

Neighbourhood Plan
Shenstone | Stonnall | Little Aston



Shenstone Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2029 Basic Conditions Statement

September 2015

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Basic Conditions Statement has been produced to explain how the proposed Shenstone 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 Shenstone Neighbourhood Plan is supported by a Consultation Statement, A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) 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 Shenstone ward. The Shenstone 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 Shenstone 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 Shenstone Neighbourhood Plan does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area. It is solely related to the area of Shenstone as designated by Lichfield District Council on 19th February 2013.
- 1.10 There are no other neighbourhood plans in place for the Shenstone neighbourhood area.

2 CONFORMITY WITH NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

2.1 It is required that the Shenstone Neighbourhood Plan (SNP) 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 SNP 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
- Protecting Green Belt land

2.4 The SNP has identified several objectives 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 SNP conforms specifically to the NPPF.

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

SNP Objective	Relevant NPPF goal
Provide for a minimum of 50 to 150 new dwellings over the period 2008 to 2029 in accordance with Lichfield District Council's District Local Plan and ensuring that the overall quantum of development does not put an unacceptable strain on infrastructure capacity.	Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes Protecting Green Belt land
Allocate the most appropriate sites to accommodate the levels of growth proposed.	Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes Protecting Green Belt land
Ensure that new developments include a mix of housing to meet the needs principally of local people, taking into account the current and predicted social demographic of the neighbourhood area.	Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
Ensure that new housing developments are designed to be in keeping with the existing character of Shenstone, particularly in terms of their design and the provision of private amenity space.	Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes Requiring good design

SNP Objective	Relevant NPPF goal
Protect and maintain existing green spaces of value to the community.	Promoting healthy communities Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
Provide new and improved community facilities to address the needs of the local population.	Promoting healthy communities
Enhance the village by improving the appearance and safety of the village centre.	Requiring good design
Protect the existing village facilities of value to the community.	Promoting healthy communities
Minimise and ideally reduce the impact of commercial traffic movements through the village.	Promoting healthy communities
Improve access and parking to Shenstone Railway Station.	Promoting sustainable transport
Improve movement by non-car modes (walking and cycling).	Promoting healthy communities Promoting sustainable transport
Improve the level and quality of public transport services.	Promoting sustainable transport
Improve highway safety, both for vehicular users and pedestrians.	Promoting healthy communities
Ensure that new commercial activity does not create parking problems.	Supporting a prosperous rural economy
Improve the level and quality of signage in the village centre.	Supporting a prosperous rural economy
Protect Shenstone's existing services and facilities and support measures to maintain and improve them.	Supporting a prosperous rural economy
Encourage the delivery of high speed broadband to the neighbourhood area.	Supporting a prosperous rural economy Supporting high quality communications infrastructure

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

No.	Policy title and reference	NPPF ref. (para.)	Commentary
1	Policy GB1: Protection of Green Belt boundaries	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 H1: Dwelling mix	50, 54	Addresses the need for a mix of dwelling sizes – and particularly a greater proportion of smaller dwellings than has been delivered in the past - in order to provide for local needs.
4	Policy H2: Dwellings appropriate for the needs of first-time buyers and people looking to downsize	50, 54	Recognises the significant ageing population in Shenstone and also the problems faced by younger people trying to get on the property ladder. Seeks to provide for their needs through the provision of a proportion of housing to Lifetime Homes standards.
5	Policy H3: 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.
6	Policy H4: Design of residential development	58, 60, 63, 64	Seeks to ensure that housing development is not out of keeping with the design of surrounding housing, without stifling good or innovative design.
7	Policy H5: Provision of private amenity space to serve residential development	58, 73	Recognises the value of amenity green space for residents and how this will help to ensure that development is in keeping with surrounding residential areas.
8	Policy HA1: Land at Birchbrook Industrial Estate, Lynn Lane	21, 22, 28, 50, 51	Allocates the most sustainable potential site for a mix of development that both addresses housing needs and also makes best commercial use of a B-class employment site that has available land which is unviable for industrial employment use.
9	Policy MO1: Pedestrian access to Shenstone Railway Station	29, 30, 34, 35	Seeks to take the opportunity created by the allocation of land at Birchbrook Industrial Estate to improve pedestrian access to a key transport node.
10	Policy MO2: Provision of additional parking to serve Shenstone Railway Station	30, 34	Recognising the opportunity to create more parking which will ensure more people are able to use the railway station because they can access it by car.
11	Policy MO3: Improvements to pedestrian and cycle routes	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

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No.	Policy title and reference	NPPF ref. (para.)	Commentary
12	Policy MO4: Commercial parking	28, 36, 39	Seeks to ensure that new commercial activities do not have a detrimental impact on the existing centre of the village, its shops and services in terms of on-street parking.
13	Policy GSC1: Local green spaces	74, 76, 77	Makes use of the provision for making a designation and applies the site selection criteria.
14	Policy GSC2: Provision of community facilities at Shenstone Playing Fields	70	Seeks to provide for a community hub to come forward and provide for a range of community activities that promote exercise within the community.
15	Policy GSC3: Minimising the environmental impact of development	58	Seeks to ensure that development minimises its impact on the landscape and on biodiversity assets that are part of that landscape.
16	Policy CO1: New commercial development	20, 28	Seeks to provide positively for new commercial development whilst ensuring that it does not have a detrimental impact on the safety and wellbeing of the community.
17	Policy CO2: Land at Birchbrook Industrial Estate	21, 22, 28	Makes best commercial use of a B-class employment site that has available land which is unviable for industrial employment use.
18	Policy CO3: Protection of existing commercial premises or land	21, 22, 28	Seeks to protect commercial land and premises that is valuable in maintaining the vitality of the local economy.
19	Policy CO4: High speed broadband	43	Seeks to ensure that Shenstone is provided with a high quality communications network in order that its economic base can grow.

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 Shenstone, recognising that the community and its needs may change over time. This it seeks to achieve by providing improved non-car movement, improved community infrastructure and a high quality of design in the provision of public and private space.
- 3.4 The **economic** goals are to retain and improve the existing employment base within Shenstone. This it seeks to achieve by ensuring that new employment space is provided in the sectors with potential to grow, and 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, density and biodiversity.
- 3.6 Lichfield District Council considered that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was required because the SNP could have a significant impact upon the environment.
- 3.7 For this reason, a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has been undertaken to satisfy the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. While there is no statutory requirement to do so, it was considered prudent to undertake a full SA which takes into consideration the broader economic and social effects of the plan. This was duly undertaken and is provided as part of the supporting documents to the plan.
- 3.8 In respect of the possible need for a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA), the assessment undertaken by Lichfield District Council concluded that whilst there are potential significant effects upon the Cannock Chase SAC, the inclusion of Policy SAC1 ensures that development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated it will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC. As such no further work as part of the compliance with the Habitat Regulations is be required.

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 SNP 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 SNP because the SNP 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 SNP policies have any relevance to.

Table 4.1: Relevant policies in the 2015 Lichfield District Local Plan (and saved policies from 1998 Local Plan)

District Local Plan Policy	SNP Policy
Core Policy 4 – Delivering our Infrastructure	Policy GSC2 provides for the expansion of community infrastructure sought by the community
Core Policy 5 – Sustainable Transport Policy ST1 – Sustainable travel Policy Shen 3 – Shenstone Economy	Policies MO1 to MO3 seek to promote the provision of better walking (including access) and cycling facilities, linking up with other key transport nodes.
Policy ST2 – Parking provision	Policy MO4 addresses problems of on-street parking created by a specific type of use.
Policy Shen 1 – Shenstone Environment	Policy MO2 provides additional parking to serve identified needs and Policy MO3 promotes improved walking and cycling.
Core Policy 6 – Housing Delivery Policy H1 – A Balanced Housing Market	Policies H1 and H2 seek to provide a mix of housing to address identified needs in the community.
Policy Shen 4 – Shenstone Housing	Policy HA1 identifies the site that will contribute towards delivering the large majority of the required housing in Shenstone.
Policy Shen 1 – Shenstone Environment	Policy H4 addresses good design and recognising the local vernacular.

District Local Plan Policy	SNP Policy
<p>Core Policy 7 – Employment & Economic Development Policy Shen 3 – Shenstone Economy Saved Policy Emp.2 – Existing Industrial Areas</p>	<p>Policies HA1, CO1 and CO2 seek to provide for a more diverse economy, with Policy CO3 providing support for the retention of existing employment land.</p>
<p>Core Policy 10 – Healthy & safe lifestyles Policy Shen 2 – Shenstone Services & Facilities</p>	<p>Policy GSC1 seeks to protect existing green spaces of value and GSC2 encourages the provision of a community hub and other leisure infrastructure that will widen opportunities for healthy activities. Policy MO3 seeks to promote the provision of better walking and cycling facilities.</p>
<p>Core Policy 11 – Participation in sport & physical activity Policy HSC2 – Playing Pitch & Sports Facility Standards Policy Shen 2 – Shenstone Services & Facilities</p>	<p>Policy GSC2 seeks to encourage the provision of a community hub and sports and play infrastructure that will widen opportunities for healthy activities.</p>
<p>Core Policy 13 – Our Natural Resources Policy NR2 – Development in the Green Belt Policy NR3 – Biodiversity, Protected Species & their Habitats Policy NR4 – Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows Policy NR7 – Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation</p>	<p>Policy GB1 reinforces the protection afforded to green belt boundaries Policy GSC3 seeks to protect the biodiversity of the wider rural area. Policy SAC1 reinforces the protection of the SAC.</p>
<p>Core Policy 14 – Our Built & Historic Environment Policy BE1 – High quality development</p>	<p>Policy H4 seeks to provide more context for this within the local built environment.</p>
<p>Policy 1 – Rural Areas</p>	<p>Policy HA1 allocates a site that will contribute towards the requirement for the rural areas to deliver growth.</p>

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 SNP Group submitted a formal screening request regarding the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) of the draft SNP in October 2015. In November 2015, Lichfield District Council formally stated that an SEA was required but that an HRA was not required. The formal Screening Report providing this opinion is submitted 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 Shenstone Neighbourhood Plan and all the policies therein. It is therefore respectfully suggested to the Examiner that the Shenstone Neighbourhood Plan complies with Paragraph 8(1)(a) of Schedule 4B of the Act.

