

Neighbourhood Plan
Shenstone | Stonnall | Little Aston



Little Aston Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2029 Basic Conditions Statement

February 2015

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Basic Conditions Statement has been produced to explain how the proposed Little Aston Neighbourhood Development Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning General Regulations 2012 and how the basic conditions of neighbourhood planning and other considerations as prescribed by Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 have been considered to have been met.
- 1.2 The Statement addresses each of the four 'basic conditions' required of the Regulations and explains how the submitted Neighbourhood Plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act.
- 1.3 The Regulations state that a Neighbourhood Plan will be considered to have met the basic conditions if:
- having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood development plan;
 - the making of the neighbourhood development plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - the making of the neighbourhood development plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area); and
 - the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

Supporting documents and evidence

- 1.4 The Little Aston Neighbourhood Plan is supported by a Consultation Statement and this Basic Conditions Statement.

Key statements

- 1.5 Shenstone Parish Council is a qualifying body and entitled to submit a Neighbourhood Plan for the wards within its own parish, including Little Aston ward. The Little Aston Neighbourhood Plan expresses policies that relate to the development and use of land only within the neighbourhood area.
- 1.6 The neighbourhood area is contiguous with the ward boundary, as shown in the map accompanying the neighbourhood area designation application.
- 1.7 The Little Aston Neighbourhood Plan covers the period from 2015 to 2029.
- 1.8 No provision for excluded development such as national infrastructure is contained within the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.9 The Little Aston Neighbourhood Plan does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area. It is solely related to the area of Little Aston as designated by Lichfield District Council on 19th February 2013.
- 1.10 There are no other neighbourhood plans in place for the Little Aston neighbourhood area.

2 CONFORMITY WITH NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

2.1 It is required that the Little Aston Neighbourhood Plan (LANP) has appropriate regard to national planning policy. This is principally provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

National Planning Policy Framework

2.2 The NPPF in sections 183-185 refers to Neighbourhood Plans and seeks that those plans have regard to the policies in the NPPF and to be in 'general conformity' with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. This phrasing is explained more clearly by the Localism Act which refers to the 'adopted Development Plan'.

2.3 This section demonstrates that the LANP has regard to relevant policies within the NPPF in relation to:

- Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
- Supporting a prosperous rural economy
- Promoting sustainable transport
- Supporting high quality communications infrastructure
- Requiring good design
- Promoting healthy communities
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

2.4 The LANP has identified five principal challenges which it seeks to address. We summarise them in Table 2.1 below and which NPPF goals each objective seeks to address.

2.5 Table 2.2 then provides a summary of how each policy in the LANP conforms specifically to the NPPF.

Table 2.1: Assessment of challenges that the LANP addresses against NPPF goals

LANP Objective	Relevant NPPF goal
Maintaining Little Aston's identity as a distinct community that its residents enjoy living in	Conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Promoting healthy communities.
Ensuring that development (particularly infill and backland development) maintains the character and density of the surrounding built form.	Requiring good design
Addressing the problems caused by its busy, sometimes urban roads, particularly pedestrian safety and severance.	Promoting sustainable transport

2.6 Two other challenges were identified in the LANP that, through the work on developing the plan, it was not possible to address. These are:

- An ageing population that has particular demands in terms of their accessibility to services.
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.

Table 2.2: Assessment of how each policy in the LANP conforms to the NPPF

No.	Policy title and reference	NPPF ref. (para.)	Commentary
1	Policy GB1: Green Belt boundary	81, 84, 85	Reinforces the aims of green belt policy and recommends a minor amendment to the boundary (to be taken forward by LDC in its Local Plan Review) to exclude land that does not perform the functions and was an anomaly when the boundary was last drawn.
2	Policy SAC1: Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation	118	To ensure protection of the integrity of a Special Area of Conservation
3	Policy HSG1: Residential infill and backland development	53	Seeks to resist the inappropriate development of sites in the built-up area where this would have an unacceptable impact on residential amenity.
4	Policy LAP1: Density of development in Little Aston Park	53	Seeks to resist the inappropriate development of sites within a particular and unique part of the built-up area where this would have an unacceptable impact on residential amenity.
5	Policy LAP2: Design of development in Little Aston Park	57, 58, 60	To ensure that design is of the highest standard in a particular and unique part of the built-up area in order to protect its high quality environment.
6	Policy MOV1: Provision of footpaths and cyclepaths	29, 30	Seeks to improve access to both the built-up area and the countryside and ensure that non-car users have alternative routes to the existing road network
7	Policy MOV2: Provision of new bus stops	29, 30	Seeks to improve access to the bus network which in turn seeks to improve modal choice and patronage
8	Policy MOV3: Provision of pedestrian safety improvements	58	Seeks to ensure that Little Aston is a safe place for pedestrians where they come into contact with vehicular traffic.
9	Policy CMH1: Provision of community hub	70	Seeks to provide the necessary flexibility to permit a community hub to come forward and provide for a range of community activities that promote exercise within the community.
10	Policy BBD1: High speed broadband	43	Seeks to ensure that Little Aston is provided with a high quality communications network in order that its economic base can grow.
11	Policy EE1: Light pollution	125	Seeks to ensure that light pollution does not detract from the quality of the night sky in an area of outstanding natural beauty.

3 CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The NPPF states in paragraph 14 that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF and 'should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.'
- 3.2 The strategic objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan comprise a balance of social, economic and environmental goals.
- 3.3 The **social** goals are to maintain a thriving community within Little Aston, recognising that the community and its needs may change over time. This it seeks to achieve by providing improved non-car movement and recreation within the local and wider community.
- 3.4 The **economic** goals are to retain and improve the existing employment base within Little Aston. This it seeks to achieve by ensuring that communications infrastructure, in the form of broadband, is in place.
- 3.5 The **environmental** goals are to protect the environment and ensure that development recognises this in its design, landscaping and access. This it seeks to achieve through its policies on design and density within Little Aston Park.
- 3.6 Lichfield District Council considered that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was not required because the LANP is not likely to have a significant impact upon the environment.

4 GENERAL CONFORMITY WITH THE STRATEGIC POLICIES OF THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 4.1 The development plan currently consists of the following:
- 2015 Lichfield District Local Plan
 - 1998 Lichfield Local Plan (saved policies) – which remain saved until replaced by policies in the Local Plan: Allocations document
 - 1999 Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Minerals Local Plan (saved policies)
 - 2013 Staffordshire Waste Local Plan.
- 4.2 The policies of relevance are shown in Table 4.1 below, along with a consideration of whether they represent the strategic policies of the development plan. Where they do, consideration is made of whether the LANP is in general conformity with them.
- 4.3 Any policy that is not identified in Table 4.1 is not considered to be relevant to the LANP because the LANP does not have any policies that directly relate to it.
- 4.4 It is confirmed that there are no policies in either the 1999 Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Minerals Local Plan (saved policies) or the 2013 Staffordshire Waste Local Plan that the LANP policies have any relevance to.

Table 4.1: Relevant policies in the 2015 Lichfield District Local Plan

District Local Plan Policy	LANP Policy
Core Policy 5 – Sustainable Transport	Policy MOV1 seeks to promote the provision of better walking and cycling facilities. Policy MOV2 seeks to improve the provision of facilities to support bus movements.
Core Policy 10 – Healthy & safe lifestyles	Policy MOV3 seeks to improve the safety of pedestrians. Policy CMH1 seeks to encourage the provision of a community hub that will widen opportunities for healthy activities. Policy MOV1 seeks to promote the provision of better walking and cycling facilities.
Core Policy 11 – Participation in sport & physical activity	Policy CMH1 seeks to encourage the provision of a community hub that will widen opportunities for healthy activities.
Policy NR7 – Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation	Policy SAC1 reinforces the protection of the SAC.
Policy BE1 – High quality development	Policies LAP2 seeks to provide more context for this within the Little Aston Park area.
Policy SA6 – Little Aston Park (saved policy)	Policy LAP1 duplicates this policy to ensure that it is retained after the Saved Policy is replaced by the Local Plan: Allocations document.

5 DOES NOT BREACH, AND IS COMPATIBLE WITH, EU OBLIGATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS REQUIREMENTS

- 5.1 The Neighbourhood Plan has regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights and complies with the Human Rights Act.
- 5.2 The LANP Group submitted a formal screening request regarding the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) of the draft LANP in September 2015. In October 2015, Lichfield District Council formally stated that neither an SEA nor an HRA was required. The formal opinion is provided as a separate supporting document.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Basic Conditions as set out in Schedule 4B to the TCPA 1990 are considered to be met by the Little Aston Neighbourhood Plan and all the policies therein. It is therefore respectfully suggested to the Examiner that the Little Aston Neighbourhood Plan complies with Paragraph 8(1)(a) of Schedule 4B of the Act.

