

A decorative horizontal band featuring a row of stylized houses and trees. The houses are white with green roofs, and the trees are white with green foliage. The background is a solid teal color.

Armitage with Handsacre **Neighbourhood Plan**

2017-2029

Made 09 October 2018

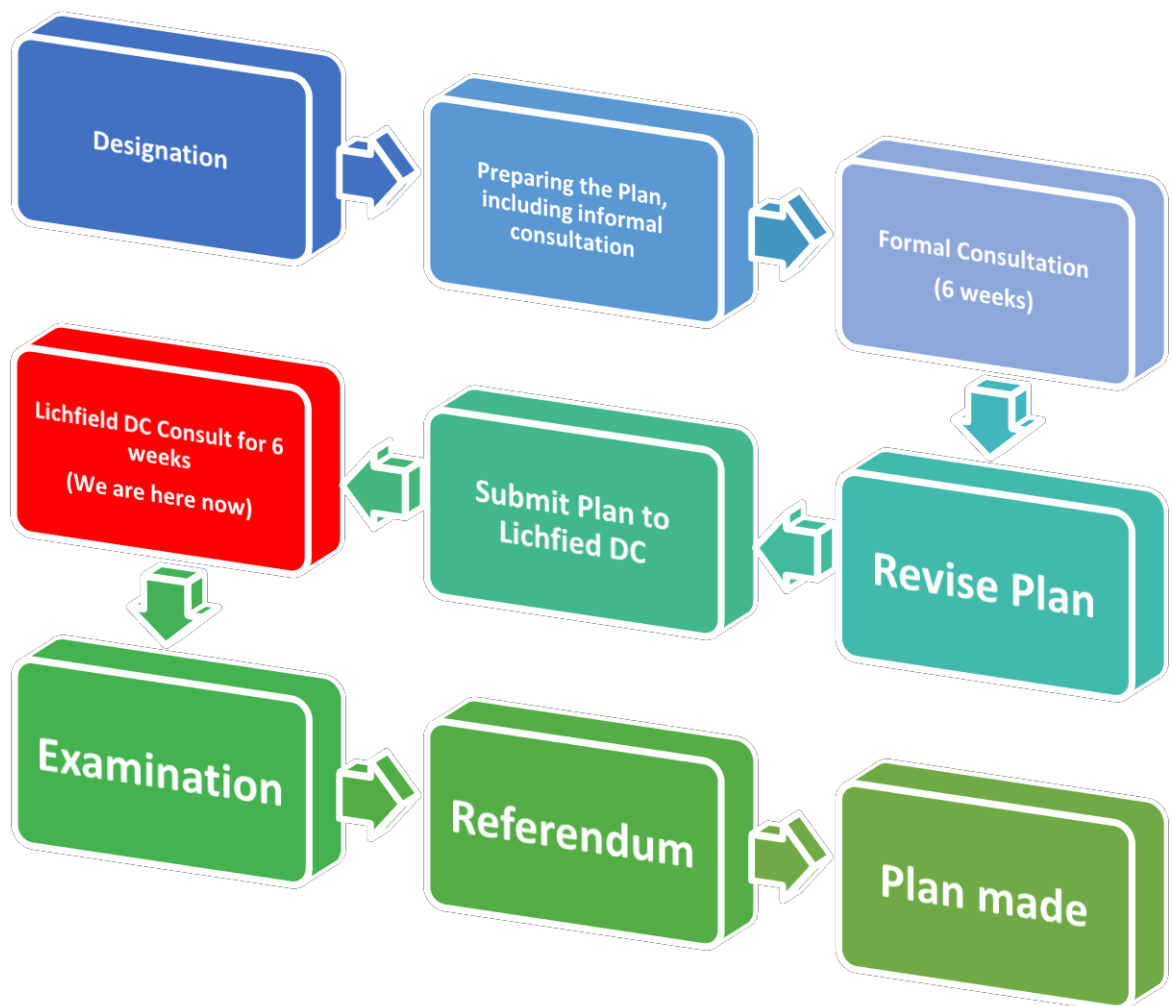
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1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 presented Armitage with Handsacre Parish Council with the opportunity to use a new power: the power to prepare a neighbourhood development plan (NDP) for the area. NDPs give local people the opportunity to shape new development.
- 1.2 NDPs must be prepared using a process set by government (Figure 1). The first step is "designation", and an application for designation of the parish as a neighbourhood planning area was submitted to Lichfield District Council. This application was approved on 9th July 2013. The designated neighbourhood planning area is shown on Map 1.

Figure 1 Neighbourhood Plan Process



- 1.3 To kick-start the Armitage with Handsacre NDP preparations a questionnaire survey was conducted this revealed that you wanted to:

- **protect local heritage including the historic village centre and the canal**
- **protect and enhance open spaces, local green spaces and play and recreation areas**
- **see better design in new development**
- **maintain the rural “feel” of the area, protect the countryside whilst improving access to this resource and maintaining the separation from other settlements**
- **maintain existing community facilities and services and ensure that such uses can meet the needs of any future growth**
- **manage the future growth of housing so that it is in line with strategic planning policy, is built in the right place and is appropriate to meet the needs of the local community**
- **see a range of transport issues including speeding, access to other areas and movement around the parish itself tackled**
- **see a number of non-land use issues such as crime and anti-social behaviour addressed**
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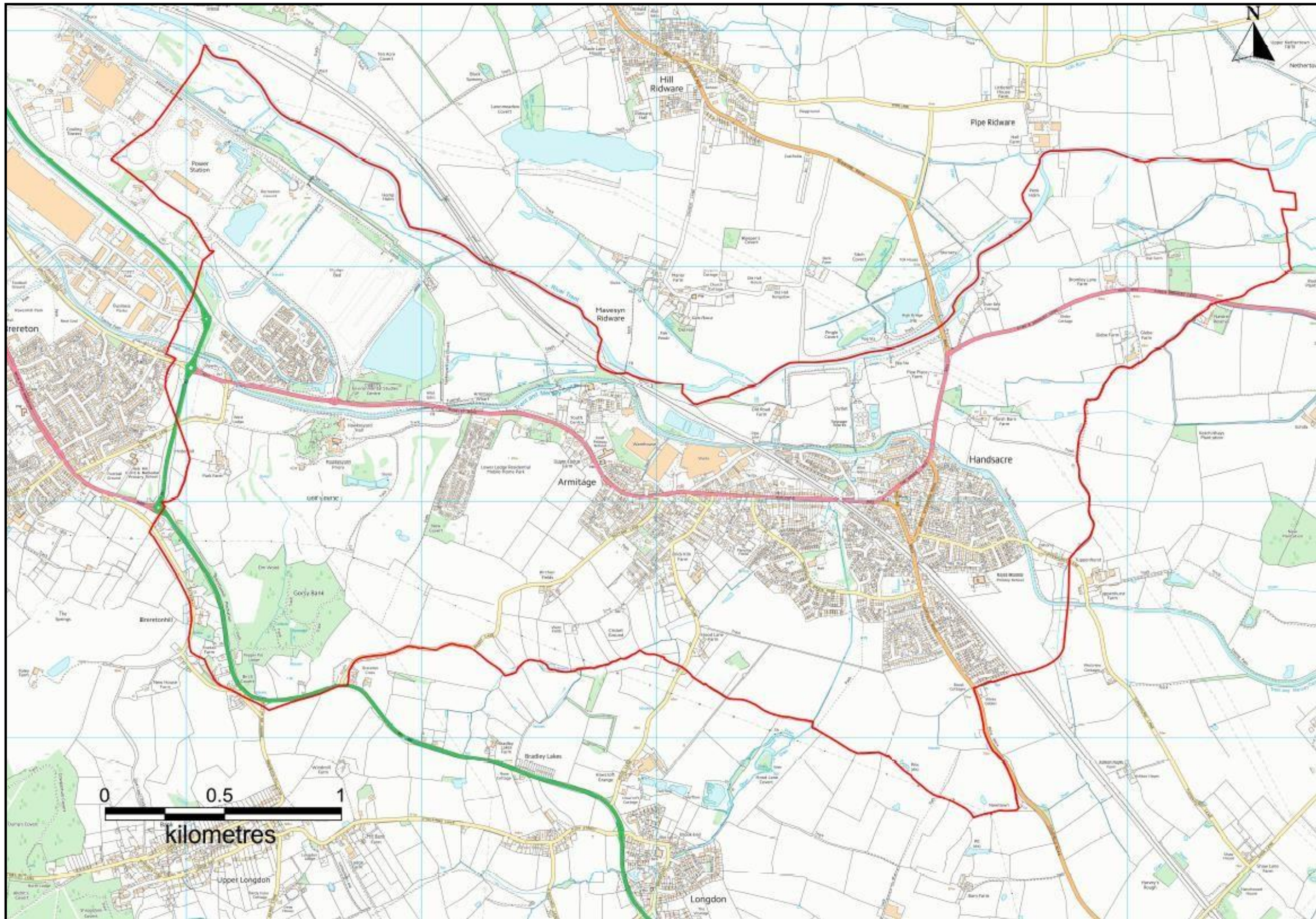
13 The Parish Council undertook the formal Regulation 14 consultation from 2nd May to 16th June 2017. 25 responses were received to this consultation and a response from Lichfield District Council. The Consultation Statement that accompanies this Submission Draft NDP details how the Parish Council considered the response and the resulting revisions to the NDP.

14 This Regulation 16 Submission Draft NDP has now been produced and gives you a further opportunity to comment and put forward your views on the future of the area. Any comments made at this stage will be considered at the independent examination into the NDP.

15 In preparing the Draft NDP the plan has been screened for the purposes of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA). The conclusion of these screenings is that there is no need for a full SEA or HRA of the Draft NDP. Copies of these screenings are available separately at <http://armitagewithhandsacre.co.uk/>

16 Planning can be full of jargon, so to help you in the reading of this document we have included a glossary at the back (Appendix 4).

Map 1. Armitage with Handsacre Designated Neighbourhood Plan Area (Crown copyright and database rights [2015] Ordnance Survey PSMA to be inserted Armitage with Handsacre Parish Council (Licensee))



2.0 Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy

2.1 National planning policy is set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF)¹. The Armitage with Handsacre NDP has to take account of national planning policy and guidance. The NPPF sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and that the planning system has to perform an economic role, a social role and an environmental role.

2.2 Neighbourhood planning is addressed in paragraphs 183-185 of the NPPF:

“183. Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need. Parishes and neighbourhood forums can use neighbourhood planning to:

- set planning policies through neighbourhood plans to determine decisions on planning applications; and*
- grant planning permission through Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders for specific development which complies with the order.*

184. Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. To facilitate this, local planning authorities should set out clearly their strategic policies for the area and ensure that an up-to-date Local Plan is in place as quickly as possible. Neighbourhood plans should reflect these policies and neighbourhoods should plan positively to support them. Neighbourhood plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies.

185. Outside these strategic elements, neighbourhood plans will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area. Once a neighbourhood plan has demonstrated its general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict. Local planning authorities should avoid duplicating planning processes for non-strategic policies where a neighbourhood plan is in preparation.”

Lichfield District Planning Policy

- 2.3** As set out in the section above on national planning policy, neighbourhood plans have to be in “general conformity” with the strategic local planning policies set by Lichfield District Council.
- 2.4** Current strategic planning policy for the area is in the Lichfield District Local Plan Strategy 2009-2029 and the saved policies of the 1998 Lichfield District Local Plan.
- 2.5** The spatial impact of these policies is shown in a Key Diagram (Map 2 below). The vision for the Rural Areas is that:

Vision for Rural Areas

*“Alrewas, **Armitage with Handsacre**, Fazeley, Fradley, Shenstone and Whittington will continue their role as key rural settlements that 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.”*

- 2.6** The Local Plan Strategy’s Vision for Armitage with Handsacre is:

Vision for Armitage with Handsacre

“Armitage with Handsacre will maintain and enhance its role as a free-standing settlement, which functions as a local service centre serving the village and its hinterland. There will be an enhanced quality of physical environment in all parts of the village, with a better defined and attractive village 'centre' to act as a key focal point. Links to the Trent and Mersey Canal will be improved so that it becomes a key feature of the village, links to an enhanced green infrastructure network and maximises opportunities from canal-based tourism, particularly to benefit local businesses.

The community will become more cohesive, safer, will have better overall health and will have improved access for all to a wide range of local community activities. The village will maintain a range of good quality local services, employment and facilities,

enhanced through improved accessibility in a more pedestrian and cycle - friendly environment.

Armitage with Handsacre will accommodate a proportionate scale of growth that provides for local needs and helps to deliver an enhanced village environment. Local infrastructure will be improved, particularly in relation to local traffic and flooding issues."

- 2.7** To bring about this Vision four settlement specific policies for Armitage with Handsacre are set out, along with other strategic policies within the Local Plan Strategy. The four settlement specific policies are:

Policy ARM1 – Armitage with Handsacre Environment

Policy ARM2 – Armitage with Handsacre Services and Facilities

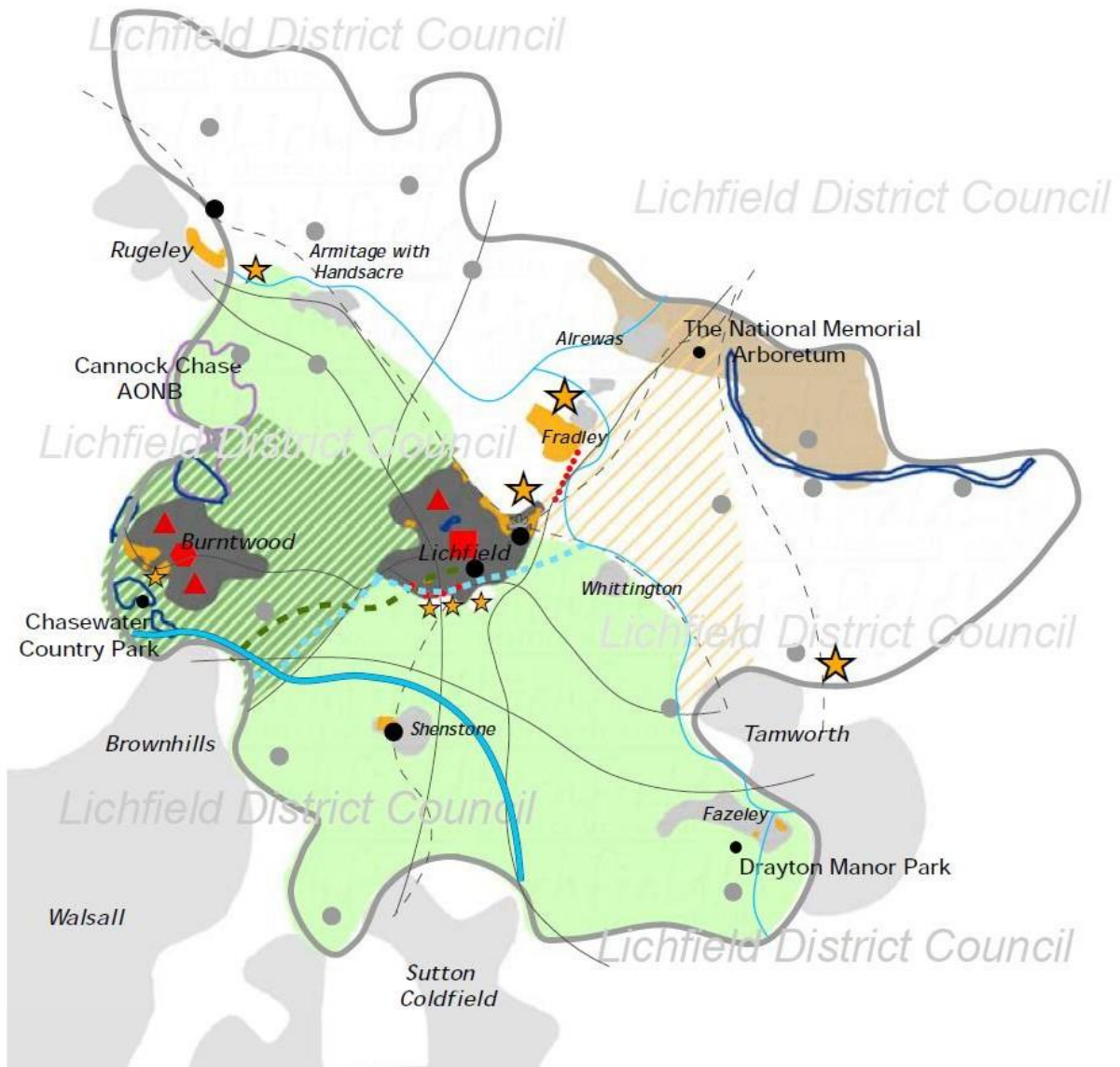
Policy ARM3 - Armitage with Handsacre Economy

Policy ARM4 – Armitage with Handsacre Housing

These policies are copied in full in Appendix 1 of this plan. Maps 3 and 4 set out the strategic planning policy as set in the Local Plan Strategy Policies Map.

- 2.8** As well as the four settlement specific strategic planning policies, the south of the settlements of Armitage and Handsacre lies within the Green Belt. This is covered by national Green Belt planning policy that seeks to keep this land permanently open (Map 3 and 4). Neighbourhood plans cannot alter Green Belt boundaries.
- 2.9** As well as the adopted strategic planning policies for the district highlighted above we have also had regard to emerging planning policy in the area, including the Local Plan Allocations Document.

Map 2. Lichfield Local Plan Strategy Key Diagram (Source: Lichfield District Council)



Key

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Key Urban Centre | National Forest | Safeguarded Rail Route |
| Key Rural Settlements | Forest of Mercia | Route for a Restored Lichfield Canal |
| Other Rural Settlements | Additional parking to serve Trent Valley | Highway Schemes |
| Green Belt | Strategic City Centre - Lichfield | Major Roads |
| AONB | Expanded Town Centre - Burntwood | Railway Lines |
| SSSI | Strategic Development Allocations & Broad Development Locations | Train Stations |
| M6 Toll | Employment Zones | Community Regeneration Areas |
| Central Rivers Initiative Area | | Canals |

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NOT TO SCALE

3.0 A Portrait of Armitage with Handsacre

3.1 The designated neighbourhood planning area covers the whole of the Armitage with Handsacre Parish Council area and lies three and a half miles east of Rugeley and five miles north of Lichfield (Map 5).

Map 5. Armitage with Handsacre Geographical Context (Source: Lichfield District Council)

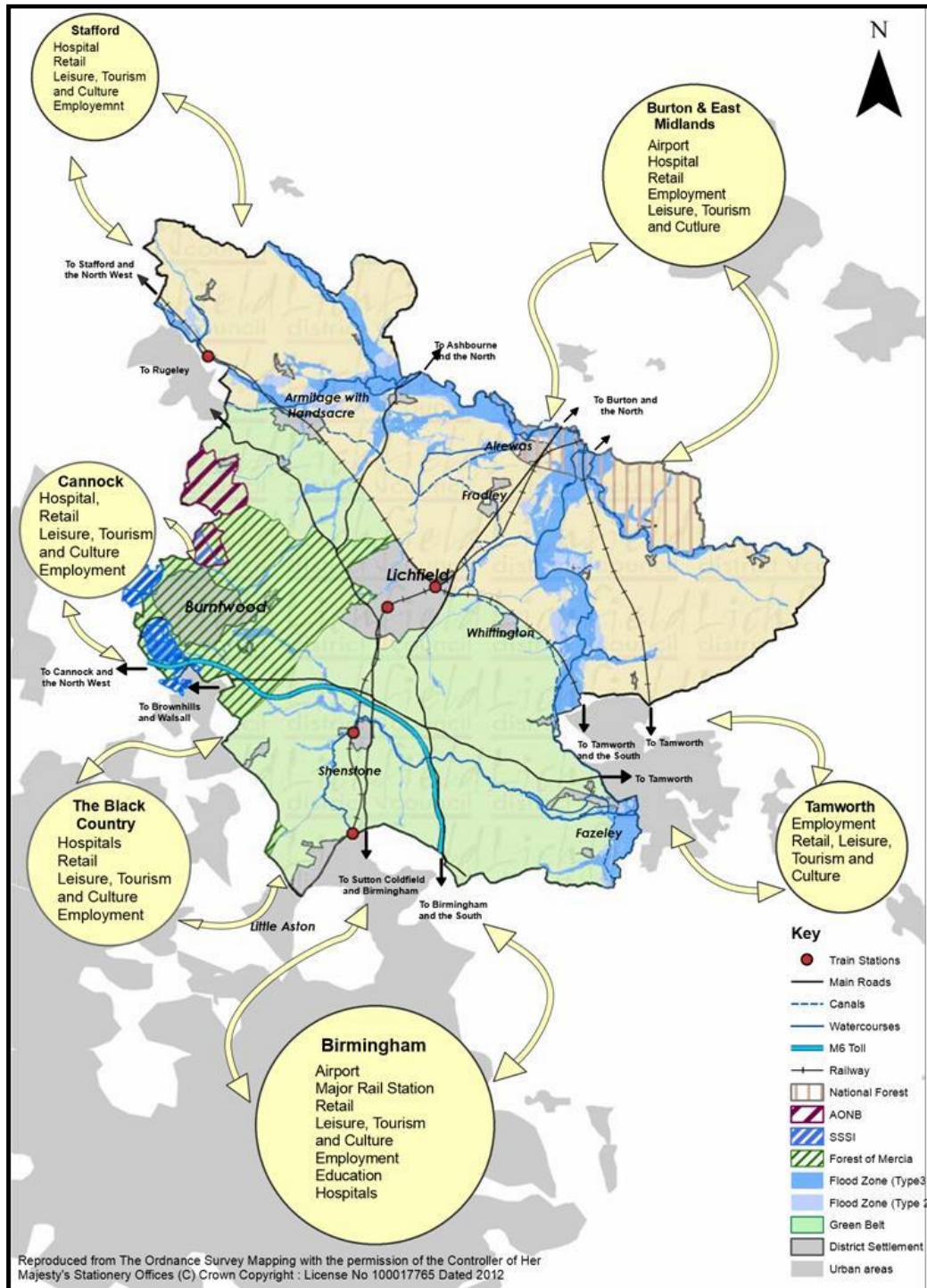
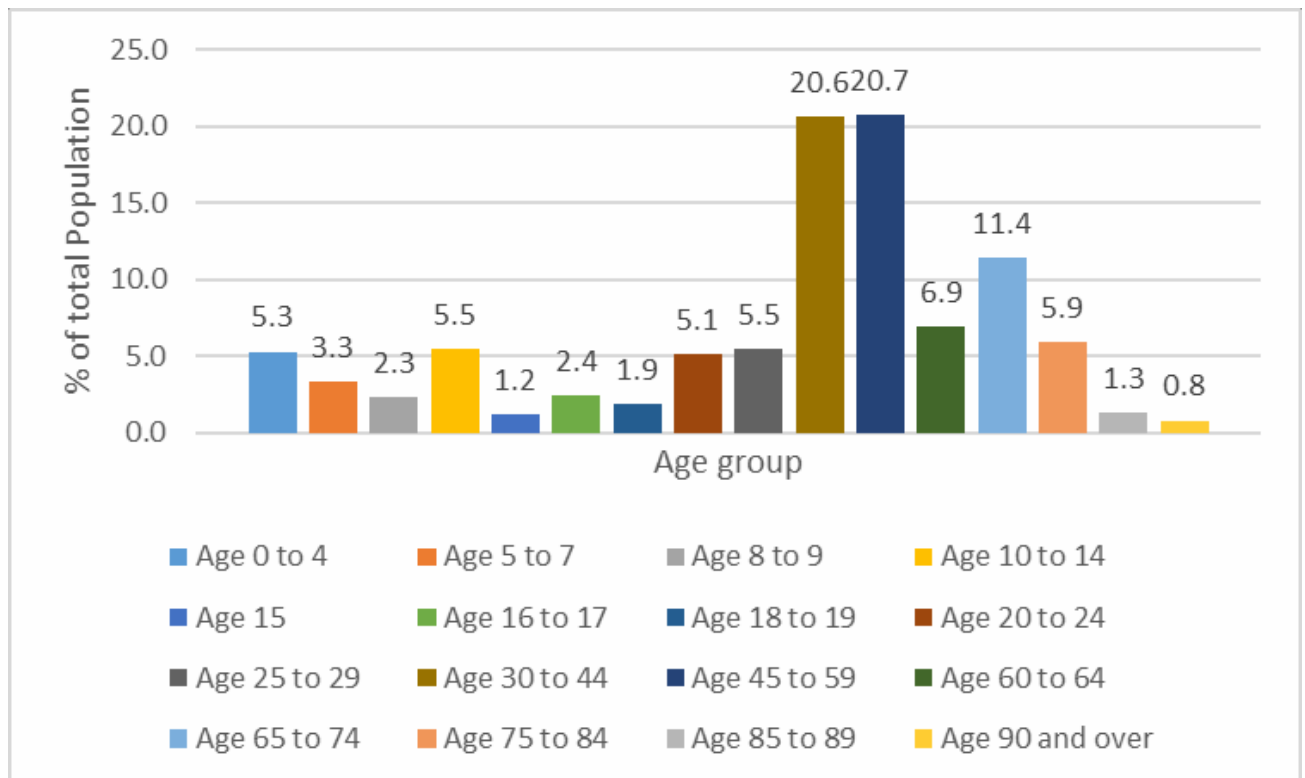


Figure 2. Armitage with Handsacre Population (Source: 2011 Census)



3.2 The area has a population of 5,335 (2011 Census), Figure 2.

3.3 Handsacre is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086. The entry says: 'Hadesacre' (also variously Hadsacre, Hondesacre, Houndsacre, Hounzacre and Hansacre) meaning an extent of land of no exact measurement, held by Robert of Stafford, from the Bishop of Chester. Neighbouring Armitage was originally called Hermitage with several attributions, one being a story handed down over generations, of a hermit living in the area between the Parish Church and the Trent.

3.4 Little is known of the villages and the surrounding area before its mention in the Domesday Book, but Julie Handsaker, a descendant of the original landowners could trace her family origins back to Hermitage de Hodesacre in 899 who was granted land which eventually became Armitage with Handsacre by King Alfred the Great. Then there is a deed from early in the reign of Edward I, circa 1280, which mentions Hermitag de Hondeshakere.

3.5 Nothing then until the famous (or infamous) but certainly oft-told account of the feud between the Handesacre and Mavesyn families, over boundary disputes and the rights to a local mill. Apparently, in 1382 a bitter argument between Robert Mavesyon and the Handesacre family resulted in one of the Handesacre's men being killed. Understandably this did nothing to improve relations with the Mavesyns. Incidentally, their original family name when they arrived with William the Conqueror was Malvoisin, meaning 'bad neighbour'.

3.6 Things simmered on for years until 1403 when they came to a head in a battle or skirmish in a meadow in nearby Mavesyn Ridware under two oak trees known as 'Gog and Magog' which were still standing until 1921 when they were cut down for fuel in the miners' strike. The result of this affray was the death of Sir William Handesacre at the hand of Sir Robert Mavesyn, who was himself killed shortly after in the Battle of Shrewsbury, fought by Henry IV and the Percies. The surprising, ironic turnaround to this affair was the subsequent marriage of the Handesacre heir, Sir William, to Margaret, Sir Robert's daughter, ending the feud and uniting the two families.



Plum Pudding Public House beside the Trent and Mersey Canal

3.7 As recently as the fifteenth and probably the sixteenth centuries in fact, Handsacre Hall was still the centre of village life. This splendid building existed in its original form before Domesday Book and was the residence of Robert de Handsacre who controlled tenant farmers working unenclosed strips of arable land. The medieval village consisted of hovels and cottages constructed of timber, and wattle and daub. The Hall had fallen into disrepair by the 16th century and was restructured in the 17th. Title passed to Lady Robert Bertie, then to Sir George Chatwynd of Brocton in the 17th and 18th centuries. By 1912 it was owned by Francis Villiers Forster but farmed by a Mrs Boycott and Miss Harvey, as Forster lived at Longdon Grange. In 1963 the Hall was bought by Robert Boston of Brereton Cross Farm. It gradually fell into disrepair and an account in the Rugeley Times dated 11th November 1967 described it as having 'seen its best days and is now falling victim to vandalism'. It was finally demolished in 1973, its sole remains being the Scheduled moat off Shropshire Brook Road.



ii Handsacre Hall before demolition

3.8 The other great hall in the area was Hawkesyard Hall which had a splendid existence for hundreds of years but was eventually reduced to a few submerged remains under a small lake created by the power station. A new Hawkesyard Hall was built in the 19th century alongside Hawksyard Priory, later built for the Dominicans. The new Hall, formerly called Armitage Park, became a school for a period after the Dominicans left but then closed and was boarded up until 1999. The Priory became a Care Home but there is still a graveyard there where monks are buried. The new owners of the Hall – Relaine Estates Ltd., returned it to something like its former glory and it is now a Grade II listed conference and events centre, alongside the St. Thomas's Priory Golf Course.

3.9 No account of Armitage would be complete without a mention of the sanitary ware company in Old Road which became "Armitage Shanks", providing work for generations of local people. It was first built by Thomas Bond in late 1817 during the reign of George III on land known as Joan Croft, owned by John Aldritt. Bond was unfortunately declared bankrupt within two years and sold out to John Haynes and another. This resulted in two separate potteries: Thomas Bond's original was "Armitage Old Pottery", the other, built alongside was known locally as "Penman's Works" and also as "Armitage Pottery". The potteries went from strength to strength and in 1907 became Armitage Ware Ltd. In 1969 the company merged with Shanks Holdings Ltd., of Barrhead near Glasgow, becoming Armitage Shanks, which lasted until 1980 when they sold out to Blue Circle Industries. This was subsequently sold again in 1999 to the US based American Standard Companies, then re-acquired by Bain

Capital – now majority-owned by Sun Capital Partners. The Armitage Shanks brand still continues in the UK with subsidiary Ideal Standard, based in Kingston upon Hull with considerable workshops still in Old Road in Armitage.

- 3.10** The other major source of employment in the area was Lea Hall Colliery which, although the pit itself was not situated in the village but in nearby Brereton and Ravenhill Parish, was inextricably linked as a major employer until its closure in the early 1990s.
- 3.11** Today, with the exceptions of the current Hawkesyard Hall and nearby St. Thomas’s Priory Nursing Home, both on the same estate, you will find no castles or manor houses only the homes of those who live here.



iii Londis convenience store

- 3.12** Today, the parish offers a wide range of facilities for all ages. A number of shops and a Post Office all offer excellent service. A regular bus service between Stafford and Lichfield is a further asset proving the opportunity to use public transport to travel around the area, particularly the elderly and the young and others without access to a car.
- 3.13** The area has a doctor’s surgery in the centre of Armitage and close by a dispensing chemist. Excellent primary schools are placed at either end of the two villages. The village hall in the centre of Armitage provides good facilities where organisations and groups can meet to cater for the social needs of the community. For example, an excellent pre-school playgroup meets every school day at the Hall.



iv Bowls Club

- 3.14** The Village Hall is also surrounded by recreation areas and open space. There is also a bowling green and bowls club. The Parish Church in Armitage and the Methodist Chapel in Handsacre provide spiritual care to members of the community.
- 3.15** There are five public houses in the village, three of which serve food.
- 3.16** Armitage with Handsacre has a number of natural and built heritage assets, including part of the Canal Conservation Area following the Trent and Mersey Canal.



v Plum Pudding Allotments

4.0 Key Planning Issues

4.1 A set of key planning issues for the Armitage with Handsacre Neighbourhood Plan to address have been identified by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. To help identify these issues we have used the wealth of information collected in our questionnaire survey; our evidence base review; and the framework set by national and strategic planning policy.

4.2 The key issues the NDP should address are:

- 1. The need to protect local heritage including the historic village centre and the canal**
- 2. Protecting and enhancing open spaces, local green spaces and play and recreation areas**
- 3. Better design in new development**
- 4. Maintaining the rural “feel” of the area, protecting the countryside whilst improving access to this resource and maintaining the separation from other settlements**
- 5. Maintaining existing community facilities and services and ensuring that such uses can meet the needs of any future growth**
- 6. Managing the future growth of housing so that it is in line with strategic planning policy, is built in the right place and is appropriate to meet the needs of the local community**
- 7. There are a range of transport issues including speeding, access to other areas and movement around the parish itself**
- 8. The questionnaire survey sought views on a number of non-land use issues such as crime and anti-social behaviour**

4.3 How have we identified these issues? Firstly, from our work with you the local community and through our questionnaire, and, secondly, through the work of the Steering Group, who have examined the evidence base, and assessed what we need to do to produce a sustainable plan and a plan that meet national and strategic planning policy.

4.4 The key findings from the questionnaire were that:

- Nearly 80% of respondents think it is important or very important to protect the conservation area and listed buildings.

- Over 90% of respondents think it is important or very important to protect the canal and riversides



vi Trent and Mersey Canal

- Over 84% of respondents think it is important or very important to protect open and green spaces
- Over 80% of respondents felt it was important/very important to protect working farms in the area and almost 80% felt it was important/very important to maintain the separation of the village from other areas
- Over 91% of respondents said it was important/very important to maintain the rural nature of the village; and over 80% said it was important to feel part of a village or community
- Nearly 90% of respondents said that it was important/very important to maintain the right balance of population and facilities
- 57% said it was important/very important to maintain varied buildings styles in the village; 30% were neutral on this question
- Over 76% of respondents disagreed with the statement the village needed more houses; only just over 24% said the village needed a "few more"
- Over 84% of respondents said local shops were important/very important

5.0 Objectives and Vision

5.1 To address these key issues a set of Objectives have been identified for the NDP.

Objectives

To help us tackle the key issues we have identified and to achieve this Vision we have identified the following objectives for the Armitage with Handsacre Neighbourhood Plan:

OBJECTIVE 1 – To conserve and enhance the historic and natural environment

OBJECTIVE 2 – To protect and enhance local recreation, open and green spaces

OBJECTIVE 3 – To promote better design in new development

OBJECTIVE 4 – To protect the surrounding countryside and rural nature of the area

OBJECTIVE 5 – To protect and enhance local community facilities

OBJECTIVE 6 – To manage future housing growth so that it meets strategic development needs and the needs of the local community whilst at the same time providing appropriate infrastructure

OBJECTIVE 7 – To improve movement and accessibility around the area

5.2 If we achieve these objectives it will help us achieve our overall vision for 2029. The Vision we are using as the basis of the neighbourhood plan is taken from the Lichfield Local Plan Strategy.

Vision

“Armitage with Handsacre will maintain and enhance its role as a free-standing settlement, which functions as a local service centre serving the village and its

hinterland. There will be an enhanced quality of physical environment in all parts of the village, with a better defined and attractive village 'centre' to act as a key focal point. Links to the Trent and Mersey Canal will be improved so that it becomes a key feature of the village, links to an enhanced green infrastructure network and maximises opportunities from canal -based tourism, particularly to benefit local businesses.

The community will become more cohesive, safer, will have better overall health and will have improved access for all to a wide range of local community activities.

The village will maintain a range of good quality local services, employment and facilities, enhanced through improved accessibility in a more pedestrian and cycle - friendly environment.

Armitage with Handsacre will accommodate a proportionate scale of growth that provides for local needs and helps to deliver an enhanced village environment.

Local infrastructure will be improved, particularly in relation to local traffic and flooding issues."

(From the Lichfield Local Plan Strategy)

6.0 Neighbourhood Plan Policies

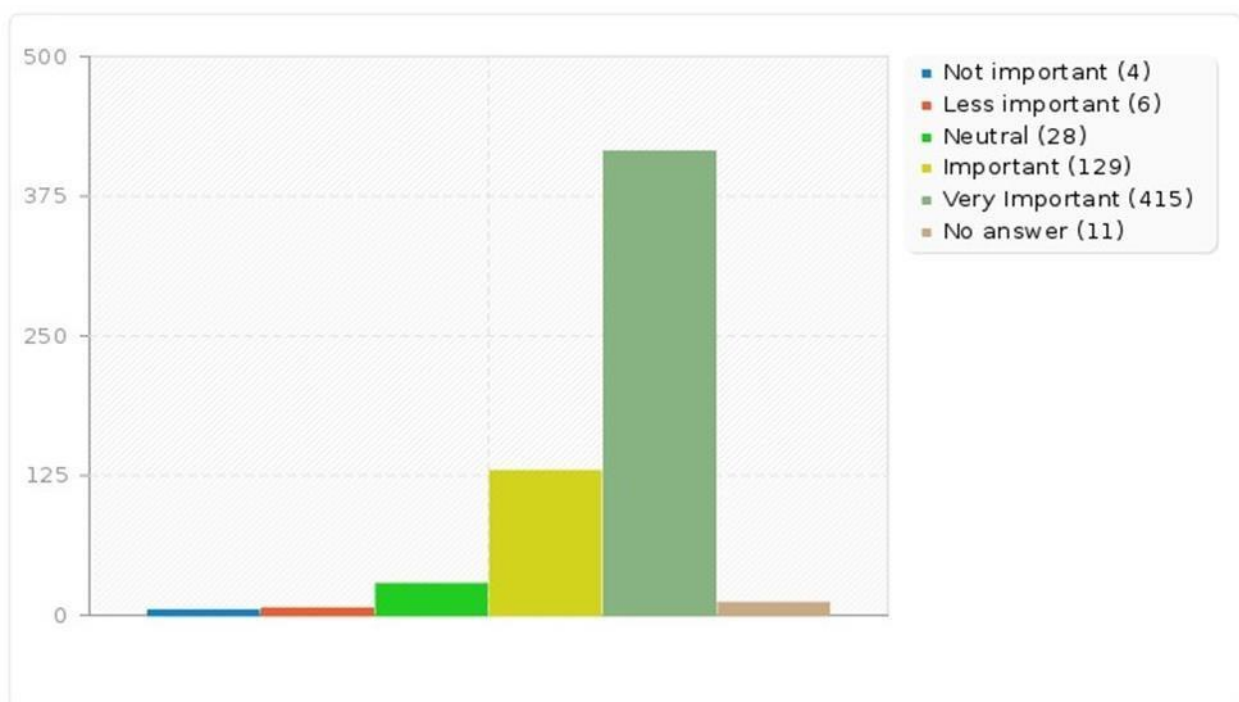
- 6.1 The following sections set out the planning policies of the Armitage with Handsacre Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).
- 6.2 Each section that follows is set out under one of our seven objectives, and consists of a short introduction, followed by a planning policy or policies, a background and justification section and the relevant Lichfield District policies that the NDP policy relates to.
- 6.3 Planning can be full of jargon, so to help you in the reading of this document we have included a glossary at the back (Appendix 4).

The Historic and Natural Environment

OBJECTIVE 1 – To conserve and enhance the historic and natural environment

6.4 From the questionnaire survey the importance of the parish's heritage assets, such as listed buildings, conservation area and canalside are very important (Figure 3). Similarly, the parish's natural environment from the riversides, wildlife areas and countryside are also valued.

Figure 3. How important is to protect the canal and river sides?



6.5 Many built and natural environment assets, including some of those mentioned above, such as listed buildings and the conservation area already have existing protection under other legislation. The neighbourhood plan does not seek to duplicate these and instead concentrates on more local non-designated and natural heritage assets that do not have strong existing protections.

Non-designated Heritage Assets

- 6.6 Non-designated heritage assets include the historical, architectural and cultural buildings and structures (e.g. mile posts, bridges, date stones etc.) that go to make up part of the richness of the parish's surroundings and are key features in connecting people with the area's past.

Policy AH1 – Conserving and Enhancing Non-Designated Heritage Assets

The non-designated local heritage assets identified below and as shown on Map 6 will be conserved and enhanced.

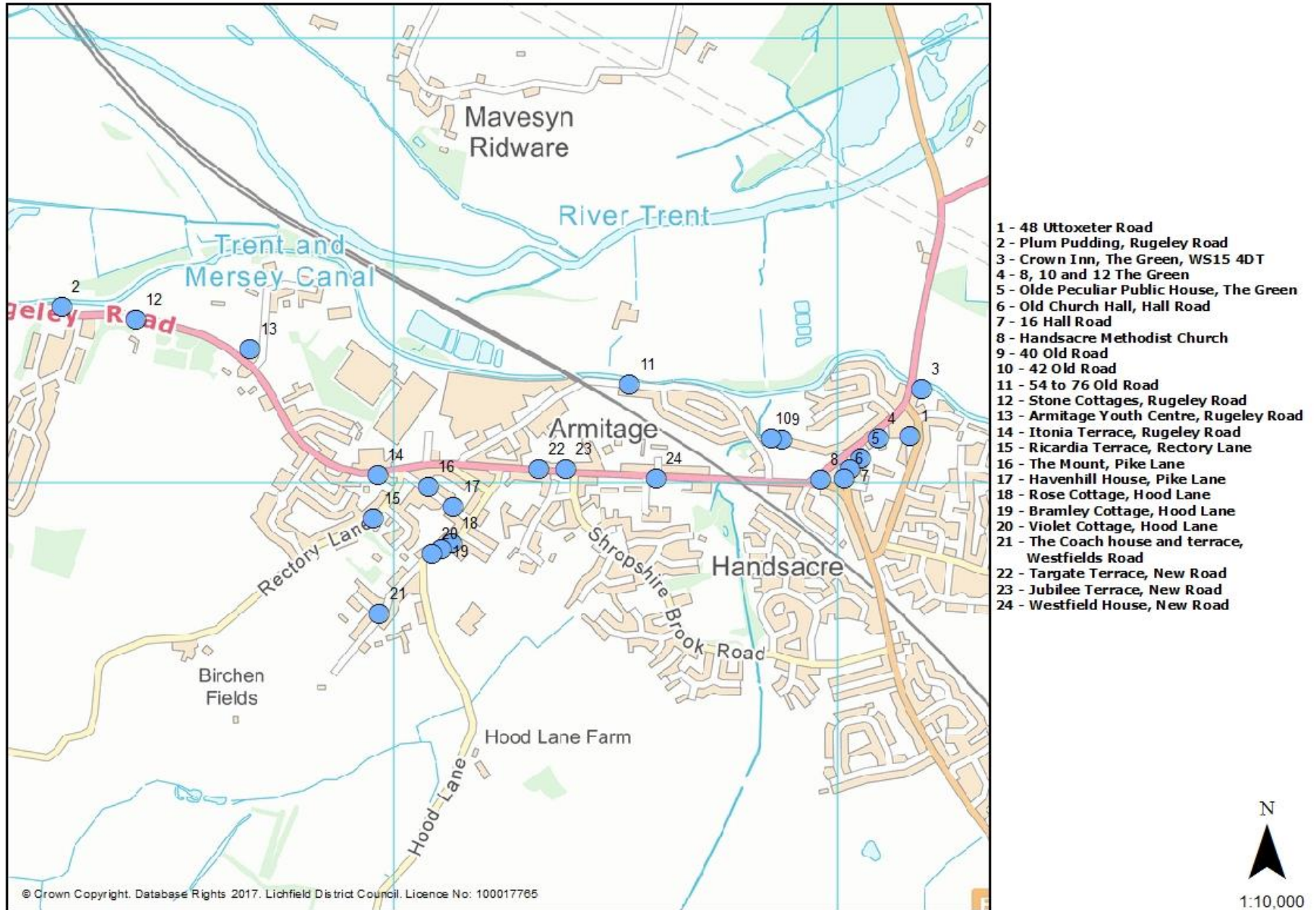
- **48 Uttoxeter Road, WS15 4DN**
- **Plum Pudding, Rugeley Road, WS15 4AZ**
- **Crown Inn, The Green, WS15 4DT**
- **8, 10 and 12 The Green, WS15 4DP**
- **Olde Peculiar Public House, The Green, WS15 4DP**
- **Old Church Hall, Hall Road, WS15 4DD**
- **16 Hall Road, WS15 4DD**
- **Handsacre Methodist Church, Lichfield Road, WS15 4DP**
- **40 Old Road, WS15 4DR**
- **42 Old Road, WS15 4DR**
- **54 to 76 Old Road, WS15 4BU**
- **Stone Cottages, Rugeley Road, WS15 2LL**
- **Armitage Youth Centre, Rugeley Road, WS15 4AR**
- **Itonia Terrace, Rugeley Road, WS15 4AR**
- **Ricardia Terrace, Rectory Lane, WS15 4AN**
- **The Mount, Pike Lane, WS15 4AF**
- **Havenhill House, Pike Lane, WS15 4AF**
- **Rose Cottage, Hood Lane, WS15 4AG**
- **Bramley Cottage, Hood Lane, WS15 4AG**
- **Violet Cottage, Hood Lane, WS15 4AG**
- **The Coach house and terrace, Westfields Road, WS15 4AH**
- **Targate Terrace, New Road, WS15 4AA**
- **Jubilee Terrace, New Road, WS15 4AA**

- **Westfield House, New Road, WS15 4BJ**

Development proposals affecting these non-designated heritage assets will be supported when they conserve and, if possible enhance, these significance of these assets. Development that would result in the loss of, or have a detrimental impact on, these assets will only be supported in the following circumstances:

- a) Where renovation or alteration of non-designated heritage assets require planning permission, such changes are designed sensitively, and with careful regard to the heritage asset's historical and architectural value and pay appropriate regard to the asset's setting; or**
- b) Where a development proposal would result in the loss of, or substantial harm to a locally non-designated heritage asset, such development will only be supported when the public benefit of the proposed development outweighs the loss of or harm to the asset and its setting. Where development is permitted, this will be conditioned in such a way so as to ensure the development takes place after the loss, or harm, has occurred; and that appropriate recording of the heritage takes place prior to any loss or harm.**

Map 6. Policy AH1 properties



Background/Justification

- 6.7 Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, some heritage assets in the neighbourhood plan area already have statutory protections e.g. the area's listed buildings and the conservation area which includes the Trent and Mersey Canal. Other buildings and structures that are locally important for their heritage value do not benefit from these protections and, in line with national planning policy, that advises that heritage assets should be managed in a manner appropriate to their significance, Policy AH1 identifies the important, local heritage assets that should be conserved and enhanced. All of these assets make a positive contribution to the distinctiveness and identity of the area, this may be by reason of their architecture, history, cultural or local associations. The assets identified in Policy AH1 date from different periods in the development to the two villages and, in a number of instances, provide links back to the farming and industrial heritage (including the canal) and development of the area.
- 6.8 In drawing up Policy AH1, buildings in the neighbourhood area were identified by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group from a visual survey of the area using the knowledge of local residents and groups. The candidate buildings then identified were considered for identification in Policy AH1 against the guidance published by English Heritage (now Historic England) in *Knowing Your Place* and *Good Practice Guide for Local Heritage Listing*. Owners, residents and other interested parties then had an opportunity to comment on whether the buildings identified in Policy AH1 should be identified in the Regulation 14 Draft Plan during the informal Draft Policies consultation. The Lichfield Historic Environment Character Assessment (HECA) (2009) produced by Staffordshire County Council has also been used in the development of Policy AH1. This study includes a separate section on Armitage with Handsacre (LHECZ11) and notes that the landscape around the two villages has changed significantly in the last century and how the Trent and Mersey Canal to the north has provided a logical boundary to the settlements growth. In particular, the HECA identifies the following, in addition to the area's Listed Buildings and Conservation Area, as important considerations for future development:
- The potential for below ground archaeological deposits; and
 - The impact on the surviving historic landscape character to the west of Hood Lane.
- 6.9 Policy AH1 by identifying non-designated heritage assets in Armitage with Handsacre will support the implementation of Local Plan Strategy Core Policy 14 that seeks to conserve and enhance locally listed buildings and to maintain local distinctiveness.

Relevant Local Planning Policies:

Lichfield District Local Plan Strategy 2008 – 2029 Adopted 17 February 2015

Core Policy 14: Our Built & Historic Environment

Policy Arm1: Armitage with Handsacre Environment

Policy BE1: High Quality Development

Lichfield Local Plan saved policies

Policy C2: Character of Conservation Areas

See also Lichfield District's Historic Environment SPD.

Natural Environment

- 6.10 The neighbourhood area has a mix of urban and rural landscape features, these provide a diverse range of habitats for wildlife and pleasant opportunities for informal recreation. The neighbourhood plan seeks to identify and protect the valued sites and features of our natural environment.

Policy AH2 – Conserving and Enhancing the Local Natural Environment

Development proposals should seek to conserve and enhance the area's natural environment assets, including habitats, brooks, streams, ponds, hedgerows, semi- and unimproved grassland and broadleaf native woodland. In particular, the following areas will be protected for their local natural environmental resource value:

- Shropshire Brook**
- Trent and Mersey Canal**
- Lake, adjacent to Rugeley Road**
- Borrow Pit, including allotments and Environment Centre**
- River Trent and its floodplain**

Where appropriate, new development should include new woodland and tree planting of native species of local provenance.

Development proposals that would otherwise affect the neighbourhood area's natural environmental assets will only be supported where they would:

- Protect, enhance, restore and implement appropriate conservation management of the biodiversity or geodiversity value of the land of buildings concerned, or those listed in the first part of this policy in particular; and/or**
- Minimise fragmentation and maximise opportunities for restoration, enhancements and connection of natural habitats; and/or**
- Incorporate beneficial biodiversity and geological conservation features; and/or**
- Deliver a net gain for biodiversity and/or geodiversity in the neighbourhood area.**

Background/Justification

6.11 Our questionnaire shows that local people value and appreciate the surrounding natural environment. Policy AH2 seeks to protect this natural environment, and identifies five specific areas for protection, including the existing Trent and Mersey Canal Site of Biological Importance and, following responses made to the Regulation 14 consultation the Borrow Pit. The Borrow Pit was identified to be retained as a landscape/water feature in the Rugeley Power Station Development Brief Supplementary Planning Document which was jointly prepared by Lichfield District Council and Cannock Chase District Council in February 2018. In protecting sites in Armitage with Handsacre the neighbourhood plan will help to achieve a number of the targets set in the *Biodiversity Strategy for Lichfield District*, including:

- Prevention of further loss of native broadleaf woodland
- Limiting the loss and degradation of hedgerows
- Increasing the number of native trees of local provenance
- Maintenance of areas of semi and unimproved grassland.
- Maintenance of open water habitats
- Increasing access to nature in urban areas

Development management decisions affecting these sites will also be taken with regard to existing Local Plan Strategy policy. Policy AH2 seeks to add local value and distinctiveness to Lichfield Local Plan Strategy Core Policy 13 and Policies NR1 to NR6.

Relevant Local Planning Policies:

Lichfield District Local Plan Strategy 2008 – 2029 Adopted 17 February 2015

Core Policy 13: Our Natural Resources

Policy Arm1: Armitage with Handsacre Environment

Policy NR1: Countryside Management

Policy NR2: Development in the Green Belt

Policy NR3: Biodiversity, Protected Species and their Habitats

Policy NR4: Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows

Policy NR5: Natural and Historic Landscapes

Policy NR6: Linked Habitat Corridors and Multi-Functional Greenspaces

Lichfield Local Plan saved policies

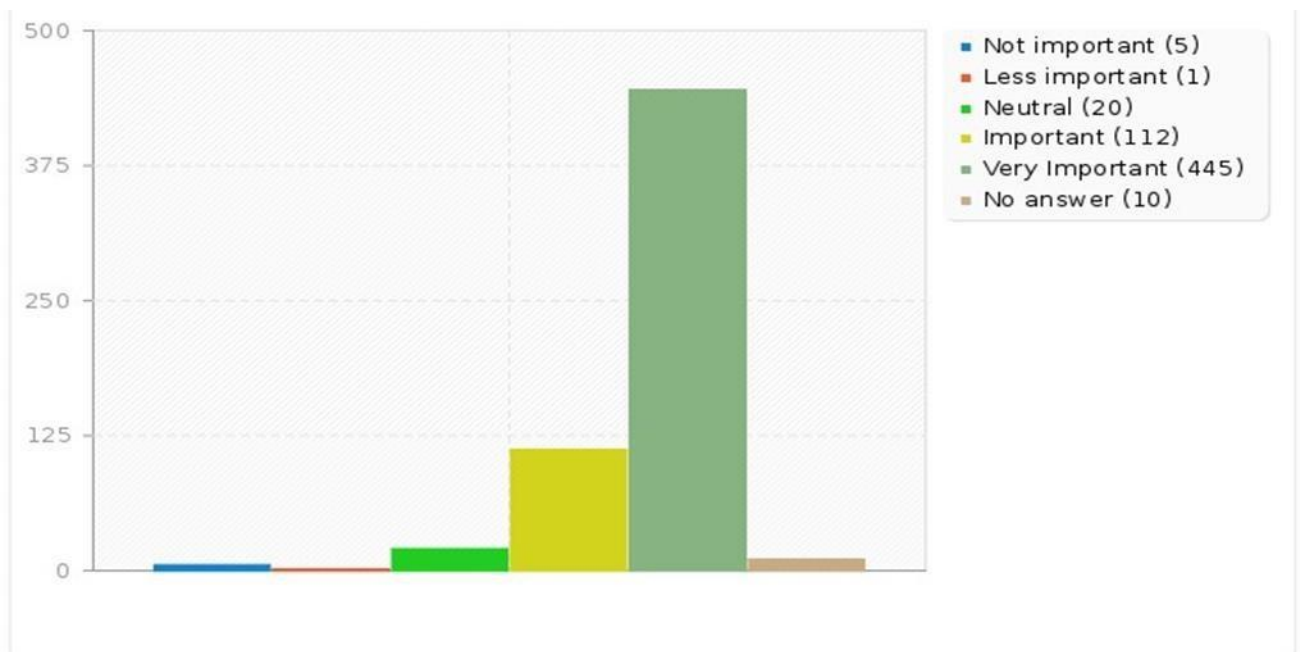
None.

Recreation, Open and Green Spaces

OBJECTIVE 2 – To protect and enhance local recreation, open and green spaces

6.12 From the questionnaire survey we know that protecting open and green spaces is a key concern of the local community: more than 84% of respondents said this was important to them, Figure 4.

Figure 4. How Important is Open and Green Space in the Village?



Policy AH3 – Protecting and Enhancing Local Recreational Facilities

The following sites as shown on Map 7 will be protected:

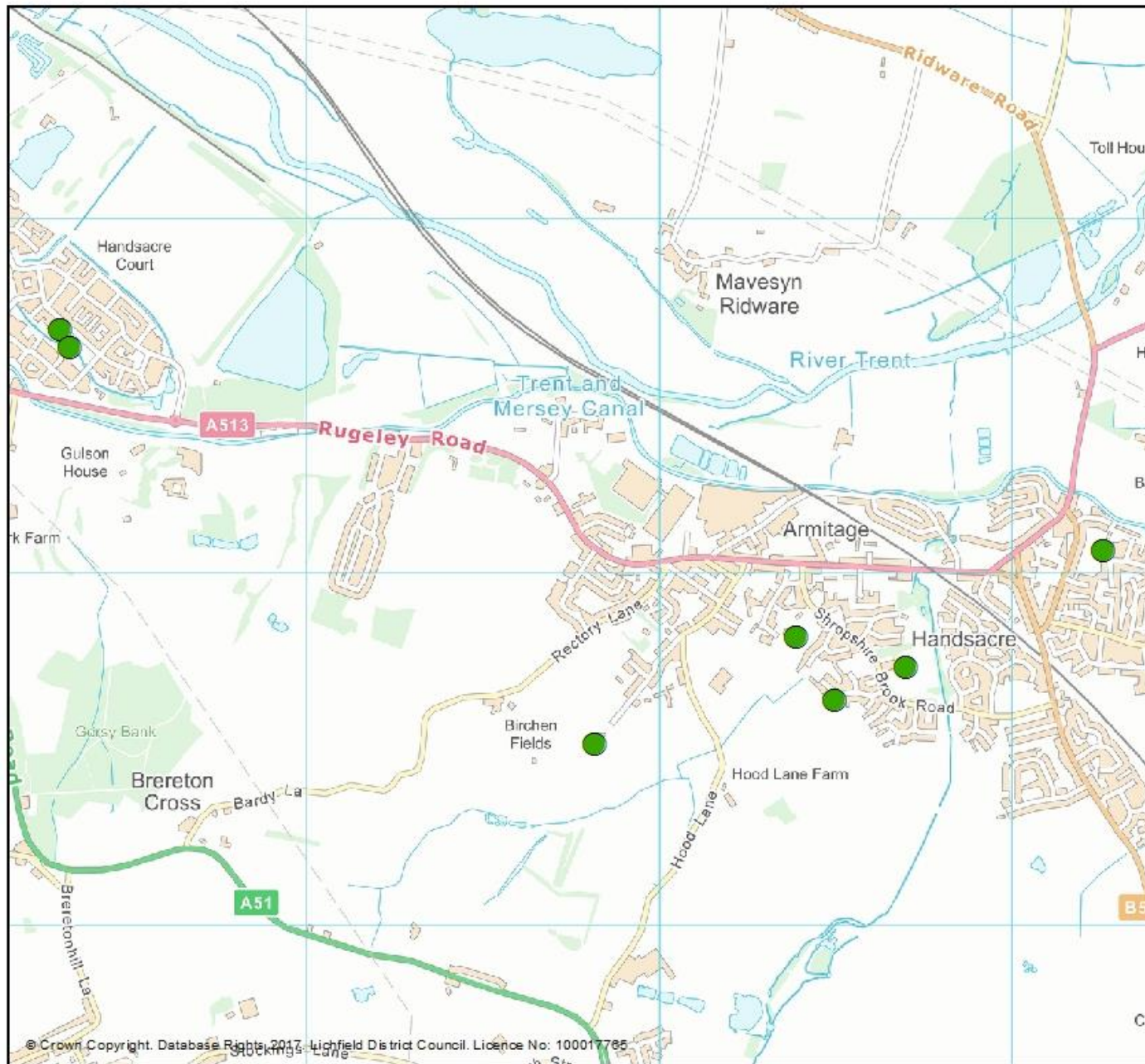
- Peak Close recreation area
- Canon Lane/Lower Fufin proposed site for a community building
- Hawksyard play area
- Bowling Green, Millmoor Avenue

- **Hard court play area including tennis, football and basketball at Shropshire Brook Road**
- **St Barbara Road Play Area**
- **Cricket Ground (Ideal Standard)**

Schemes to enhance and improve these local recreational facilities and open spaces will be supported.

Development that will lead to the loss of these facilities will only be supported when equivalent, or better provision of alternative facilities is provided within the neighbourhood area; or the development is for alternative sport and recreation facilities the need for which clearly outweighs the loss of the existing facility.

Map 7. Policy AH1 properties



- 1 - Peak Close recreation area
- 2 - Cannon Lane
- 3 - Hawksyard play area
- 4 - Blowing Green, Millmoor Avenue
- 5 - Shropshire Brook Road
- 6 - St Barbara's Road play area
- 7 - Cricket Ground



1:14,699

Background/Justification

- 6.13 As stated in national planning policy (para. 73) access to opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to a community's health and well-being. The sport and recreation facilities identified in Policy AH3 fulfill this role. Proposals to improve and enhance these facilities will be supported. National planning policy also states that existing sport and recreation land and buildings, including playing fields should not be built on unless they are surplus to requirements; the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or development is for alternative sport and recreation facilities the need for which clearly outweighs the loss of the existing facility. Policy AH3 is entirely consistent with this approach and that set out in Local Plan Strategy Policy HSC2: Playing Pitch and Sport Facility Standards.

Relevant Local Planning Policies:

Lichfield District Local Plan Strategy 2008 – 2029 Adopted 17 February 2015

Core Policy 10: Healthy & Safe Lifestyles

Core Policy 11: Participation in Sport & Physical Activity

Policy HSC2: Playing Pitch and Sport Facility Standards.

Policy Arm2: Armitage with Handsacre Services and Facilities

Lichfield Local Plan saved policies

None.

- 6.14 The majority of open spaces in the neighbourhood area are currently in the ownership of and managed by Lichfield District Council. The various sites already feature in the District Council's Open Space Assessment. Neighbourhood planning allows local people to identify open spaces and green areas that they want to see protected – something that is clearly in line with views expressed in response to the questionnaire survey. Work is taking place to work up proposals in particular parts of the neighbourhood area. Long term aspirations for the enhancement and improvement of local facilities include;
- Improved or new equipped play at Upper Lodge Road and Millmoor Avenue;
 - New amenity green space to the east around Tuppenhurst Lane; and

- Provision of an additional football pitch in an appropriate location.

Policy AH4 – Protected Open Spaces

The open space listed below and shown on maps 8a and 8b are identified as protected open spaces:

- 1. Pinfold Drive**
- 2. The Green**
- 3. St Barbara’s Road**
- 4. Moat Way**
- 5. Reeve Court**
- 6. Leet Court**
- 7. Manor Court Drive**
- 8. Shropshire Brook Road/New Road**
- 9. Warren Croft**
- 10. Wordsworth Close**
- 11. Hazel Drive**
- 12. Peak Close**
- 13. Chase View**
- 14. Millmoor Avenue**
- 15. War Memorial, New Road**
- 16. Upper Lodge Road**
- 17. Playing field and bowling green, Millmoor Avenue**

6.15 The neighbourhood area has a number of important open spaces. These have been identified on the Policies Map (Map 6) and will be protected. These spaces serve a number of different functions for the local community: providing spaces to play, relax, walk dogs and carry out more formal recreation activity.

Relevant Local Planning Policies:

Lichfield District Local Plan Strategy 2008 – 2029 Adopted 17 February 2015

Core Policy 1: The Spatial Strategy

Core Policy 2: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Core Policy 3: Delivering Sustainable Development

Core Policy 10: Healthy & Safe Lifestyles

Core Policy 11: Participation in Sport & Physical Activity

Policy HSC1: Open Space Standards

Policy HSC2 Playing Pitch & Sport Facility Standards

Policy NR6: Linked Habitat Corridors & Multi-functional Greenspaces

Lichfield Local Plan saved policies




None.

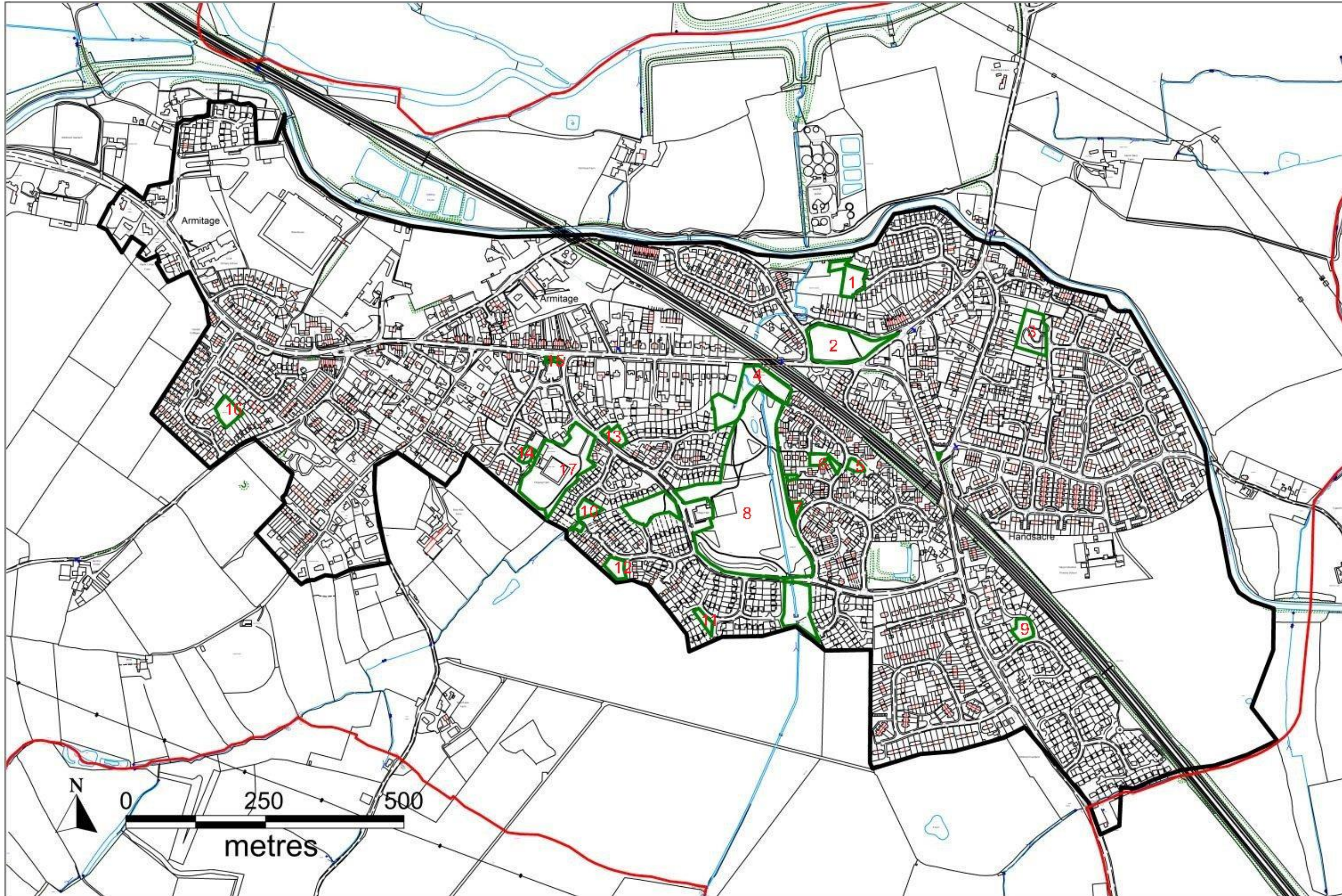


vii Plum Pudding allotments

Map 8a - Armitage with Handsacre Policies Map

Policies Map Key

Settlement boundary  Protected open spaces  Parish boundary 



Map 8b - Armitage with Handsacre Policies Map – Borrow Pit

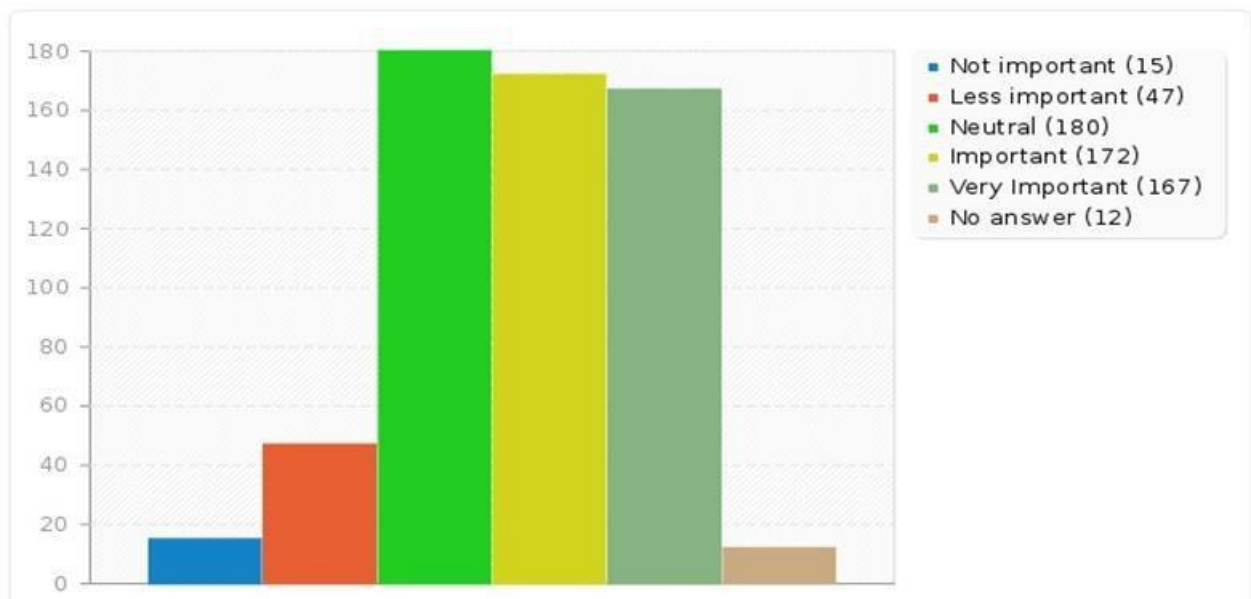


Better Design

OBJECTIVE 3 – To promote better design in new development

6.16 National planning policy seeks to promote better design in our buildings and spaces. Through the Armitage with Handsacre NDP we would like to support this objective, particularly for housing, recognising that the demands of modern-day society result in people have different needs at different life stages when it comes to homes, health care, education, transport, infrastructure, shops and open spaces

Figure 5. How important is it to maintain varied building styles throughout the village?



Policy AH5 – Better Design

New residential development should be of a good quality design. Where appropriate development proposals should take account of the character of the historic village centre, their proximity and accessibility to the Trent and Mersey Canal Conservation Area and their location in relation to open spaces and play and recreational facilities. Development proposals will be supported where these characteristics are respected and where their design responds positively to the following factors:

- 1. Setting**
- 2. Public Realm**
- 3. Accessibility**
- 4. Site characteristics**
- 5. Frontages**
- 6. Innovation and responding to local context**
- 7. Roofscape and Chimneys**
- 8. Elevations**
- 9. Parking Standards**

Background/Justification

- 6.17 The Lichfield District Council Sustainable Design Supplementary Planning Document provides a range of design principles for new development and these have been carefully considered, and where appropriate, the most important local factors have been considered by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and brought forward into the design policies in the neighbourhood plan. Policy AH5 captures key design and environmental considerations that were considered to be important to the local community as part of the Plan preparation process. This is important, as the neighbourhood plan will have greater weight in decision making than an SPD (SPDs are guidance documents) as the neighbourhood plan forms part of the statutory development plan for

the area. The factors listed under Policy AH5 should be taken into account by designers and applicants and Planning Statements and Design and Access Statements, when submitted, should explain how each of these factors, if relevant, have been taken into account in the design of planning proposals.

Relevant Local Planning Policies:

Lichfield District Local Plan Strategy 2008 – 2029 Adopted 17 February 2015

Core Policy 1: The Spatial Strategy

Core Policy 2: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Core Policy 3: Delivering Sustainable Development

Core Policy 14: Our Built & Historic Environment

Lichfield Local Plan saved policies

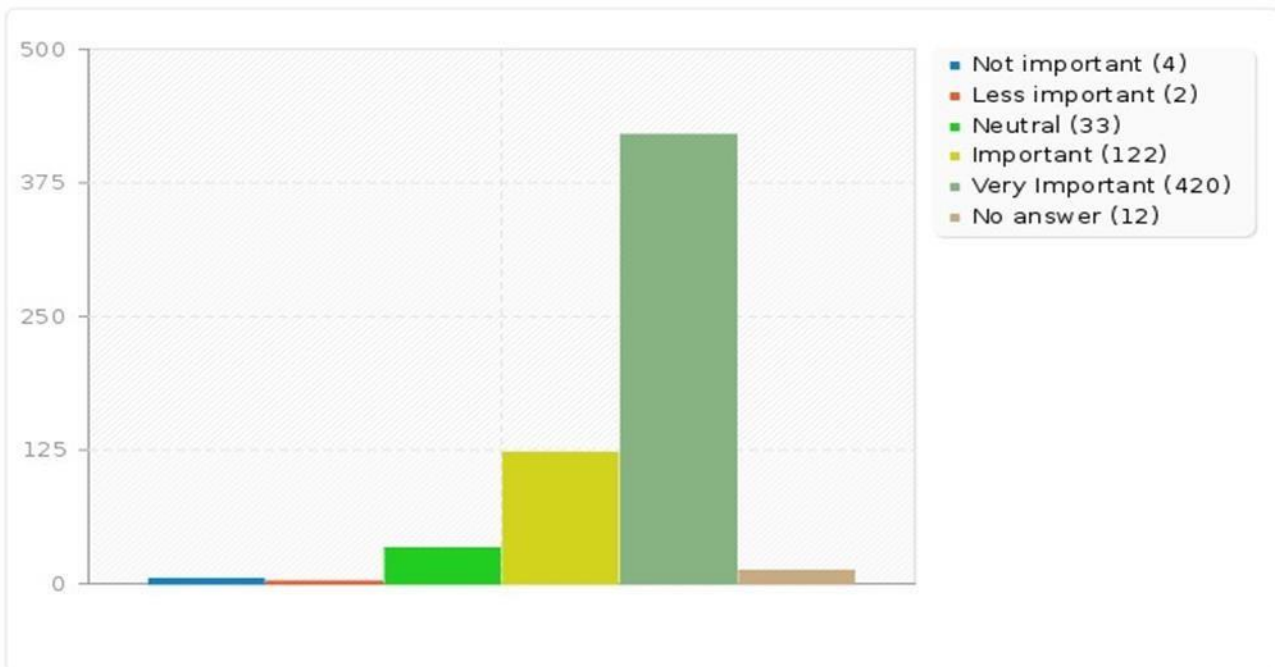
None.

The Countryside and Rural Area

OBJECTIVE 4 – To protect the surrounding countryside and rural nature of the area

6.18 The neighbourhood plan questionnaire illustrates strongly the desire of local people to retain the rural nature and “feel” of the village (Figure 6).

Figure 6. How important is the rural nature of the village?



Policy AH6 – Maintaining the Rural Nature of the Villages

Development proposals should maintain the rural nature of the village. Proposals will be supported which maintain Armitage and Handsacre as separate free-standing communities within a rural setting and which:

- a) respect the landscape setting of the settlement concerned ;**
- b) maintain the distinction between Armitage and Handsacre from other settlements;**

- c) respect the character and appearance of the Trent and Mersey Canal Conservation Area and its setting; and**
- d) Safeguard existing outdoor sport and recreational facilities and, where appropriate , create new opportunities for such facilities.**

Background/Justification

- 6.19 Objective 4 and Policy AH6 of the neighbourhood plan are in line with the *Local Plan Strategy*, Policy Arm1 which seeks to maintain Armitage with Handsacre's role as a "separate free- standing and stable community". In the south of the parish, this objective will be supported by Green Belt policy that seeks to keep land permanently open (Map 4). However, the *Local Plan Strategy* does indicate that a small amount of Green Belt land could be considered for future housing.
- 6.20 Policy AH6 will also help to address one of the key concerns of residents as identified in the questionnaire by maintaining the open and land and landscape setting of the two villages, particularly where it is not protected by Green Belt; and seeking to ensure that the two settlements remain free-standing and separate from other areas of build development, particularly the former power station site (see Maps 3 and 4).
- 6.21 In seeking to protect the rural nature of the neighbourhood area this will open up opportunities for new outdoor sport and recreation.

Relevant Local Planning Policies:

Lichfield District Local Plan Strategy 2008 – 2029 Adopted 17 February 2015

Core Policy 1: The Spatial Strategy

Core Policy 2: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable

Development Core Policy 3: Delivering Sustainable

Development

Core Policy 10: Healthy & Safe Lifestyles

Core Policy 11: Participation in Sport & Physical Activity

Core Policy 13: Our Natural Resources

Policy NR1: Countryside Management

Policy NR2: Development in the Green Belt

Lichfield Local Plan saved policies None.

Community Facilities

OBJECTIVE 5 – To protect and enhance local community facilities

6.22 The NDP offers the opportunity to identify existing community facilities that should be retained, and, where necessary, enhanced.

Policy AH7 –

Retaining and Enhancing Existing Community Facilities

Community Facilities

The following community facilities will be safeguarded.

- Village Hall
- Pavilion
- Public houses
- Shops

Proposals for their enhancement will be supported.

Insofar as planning permission is required development that would result in the loss of these facilities will only be supported when an equivalent or better facility is provided within the neighbourhood plan area, or where it can be demonstrated by the applicant there is no longer a need for a particular community facility or that is no longer commercially viable.

Proposals for new community facilities will be supported when they do not have a significant adverse impact on any of the following: the natural or built environment; residential

amenity; road safety; and traffic congestion.

Background/Justification

6.23 The *Local Plan Strategy* identifies Armitage with Handsacre as a Key Rural Centre, because of the services and facilities it currently provides to serve the local community and its hinterland. The policy recognises that the shops in the neighbourhood area play an important role in the vitality of the local community. Nevertheless, it also recognises that there may be circumstances where an on-going retail use of particular premises is no longer commercially viable. In addition, the second part of the policy provides active support for new community facilities. Plainly it is impractical to identify the range of facilities which may be promoted within the Plan period. However, the second part of the policy is intended to be wide-ranging and is not restricted to the four facilities highlighted in the first part of the policy.

To retain this function Policy Arm2 seeks to resist the loss of existing services and facilities

unless an "equivalent facility can be provided".



6.24 From the neighbourhood plan questionnaire we know how much people value existing services and facilities (e.g. local shops, Figure 7); and the type of new facilities that they would like to see provided. Policy AH7 sets out those facilities to be protected and that enhancements will be supported.

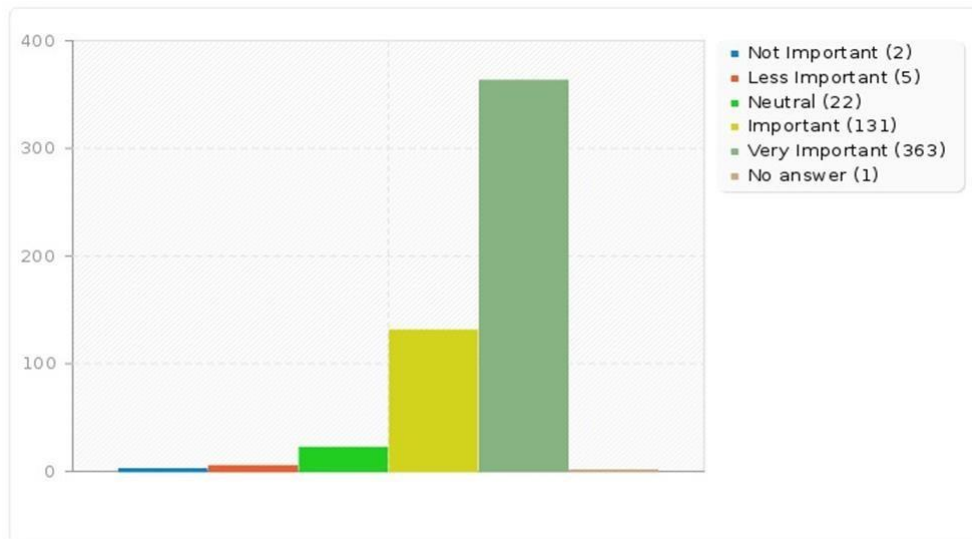


Figure 7. How important are Local Shops?

Relevant Local Planning Policies:

Lichfield District Local Plan Strategy 2008 – 2029 Adopted 17 February 2015

Core Policy 2: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Core Policy 3: Delivering Sustainable Development

Core Policy 4: Delivering our Infrastructure

Policy Arm2: Armitage with Handsacre Services and Facilities

Lichfield Local Plan saved policies

None.

Housing

OBJECTIVE 6 – To manage future housing growth so that it meets strategic development needs and the needs of the local community whilst at the same time providing appropriate infrastructure

6.25 The *Local Plan Strategy's* Vision for Armitage with Handsacre envisages a scale of growth in the village that provides for local needs and helps to deliver an enhanced village environment.

Policy AH8 – New Housing Development within the Village of Armitage with Handsacre

In order to retain the rural character of the village proposals for new housing within the settlement boundary as defined Map 6a will be supported when it meets the following criteria:

- (a) It is normally no more than two-storeys in height;**
- (b) It ensures appropriate and safe access can be achieved;**
- (c) It provides appropriate residential amenity for future occupiers (not located adjacent to noise generating agricultural, industrial or commercial activities);**
- (d) It would not lead to the loss of protected areas and facilities identified elsewhere in this plan; and**
- (e) It includes adequate car parking, garaging and private and public amenity space for future residents.**

Background/Justification

6.26 The *Local Plan Strategy's* Vision for Armitage with Handsacre envisages a scale of growth in the village that provides for local needs and helps to deliver an enhanced village environment. National planning which sets the overall framework for new housing has a central theme of

seeking to encourage the growth in housing provision.

6.27 The Armitage with Handsacre Neighbourhood Plan has to be in general conformity with the Local Plan Strategy and has to have regard to national planning policy and guidance. Therefore, in preparing the plan we have undertaken a strict balancing exercise, because our questionnaire survey reveals little support for substantial growth in the village: people want to maintain the village’s separate identify (Figure 8) and see the number of new homes developed at an appropriate level (Figure 9).

Figure 8. How Important is it to Maintain Separation from Surrounding/Neighbouring Villages?

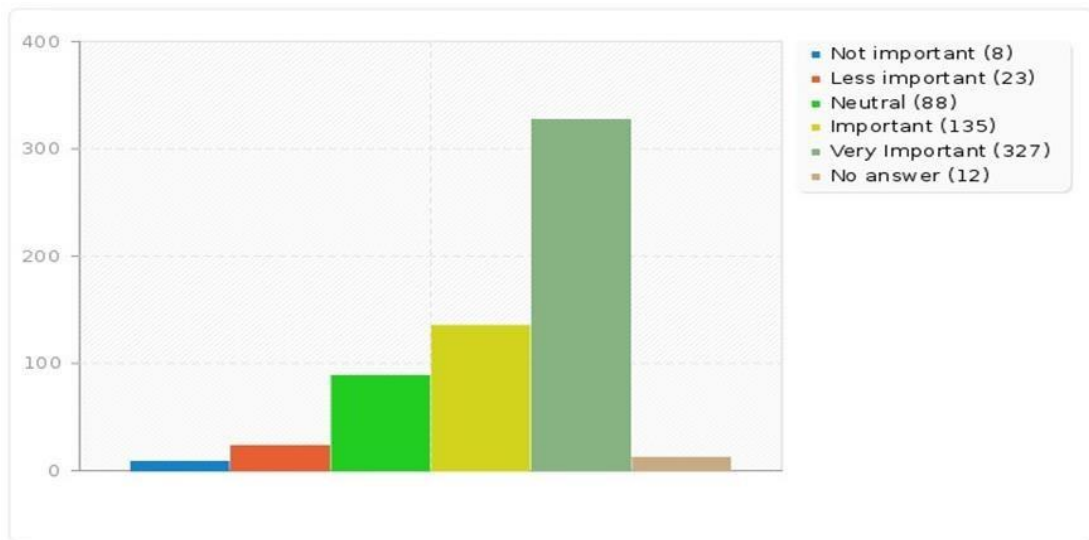
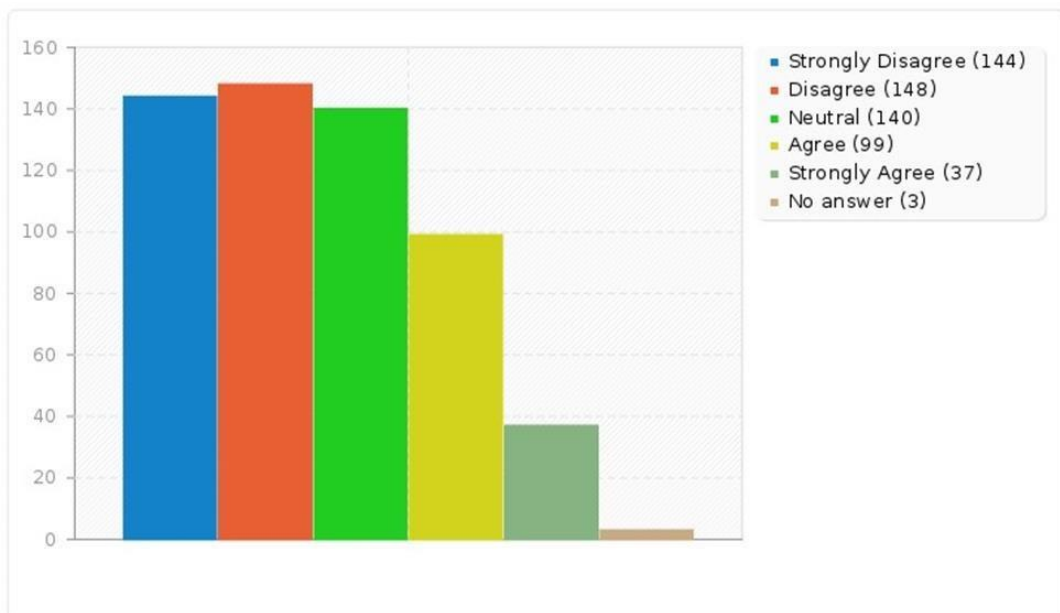


Figure 9 – Should the Village only accommodate a few more homes in the future?



- 6.29 In order to meet this aspiration and in line with the *Local Plan Strategy* which seeks to provide “a modest and proportionate level of growth, whilst maintaining a self-contained community with clear physical boundaries” in Armitage with Handsacre, the neighbourhood plan carries forward the settlement boundary as defined in the “saved” policies of the previous 1998 Local Plan (Map 6).
- 6.30 Any further growth beyond the settlement boundary, and Policy Arm4 of the *Local Plan Strategy* identifies a range of between 120 - 220 new homes being provided in Armitage with Handsacre over the period 2008 to 2029 will be determined via the *Local Plan Allocations* document. The Draft Local Plan Allocations Consultation (Regulation 19 Consultation) closed in May 2017.

Relevant Local Planning Policies:

Lichfield District Local Plan Strategy 2008 – 2029 Adopted 17 February 2015

Core Policy 6: Housing Delivery

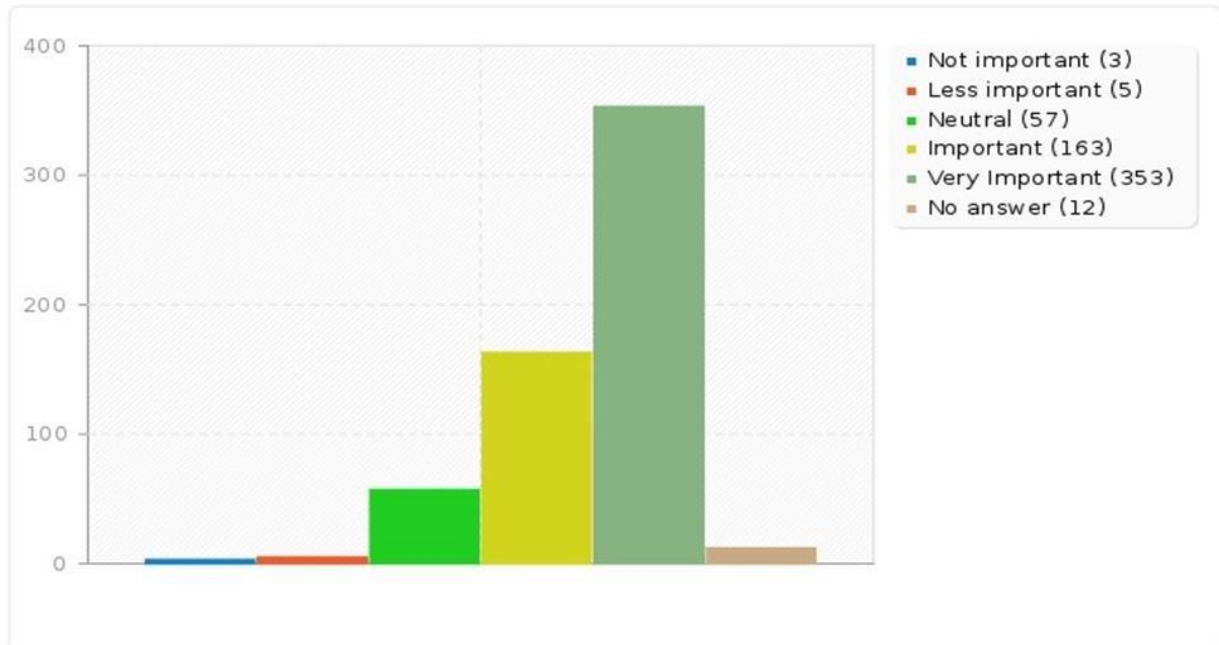
Policy Arm4 – Armitage with Handsacre Housing

Lichfield Local Plan saved policies

None.

- 6.31 From the questionnaire survey we know that a key concern of local people is to maintain the right balance between the village’s population and available facilities (Figure 10).

Figure 10. How important is it to maintain the right balance between population and facilities?



6.32 The neighbourhood plan will do this in three main ways:

- a) By setting planning policy that will help to manage future housing growth;
- b) By protecting key assets in the village such as community facilities and open and local green spaces; and
- c) By using resources that become available to the Parish Council to address identified needs and deficiencies. One of the sources of funding that will become available to the Parish Council is through its "meaningful proportion" of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts from chargeable development within the neighbourhood area.

6.33 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a tariff upon development which Local Authorities can opt to charge in order to raise funds to contribute to the delivery of infrastructure needs which arise as a result of new development in an area. Such needs can include new or expanded schools, sports and recreation facilities and improvements to the transport network for example. It should be noted that the amount of CIL raised will not cover all of the funding required, but will be part of a wider package of finance measures which will come from a

range of sources such as grant aid for example. Lichfield District Council's *CIL Charging Schedule* has recently been adopted.

- 6.34 Neighbourhoods which have taken a proactive approach by drawing up a neighbourhood development plan, and securing the consent of local people in a referendum, will receive 25 per cent of the revenues from the Community Infrastructure Levy from development within their neighbourhood area. This is one of the significant benefits of our neighbourhood plan.

Movement and Accessibility

OBJECTIVE 7 – To improve movement and accessibility around the area

6.35 Policy Arm2 of the *Local Plan Strategy* seeks to improve sustainable local transport links.

6.36 From the neighbourhood plan questionnaire we found that:

- Over 70% of people felt speeding in the village was an issue;
- Almost 40% felt there was a need to improve bus services;
- Over 47% agreed that car parking was a problem;
- Over 67% road maintenance was a problem;
- 54% would support better cycleway provision and 67% better footpaths;
- Almost 60% agreed that there was a need for further traffic calming; and
- Over 67% identified a problem with Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGVs).

6.37 Most of these issues, with the exception of car parking are not land use planning issues. Therefore, the following supporting Parish Council Actions are identified:

Parish Council Actions

1. To work with Staffordshire County Council to identify and support the implementation of measures to curb speeding in the parish;
2. To work with Staffordshire County Council and service operators to improve the quality and frequency of bus services;
3. To identify and notify at regular intervals problems with highway maintenance and to seek prompt and appropriate responses from Staffordshire County Council.
4. To work with Staffordshire County Council and local business to identify and support the implementation of measures to address issues arising from Heavy Goods Vehicle traffic in the parish;
5. To support the provision of better foot and cycleways.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – Local Plan strategy section on Armitage with Handsacre (Note: paragraph references refer to the Local Plan Strategy).

Vision for Armitage with Handsacre

Armitage with Handsacre will maintain and enhance its role as a freestanding settlement, which functions as a local service centre serving the village and its hinterland. There will be an enhanced quality of physical environment in all parts of the village, with a better defined and attractive village 'centre' to act as a key focal point. Links to the Trent and Mersey Canal will be improved so that it becomes a key feature of the village, links to an enhanced green infrastructure network and maximises opportunities from canal -based tourism, particularly to benefit local businesses.

The community will become more cohesive, safer, will have better overall health and will have improved access for all to a wide range of local community activities. The village will maintain a range of good quality local services, employment and facilities, enhanced through improved accessibility in a more pedestrian and cycle - friendly environment.

Armitage with Handsacre will accommodate a proportionate scale of growth that provides for local needs and helps to deliver an enhanced village environment. Local infrastructure will be improved, particularly in relation to local traffic and flooding issues.

Policy Arm1: Armitage with Handsacre Environment

Armitage with Handsacre will maintain its role as a separate, freestanding and stable community functioning as a local service centre offering a range of services and facilities.

The Canal Conservation Area will be recognised and protected in all potential change and improvements supported, with particular encouragement to enhancing links to the local community and its facilities and services provided that they accord with other policies in the Local Plan.

Support will be given to initiatives which help to create a focal point for the community in the village provided that they are of a physical form, distribution and quality appropriate to current local needs and the local environment and which help it to develop its cohesiveness

as a settlement.

Support will be given to infrastructure improvements in the village, particularly those which address local traffic and flooding issues.

Explanation

17.33 Handsacre is recorded in the Domesday Book and Armitage has medieval origins. Pockets of historic significance remain, particularly the pre-1900 area in Armitage which includes parts of Hood Lane, Pike Lane and parts of New Road.

17.34 The present Armitage with Handsacre settlement is the result of the coalescence of two formerly separate village communities. The emergence as a single physical community largely took place towards the last half of the twentieth century through the separate expansion of Armitage and Handsacre. Initially this was related to the growth of industrial and mining communities partly linked to the opening of Lea Hall Colliery in Rugeley, and particularly linked to the industrial function of the Trent and Mersey Canal which runs almost the entire length of the settlement. This expansion included development along New Road that effectively joined the villages along a main through route. The emergence of a single settlement was further consolidated by development in the 1990s with over 400 dwellings being built in the Shropshire Brook Road and Lichfield Road (Handsacre) areas.

17.35 As a result of this rapid expansion, the settlement is physically very elongated and lacks a central focal point or 'heart'. Its present characteristics are therefore of a substantial, relatively recently developed industrial based community having an increasingly commuter element to it. There is a substantial and long-standing employer (Ideal Standard, formerly Armitage Shanks) which is fairly centrally located.

17.36 The Trent and Mersey Canal runs in an east-west direction and effectively forms a northern limit to the village, although this is reinforced by the presence of the River Trent flood plain. The village is surrounded to the south and west by Green Belt.

17.37 The canal is a Conservation Area, is of significant recreational value and brings tourists through the village. It is of ecological importance: part of its length is a Site of Biological Importance (SBI), as is an area to the east of Handsacre.

17.38 The A513 is the main route through the village and experiences significant levels of traffic.

Staffordshire County Council have identified the village as a locally identified location for

pedestrian safety measures. Much of the settlement is dominated, and partially severed by the presence of the recently upgraded West Coast Main Line, although there is no rail service running from the village with the nearest stations being located in Rugeley to the east.

17.39 The area experiences surface water flooding issues, particularly in the centre of Armitage.

Policy Arm2: Armitage with Handsacre Services & Facilities

Armitage with Handsacre will function as a Key Rural Centre, with a range of services and facilities which serve the local community and its hinterland. 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 and enhance local facilities and amenities will be supported, specifically but not exclusively including: projects which contribute to improved health; play provision; green infrastructure; improved sustainable transport links, and schemes which will result in improvements to traffic and pedestrian safety in the village provided that they are of a physical form, distribution and quality appropriate to current local needs and the local environment.

Initiatives to improve or provide new equipped play will be supported, particularly relating to the areas around Upper Lodge Road and Millmoor Avenue, and including the relocation and subsequent improvement of the Upper Lodge Road play area.

The provision of new amenity green space, particularly to the west of the settlement and to the east around Tuppenhurst Lane will be supported, particularly if it links to a wider network of green infrastructure and provided it is in accord with other policies in the Local Plan.

The provision of an additional football pitch in an appropriate location will be supported, potentially through the formalisation of facilities at Shropshire Brook Road.

Explanation

17.40 The village plays an important role in the rural community, with a range of services and facilities which serve residents and the wider rural hinterland. It is important that this role is protected and enhanced.

17.41 There is a need to maximise the use of existing facilities and services in the village such as the village hall on Shropshire Brook Road, whilst seeking improvements elsewhere such as maintaining and improving bus services or delivering a local rail station in line with local aspirations. (xlv) Because of the linear nature of the settlement, access to services and facilities is not consistent throughout the community and local provision should be improved where needed, such as the quantity and quality of play facilities and activities for teenagers but without putting existing facilities and services at risk.

17.42 There is a recently redeveloped play / multi-use games area (MUGA) at St. Barbaras Road (Handsacre) and another MUGA at Shropshire Brook Road although there is potential to increase the amount of play equipment on this site. Sites in Armitage (Upper Lodge Road and Millmoor Avenue) are of poor quality with Upper Lodge Road scoring particularly poorly. Access to amenity green space is generally good although there is an identified shortfall to the west, and also to the far east around Tuppenhurst Lane.

17.43 In terms of playing pitches, the priority is to upgrade the existing cricket facilities at Rugeley Power Station, but to seek additional provision for football to address a potential shortfall over the plan period possibly by formalising facilities at Shropshire Brook Road.

17.44 There is a wider need to improve the health of the local community(xlviii)and a wider range of initiatives can help to encourage healthier lifestyles such as sport and recreational facilities, walking and cycling and these should be supported.

Policy Arm3: Armitage with Handsacre Economy

The importance of local employment in the settlement will be recognised and initiatives to ensure it links positively and in a way which is relevant to the local community will be supported.

New and existing business, services and facilities will be supported where proposals do not conflict with other policies within the Local Plan. This includes initiatives which improve tourism links and opportunities, particularly relating to the Trent and Mersey Canal.

Explanation

17.45 Armitage with Handsacre plays an important role in the rural community, with a range of shops and facilities, which serve residents and the wider rural hinterland as well as providing a significant local employer, Ideal Standard (formerly Armitage Shanks).

17.46 It is important that Armitage with Handsacre is enabled to continue to function and enhance its role as a Key Rural Settlement without compromising the overall character of the village. There are opportunities to consolidate the village to create a more cohesive 'centre' which should be explored. There are also opportunities for improved links from tourism locally, particularly related to the canal and there is scope for improving links between the canal and the village. There is also scope for strengthening the links between the local community and key employers. These opportunities should be further explored and encouraged where appropriate.

Policy Arm4: Armitage with Handsacre Housing

A range of between 120 - 220 homes will be provided with final numbers and locations to be determined via the Local Plan Allocations document. Small-scale redevelopment within the village will be supported to provide for new housing and a modest and proportionate level of growth, whilst maintaining a self-contained community with clear physical boundaries and which complements and enhances the character of the existing settlement and which does not further elongate its physical form.

Infill development will be prioritised provided that this does not result in a loss of services and facilities which contribute to the function of the settlement as a Key Rural Centre. Some sites beyond the village boundary may need to be included, potentially including a small amount of Green Belt and these will be considered via the Local Plan: Allocations document. The determination of locations for housing will take into account current information gathered by, and in conjunction with the local community.

Housing in Armitage with Handsacre 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.

Explanation

17.47 There is a particular need in Armitage with Handsacre (and the wider Rural North Housing Market Area) for smaller properties, 2 or 3 bedrooms in size which can help to address a local shortfall of starter homes and properties for people to downsize to: there is also a need to ensure that there is sufficient housing stock to be able to address the varied needs of the ageing population.(xlix) This is particularly to help ensure that residents, of any age, are not forced, by lack of choice and opportunity, to leave their community once their needs change. This will enable Armitage with Handsacre and its hinterland to become more self-sustaining and to positively contribute to the health and well-being of all of its residents.

17.48 Due to the need to avoid further elongating the village, it may not be possible to address the level of local need without some limited release of Green Belt, in a way which minimises the impact upon the local environment and which can be fully integrated with the existing community. This will be considered further through the Local Plan: Land Allocations document.

17.49 The determination of locations for housing will take into account current information gathered by, and in conjunction with local communities.

APPENDIX 2 - Identifying non-designated heritage assets

Historic England (English Heritage as was) produce a guide on identifying non-designated heritage assets or local listing and a guide on the wider historic environment, *Knowing Your Place*. These can be found at the following links:

[Local listing](#)

[Knowing Your Place](#)

It is suggested to the group that they use these guides to help identify the non-designated heritage assets that could be protected through the neighbourhood plan.

APPENDIX 3 – Evidence Base

This plan is accompanied by a Planning Policy Assessment and Evidence Base Review. The following is a summary of some of the documents used in the production of this plan:

[Armitage with Handsacre Historic Environment Character Assessment](#)

[Staffordshire Extensive Urban Survey](#)

[Open Space Assessment](#)

[Playing Pitch, Tennis and Bowls Strategy](#)

[Green Belt Review](#)

[Rural Settlement Sustainability Study](#)

[Affordable Housing Assessment 2010](#)

[South Staffordshire District Housing Needs Study and SHMA Update](#)

[Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment](#)

[Five Year Housing Land Supply](#)

[Strategic Flood Risk Assessment](#)

APPENDIX 4 – Glossary

Affordable housing: Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency.

Affordable rented housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).

Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.

Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as “low cost market” housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.

Conservation (for heritage policy): The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

Community Infrastructure Levy: A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area.

Designated heritage asset: A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

Development plan: This includes adopted Local Plans, neighbourhood plans and the London Plan, and is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. (Regional strategies remain part of the development plan until they are abolished by Order using powers taken in the Localism Act. It is the government’s clear policy intention to revoke the regional strategies outside of London, subject to the outcome of the environmental assessments that are currently being undertaken.)

Economic development: Development, including those within the B Use Classes, public and community uses and main town centre uses (but excluding housing development).

Ecological networks: These link sites of biodiversity importance.

European site: This includes candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas, and is defined in regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

Green infrastructure: A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

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

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

Inclusive design: Designing the built environment, including buildings and their surrounding spaces, to ensure that they can be accessed and used by everyone.

International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity: All international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites), national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites.

Local planning authority: The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. All references to local planning authority apply to the district council, London borough council, county council, Broads Authority, National Park Authority and the Greater London Authority, to the extent appropriate to their responsibilities.

Local Plan: The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Current core strategies or other planning policies, which under the regulations would be considered to be development plan documents, form part of the Local Plan. The term includes old policies which have been saved under the 2004 Act.

Neighbourhood plans: A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

Older people: People over retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly, whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing for those looking to downsize from family housing and the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.

Open space: All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

Out of centre: A location which is not in or on the edge of a centre but not necessarily outside the urban area.

Out of town: A location out of centre that is outside the existing urban area.

People with disabilities: People have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and that impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. These persons include, but are not limited to, people with ambulatory difficulties, blindness, learning difficulties, autism and mental health needs.

Planning condition: A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

Planning obligation: A legally enforceable obligation entered into under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.

Playing field: The whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010.

Previously developed land: Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

Primary shopping area: Defined area where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the primary shopping frontage).

Primary and secondary frontages: Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods. Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses

Renewable and low carbon energy: Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

Rural exception sites: Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where

Setting of a heritage asset: The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may

make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

Significance (for heritage policy): The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Special Areas of Conservation: Areas given special protection under the European Union's Habitats Directive, which is transposed into UK law by the Habitats and Conservation of Species Regulations 2010.

Site of Special Scientific Interest: Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Strategic Environmental Assessment: A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Supplementary planning documents: Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design.

Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

Sustainable transport modes: Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra-low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.

Transport assessment: A comprehensive and systematic process that sets out transport issues relating to a proposed development. It identifies what measures will be required to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport and what measures will need to be taken to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the development.

Transport statement: A simplified version of a transport assessment where it is agreed the transport issues arising out of development proposals are limited and a full transport assessment is not required.

Travel plan: A long-term management strategy for an organisation or site that seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives through action and is articulated in a document that is regularly reviewed.

Wildlife corridor: Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.

Windfall sites: Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available.

