



Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan Examination

Action Point 25 – Council to consider the role of compensatory improvements / measures and how they would be achieved for smaller sites. Council to consider whether any additional specificity is required in the policy and if there are any schemes that need to be referenced.

1. Following the Matter 6 discussion at the Local Plan Examination Hearing Sessions, the Inspector has asked the Council to consider the approach of the Local Plan to compensatory improvements for sites released from the Green Belt.
2. This note should be read alongside Action Point 32 and the approach to policy SA1 'General Requirements' which also refers to Green Belt Compensatory improvements. As such the modifications proposed, in Appendix 1, to policy PSD5: Green Belt takes account of and is reflective of the changes proposed through Action Point 32.
3. The Council has considered whether any further specificity is required to the Policy and determined that the policy would benefit from examples being provided in the supporting text to schemes where compensatory improvements could be secured through developer contributions. This includes references to schemes included in the Local Transport Plan, the Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan and Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan, where infrastructure is included in the Green Belt. Other relevant references include the Council's Carbon Capture Areas (tree planting).
4. Following consultation with Staffordshire County Council, the Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (2021) provides in Figure 9.4 of that document (page 55 (page 56 of PDF)) the maintenance of the existing cycle network alongside proposed new cycle corridors¹. Appendix 2 of this note includes an extract of the cycle network in the Green Belt. There are routes, as examples, between Bignall

¹ <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Transport/Transport-Planning/Documents/LCWIP-Final-Report-October-2021.pdf>

End and Halmer End, and at Talke and along the A525 that could potentially be improved through compensatory improvements.

5. On a similar basis, Appendix 3 of this note highlights the extent of the Public Rights of Way in the Borough, including areas of land in the Green Belt. The Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan² aims to enhance the public access and enjoyment of the footpaths, bridleway and other rights of way. Improvements to such routes could potentially be improved through compensatory improvements guided by the Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
6. The Council's Carbon Capture areas are defined in the glossary to the Local Plan as areas identified on the Policies Map where tree planting and other measures can help absorb carbon dioxide. Reference is also made to the Carbon Capture Areas and Urban Tree Planting Strategy in policy CRE: Climate Change, Criterion 10.

² <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Transport/Transport-Planning/Local-transport-plan/Documents/AppendixQROWIP.pdf>

Appendix 1: Modifications Proposed for PSD5: Green Belt

Policy PSD5: Green Belt

1. The Green Belt boundary is defined on the Policies Map.
2. The Plan will alter the Green Belt boundary only to:
 - a. Support the allocation of the following Green Belt sites in the Local Plan
 - a. AB2 Land at Junction 16 of the M6;
 - b. AB12 Land east of Diglake Street;
 - c. AB15 Land north of Vernon Avenue;
 - d. AB33 Land off Nantwich Road / Park Lane;
 - e. CT1 Land off Red Street and High Carr Farm;
 - f. KL15 Land south of A525 Keele;
 - g. NC13 Land west of Bullockhouse Road;
 - h. SP11 Lyme Park, Silverdale;
 - i. SP23 Land at Cemetery Road / Park Road;
 - j. BL18 Land at Clough Hall;
 - k. TK10 Land at Crown Bank, Talke;
 - l. TK17 Land off St Martins Road;
 - m. TK27 Land off Coppice Road;
 - n. TB19 Land South of Newcastle Golf Club.
 - b. Establish an inset boundary at Keele

c. to allocate land for the extension of Madeley High School

3. Within the Green Belt, planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development, **except except** in very special circumstances, in accordance with the approach set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.
4. New buildings within the Green Belt will be considered inappropriate unless they meet an exception listed in the National Planning Policy Framework.
5. Other forms of development may be considered appropriate in the Green Belt if they preserve its openness and align with the purposes of the Green Belt, as outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework.
6. Development proposals for sites removed from the Green Belt should include compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt Land to offset the impact of the removal of land from the Green Belt. These improvements should demonstrably enhance environmental quality, biodiversity and accessibility. **Details of such improvements will be considered during the development management process and assessed on an individual application basis.**
- 7. Development proposals for sites removed from the Green Belt should establish a recognisable and permanent new boundary to the Green Belt.**

Supporting Information

5.31 This policy establishes the framework for managing the Green Belt within Newcastle-under-Lyme. It aims to protect the Borough's essential open spaces, prioritise the use of brownfield land, and guide potential future development in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

5.32 The Green Belt in Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough consists of the North Staffordshire Green Belt, which covers the northern half of the Borough and is contiguous with the Green Belt in Cheshire East to the north and Stafford to the south. This was originally defined in 1967. The North Staffordshire Green Belt forms a vital part of Newcastle-under-Lyme's landscape, protecting the character of the Borough and maintaining a distinct separation between the urban areas of the Borough to the East from the more rural environments to the West and South.

5.33 Compensatory improvements to the Green Belt will be secured through planning conditions or planning obligations such as Section 106 agreements.

Site allocations that involve removing land from the Green Belt will provide compensatory improvements to the remaining Green Belt. The scope of compensatory improvements will also be informed through early engagement with relevant landowners, key stakeholders and the local community. Compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land may include:

- **New or enhanced green infrastructure.**
- **Woodland planting, examples include support for the Council's Carbon Capture Areas and Urban Tree Planting Strategy.**
- **Landscape and visual enhancements (beyond those needed to mitigate the immediate impacts of the proposal);**
- **Improvements to biodiversity, habitat connectivity and natural capital including schemes that can also enhance natural flood resilience by managing surface water run-off and improving drainage.**
- **New or enhanced walking and cycle routes including contributions to schemes, such as the Staffordshire County Council Local Transport Plan, Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan and the Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan (all as updated); and**
- **Improved access to new, enhanced or existing recreational and playing field provision for sites in the Green Belt identified in the Local Plan or Playing Pitch Strategy.**

5.34 A detailed assessment of the potential inset boundary, as presented in the Green Belt Village Study (2019), concluded that the unique circumstances of Keele, including the presence of the university and the need for future growth and expansion, justify the creation of a new settlement boundary. This approach ensures a clear and defined boundary for development while protecting the wider Green Belt.

Related Documents

- ED008 Green Belt Study (Ove Arup, 2019, 2017, 2020, 2023, 2024)
- ED009 Green Belt Village Study (Ove Arup, 2024)
- **Staffordshire County Council, Local Transport Plan**
- **Staffordshire County Council, Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan**
- **Staffordshire County Council, Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan**

Appendix 2 – Cycling Infrastructure

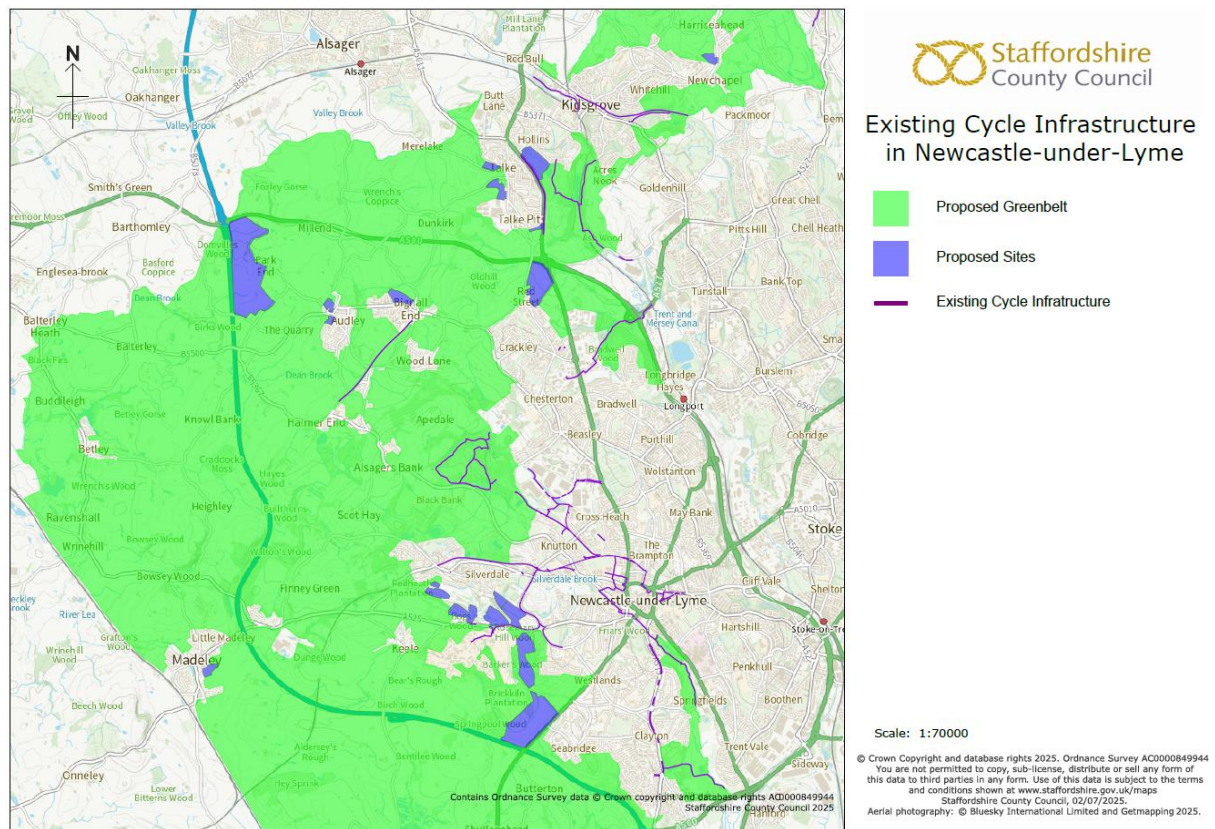


Figure 1: Example of Cycling Infrastructure in the Green Belt

Appendix 3: Public Rights of Way Network

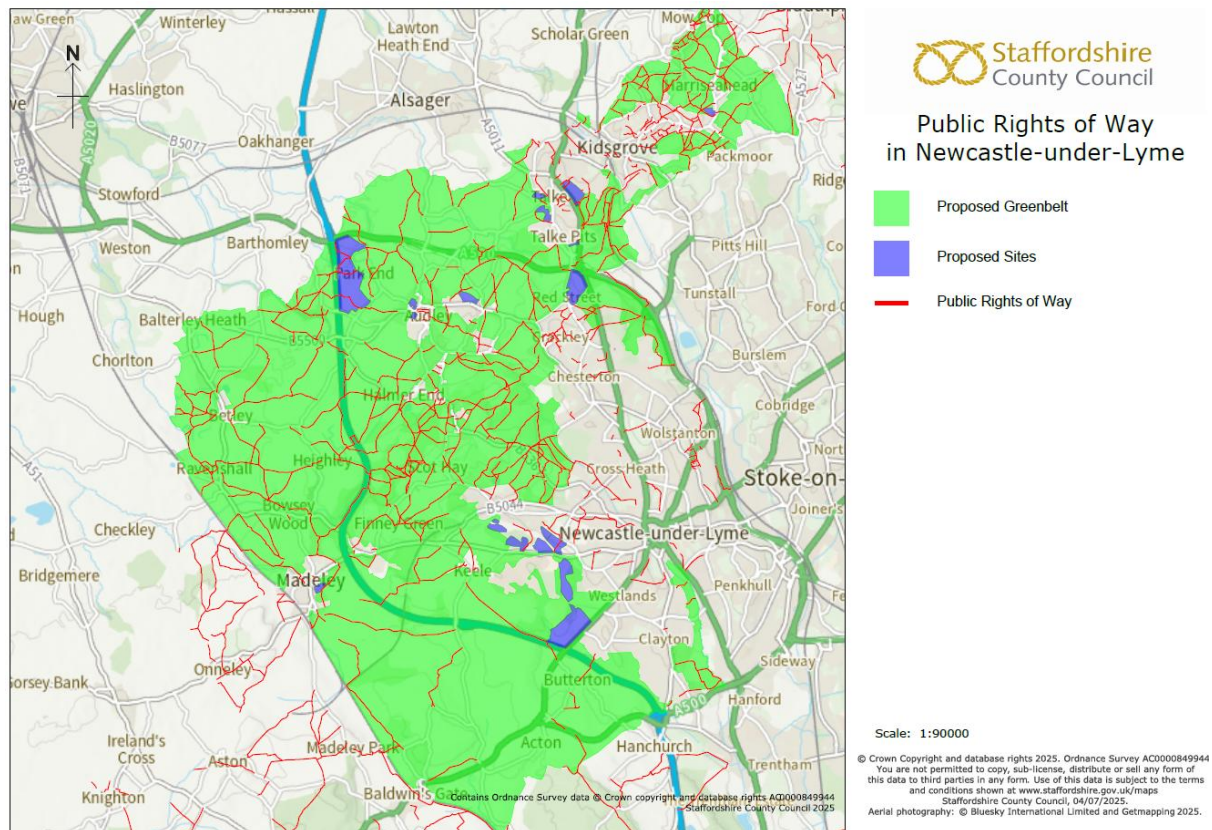


Figure 2: Public Rights of Way Network