

Sustainability Appraisal – Lichfield District Council (November 2012)

This summary document has been produced from a review of the Sustainability Appraisal – Lichfield District Council (November 2012) to capture the key points to assist with the development of the Neighbourhood Plan for the Wigginton, Hopwas, and Cumberford villages.

The sustainability appraisal process looks at all plans and programmes, which relate to the use of land and development, to find how these will affect Lichfield District and how they can help us to make development in Lichfield compatible with the aims of sustainable development.

Sustainable development is about meeting the needs of this generation without harming the ability of future generations to meet their needs, and the sustainability appraisal also tries to incorporate the effects of social issues as well as environmental and economic issues.

The Lichfield District Local Plan: Strategy

The Lichfield District Local Plan will plan, monitor and manage future growth and change in Lichfield District up to 2028. It covers a broad range of spatial issues that contribute towards the creation of sustainable communities, including the provision and management of new development, community infrastructure, environmental and heritage protection and measures to help reduce carbon emissions

The Current State of Sustainable Development in Lichfield District

The main issues for sustainable development in Lichfield District and which are relevant to the Local Plan is summarised in the following table. It also predicts how the environment, social and economic conditions might be likely to evolve if the Local Plan Strategy is not implemented.

Issue	Key Findings	Likely Evolution without Local Plan
Landscape	The District is characterised by several areas of high landscape quality, including the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Forest of Mercia and National Forest are landscape-orientated initiatives addressing woodland loss. Around half the District is covered by green belt.	There would be a loss of local distinctiveness, and opportunities to enhance the landscape and townscapes may be lost.
Biodiversity	Lichfield is home to some important species and habitats.	Less new green infrastructure may be delivered, and benefits for biodiversity including networks would be reduced.

Heritage Assets	Lichfield District has a valued built environment, with a significant historic built environment particularly within Lichfield city.	There would be difficulty in protecting locally significant historic assets
Climate Change	At 7.8 tonnes per capita, emissions of carbon dioxide for Lichfield are above the national average of 7.6 tonnes	Development may not be located in the most sustainable locations which would increase emissions from transport. Economies of scale in developments may not be achieved to deliver renewable energy.
Air Quality	Road traffic is the main emission source of pollutants in Lichfield	Housing and economic growth may not be balanced, leading to increased road travel which is likely to reduce air quality further.
Water Quality	There is limited water availability from the surface and groundwater management units, especially from the Bourne/Black Brook and the Lichfield and Shenstone Groundwater Management Unit. Although this should not prevent development, it will require infrastructure upgrades which will require investment and may delay development. Some wastewater treatment works have either physical capacity or quality constraints which will require investment and upgrades before development can proceed. A number of watercourses in the District are of poor or moderate quality, and developments within the catchments of these watercourses may be impacted by abstraction and wastewater treatment limitations	Infrastructure upgrades are likely to still be required to meet the needs of new development and prevent a deterioration in water quality.
Waste	In 2009/10 52% of Lichfield's municipal waste was recycled	Waste generation and recycling are unlikely to be affected. Recycling rates are likely to continue to improve.
Energy	Lichfield District has an estimated 2483 MWh of renewable energy generating capacity installed and a further 32,850 MWh proposed, which would take the percentage of	It is possible that economies of scale in developments will not be reached, therefore renewable energy

	renewable energy to 1.9%.	installations are likely to be fewer.
Flood Risk	Fluvial flood risk is a constraint to development in many areas of the District, most significantly within and around the towns of Burntwood, Alrewas and Fradley. Seven settlements have been identified as being at high risk of surface water flooding, namely Lichfield, Armitage and the Longdons, Burntwood, Elford, Little Aston, Mile Oak and Fazeley and Whittington.	Through the NPPF, developers will still be required to take full account of flood risk and therefore it is likely that flood risks would be avoided or reduced.
Transport	<p>Lichfield District is served by a high concentration of local routes such as the A51 and A515 and has good connections to the national transport network including the M6 Toll, A38(T) and A5(T). Most parts of the network are operating below capacity, although the Highways Agency has concerns regarding heavy traffic levels at junctions on the A38(T) to the south and east of Lichfield and on the A5(T) at Wall and Muckley Corner, and some junctions on the A5127 are operating at or just over capacity.</p> <p>Lichfield has one of the highest levels of car drivers, at 75%. Rail usage has grown significantly in recent years.</p> <p>Phase 1 of the Government's proposed High Speed Rail network passes through Lichfield District.</p> <p>Lichfield City, Burntwood and key rural villages such as Fazeley and Armitage are most accessible in terms of access to key services using existing transport infrastructure. The more rural locations within the district are least accessible.</p>	<p>Without the Local Plan, it is possible that development is not located in the most sustainable locations, and that the amount of housing and employment development are not balanced leading to increased commuting in and/or out of the District. Further, it is likely that opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport improvement will be fewer.</p> <p>This is likely to have an adverse impact on the demand for road space in the District, and particularly increasing congestion on the key network including the A38 and A5. Any necessary highway improvements may not be carried out if development is piecemeal.</p>
Employment & Skills	Three quarters of the working age population are economically active. Census data suggest that almost 50% of employees living in Lichfield commute out of the District to work. Key sectors in terms of number of jobs are: public admin, education and health; distribution, hotels and	It is possible that insufficient employment land will be delivered, which will fail to create enough jobs for Lichfield residents. It is also possible that the type of employment created does

	<p>restaurants; and finance, IT and other business activities.</p> <p>Qualifications are slightly lower than for Great Britain as a whole, with 31% educated to NVQ4 level and above compared to 33% for GB, while 5% of the population have no qualifications at all.</p>	<p>not match the skills of the resident workforce. Development may be piecemeal which could create difficulties in providing new education facilities.</p>
Housing	<p>The Southern Staffordshire Districts Housing needs Study and SHMA update identifies an annual need of between 377 and 702 affordable homes over a 5-year period, compared to the overall local annual housing target of 435 dwellings per year.</p> <p>Less than a fifth of all renting households in Lichfield can afford market housing.</p>	<p>Economies of scale may not be reached in housing developments, which could reduce the amount of affordable housing provided. An insufficient mix of housing could be delivered that does not meet the housing needs of all residents.</p>
Sport & Recreation	<p>Only 53% of children spend at least three hours of high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum per week, lower than the national average. Adult activity levels are significantly lower, with only 12% of men and women achieving recommended levels of physical activity.</p> <p>Lichfield district has 5 sports hall sites. A majority of people are satisfied with the parks and open spaces within the District although a significant proportion of Burntwood residents felt there are not enough facilities for children and young people within the town.</p>	<p>Enhancements to sports provision may not be delivered to the same degree as would be promoted by the Local Plan. Open spaces may be lost, adversely affecting opportunities for recreation. Less new green infrastructure would be delivered, reducing opportunities to walk and cycle. Community facilities could fail to be delivered to meet residents' needs.</p>
Crime & Safety	<p>Recorded crime in Lichfield District has shown some considerable reductions over recent years, with a 26% reduction over the five years to 2009/10. The most common crimes were violence against the person (24%) and criminal damage including arson (20%).</p> <p>In 2003, there were 53 road accident casualties, of which 3 were children. 47 of the casualties were killed or</p>	<p>Without the Local Plan, there may be less emphasis in developments on 'designing out crime', which may fail to deliver opportunities to reduce crime still further. Additional congestion on the roads would lead to an increase in the number of road casualties.</p>

	seriously injured (ONS data)	
Health	According to the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2011 statistics, the majority of Lichfield District was ranked better than average in England for health deprivation and disability. Although some areas were below average, none were in the worst 20% of the country.	If development is piecemeal and economies of scale are not reached, it is likely that improvements to community services and facilities, including healthcare facilities will not be provided. This may negatively affect health outcomes for residents.
Participation	Lichfield District has a population of 97,900 (2008 mid-year projection). At July 2012, there were 8008 individuals on the Development Plans database, and in excess of 18,000 representations to the 'Shaping Our District' consultation in 2010/11.	Without the Local Plan, the community would not be able to participate in shaping the future development of the District.

Existing Characteristics and Problems Relevant to the Local Plan: Strategy

These are summarised below:

- Lichfield District is an area of high demand for housing, with above average house prices and a strong need for housing which is affordable and meets the needs of all sections of the population.
- Younger age groups tend to move out of the District to other areas in search of affordable housing and jobs. Conversely, the District attracts in-migrants, particularly from Birmingham, who tend to be retired or retiring.
- Burntwood suffers from an inadequate town centre and associated facilities and services for its size, which do not meet local needs.
- The availability of jobs, the history of in-migration and the regional pattern of town centres all contribute to a high level of travel by residents. Journey to work movements are largely made by car.
- The District has a high level of carbon emissions, and some areas of poor air quality.
- Lichfield city has seen some major housing estates developed post-war which now need regeneration.
- A large part of the District is covered by green belt.

- There is a need to stem the gradual loss of biodiversity that has seen a decline in the extent of lowland heathland and loss of local biodiversity sites.
- Lichfield District has a job balance ratio considerably below the former West Midlands region average. This indicates high levels of out-commuting.
- Although the District is relatively prosperous overall, there are pockets of deprivation in both urban and rural areas.
- Rural areas have a particular problem of public transport accessibility.
- There are shortfalls in places in relation to sports facilities and provision of open spaces.
- Road safety is a key priority.

The objectives established through this process are as follows:

- A. To maintain and enhance landscape and townscape quality
- B. To promote biodiversity and geodiversity through protection,
- C. To protect and enhance buildings, features and areas of archaeological, cultural and historic value and their settings
- D. To mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change
- E. To encourage prudent use of natural resources.
- F. To reduce flood risk
- G. To improve availability of sustainable transport options to jobs and services.
- H. To encourage sustainable distribution and communication systems
- I. To create mixed and balanced communities.
- J. To promote safe communities, reduce crime and fear of crime
- K. To improve the health of the population
- L. To enable improved community participation