committed the UK to an 80% reduction in CO2 emissions by 2050. In June 2019, an announcement was made by Government to reduce this further to almost 100% by 2050. This will be a major task that will require everyone to be engaged, from households and communities, to businesses and local and national government.
- 7.34 In 2022, the residential sector alone accounted for 17% of the UK's annual greenhouse gas emissions (source: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero). The total emissions from all building types will therefore be much greater. Standards for ecologically sustainable homes and developments are established through Building Regulations and adopted Local Plan policies. As far as requirements for residential development is concerned, Local Plan Policy SC1 (Sustainability Standards for Development) refers to the Code for Sustainable Homes which is no longer part of national policy. In order for built development to make a meaningful contribution towards achieving net zero by 2050, development needs to go as far as possible to minimise energy use and maximise efficiency. New development is therefore encouraged to ensure that new properties are designed so that they are ready to receive the technologies that are crucial to minimising their

¹³ Priority habitats are identified in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-the-uk-action-plan>)

energy use, e.g. underfloor heating to increase the effectiveness of heat pumps, orientated south to maximise the potential from solar panels if installed, etc. Technological advances are coming on to market all the time (e.g. there are now solar panels which incorporate refrigerant filled coils on the back that can be connected to the equivalent of a ground source heat pump) and therefore policy must facilitate the appropriate adoption of the best technologies available at the time.

POLICY GSC5: LOW ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENT DESIGN

- A. To mitigate emissions that worsen climate change it is essential that all buildings in Shenstone parish minimise energy use and emissions and maximise energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy to meet their needs.**
- B. All new buildings, conversions, extensions, retro-fits and refurbishments in Shenstone will demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change. The following measures shall be incorporated into development:**
- **Wherever possible, new buildings shall be orientated to maximise the opportunities for both natural heating and ventilation, reducing exposure to wind and other elements and energy from solar and other installations on roofs;**
 - **Proposals involving both new and existing buildings shall demonstrate how they have been designed to maximise resistance and resilience to climate change for example by including measures such as solar shading, thermal mass, heating and ventilation of the building and appropriately coloured materials in areas exposed to direct sunlight; and**
 - **Use of trees and other planting, where appropriate as part of a landscape scheme, to provide shading of amenity areas, buildings and streets and to help to connect habitat, all designed with native plants that are carefully selected, located and managed so they are adaptable to meet the predicted changes to the climatic conditions.**

Renewable energy and energy efficiency measures affecting heritage

Policy Justification

- 7.35 As identified in Policy GSC5, it is imperative that all development, be it new build, refurbishments, extensions or re-builds, seeks to minimise its energy footprint and maximise the energy it uses from renewable sources. Solar energy capture via solar panels is one of the easiest ways this can be achieved. For heritage buildings (listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets) and development in conservation areas, it is important that development proposals conserve and enhance the historic environment.
- 7.36 In the past, the requirement in the NPPF to conserve and enhance the historic environment has meant that proposals for solar panels have either been refused or have gone through a lengthy planning application process with significant uncertainty to the applicant regarding their potential for securing consent. This partly reflected the design of the first wave of solar panels which were often obtrusive and very visible. In areas such as the Shenstone Conservation Area, this could have an unacceptable impact. Potentially for these reasons, installation of solar panels in the

Conservation Area has been low. Today however, solar panels are being designed to be far less obtrusive than their predecessors. The use of such solar panels can, in most instances, mitigate the impact on the Conservation Area.

- 7.37 Similarly, modern designs of heritage-sensitive double glazing are extremely slimline and are far more in keeping with heritage buildings that in the past. Proposals for the use of such windows instead of the traditional approach of replacing single glazed windows with similar windows is supported.



Solar panels sitting flush to the roofline on a property in Shenstone

- 7.38 However, any proposals for solar panels in the Conservation Area, or on listed buildings, must be accompanied by appropriate planning or listed building applications and heritage statements to ensure compliance with local and national policy and legislation.

POLICY GSC6: RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURES AFFECTING HERITAGE

In order to mitigate emissions that worsen climate change, the sensitive retrofitting of energy efficiency and renewable energy generation measures in historic buildings will be encouraged, including the retrofitting of heritage buildings and buildings in the Shenstone Conservation Area, provided that it safeguards the historic characteristics of these heritage assets. This could include solar panels and heritage-sensitive slimline double glazing where it is demonstrated that such interventions would not result in harm to the significance of listed buildings or the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Surface water flooding

Policy justification

- 7.39 The effects of climate change are already being felt and six of the UK's ten wettest years on record have occurred since 1998. The Met Office predict that as the effects of climate change deepen the UK will see wetter winters, warmer and drier summers, and the frequency of intense storms will increase.
- 7.40 Drainage across Shenstone is via a combined sewer system. Consequently, both foul and surface water runoff feed into the same sewer pipes which have a limited capacity. During intense storms the pipes can become overloaded and result in surcharging and surface water flooding.
- 7.41 The Severn Trent Water pumping station located at the Eastern end of Pinfold Hill that feeds the waste water treatment works on Park Lane, regularly becomes overloaded and floods during intense storm events.
- 7.42 During the consultation a number of residents reported that the extended wet period over the winter combined with individual heavy rainfall events had caused flooding at several locations across the village. This included along Birmingham Road and the pathway under the railway bridge leading into the Lammas Land.
- 7.43 It is important that the Neighbourhood Plan ensures that new development provides effective sustainable drainage solutions (SuDS) to mitigate surface water risk, ensure surface water quality and benefit biodiversity and amenity value, also allowing residents to be closer to nature and green infrastructure. SuDS drainage features are required on new development as per the NPPF.
- 7.44 With the threat of a warming climate, SuDS provide opportunities to mitigate the growing threat of water stress through effective water capture and management. For example, when rainwater or greywater is captured, it can be used to keep greenery adequately watered and to generally cool the ambient temperature of the built development.

POLICY GSC7: PREVENTING SURFACE WATER FLOODING

- A. All development should mitigate the risk of flooding from all sources and not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere through the use, where appropriate, of multi-functional Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), which can be available for use as informal open space if well designed. SuDS should be well integrated and an attractive part of a development and the use of a wide range of creative solutions are encouraged such as provision of SuDS as part of green spaces, green roofs, permeable surfaces and rain gardens.**
- B. Where appropriate, development must demonstrate how the proposed SuDS are designed so they can enhance wildlife, biodiversity and amenity benefits.**
- C. Where appropriate, development proposals should be supported by a drainage scheme maintenance plan, which demonstrates a schedule of activities, access points, outfalls and any biodiversity considerations, as well as the body responsible for each aspect of the plan. Where possible, water entering SuDS should be returned to the aquifer.**

Delivering renewable energy

- 7.45 There is an opportunity to deliver renewable energy from the aquifer below Shenstone. Work is ongoing to develop the business case that would ultimately lead to its funding. This is supported by Policy SC2 of the adopted Local Plan and proposals to deliver this are supported by the Shenstone Neighbourhood Plan Review.

Light pollution

Policy justification

- 7.46 One of the identified issues in the Shenstone neighbourhood area is light pollution. In a relatively rural location, where the topography makes certain parts of the neighbourhood area highly visible, poorly designed and located lighting can have a disproportionate polluting effect.
- 7.47 The Shenstone Neighbourhood Plan recognises the guidance notes on the reduction of light pollution provided by the Institute of Lighting Engineers¹⁴. This guidance should be followed in seeking to comply with Policy GSC8. Specifically, any development away from the built up area should accord with the guidance Environmental Zone E2 which covers appropriate lighting in rural or small village locations; within the built-up area it should accord with the guidance Environmental Zone E3 which covers appropriate lighting in small town centres or urban locations.
- 7.48 It will be a requirement of any form of development which proposes external lighting to minimise the amount of light that is visible from outside the property. Lighting in public areas, particularly street lights, should be provided in the form of downlighters which serve to minimise the amount of light that is visible away from the area of the street intended to be lit.

POLICY GSC8: LIGHT POLLUTION

While ensuring new developments are secure in terms of occupier and vehicle safety, outdoor lighting systems should be designed to limit their impact on the environment, including light pollution and its associated effects on wildlife. Wherever practicable, low energy lighting technologies should be used to reduce consumption and minimise glare in order to keep night-time skies dark.

¹⁴ Institute of Lighting Engineers (2021) *Guidance Note 1 for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light*

8 COMMERCE

- 8.1 Policy Shen3 of the Lichfield District Local Plan focuses on the economy and recognises that a balance needs to be struck between ensuring the commercial facilities of Shenstone thrive and ensuring that the negative impacts that commercial activity have do not affect the sustainability of Shenstone village for its residents. In particular, the community has significant concerns about HGV traffic moving through the village from the Birchbrook Industrial Estate and Shenstone Business Park.

New commercial development

Policy Justification

- 8.2 The community of Shenstone recognises that its industrial estates, on the west side of the village, do play a role in supporting Shenstone as a thriving community. However, this role is relatively limited in terms of the direct benefits it brings. Whilst a significant number of jobs have been created at Shenstone Business Park and Birchbrook Industrial Estate, surveys have shown that relatively few local people fill these jobs. Therefore it is the spending of workers locally that provides some direct benefits, although this is still relatively limited.
- 8.3 This, coupled with the major concern of local residents – the volume of HGV traffic from these industrial areas having to travel through the centre of the village to access the strategic road network – has been a factor in deciding to allocate land at Shenstone Business Park for housing-led mixed use development, with commercial activity focused on sectors that will create less HGV traffic, e.g. offices and light industry.
- 8.4 There is still the potential for commercial expansion in Shenstone and so it is important that this does not serve to have negative impacts on the community. New commercial development is therefore welcomed but it must recognise that it sits in a predominantly rural area close to a village with a rich heritage and vibrant community. Development must therefore not have a detrimental impact on these key attributes.

POLICY CO1: NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

A. New B-class and office/light industrial (use class E) commercial development will be supported within existing employment areas subject to the following criteria:

- **the scale and nature of the proposals would not have significant harmful impacts on the amenities of adjoining activities; and**
- **the scale and nature of the proposals would not have an unacceptable impact on existing commercial activity on adjacent land, including agricultural activity; and**
- **the proposal would not have unacceptable impacts on the local road network, particularly in respect of the volume of HGV traffic.**

B. Developments will be required to provide travel assessments and/or travel plans in line with the Local Plan Policy ST1.

Protection of existing commercial premises or land

Policy Justification

- 8.5 Reflecting the wider importance of Shenstone’s business base, it is important that this is protected. Whilst there are opportunities to commute by non-car modes, inevitably the majority of people working away from Shenstone will do so by car. The protection of local employment opportunities will not only provide greater prospects for local people to access jobs – even if the number that do so at present is comparatively low - but will ensure that these are sustainable in terms of the patterns of commuting that they generate.
- 8.6 The Plan considered that it is important to protect the stock of commercial property in the parish. To do so, it is necessary to restrict the demolition or conversion of existing commercial premises (E- and B-class uses) for non-commercial purposes. Only if it is clearly demonstrated that there is little prospect of the existing building or land being used for employment-generating purposes can this be permitted.
- 8.7 In order therefore to demonstrate that commercial land or property can be redeveloped for non-commercial uses, the land or buildings must not have been in active use for at least twelve months and it must be clear that there is little or no prospect of the premises or land being reoccupied by an employment-generating user in the future. This must be demonstrated by a sustained marketing campaign lasting at least six months, undertaken through an appropriate commercial agent. This must show that all reasonable steps have been taken to market the property and that there has been no interest from a credible party.

POLICY CO2: PROTECTION OF EXISTING COMMERCIAL PREMISES OR LAND

There will be a strong presumption against the loss of commercial premises (E-class or B-class) or land which provides employment or future potential employment opportunities. Applications for a change of use to an activity that does not provide employment opportunities will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that:

- **the commercial premises or land in question has not been in active use for at least 12 months; and**
- **the commercial premises or land in question has no potential for either reoccupation or redevelopment for employment generating uses and as demonstrated through the results both of a full valuation report and a marketing campaign lasting for a continuous period of at least six months.**

Flexible use of community spaces by micro-businesses

Policy Justification

- 8.8 Shenstone has an abundance of community spaces. Whilst most are generally well used, there are times when they are available and would benefit financially from increasing the level of hire. With the increase in self-employment over the period 2011 to 2021 – which anecdotal evidence suggests has increased strongly since Covid - some of these home workers may like to hold meetings in a formal space or spend some of their working time with other workers. Along with this, there has been a general increase in the number of ‘micro-businesses’ which have less than 10 employees and are often 2-4 people strong. For them, the cost of business space is critical, with flexibility

being key. The conversion or adaptation of a community space so that it can be hired by businesses or home workers would help to support the viability of these businesses, reduce isolation of home-workers and increase income for community spaces. Such proposals are therefore supported provided they do not result in the loss of the community space for which they were originally intended. The purpose should also not be to convert larger buildings into a single space for a large commercial occupier – proposals must demonstrate how they are suitable to meet the needs of micro-businesses.

- 8.9 For the purposes of maximising potential opportunities, a community space doesn't necessarily mean it must be owned by a not-for-profit organisation. It could be a privately-owned space in an existing or former civic building. One particular example would be the former Shenstone Railway Station building.

POLICY CO3: FLEXIBLE USE OF COMMUNITY SPACES BY MICRO-BUSINESSES

The use of community buildings and spaces by micro-businesses¹⁵ will be supported, subject to the following criteria:

- **it is clearly demonstrated that the community space in question is not required solely for community activity; and**
- **the proposals do not change the layout of the community space so significantly as to preclude its re-use as a community space in the future;**
- **the proposals clearly demonstrate how the space will be configured to meet the needs of micro-businesses; and**
- **the scale and nature of the proposals would not have significant harmful impacts on the amenities of adjoining activities.**

¹⁵ Micro-businesses are those employing 10 employees or less

9 NON-LAND USE ISSUES

- 9.1 There are a number of issues that have been raised through the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan that are not directly related to land-use matters (although several indirectly relate to the use of land in some form). As such, they are not matters that can be addressed directly by the provision of a planning policy in the Neighbourhood Plan. However, this is not to say that these are not important matters and it is important that a strategy for dealing with these matters is assembled and taken forward. In doing so, this will help to achieve the vision and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 9.2 The issues that have been identified are shown in Table 9.1, along with possible actions. More detail of potential activities, along with the evidence to support them, is provided in 'The Shenstone Neighbourhood Report' and associated supporting documents which accompany the Neighbourhood Plan Review. Text in italics in Table 9.1 identifies the relevant document where this evidence is presented.
- 9.3 It is worth noting that Lichfield District Council has a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule and, with a Neighbourhood Plan in place, Shenstone Parish Council receives a proportion of the CIL receipts from development within the neighbourhood area. This source of funding can be channelled towards infrastructure projects within the neighbourhood area as well as other sources of funding.

Table 9.1: Non-land use issues to be addressed

Issue <i>Evidence source</i>	Possible actions	Lead agencies and partners	Funding needed?	Priority
Transport				
Provide reliable and accessible bus services	Work with bus companies to improve reliability and frequency of services and to improve east-west transport links.	Shenstone Parish Council National Express Chaserider	Possibly	High
Ensure adequate parking provision to support activities within the village	Work with Staffordshire County Council Highways Department to introduce parking management measures to maximise short term use commensurate with commercial, safety and conservation interests	Shenstone Parish Council, Staffordshire County Council	No	Medium
Ensure traffic and pedestrian movement is not impeded by parking in Shenstone village <i>See Public Survey Results p1, Q1; p6, Q6–response 14. See Shenstone Neighbourhood Report – Parking Issues map p33.</i>	Work with Staffordshire County Council Highways Department to introduce better enforcement of on-street parking, particularly on Main Street, Lincoln Croft, Barnes Road, Churchill Road and Schoolfields Road.	Shenstone Parish Council, Staffordshire County Council	No	Medium
Implement traffic management plans to improve safety and reduce environmental impact, including air pollution. <i>See Public Survey Results p1, Q1; p7, Q7; p11, 12 & 13, Q10; Q13; Q21 & p14. See 11.1 Supporting Documents - Air Quality Strategy. See Shenstone Neighbourhood Report – Roads & Paths, pp28-40.</i>	Work with Staffordshire County Council Highways Department to develop a strategy for reducing the volume of traffic passing through Shenstone village	Shenstone Parish Council, Staffordshire County Council	Yes	High
	Work with Staffordshire County Council Highways Department to develop a traffic management plan and associated air quality strategy focused on traffic calming and safety enhancement. Specifically this should focus on safety at junctions and roundabouts, pedestrian safety, parking on pavements and other parking problems,	Shenstone Parish Council, Staffordshire County Council	Likely	Medium

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Issue <i>Evidence source</i>	Possible actions	Lead agencies and partners	Funding needed?	Priority
	<p>vehicles speeds, rat running, engine idling and pollution.</p> <p>Resurface roads, e.g. Birmingham Road (A5127) through the village to reduce emissions noise and air pollution caused by tyre wear.</p>			
<p>Explore options for improving pedestrian safety on Lynn Lane railway bridge and along Lynn Lane.</p> <p><i>See Public Survey Results p7, Q7 response 8; 9; 11; 13 & 17: p8, Q8 responses 8-17: p10, Q10, response 8; 11; 13; 14 & 17: p11 & 12, Q12.</i></p>	<p>Undertaking feasibility study to ascertain options and costs for provision</p>	<p>Shenstone Parish Council</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>Cycle routes, shared-use paths and 'Quiet Lanes'</p> <p><i>See Public Survey Results p8, Q8; p9, Q9; p11 & 13, Qs 14-19 & p14</i></p> <p><i>See Shenstone Neighbourhood Report - Report 9 pp31-40 & Report 11, pp51-57</i></p>	<p>Explore provision of and funding for cycle routes, shared-use paths and 'Quiet Lanes' to connect the village to nearby areas, amenities and green spaces more safely.</p> <p>Explore improvements to pedestrian safety on Mill Lane and Hollyhill Bridge.</p>	<p>Shenstone Parish Council Lichfield District Council Staffordshire County Council Active Travel England</p>	<p>Likely</p>	<p>Medium</p>
Environment and appearance				
<p>Maintain the character and quality of the village and its surrounding landscape</p>	<p>Actively support the conservation and enhancement of the Little Holmes and the Lammas Land, focusing on their biodiversity and amenity value.</p>	<p>Shenstone Parish Council Lammas Land Management Committee</p>	<p>Possibly</p>	<p>Medium-low</p>
<p>Improve air quality in Shenstone village</p>	<p>Consider designating Shenstone a 'Smoke Control Area' to improve public health, fuel efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.</p>	<p>DEFRA Shenstone Parish Council Lichfield District Council</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>High-medium</p>

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<p><i>See Public Survey Results p1, Q1-responses; p2, Q2; p3, Q3; p11 & 12, Qs1-4 & p14 .</i></p> <p><i>See Shenstone Neighbourhood Report - Report 1, pp4-6 & Report 2, pp7-8.</i></p>	<p>Disseminate DEFRA 'Ready To Burn' information leaflets.</p> <p>Open discussion between farms, businesses and residents to consider ways to most effectively reduce pollution impact.</p>	Staffordshire County Council		
<p>Verges and weed control</p> <p><i>See Shenstone Neighbourhood Report - Proposal 7c, p26.</i></p>	Consider 'No Mow' months and use of organic alternatives to Glyphosate	Shenstone Parish Council Staffordshire County Council	No	Medium-low
<p>Enhance environment of village centre</p>	Lichfield District Council and Staffordshire County Council Highways Department to complete improvements for Main Street and shop frontages	Frontage owners Lichfield District Council Staffordshire County Council Shenstone Parish Council	No	High
<p>Enhancement of the village environment and pride</p> <p><i>See Public Survey Results p6, Q6-response 14; pp11 & 12, Q2; Qs5-8; Q12 & p14.</i></p> <p><i>See Shenstone Neighbourhood Report - Report 5, pp16-23 & Proposal 6, pp24-25.</i></p>	<p>Plant more trees, strategically located to reduce pollution and increase biodiversity.</p> <p>Increase the use of plants and flowers to improve the appearance of the village.</p> <p>Enter Britain in Bloom / Best Kept Village competitions (through Shenstone Gardening Guild).</p> <p>Stop dog fouling.</p> <p>Improve environment around Tesco store and Shenstone Takeaway.</p>	Community groups including Shenstone Gardening Guild Shenstone Parish Council	Possibly	Medium
<p>Preserving village trails and footpaths</p>	Regular litter picks and enforcement of dog fouling laws.	Community groups	No	Low
<p>Expand network of footpaths and trails in and around Shenstone village</p>	<p>Complete a study looking into needs and opportunities.</p> <p>Advertise for volunteers to join a village pathways group.</p>	Volunteers Shenstone Strollers Shenstone Parish Council	No	Medium

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<i>See Public Survey Results p8, Q8; p9, Q9 & pp11 & 13, Qs 14-19. See Shenstone Neighbourhood Report - Report 10, pp41-50.</i>				
Explore ways to minimise surface water flooding, including more frequent pot gully cleaning	Lobby Severn Trent Water	Shenstone Parish Council	No	Medium
Explore potential for enhancing links between wildlife corridors	Use existing wildlife maps and ecological data for the parish to identify opportunities.	Shenstone Parish Council Staffordshire Wildlife Trust	Yes	Medium
Community infrastructure and leisure				
Enhance community links between Greysbrooke School and Shenstone village	Explore potential for school and pupils to get more involved in community projects	Shenstone Parish Council Greysbrooke School (Arthur Terry Learning Partnership)	No	Medium-low
'Greysbrooke Green Guard' – protect the school field and local area from road pollution through planting. <i>See Public Survey Results p5, Q5; pp11 & 12, Q5 & p14. See Shenstone Neighbourhood Report - Report 4, pp13-15.</i>	Increase planting of evergreen hedging and trees along Greysbrooke School fence line and on adjacent verge. May form part of Hedgehog Highway. Apply to Woodland Trust and Dobbies Garden Centre for trees/hedging and for 'Green Schools Award'. Work with SCC to increase verge planting.	Greysbrooke School Woodland Trust Dobbies Garden Centre Staffordshire County Council	Yes	High
Complete the provision of new and improved play and leisure infrastructure at Shenstone Playing Fields (see policy GSC2). This is likely to include such items as a wall for ballgames, making the skateboard park bigger, provision of	Renew the play equipment and overall recreational offer. Support the role of the Country Club.	Shenstone Playing Fields Management Committee Shenstone Parish Council Staffordshire County Council	Possibly	High

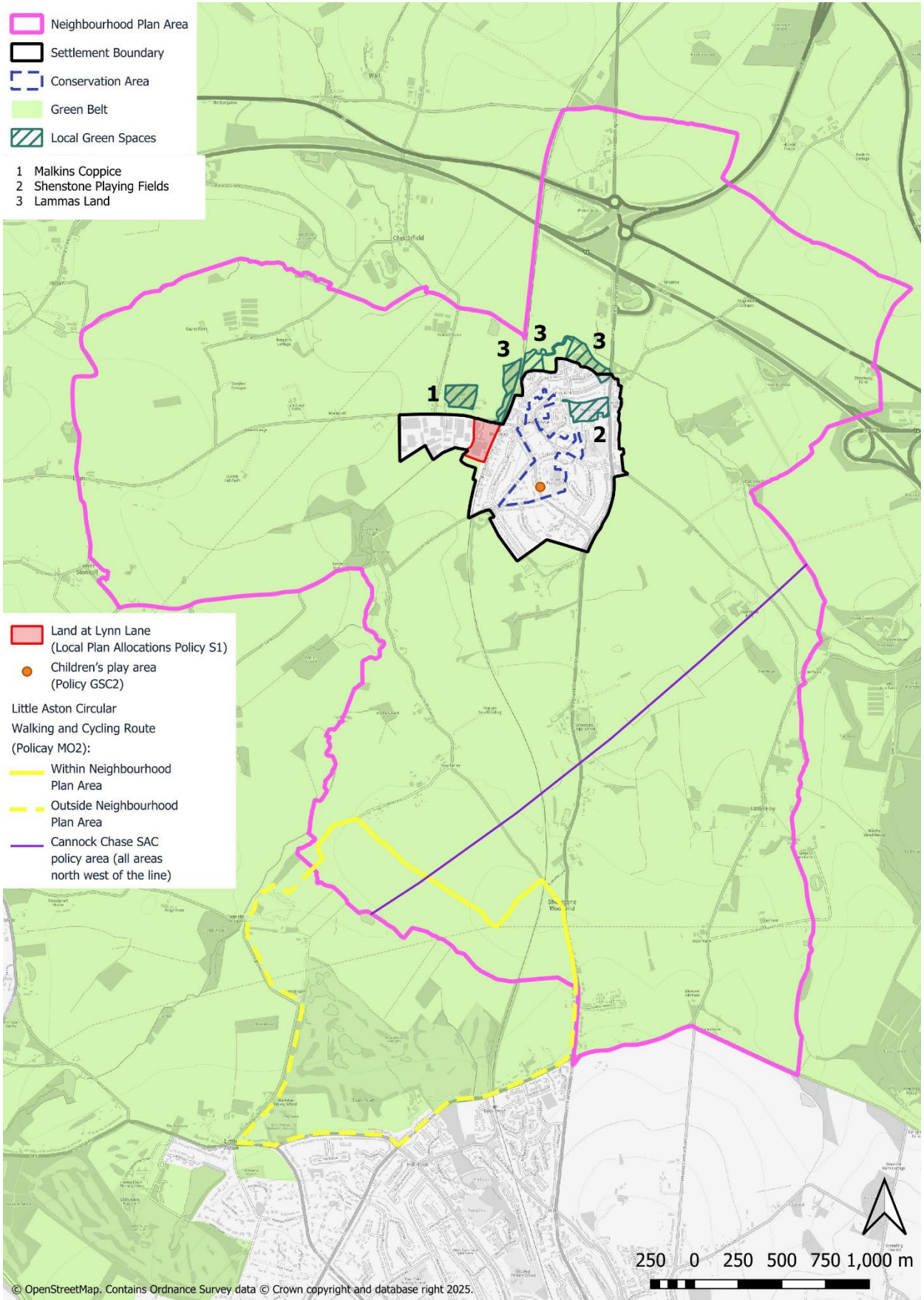
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Issue <i>Evidence source</i>	Possible actions	Lead agencies and partners	Funding needed?	Priority
a multi-use games area (MUGA), and a bigger play area for younger children.				
Develop a community website	Volunteers from the community to be sought (particularly young people who want some work experience and have the necessary IT skills) by advertising and word of mouth to join a working party to take forward the website scope previously drafted.	Shenstone Parish Council	No	Medium
Explore the potential for setting up a community solar PV or equivalent scheme. Improve the energy efficiency and hence affordability of the least efficient dwellings and community buildings in Shenstone village.	Form a Community Energy Group (as per the Whittington and Fisherwick Environment Group) to assess the potential for community benefit of a community energy scheme. Look at opportunities to work with owners of existing buildings within the area to provide the necessary infrastructure.	Community Energy Group Shenstone Parish Council	Possibly	Medium
Heritage				
Protect the heritage assets in Shenstone	Investigate whether greater protection can be given to the Old Church Tower than its current Grade II* listing	Friends of Shenstone Tower Lichfield District Council Historic England Church of England Shenstone Parish Council	No	Low
Preservation of Malkins Coppice	Put in place a woodland management scheme for the ancient woodland of Malkins Coppice. Provide limited access to the woodland.	Lammas Land Management Committee South Staffs Water Shenstone Parish Council	Yes	Medium
Preservation of appearance of Shenstone village	Produce list of buildings/groups of buildings/views that the village wants to preserve.	Conservation volunteers Shenstone Parish Council	Possibly	Low

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<p><i>See Public Survey Results pp11 & 12 Q11 & p14.</i> <i>See Shenstone Neighbourhood Report – Report 13, pp64-67.</i></p>	<p>Possible 'Conservation Corridor' along the Birmingham Road preserving: Crane Brook Bridge, the milestone, sandstone wall by Shenstone Playing Fields, the Bull's Head and Churchill Road phone box and letterbox.</p> <p>Cooper Room - roof may benefit from treatment with encapsulation paint.</p>	<p>Shenstone Local History Group Friends of Shenstone Station Historic England</p>		

POLICIES MAPS



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