Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore Neighbourhood Development Plan

Protecting rural character while allowing for appropriate development

Draft 1.1 – September 2018
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Acknowledgements

The Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore Neighbourhood Development Plan has been prepared by a Steering Group appointed by the 3 Parish Councils, led by Whitmore Parish Council, and comprising representatives of the Councils and residents of the 3 parishes. The Steering Group members have given freely of their time as volunteers. In any project that depends on volunteers, from time to time some will find that changing circumstances prevent their continuing participation. The Parish Councils gratefully acknowledge the work of all who have given of their time to the Neighbourhood Plan.

The communities of the 3 parishes have supported the Plan through their engagement with the process – attending events and consultations, responding to the Residents’ Survey, helping with practical matters such as leaflet distribution, setting out and putting away chairs at events and generally taking an ongoing interest in the progress of the Plan. Community members with specific areas of expertise have generously provided advice and assistance to the Steering Group.

Hannah Barter of Urban Vision Enterprise CIC was the project’s professional planning consultant. Hannah has guided the Steering Group and the Parish Councils through the practical and statutory details of the Neighbourhood Planning process and with her colleague Dave Chetwyn, also of Urban Vision Enterprise CIC, has assisted with writing the policies of the Plan.

The making of the Plan has been made possible by grant funding from Locality. Indispensable support has also been received in the form of technical assistance packages provided by planning consultants AECOM and funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Our Borough Council and County Council ward members and staff of Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, Staffordshire County Council, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, the Staffordshire Ecological Record and Natural England North Mercia Area have assisted on a variety of matters, providing both advice and information, and for all their contributions we are grateful.
## Abbreviations

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<tr>
<td>ACRE</td>
<td>Action with Communities in Rural England</td>
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<td>Chorlton parish</td>
<td>Chapel and Hill Chorlton parish</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSS</td>
<td>Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy 2006–2026</td>
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<td>DCLG</td>
<td>Department for Communities and Local Government</td>
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<td>Defra</td>
<td>Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCA</td>
<td>Heritage and Character Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>HER</td>
<td>Historic Environment Record</td>
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<td>HNA</td>
<td>Housing Needs Assessment</td>
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<td>HS2</td>
<td>High Speed 2</td>
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<td>HTP</td>
<td>Housing Technical Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>JLP</td>
<td>Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme Joint Local Plan</td>
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<td>LPA</td>
<td>local planning authority</td>
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<td>LTTI</td>
<td>limiting long-term illness</td>
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<td>LWS</td>
<td>Local Wildlife Site</td>
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<td>Maer parish</td>
<td>Maer and Aston parish</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>Neighbourhood Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCA</td>
<td>National Character Area</td>
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<td>NPPF</td>
<td>National Planning Policy Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>NuL</td>
<td>Newcastle-under-Lyme</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAN</td>
<td>objective assessment of need</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRoW</td>
<td>Public Right of Way</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCC</td>
<td>Staffordshire County Council</td>
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<td>SoT</td>
<td>Stoke-on-Trent</td>
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### List of abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>SPG</td>
<td>Special Planning Guidance</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSSI</td>
<td>Site of Special Scientific Interest</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUDS</td>
<td>Sustainable Urban Drainage System</td>
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<tr>
<td>TCA</td>
<td>Townscape Character Appraisal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCML</td>
<td>West Coast Mainline</td>
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Maps
Map 1  Neighbourhood Area of Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore
Map 2 Transport network in the NA

Note: West Coast Mainline: black; planned High Speed 2: red.
Map 3  Public Rights of Way, Bridleways and Byways Open to All Traffic in the NA
Map 4  Extent of the Green Belt in the NA
Map 5a  Community facilities in the wider NA
Map 5b  Community facilities in Baldwins Gate
Map 6  Superfast broadband rollout in the NA

Source: www.superfaststaffordshire.co.uk
Map 7a  2G/3G mobile coverage in the NA at 19 September 2017

Source: https://opensignal.com
Map 7b  4G mobile coverage in the NA at 19 September 2017

Source: https://opensignal.com
Map 8  Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore Parishes: landscape character types

Map 9  Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore Parishes: landscape policy objectives

Map 10  Functional Ecological Unit of lowland raised bog at Chorlton Moss (for methodology see facing page)

Source: Reproduced courtesy of Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and Staffordshire Ecological Record
Having explored the application of the ‘Lawton principles’ to the Meres and Mosses landscape, and drawn some conclusions regarding a way forward, it was decided that this should be mapped to allow visualisation of the implications and help in the prioritisation of future work. The following sets out the methodology employed.

Two key elements were mapped – suggested ‘Functional Ecological Units’ and then their catchments. The mapping of both elements is primarily based on topography, with use being made of lidar data. Lidar is a remote sensing technique whereby an airborne survey using lasers generates detailed topographic data (known as a Digital Terrain Model (DTM)). With approximately 70% coverage of the Meres & Mosses landscape, this is a valuable tool.

Mapping of the Functional Ecological Units (FEUs) started with the identification of extant sites:

1) All designated sites, SSSIs and County Wildlife Sites, that are either a mere or a moss were included. [Note: no Wildlife Site data has been sourced for Wales to date.]

2) Beyond the designated sites, use was made of a detailed peat soils map for the area. From this dataset a distinction was made between likely moss peats and extensive areas of likely fen peat associated with some of the river valleys - the latter were ignored for this mapping exercise. The moss peat sites were then reviewed using aerial photography and divided into two categories: destroyed and de-graded. The former are sites under arable, intensive grassland or other land use, where any relict habitat, and potentially even the peat itself, have been lost – these were excluded. The de-graded sites are those supporting some form of relict habitat (e.g. extensive grassland, rush pasture or woodland) offering potential for restoration – these were taken forward as FEUs. [Note: no detailed peat soils data is available for Wales.]

3) Finally the 1:10,000 scale OS base map was scanned for names alluding to meres and mosses. All waterbodies specifically called “Mere” were included in the mapping, but sites with names suggestive of meres (e.g. Black Lake) were ignored. A few sites were identified called “Moss” – however, because these were not shown on the peat soils map, these were excluded.

For each potential FEU (a total of 344 have been identified within the landscape) the lidar data was manipulated to show land within a nominal 3 metres elevation of the lowest point on the site. The FEU was then defined as the obvious basin around the lowest point – i.e. the land where it should be possible to restore hydrological function and therefore a wetland habitat mosaic (generally a nominal 1.0 - 1.5 metres above the lowest point on the site). Where no lidar data was available, the likely boundary of the FEU was estimated from the peat soils data and aerial photography.

Subsequently, for each FEU, the lidar was re-analysed at a broader scale to identify the catchment feeding the core wetland area. Where no lidar data was available, basic contour data was used to estimate the extent of catchments. In the majority of cases these are discrete catchments, although it should be noted that where there is a direct hydrological link between FEUs, there is a resultant ‘nesting’ of catchments.

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1 61 Shropshire, Staffordshire & Cheshire Plain (England) + 14 Maelor (Wales)


3 While complementing the Meres and Mosses, these areas are not internationally important, support a different range of wetland habitats (and species) and require a potentially different landscape-scale conservation approach.
Map 11  Functional Ecological Units of Meres and Mosses sites in the NA and their water catchments: Chorlton Moss LWS, Maer Pool SSSI and New Pool and Oak Wood LWS (for methodology see preceding page)

Source: Reproduced courtesy of Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and Staffordshire Ecological Record. For enlargement see http://bit.ly/2D7RhDw
Map 12  Soilscape map of the NA
Source: Cranfield Soil and Agrifood Institute, Soilscape map, www.landis.org.uk/soilscape
Map 13  Principal aquifer underlying the NA
Map 14  Groundwater vulnerability zones in the NA
Map 15  Groundwater source protection zones

Map 16 Environment Agency flood zone map
Source: https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk
Map 17a  Designated ecological sites in the NA (western map) (for key see overleaf)

Map 17b  Designated ecological sites in the NA (eastern map) (for key see overleaf)

**Source:** Map prepared by Staffordshire Ecological Record for Whitmore Parish Council. For enlargement see http://bit.ly/2Fp0Xyp
A legend to the map showing Nature Conservation Sites and Species

Introduction
These colours are used on the site alert mapping within the SWT GIS, but SER cannot guarantee the same colours are used in any other mapping system, particularly those based on ArcView.

Statutory Designations from Natural England's web-site
- National Nature Reserves ★ NNR (boundary not available owing to OS restrictions)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest ★ SSSI (boundary not available owing to OS restrictions)
- Local Nature Reserves ★ LNR (boundary not available owing to OS restrictions)

Non-statutory Designations from the Staffordshire Grading System (1995 onwards)
- Site of Biological Importance (ex Grade 1 SBI) equivalent to "Local Wildlife Site"
- Biodiversity Alert Site (ex Grade 2 SBI)
- Proposed/potential Site of Biological Importance

Geological Sites
- Regionally Important Geological/geomorphological Site (= Local Geological Site)

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust Sites
- SWT Nature Reserves
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

Species Information
- Mammals excluding those listed below
  - Otter (Lutra lutra)
  - Badger (Meles meles) - not normally supplied
  - Water Vole (Arvicola terrestris)
- All bat species
- All bird species
- Any other protected species (precise to 100m)
- All Protected Species Records (precise to 1km)

Ancient Woodland Inventory
- Ancient & Semi-natural Woodland
- Ancient Replanted Woodland

- Amphibians and reptiles excluding those below
  - Great Crested Newt (Triturus cristatus)
  - Native Crayfish (Astropotamobius pallipes)
  - Flowering plants except those below
  - Bluebell (Hyacinthoides non-scripta)
  - Butterflies and Moths

BAP Species Records (precise to 100m)
BAP Species Records (precise to 1km)

Notes:
The Local Nature Reserve and other nature reserve boundaries can overlay the current grading when both layers are actively visible.

Where there are multiple species records for the same grid reference the dot for one species may obscure the dots for other species - all species records will be displayed in the accompanying spreadsheet.

Not all the above categories may be present on the accompanying map.

Version 2.0 July 2011
Map 18 Habitats of Principal Importance in the NA

Map 19a  Heritage assets in Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish

Map 19b  Heritage assets in Maer and Aston parish

Source: Map prepared by Staffordshire County Council for Whitmore Parish Council. For enlargement see http://bit.ly/2sHZK0a
Map 19c  Heritage assets in Whitmore parish
Map 20a  Historic farmsteads recorded in Chapel and Hill Chorlton parish

Map 20b  Historic farmsteads recorded in Maer and Aston parish

Map 20c Historic farmsteads recorded in Whitmore parish

Map 21  Cheshire railings in the NA
**Map 22a**  Historic landscape character, Chapel and Hill Chorlton parish (for enlargement see [http://bit.ly/2BKVb8s](http://bit.ly/2BKVb8s))

Map 22b  Historic landscape character, Maer and Aston parish (for enlargement see http://bit.ly/2ELbJMf)

Source: Map prepared by Staffordshire County Council for Whitmore Parish Council.

Map 23  Boundary of Madeley Great Park as identified by documentary and physical evidence

Map 24  Section from original preliminary surveyor’s drawing British Library Ordnance Survey Drawings: No. 329, Betley, 1831
Map 25  Habitat distinctiveness map for the NA (see facing page for methodology)

Habitat value mapping – Draft SWT methods

Values
Compatible with Biodiversity Offsetting habitat distinctiveness bands – # get definitions for these. Needs to also relate to statutory designations and policy, EcIA definitions and NPPF/ PPG terms.

VERY HIGH
Not included in Biodiversity Offsetting
International, national, regional value – SAC, SPA, NNR, SSSI
Irreplaceable habitats e.g. ancient woodland, veteran trees, limestone grassland, meres, mosses, bogs, inland saltmarsh
International, national, regional value species populations
Action – Avoid loss, Enhance, Link, Create new habitat adjacent

HIGH
County and District value.
LWS, candidate LWS
Habitats known to support County and District value species populations
E.g. all rivers and good quality streams
Action – Avoid loss, mitigate loss, last resort compensate loss, Enhance, Link, Create

MEDIUM
Local value.
Habitats of Principal Importance and Staffs BAP habitats that don’t meet LSW criteria, semi-natural habitats that act as corridors and stepping stones, arable in HLS/ organic.
Local value species populations.
E.g. hedges, ponds, copses and low quality woodland, rough grassland, ruderal vegetation, degraded watercourses/ ditches. Habitats known to support priority species. Buildings with protected species presence, that aren’t High value
Action – Mitigate and Compensate loss, Enhance, Link, Create

LOW
Site value.
Intensive arable, improved and amenity grassland, manicured landscaping, isolated poor semi-natural habitat, gardens
Action – Compensate large losses, Enhance, Link, Create

NEGLIGIBLE/ NO VALUE
Buildings (unless support protected/ priority species), hard standing, roads, regularly disturbed bare ground
Create new habitat where connectivity exists or functional size is achievable

Purpose
Suggested uses:
1. A tool to identify areas of high biodiversity value (priority habitat) which can be highlighted/ designated in the Neighbourhood Plan. This would pick up LWSs, SSSIs and potential LWS.
2. Flagging areas that may contain medium value (semi-natural) habitat. These areas have been highlighted in their policies as requiring a comprehensive biodiversity evaluation if they are put forward for planning purposes. Biodiversity offsetting/ compensation may be required in these areas if they are developed.
3. A tool to identify possible wildlife corridors which can be highlighted/designated in the Neighbourhood Plan. These areas may be targeted for restoration projects/ funding/ aspirational opportunity areas – possibly funded through development compensation (offsetting money)

Method
The habitat distinctiveness map is created from BAP inventories, Land cover data, designated sites data, agricultural land grading, aerial photography plus any information we can pull out of past planning applications. We also speak to the local community and local WT volunteers to get their input.
Map 26  Phase 1 habitat survey of land in the environs of Baldwins Gate (see facing page for key to symbols)
A Key to Colours and Patterns used on SER & SWT Habitat Maps

Introduction:
These colours are broadly based on the "Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey" published by Nature Conservancy Council, 1990, now distributed by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. Categories marked '*' are not the same as in the Handbook.

Woodland and scrub categories

- A1*: Undefined woodland
- A12*: Coniferous woodland
- A2*: Scrub
- A3*: Scattered trees : over other habitats:
  - A3
  - A31
  - A32
- A11*: Semi-nat. broad-leaved woodland
- A122*: Conifer plantation
- A21*: Dense/continuous scrub
- A13*: Broad-leaved plantation
- A13*: Mixed woodland
- A22*: Scattered scrub
- A22*: Orchards

Grassland and marsh categories

- B*: Undefined grassland
- B31*: Unimp. calc. grassland
- B32*: Semi-imp calc. grassland
- B6*: Poor semi-improved gld
- B11*: Unimproved Acid gld
- B12*: Semi-improved acid gld
- B4*: Improved grassland
- B1*: Unimproved Neutral grassland
- B22*: Semi-improved neutral grassland
- B5*: Marsh/marshy grassland
- B4a*: Improved grassland or arable

Tall herb and fern categories

- C11*: Continuous bracken
- C31*: Tall ruderal herbs
- J13*: Ephemeral/short perennial herbs
- C12*: Scattered bracken
- C32*: Non-ruderal tall herbs
- J14*: Introduced shrubs
- C3*: Undefined tall herbs
- J11*: Arable land

Heathland categories

- D*: Undefined heathland
- D3*: Lichen/bryophyte heath
- D1*: Dry dwarf shrub heath
- D5*: Dry heath/acid grassland mosaic
- D2*: Wet dwarf shrub heath
- D6*: Wet heath/acid grassland mosaic

Wetland categories; mire, swamp and open water

- E1*: Sphagnum bog
- E2*: Flush and spring
- E4*: Bare peat
- F1*: Swamp
- F21*: Marginal vegetation
- G*: Open water, both standing (G1) and running (G2)

Rock exposures and waste categories

- I11*: Inland cliff (acid/neutral)
- I112*: Inland cliff (basic)
- I14*: Natural rock exposure
- I2*: Artificial exposures
- I12*: Scree (acid/neutral)
- I122*: Scree (basic)
- I141*: Acid rock exposure
- I142*: Basic rock exposure
- I21*: Quarry [ I22: Spoil 'S'; I23: Mine 'M'; I24: Refuse-tip 'R']

Miscellaneous other categories

- J21*: Intact hedge (sp-rich)
- J212*: Intact hedge (sp-poor)
- J24: Fence
- J3*: Built-up land
- J34*: Caravan site
- J25: Wall
- J28: Earth bank
- J32: Industrial
- J4*: Bare ground
- J36*: Buildings
- J36: Buildings
- UR0: Houses and gardens (BHT)

Version 5.0 March 2017
Map 27a  HS2 Phase 2a construction phase: impact on Whitmore parish

Source: High Speed Rail (West Midlands–Crewe) Environmental Statement, Volume 2: Map book, CA4: Whitmore Heath to Madeley
Map 27b  
HS2 Phase 2a construction phase: impact on Whitmore parish

Source: High Speed Rail (West Midlands–Crewe) Environmental Statement, Volume 2: Map book, CA4: Whitmore Heath to Madeley
Map 28a  HS2 Phase 2a proposed scheme: permanent impact in Whitmore parish

Source: High Speed Rail (West Midlands–Crewe) Environmental Statement, Volume 2: Map book, CA4: Whitmore Heath to Madeley
Map 28b  HS2 Phase 2a proposed scheme: permanent impact in Whitmore parish

Source: High Speed Rail (West Midlands–Crewe) Environmental Statement, Volume 2: Map book, CA4: Whitmore Heath to Madeley
Map 29  Impact of HS2 Phase 2a on ancient woodland in Whitmore parish


**Map 30**  Impact of HS2 Phase 2a on ancient woodland in Whitmore parish: proposed mitigation measures

CONSULTATION ON A PREFERRED SITE OPTION
February 2018

Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Local Plan 2013 – 2033

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council are consulting on the Joint Local Plan Preferred Options and this site is identified as a Preferred Site for Housing development

Location: Land at Baldwin’s Gate Farm, Baldwin’s Gate

To find out more information or to make a comment please go to www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/jointlocalplan

Any comments need to be submitted by 5pm on 1 March 2018.

The consultation documents are also available to view at the local Library; the Guildhall, Newcastle ST5 1PW; Kidsgrove Customer Service Centre, (Town Hall) ST7 4EL; and at The Madeley Centre, CW3 9DN. If you don’t have access to the internet hard copy feedback forms can be made available.

We are also holding a number of drop-in events to which you are welcome to attend. Your nearest one is:

Whitmore Village Hall, Coneygreave Lane, Whitmore, Newcastle-under-Lyme on Thursday 22 February 2018 between 3pm and 7pm

Please check website for latest details
CONSULTATION ON A PREFERRED SITE OPTION
February 2018

Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Local Plan 2013 – 2033

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council are consulting on the Joint Local Plan Preferred Options and this site is identified as a Preferred Site for Housing development.

Location: Land adjacent The Sheet Anchor, Newcastle Road, Whitmore, ST5 5BU

To find out more information or to make a comment please go to www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/jointlocalplan

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Whitmore Village Hall, Coneygreave Lane, Whitmore, Newcastle-under-Lyme on Thursday 22 February 2018 between 3pm and 7pm

Please check website for latest details
Map 33  Proposed village envelope for Baldwins Gate
Introduction

Content of this introduction:

1 Sustainable development
2 Legal requirements
3 The Neighbourhood Area
4 Purpose of the Neighbourhood Development Plan
5 Scope
6 The Neighbourhood Plan process
7 The Local Plan
8 Vision and aims of the Neighbourhood Plan
9 Structure of this Neighbourhood Plan

1 Sustainable development

The Neighbourhood Development Plan for the parishes of Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore will set the direction of sustainable development for the three parishes until 2033 and has been brought forward under the Localism Act 2011, which aims to give local people more say in the future use of land in their parishes or neighbourhoods.

The meaning and implications of sustainable development are defined in the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 (NPPF). Paragraph 8 of the NPPF states that

Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways,

and defines those three objectives as economic, social and environmental.

Paragraph 9 of the NPPF states that

Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.

‘So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way’, a ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ is therefore ‘at the heart’ of the NPPF (para. 10).

The NPPF makes clear the role of neighbourhood plans in delivering sustainable development:
The application of the presumption has implications for the way communities engage in neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies.

Para. 13

At the same time, the NPPF (para. 29) is clear that ‘Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies.’ Nonetheless,

Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan.

Para. 29

1.1  Six decades of unsustainable development

Over a period of almost 60 years the communities of the Neighbourhood Area (NA) of Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore have not seen ‘sustainable solutions’ that ‘take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities’ of the area. The ‘three overarching objectives’ of sustainable development have not been in evidence. Local planning policy and decisions from the late 1950s to the present have encouraged an essentially urban-oriented population, dependent on urban services, into a highly rural area and have not attended to the need of maintaining a thriving rural economy and society. A focus on housing development in Baldwins Gate, Whitmore Heath and Madeley Park Wood and the creation of dormitory settlements has created unsustainable development. Contrary to the common expectations of planning policy, population growth has not sustained local services: a long-established grocery store in Baldwins Gate closed down and was subsequently demolished to make way for a housing development; mobile shops no longer visit the NA’s settlements; bus services across the NA, including routes that once served the smaller settlements, either were withdrawn long ago or have been severely reduced.
The data from census and other government sources on employment, travel and transport and access to key services that is presented in Chapter 3 evidences the urban orientation of a large proportion of the NA’s population and its high dependence on the urban area. This is complemented by data collected through the Residents’ Survey in August–September 2016.

The infrastructure of the village of Baldwins Gate, the NA’s main settlement, has failed to keep pace with either planned or unplanned residential growth. The loss of a grocery store, mobile shops and bus services have already been mentioned. Community facilities and infrastructure development during six decades have comprised the provision of a primary school in Baldwins Gate (opened in 1968 and coinciding with the closure of 3 small village schools in neighbouring settlements); the upgrading of the Baldwins Gate sewerage works in 1999–2000, at the time when the settlement’s two most recent estates were built; and work on the NA’s village halls, financed by residents’ voluntary contributions and grant funding. Growth in private car and commercial vehicle traffic on the A53 led to the installation of a pedestrian crossing at the eastern end of Baldwins Gate in the late 1990s, followed by a pedestrian crossing in Whitmore village and a roundabout at the A53/A5182 junction, the latter two developments being the result of local community pressure.

1.2 A prosperous rural economy

Over the same period, changes in the agricultural economy and the social organisation of the countryside have led to a sharp decline in or the demise of traditional employment opportunities for rural dwellers. Although the leisure and tourism base of the local economy has grown, especially since the mid-1990s, and provides some local employment, local planning policy and decisions have generally not supported the adjustment and renewal of the local rural economy and have not encouraged the development of new rural businesses and employment opportunities. The low level of low-cost housing in the NA and the running-down of the public transport system over many decades mean difficulties for employers in sourcing staff locally from within the NA.

The NPPF is clear that the planning system should support a prosperous rural economy:

Planning policies and decisions should enable:

a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;

c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and

d) the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

Para. 83

Part and parcel of a prosperous rural economy is not just the development and diversification of rural businesses, but the provision of low-cost housing to meet the needs of people working in the rural economy and to enable them to live in the area where they work. This is an essential aspect of sustainable development in the rural area that has been sorely neglected by local planning policy and decision making.

1.3 Plan-led sustainable development

The Neighbourhood Development Plan provides opportunities to establish policies and initiate actions to curtail the trend of unsustainable development and embrace a plan-led, sustainable development pattern in the NA.

The opportunities and the greater needs to achieve sustainable development in the NA are for:

(i) economic development to create the types of jobs and businesses that the NA can sustain and that can sustain the NA

(ii) a focus on providing dwelling types and low-cost housing that will enable those who work in the rural economy and who provide services to the local population to live close to their work in the NA

(iii) provision of dwelling types suitable for those older members the NA’s population who wish to remain in the NA but who need either to downsize or to move into sheltered or serviced accommodation.

Remediating the effects of nearly six decades of poor planning is a long-term project that will not be accomplished over the period of a single Neighbourhood Plan, but that can be built on and achieved over successive plans.
2 Legal requirements

The Localism Act 2011 sets out important legal requirements for Neighbourhood Development Plans. In accordance with the legislation, the Neighbourhood Plan must meet the following basic conditions:

- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, namely the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Policy Guidance
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development
- be compatible with European Union and European Convention on Human Rights obligations
- be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area.

In relation to the latter, the Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore Neighbourhood Development Plan must reflect the strategic policies of the adopted Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy 2006–2026 (adopted October 2009), the saved policies of the Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan 2011 and the emerging Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme Joint Local Plan 2013–2033 (examination currently planned for April 2020).

Within these constraints, the Neighbourhood Plan still gives the opportunity for local people to have control over the future of their parishes by actively planning where other development should go and what benefit it would bring to the area. It can provide for community facilities commensurate with the needs of the resident population and it can improve and increase the local environmental and recreational resources of the area for the benefit of their health and well-being.

It can also incorporate other wider policies that go beyond land use considerations and demonstrate support for wider strategic improvements.
3 The Neighbourhood Area

The NA is the area that will be covered by the Neighbourhood Plan. It comprises the civil parishes of Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore and is the same as the area defined in the NA application submitted to Newcastle-under-Lyme (NuL) Borough Council on 2 July 2015. The NA was formally designated by the Borough Council on 16 September 2015. The Council’s decision empowers the three parish councils to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for the area. The NA is shown in Map 1.

The lead parish council for the Neighbourhood Plan is Whitmore Parish Council.

4 Purpose of the Neighbourhood Development Plan

Neighbourhood Development Plans are part of the statutory planning system. This means that when decisions are made on planning applications the policies and proposals of the Neighbourhood Plan must be taken into account by the local planning authority (LPA), in this case NuL Borough Council.

The NPPF states:

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Para. 47

Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted.

Para. 12

Neighbourhood Plans are a new type of statutory plan. Not only are they intended to be produced by local people for their own areas, but they must also be agreed through a referendum of the people living in the area. Unlike national planning policy, which is approved by Parliament, or district planning policy, which is approved by the local authority, a Neighbourhood Plan must be the subject of a vote by residents of the area covered by the Plan.
This Neighbourhood Plan will be a statutory planning policy document, supported by a majority of local people, that will enable the parishes of Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore to have a greater and more positive influence over how the NA develops during the plan period of 2013–2033.

5 Scope

While the purpose of Neighbourhood Plans is to allow local people to have a greater say in the development of their area, each Neighbourhood Plan must be in line with and not contradict higher-level planning policy. It is a legal requirement for Neighbourhood Plans to have appropriate regard to the NPPF and to be in general conformity with local strategic policy. A key implication of these requirements is that where the Local Plan has a growth allocation for an area the Neighbourhood Plan must provide scope for at least the level of growth specified in the Local Plan (see below, section 7, ‘The Local Plan’).

Because the Neighbourhood Plan will be part of the statutory development plan for the area it may deal only with the same range of matters as all other statutory development plans, namely the development and use of land. Other matters, such as the promotion of events, social and community activities, advisory support for businesses etc. and matters that are covered by separate legislation, such as highway matters and national infrastructure projects, cannot be dealt with in the Neighbourhood Plan.

6 The Neighbourhood Plan process

The Neighbourhood Plan process is set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. These define the main stages that a Neighbourhood Plan must go through before it is voted on at the referendum. Neighbourhood Plans that do not closely follow the Regulations in the way they are produced may be vulnerable to legal challenge at a later date.

6.1 Main stages of the process

The following diagram illustrates the main stages in preparing the Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore Neighbourhood Development Plan.
Neighbourhood plans must be based on relevant evidence about the NA (the three parishes of Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore) and must reflect the views of the local community. The parish councils that appointed the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have therefore been careful to gather the necessary evidence to inform the Neighbourhood Plan and underpin its policies.

The Neighbourhood Plan itself has been led by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, comprised of parish councillors representing the three parishes and members of the community, also representing the three parishes. In producing this draft Neighbourhood Development Plan the Steering Group has been supported by neighbourhood planning specialists Urban Vision Enterprise CIC. Throughout the process the Steering Group has liaised with NuL Borough Council and Staffordshire County Council (SCC), who have provided practical assistance, advice on key issues such as strategic local policy and supporting evidence.
The Steering Group has organised and delivered informal consultation events and a Residents’ Survey to gauge local opinion at key stages in the production of the Neighbourhood Plan. In addition, a Neighbourhood Plan must be the subject of a 6-week period of statutory consultation in the local community before it can be submitted to the LPA. This is the stage when views about the Neighbourhood Plan are formally recorded and responded to, and anyone wishing to make comments must use this opportunity to register them.

During the formal consultation the parish councils are advertising that the draft Neighbourhood Plan is available for people to inspect and comment on. The publicity notifies people where they can see a copy of the Neighbourhood Plan, the deadline for comments and where they should be submitted to. Details and all relevant documents are available on the three Parish Council websites and the dedicated Neighbourhood Plan website (www.cmaw-neighbourhoodplan.org), and forms are available for people to register their comments both on paper and online.

After the formal consultation period the Steering Group will consider all the representations received and decide how to respond to them. This will include making appropriate modifications to the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

The amended Neighbourhood Plan will then be submitted to NuL Borough Council, along with a Consultation Statement and a Basic Conditions Statement, explaining how the Neighbourhood Plan satisfies the defined legal requirements.

It is the Borough Council’s duty to check whether the Neighbourhood Plan has followed the proper legal process and has met the legal requirements for consultation and publicity. If the Council is satisfied in this regard, it will then publish the Neighbourhood Plan and invite representations from the public and from statutory consultees. At this stage comments must focus on whether the Neighbourhood Plan satisfies the basic legal conditions.

Following the 6-week publicity period NuL Borough Council will appoint an independent examiner, with the agreement of the parish councils, to consider the Neighbourhood Plan and any representations made at this stage. The independent examiner’s duty is limited to
considering whether the Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions. This means that there is little scope to alter the content of the Neighbourhood Plan at this stage.

The independent examiner will prepare a report, which can recommend either that the Neighbourhood Plan proceeds to a referendum, or that it proceeds to a referendum with appropriate modifications. If the examiner concludes that the Neighbourhood Plan does not meet the basic conditions he or she will recommend that it does not proceed to a referendum.

If the examiner finds the Neighbourhood Plan to be satisfactory, with modifications if necessary, then NuL Borough Council will arrange for a referendum to take place. All people on the electoral register who live in the NA (Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore parishes) will be entitled to vote in the referendum.

If more than 50% of the votes cast support the Neighbourhood Plan, then the Borough Council will bring the plan into force through a simple resolution of the Council.

6.2 Community engagement

Community engagement is an essential part of the neighbourhood planning process.

In spring 2015 community members approached the 3 parish councils of Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore to present the case for preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan to cover the three parishes. As a result, the parish councils jointly formed an intention to make a Neighbourhood Plan. In June 2015 residents of the 3 parishes were invited to a public meeting at which their views on the parish councils’ intention were sought. Following presentations and a question and answer discussion session the meeting gave its support to the parish councils’ proposal.

Following this, an application for designation of the NA of Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore was submitted to NuL Borough Council and the NA was designated on 16 September 2015.

6.2.1 Roadshows

To launch the process of opinion gathering and community engagement with the Plan a series of Roadshows were held across the NA in November and December 2015. These took the form of a presentation and information displays followed by open discussion of issues
raised in the presentation and other issues brought forward by participants. The Roadshows and issues raised were reported in a series of blog articles on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

Two further community events took place in March 2016. The first was a Roadshow at Baldwins Gate primary school, to which all parents received a printed invitation, and the second was a stand at a parish Information Day event held by Whitmore Parish Council. In advance of the Information Day leaflets were distributed to every household in the NA.

Also in March 2016, publicity banners for the Neighbourhood Plan were set up at several strategic locations in the NA.

6.2.2 Residents’ Survey

A Residents’ Survey was conducted in August–September 2016 and is the subject of a separate report. Distribution of the questionnaire to households was preceded by publicity in local newsletters and publicity banners were set up at strategic locations in the NA.
Towards the end of the survey period reminder leaflets were distributed throughout the NA and e-mail reminders were sent to e-mail list subscribers.

Also in September 2016, the Steering Group organised a stand at the ‘Family Fun Day’ organised by Whitmore Parish Council. The event coincided with work on a Heritage and Character Assessment of the NA and the stall focused on engaging the community with local heritage and seeking information and comment.

The entire NA was leafleted in December 2016 and preliminary results from the Residents’ Survey were reported.

In March 2017 a second series of Roadshows was held across the NA to report in detail on the results of the Residents’ Survey and seek residents’ views on the proposed vision and aims for the Neighbourhood Plan. These Roadshows took the same format as the previous series of events, with a presentation, information displays and open discussion. After the
Roadshows a leaflet about the vision and aims of the plan and an article reporting on the Roadshows were distributed across the NA.

6.2.3 Local Green Space consultation

A local consultation on Local Green Space was held for 3 weeks in August 2017 and included 2 drop-in consultation sessions held in the village halls at Whitmore and Maer.

Displays set up for Local Green Space drop-in sessions

6.2.4 Regulation 14 pre-submission consultation

A Regulation 14 Pre-submission consultation was held for 6 weeks, from 19 June to 31 July 2018. Each household in the NA received a 16-page booklet containing the colour-coded text of the Plan policies and details of how to participate in the consultation, and 2 copies of a paper response form. Printed copies of the Plan were available for inspection at 4 locations in the NA and at NuL Borough Council’s Customer Service centre in NuL town centre. The Plan was also available to read online or download via the parish council and

Display at Local Consultation drop-in session
Neighbourhood Plan websites, and a form for online responses was provided. A drop-in event was held one afternoon and early evening at Whitmore village hall, which is the most centrally located community hall in the NA. A total of 62 responses were received from residents.

6.2.5 Newsletters and leaflets

Throughout the Neighbourhood Plan process the Whitmore Parish Council newsletter and the monthly/bimonthly local church newsletter have been used to keep residents informed about progress and to present a series of articles on Neighbourhood Plan issues. Because the church newsletter does not reach all parts of the NA or all households the articles have also been posted on all parish council and village hall notice boards and on notice boards in the bus shelters in Baldwins Gate. At intervals, the entire NA has been leafleted to keep residents up to date with progress and developments.

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<th>Community engagement and events log (most recent first)</th>
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7 The Local Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan has a role to play in ensuring that the parishes of Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore plan for the growth proposed in the Local Plan so that any future development meets the needs and aspirations of the community.

National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG, 2016) states that neighbourhood plans ‘can be developed before or at the same time as the local planning authority is producing its Local Plan’:

Although a draft neighbourhood plan or Order is not tested against the policies in an emerging Local Plan the reasoning and evidence informing the Local Plan process is likely to be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested. For example, up-to-date housing needs evidence is relevant to the question of whether a housing supply policy in a neighbourhood plan or Order contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
Where a neighbourhood plan is brought forward before an up-to-date Local Plan is in place the qualifying body and the local planning authority should discuss and aim to agree the relationship between policies in:

- the emerging neighbourhood plan
- the emerging Local Plan
- the adopted development plan

with appropriate regard to national policy and guidance.

The local planning authority should take a proactive and positive approach, working collaboratively with a qualifying body particularly sharing evidence and seeking to resolve any issues to ensure the draft neighbourhood plan has the greatest chance of success at independent examination.

The local planning authority should work with the qualifying body to produce complementary neighbourhood and Local Plans. It is important to minimise any conflicts between policies in the neighbourhood plan and those in the emerging Local Plan, including housing supply policies.

NPPG (para. 009 Reference ID: 41-009-20160211, February 2016)

A report from the Executive Director for Regeneration and Planning to the Cabinet of NuL Borough Council on 8 November 2017 on ‘Delegation of Neighbourhood Planning’ states the following:

2.8 Whilst Neighbourhood Plans are prepared by bodies external to the Borough Council, it will be the Borough Council’s responsibility to ‘make’ (i.e. adopt) the Neighbourhood Plans and to implement their policies through subsequent decisions on planning applications submitted for consideration. Neighbourhood Plans must however be in general conformity with national planning policy and the approved development plan for the area. In Newcastle-under-Lyme this currently means the adopted Core Spatial Strategy and the ‘saved’ policies from the Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan 2011.

2.9 The preparation of a Joint Local Plan for Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent City Council is underway. If neighbourhood plans are made in advance of the Local Plan, there is potential for neighbourhood plan policies to become out of date if they were to conflict with policies of a Local Plan that is subsequently adopted. It may be necessary for Qualifying Bodies (QBs) to review their neighbourhood plans in these circumstances.

In the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan the following local strategic documents have therefore been used:

- the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy 2006–2026, adopted October 2009
Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore
Neighbourhood Development Plan

Introduction

- the saved policies of the Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan 2011

8 Vision and aims of the Neighbourhood Plan

Overarching aim
To protect rural character while allowing for appropriate development.

Vision
- The Neighbourhood Development Plan will maintain and enhance the rural character of the three parishes and protect and enhance the area’s built and natural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of all who live and work in the Neighbourhood Area, visit it or travel through it, now and in the future.
- It will provide for a range of homes to meet the needs of community members and promote a truly sustainable community and a diversified rural economy.
- Residents and businesses will be encouraged to adopt a variety of renewable energy technologies that do not adversely impact on the landscape.
- The plan will promote health and well-being by providing space and facilities for exercise and other leisure activity.

Aims

Biodiversity and natural environment
- To protect, preserve, restore and promote the area’s natural heritage, landscape, habitats and biodiversity and to provide the means for residents and visitors to learn about and enjoy the area’s natural assets.
- To designate Local Green Space, and to protect valued near and distant views and the landscape settings of the settlements.

Built heritage
- To protect, preserve and promote the area’s conservation areas and heritage assets.
- To find new uses for disused buildings that make a positive contribution to the local built heritage.
Community assets

- To identify existing and new buildings and land that are of importance to the community’s well-being. (See also Leisure and tourism)

Design and character

- To ensure that all new development, including replacement dwellings and extensions, is compatible with the area’s rural character and local built heritage.
- To define and designate character areas.

Economy and transport

- To promote rural businesses that will contribute to the local and the wider economy.
- To promote homeworking and to provide suitable premises and communications technology to enable residents and employers to establish businesses in the Neighbourhood Area.
- To find ways to mitigate conflict between population and traffic on major transit routes and local roads.

Housing

- To provide a range of homes to meet the needs of residents of all ages, physical abilities and financial means.
- To identify suitable locations/sites for housing.

Leisure and tourism

- To provide suitable indoor and outdoor space for the enjoyment and leisure use of both residents and visitors.
- To promote the Neighbourhood Area’s built heritage and natural assets and incorporate them into the local economy.
- To provide the means for residents and visitors to learn about and enjoy the Neighbourhood Area’s natural and heritage assets.

9 Structure of this Neighbourhood Plan

The Plan is divided into a number of chapters. Chapter 1 establishes the strategic context of the NA and includes a brief overview of the NA’s settlements, a strategic description of the transport network and a review of the NA’s setting within the wider strategic context of NuL
and North Staffordshire. The social, economic and environmental contexts, all of which are reviewed in detail in later chapters, are summarised. The current strategic planning context of the NA and the wider NuL borough is also reviewed.

Chapter 2 presents the land-use policies of the Plan.

The next three chapters present detailed evidence that documents the present position of the NA and underpins the Plan and its policies. Chapter 3, Socio-economic context, looks in detail at the population and economy of the NA and draws heavily on the latest census and other central government data as presented in a set of Rural Place Profiles for the NA compiled by the Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) Rural Evidence Project. Data from the Rural Place Profiles is supplemented by evidence collected through the August–September 2016 Residents’ Survey and by locally available data on transport.

Chapter 4, Land use, reviews the range of land uses in the NA and includes an inventory of the NA’s community facilities. The chapter also presents the findings of a Housing Needs Assessment conducted by AECOM consultants in 2016 as a technical assistance package funded by Locality and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), as well as data on current residential dwelling consents and completions in the NA. The information on land use and housing needs is supplemented by opinions and indications on current and future housing need gathered through the Residents’ Survey. The strategic review of the NA’s transport network in Chapter 1 is complemented in this chapter by a detailed description of the two primary routes, the A53 and A51, that cut across the NA. The chapter ends with a review of infrastructure and infrastructure deficiencies in the NA.

Chapter 5 looks at the environment of the NA. The Residents’ Survey and dialogue with residents uncovered that the environment is the single most important aspect of this rural NA; therefore this is necessarily the longest of the three evidence chapters. National-, county-, district- and local-level evidence on the landscape, habitats and wildlife and biodiversity is presented. The area’s geology, soilscape and hydrology are also described. The review of the natural environment is followed by a review of the NA’s built and historic environments including both designated and non-designated heritage assets. Issues identified in the AECOM Heritage and Character Assessment (2016) and Townscape Character Appraisal (2017), both carried out as technical assistance packages funded by
Locality and the DCLG, are reviewed. The chapter ends with a review of Local Green Space, green infrastructure and key routes and spaces. As in the preceding chapters, the evidence presented is supplemented by data and opinion gathered through the Residents’ Survey.

The planned High Speed 2 (West Midlands–Crewe) railway (HS2 Phase 2a) will cut through the NA. This major national infrastructure project is the biggest single issue facing the NA during the period of the Plan and if it goes ahead as planned it will impact unavoidably on the NA and on the achievement of the vision and aims of the Plan, beyond the control of either the parish councils or the LPA. For this reason, a separate chapter, Chapter 6, is devoted to HS2.

The process of drawing up the Plan has uncovered a wide range of issues that cannot be the subject of land-use policies but that none the less are of importance to furthering the aims of the Plan. Chapter 7, Non-policy matters, therefore reviews a range of issues and opportunities for action by the parish councils during the period of the Plan.

Implementation of the land-use policies and action on the non-policy matters are together the way forward for sustainable development in the NA of the parishes of Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore.
1 Strategic context

Content of this chapter:

1.1 Location within Newcastle-under-Lyme borough
1.2 Settlement
1.3 Transport network
1.4 Wider strategic context
1.5 Wider social, economic and environmental context
1.6 Green Belt
1.7 Local Plan – adopted Core Spatial Strategy 2006–2026
1.8 Saved policies of the Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan 2011
1.9 Emerging Joint Local Plan 2013–2033
1.10 Strategic sites

1.1 Location within Newcastle-under-Lyme borough

The NA comprises the three civil parishes of Chapel and Hill Chorlton (Chorlton), Maer and Aston (Maer), and Whitmore (Map 1) in the rural south of Newcastle-under-Lyme in the county of Staffordshire.

Box 1.1 Boundary review 2017

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England published its review of Newcastle-under-Lyme on 13 June 2017. From April 2018 the three parishes of the NA became the new ward of Maer and Whitmore, separating from Loggerheads parish with which they had previously comprised Loggerheads and Whitmore ward. The three parishes thus returned to their status as in 2000, prior to the previous boundary review, when they comprised Whitmore ward. The new ward of Maer and Whitmore is the most rural, least densely populated ward in the borough.

1.1.1 Basic NA statistics

The NA has an area of 4,290 ha. At Census 2011 it had a population of 2,468 in 1,035 households. The total number of dwellings was 1,088. Table 1.1 breaks down this data across the three parishes. Table 1.2 sets the basic NA statistics in the context of NuL borough.
Table 1.1 Basic Neighbourhood Area statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>Chorlton</th>
<th>Maer</th>
<th>Whitmore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area (hectares)</td>
<td>4290</td>
<td>706</td>
<td>1523</td>
<td>2061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>2468</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>1554</td>
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<tr>
<td>Population density per hectare</td>
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<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households</td>
<td>1035</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwellings</td>
<td>1088</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>675</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.2 Neighbourhood Area statistics in context with NuL borough

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>NuL</th>
<th>NA as % of borough</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area (hectares)</td>
<td>4290</td>
<td>21096</td>
<td>20.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>2468</td>
<td>123871</td>
<td>1.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population density/hectares</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>9.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households</td>
<td>1035</td>
<td>52574</td>
<td>1.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwellings</td>
<td>1088</td>
<td>54220</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2 Settlement

The AECOM Townscape Character Appraisal (TCA) report assigns a typology to the settlements of the NA (Table 2, pp. 14–15). The settlements of each parish in the NA are listed below with their typology identifiers.

1.2.1 Chapel and Hill Chorlton

The 2 cluster hamlets of Chapel Chorlton (comprising settlement around village green and church at Chapel Chorlton, Haddon Lane, Swinchurch, Mill Lane and Butt House Lane) and Hill Chorlton (comprising Hill Chorlton, Chorlton Moss, Kennels Lane, Mill Lane, Chorlton Mill and Coombesdale); hamlets of Stableford and Springfield; hamlet at Sandy Lane/Woodside.

In addition to these settlements there are a static caravan park at Stableford (with mix of permanent and holiday homes) and isolated farms and dwellings across the parish.

1.2.2 Maer and Aston

The 2 lower order rural villages of Maer and Aston; cluster hamlet of Blackbrook (comprising Blackbrook, Willoughbridge and Weymouth); and isolated farms and dwellings across the parish.
1.2.3 Whitmore

The 2 modern elevated wooded settlements of Whitmore Heath and Madeley Park Wood/Manor Road; higher order rural village of Baldwins Gate; the 2 lower order rural villages of Acton and Whitmore; cluster hamlet of Butterton (comprising Butterton village, Shut Lane Head, Lymes Road, Butterton Lane, Park Road); and isolated farms and dwellings across the parish.

Box 1.2 Urban and suburban settlement in Whitmore parish

The NA’s largest settlements are Baldwins Gate (315 dwellings within the village envelope), Madeley Park Wood and Manor Road (150 dwellings), and Whitmore Heath (50 dwellings) in Whitmore parish. Whitmore Heath was developed in the 1950s and 1960s; Madeley Park Wood/Manor Road in the 1970s, with a major extension in the south-eastern area in the 1990s. Baldwins Gate grew incrementally throughout the 20th century, growing from the nucleus of a small 19th-century settlement centred on services around Whitmore railway station. Ribbon development occurred along the main road in the 1920s and 1930s. Sandyfields estate was built after the Second World War, in the late 1940s and 1950s. Major development of the village as a dormitory settlement took place from 1959 to 1968 with the Appleton Drive, Gateway and Meadowfields estates. Small infill developments at Snape Hall Close and Coneygreave Lane were built in the 1970s/1980s. These were followed by Lakeside estate and Fair-Green Road in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The development of these three settlements makes Whitmore parish the most densely populated of the three parishes. (See Table 1.1; and see Box 2.3 for a review of population growth in the three parishes since 1901.) In Baldwins Gate a major development of 109 dwellings and two minor developments of 7 and 4 dwellings, all underway in 2017, will add a further 120 dwellings, bringing the total number of dwellings in Baldwins Gate to 435.

1.3 Transport network

This section provides a strategic description of the transport network (see Map 2). For information on transport and car ownership see section 3.7 and for information roads and traffic data see section 4.7.
1.3.1 Major routes

The northbound carriageway of the M6 lies within the NA and forms its NE boundary. The NA is transected by three primary routes, the A53, A51 and A5182, the latter giving access to the M6 motorway at Hanchurch J15, just beyond the NA’s NE boundary. The West Coast Mainline (WCML) runs SE–NW through the NA, skirting Chorlton parish and crossing Whitmore parish. These routes are described in further detail below. The planned route of HS2 Phase 2a cuts SE–NW through Whitmore parish, running east of the WCML and crossing the WCML in the NW shortly before leaving the NA. For further detail on HS2 see Chapter 6.

1.3.1.1 A53

The A53 connects Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent (the North Staffordshire conurbation) in the east and Shrewsbury in the west. It bisects the NA, running NE–SW through Whitmore and Maer parishes. It enters the NA at Butterton cross-roads in the east, bisects the villages of Whitmore and Baldwins Gate and forms a staggered crossing with the A51 at Blackbrook in the west before leaving the NA.

It is of major importance to all settlements in the NA as it provides access to services in the village of Baldwins Gate, including the primary school, part-time GP surgery, shops, post office, filling station, public house, village hall, playing field and children’s playground. It is also the main commuting route from the rural south of NuL borough into the North Staffordshire conurbation and a main commercial and goods transport route between the M6 and Shrewsbury/the Welsh border.

Historically, the A53 is the former Newcastle-under-Lyme and Market Drayton turnpike, first recorded in 1769. The original route from Seabridge in Newcastle ran through the villages of Butterton, Acton and Whitmore (via Three Mile Lane) and along the present Public Right of Way Whitmore No. 4 to Common Lane, Baldwins Gate. After the opening of Whitmore station on the Grand Junction Railway in 1837 the road was rerouted via Butterton cross-roads, bypassing Butterton and Acton villages, and past the south side of Whitmore village. From the Common Lane junction westwards, the original route is essentially unaltered.
1.3.1.2 **A51**

The A51 runs east–west through Chorlton and Maer parishes. It enters the NA at Stableford in the east and runs through Stableford, Hill Chorlton, Blackbrook and Weymouth before leaving the NA at the county boundary with Shropshire.

The A51 forms a staggered cross-roads with the A53 at Blackbrook. It is a relief road during M6 carriageway closures and is a recognised bikers’ route.

Historically, the A51 is the former Rugeley and Stone turnpike road from Rugeley in Staffordshire to Woore in Shropshire, first recorded in 1790. The route through the NA remains unchanged except for realignments in 1966–67 to bypass dangerous bends at Kennels Lane, Chorlton parish and Maerfield Gate, Maer parish.

1.3.1.3 **A5182**

The A5182 crosses the NE corner of the NA, linking the A53 to the A519 and providing access to the M6 motorway at J15 Hanchurch, just outside the NA, and routes into into Stoke-on-Trent (SoT) via the A500. It also links to the A5038, giving access to the A34 at Trentham and routes into SoT.

1.3.1.4 **West Coast Mainline**

The WCML runs SE–NW through the NA, skirting Chorlton parish and cutting through the western part of Whitmore parish. The nearest railway stations on this route are at Crewe (19.3 km) and Stafford (25.8 km).

The railway originated as the Grand Junction Railway from Liverpool to Birmingham in 1837, with a station in Whitmore parish, about 1 mile SW of Whitmore village and close to the edge of the present Baldwins Gate settlement. The station was closed to passenger traffic in 1952. The former ticket office is extant and remains in the ownership of Network Rail. It is a locally listed building, but is currently shuttered and unused.

Network Rail operates a maintenance yard on the site of the former station/goods yard.

1.3.2 **Minor routes**

A number of minor routes provide important links between the NA’s settlements, and connections to the NA’s primary routes and to destinations outside the NA. They are also important transit routes through the NA for residents of neighbouring parishes/settlements.
Other minor routes and Public Rights of Way (PRoW) also provide important routes within and through the NA.

1.3.2.1 Bent Lane
Bent Lane links the settlements of Stableford and Whitmore village and provides a link between the A51 and A53. It is an important route for Chapel Chorlton and Stableford residents to access Newcastle via the A53 and is also a transit route to the A51 and to Stone and Stafford for residents of neighbouring Keele parish.

1.3.2.2 Madeley Road/Manor Road
This route links the settlement of Madeley Park Wood and Manor Road to the A53 and Baldwins Gate. It also links the NA to Madeley village, which is a Key Rural Service Centre and the location of the local GP practice’s main surgery. Via Madeley, the road links the NA to the M6 motorway at J16 Crewe for journeys north, and to the WCML station at Crewe. It is also a transit route to the A51 and to Stone and Stafford for residents of neighbouring Madeley parish.

1.3.2.3 Holly Bush Lane
Holly Bush Lane runs SE from Manor Road and links Manor Road to the A53 the west of the Madeley Road junction, providing a route from Manor Road to Market Drayton. With Manor Road it is a transit route between Madeley and Market Drayton and Shrewsbury.

1.3.2.4 Three Mile Lane
Three Mile Lane links Whitmore village to Keele village and is a key route for NA residents who work at Keele University and the Keele Science Park. With Bent Lane, it forms part of the transit route through the NA from Keele parish to the A51 and to Stone and Stafford. The road provides access between the NA and NuL when the A53 is closed between NuL and Whitmore village (e.g. due to traffic incidents).

1.3.2.5 Sandy Lane and Woodside (2 routes)
These two roads, which converge at their northern ends, link the A51 and A53. They also link Maer village and settlements in Chorlton parish to services in Baldwins Gate village. Sandy Lane links the settlements of Baldwins Gate, Whitmore Heath and Madeley Park Wood/Manor Road to the A51 commuting route to Stone and Stafford. It also forms part of the transit route to the A51 for traffic from Madeley. Woodside is used as a ‘rat run’ by
westbound drivers to avoid the A53 junction with the A51 at Blackbrook. A 7.5 ton weight limit restricts access to both lanes by heavy vehicles other than buses and local farm traffic.

1.3.3 Other minor routes

1.3.3.1 Single-track lanes

A number of single-track lanes link settlements to the NA’s primary routes.

- **Butterton Lane** and **Park Lane** link Butterton village to the A53 and A5182, respectively.
- **Stableford Bank** and **Haddon Lane** link Chapel Chorlton to the A51 via Stableford and Maer, respectively.
- **Maerway Lane**, **Maer Hills Lane**, **Holloway Lane** and **Minn Bank** link Aston to the A51.
- **Radwood Lane/Camp Hill** link Aston to the A53 via Madeley Road.
- **Stoneyford Lane/Aston Lane** link Aston to the A525 Newcastle–Whitchurch road, 1.25km from Woore village in Shropshire.
- **Heath Road/Common Lane** and **Snape Hall Road** link Whitmore Heath to the A53.

1.3.3.2 PRoWs

A number of PRoWs provide important pedestrian links between settlements in the NA (see Map 3).

- **Chapel and Hill Chorlton No. 1** from Chorlton Moss to Baldwins Gate links Hill Chorlton and Chorlton Moss to Baldwins Gate.
- **Chapel and Hill Chorlton Nos 7 and 19** from Hill Chorlton to Haddon Lane link Hill Chorlton to Chapel Chorlton.
- **Whitmore No. 4** from Common Lane to Whitmore village links Baldwins Gate and Whitmore Heath to Whitmore village.
- **Whitmore No. 5** from Madeley Park Wood links Madeley Park Wood to Baldwins Gate via Whitmore No. 6 and Snape Hall Road.
1.4 Wider strategic context

1.4.1 Rural Newcastle-under-Lyme

NuL is dominated by its rural area, which comprises 80% of the total area of the borough. Conversely, 80% of NuL’s population lives in the urban area. In respect of these two 80:20 splits NuL is a microcosm of England, where 80% of the population live in urban areas and 80% of the land area is rural.

The NA is by no means an island unto itself. Many local businesses have B2B and B2C relationships in adjoining NAs, in the urban area and beyond. Likewise, residents of working age commute to work in adjacent NAs, the urban area of NuL and SoT and further afield in Staffordshire, Shropshire, Cheshire East and beyond. And as noted above, even the minor routes in the NA’s road network have a strategic importance for communities outside the NA. A number of leisure- and tourism-based restaurant businesses bring people into the NA from surrounding areas and from the neighbouring urban area. The NA is also popular with walkers, who may come in smaller or larger groups, and with cyclists. Detail on the local rural economy is provided in Chapter 3.

1.4.2 Neighbourhood planning

The NA is one of 5 designated NAs in NuL. It is a direct neighbour of 3 NAs, namely Loggerheads, Madeley and Keele. The fifth NA, Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill, is contiguous with Madeley. Together the 5 NAs comprise more than 50% of the area of NuL. The 5 Steering Groups have formed a forum to discuss shared neighbourhood planning issues. They also support each other by sharing reports and exchanging information that could be of joint value. The planned HS2 Phase 2a is a direct concern in 2 NAs.

1.4.3 Key Rural Service Centres

NuL has 3 Key Rural Service Centres: Loggerheads, Madeley and the villages of Audley parish. Loggerheads is the most readily accessible to the NA, with its village centre 7.4 km from the centre of the NA on a direct route along the A53 and an hourly bus service. Madeley is directly accessible only by car, with its village centre 6.1 km from the centre of the NA. Audley parish is not readily accessible from the NA.
1.4.4 **NuL town centre**

NuL town centre is 8.2 km from the centre of the NA on a direct route along the A53 and with an hourly bus service on weekdays and Saturdays, during ‘working’ hours only. Because the town offers a wider range of services NA residents are more likely to use town centre services than the Rural Service Centres, except for very specific services such as GP, dental surgery, community centre, individual retail businesses etc.

1.4.5 **Market towns**

Smaller market towns surrounding the North Staffordshire conurbation include Stone, Market Drayton, Nantwich, Sandbach, Congleton, Leek and Cheadle. These are places of employment for some NA residents; some NA residents have a preference to use some of the nearer of these towns, e.g. Market Drayton and Stone, for shopping and other services.

1.5 **Wider social, economic and environmental context**

More detailed information on the social, economic and environmental contexts of the NA is provided in Chapters 3 and 5. The following summarises key points.

1.5.1 **Society**

Across the NA the following demographic trends are evident:

- displacement of a rurally based and locally employed population by an urbanised managerial and professional population that is largely employed outside the NA
- an ageing population of long-term residents
- a well-established pattern of people retiring from the urban areas of NuL and SoT
- younger families moving into the NA to be close to grandparents; and grandparents moving into the NA to be close to younger family
- younger couples and families moving into the NA as older residents vacate their homes.

1.5.2 **Economy**

Predominant economic activities within the NA are agriculture, tourism and leisure, restaurants, retail and skilled trades. There is also a small amount of food processing, represented by an organic farm that produces cheese and a number of home-baking micro-
businesses. A significant number of residents are self-employed in micro-businesses and/or work wholly/partly from home.

Changes across the local economy since the 1950s, especially in the organisation of the agricultural and land economy, have led to a major loss of local predominantly land-based jobs. There are limited local employment opportunities in the agriculture, leisure and tourism, retail and service sectors. Some workers in these sectors travel from outside the NA, both from the wider rural area and from the urban areas of NuL and SoT.

The farming community generally is an ageing population, although some family-owned farms in the NA are under the management of younger generations.

**Box 1.3 Issue: employment**

There is a great need to create jobs and employment opportunities in the NA and to attract people who will live and work in the NA rather than commute to work.

**Opportunities**

Opportunities for diversification of the rural economy include expansion of the current small food processing base; further development of tourism and leisure, including education on rural matters and development of craft-based businesses and training.

Working from home is a sustainable option. The impact of HS2 Phase 2a construction may accelerate this trend in the NA.

**1.5.3 Environment**

The NA is predominantly rural in character. Important features include:

- a rolling landform that provides distant views beyond the NA from the highest elevations
- well-wooded landscape, locally known as the ‘Woodland Quarter’ of NuL
- older settlements often well integrated into hollows in the landscape
- a network of single-track sunken lanes that serve both as wildlife corridors and as transit routes for the human population
- location on the watersheds of three of England’s major river systems
• a range of important habitat types, including a SSSI and ancient woodland; peatlands and wetlands in the valley areas; and a number of Local Wildlife Sites.

1.5.4 Coal and gas

The NA lies within the North Staffordshire coalfield. Abandoned mine workings extend southwards from Silverdale and Keele into Whitmore parish, north of Whitmore village.

National Grid operates two gas transmission lines that pass through the north-western part of Maer parish, in the areas of Blackbrook and Aston.

1.6 Green Belt

Green Belt comprises about 40% of the total NA. Its limits are defined by the M6 in the east and the WCML in the west (see Map 4).

• In the SE of Chorlton parish a sliver of land between the Meece Brook and the WCML is in the Green Belt.

• Whitmore parish is dominated by Green Belt, which makes up about 83% of the total parish area. The hamlets of Butterton, the villages of Acton and Whitmore and the settlement of Whitmore Heath are all within the Green Belt.

• The eastern settlement boundary of Baldwins Gate is contiguous with the Green Belt. The settlement straddles the WCML and thus penetrates into the Green Belt.

Any review of the Green Belt in the emerging NuL and SoT Joint Local Plan (JLP) may impact on the extent of the Green Belt in the NA.

1.7 Local Plan: adopted Core Spatial Strategy 2006–2026

The current Local Plan is the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy (CSS) 2006–2026, adopted in 2009.

1.7.1 Strategic aims

The following strategic aims of the CSS are relevant to the NA:

SA3 – To reduce the need to travel, improve accessibility and increase the opportunities for development of sustainable and innovative modes of travel to support the regeneration of the plan area by securing improvements to public transport.
transport infrastructure; and the progressive provision of park and ride and facilities to promote walking and cycling

SA4 – To balance the supply and demand for quality housing; removing surplus and unfit/obsolescent accommodation; providing a better choice of homes in sustainable locations and to ensure that a sufficient number of new homes are affordable

SA5 – To foster and diversify the employment base of all parts of the plan area, both urban and rural, including development of new types of work and working lifestyles, and supporting the office development sector, new technologies and business capitalising on the inherent advantages of North Staffordshire

SA8 – To increase the attraction of the area as a tourist destination based on its industrial heritage, existing and future magnets of tourism and leisure interest and the high quality environment in the surrounding rural area

SA12 – To renew the fabric of urban and rural areas to promote the best of safe and sustainable urban and rural living

SA14 – To protect and enhance the historic heritage and the unique character of the plan area by ensuring new developments are appropriate in terms of scale, location and their context

SA15 – To protect and improve the countryside and the diversity of wildlife and habitats throughout the plan area

SA16 – To eliminate poor quality development and establish a culture of excellence in built design by [...] requiring good, safe design as a universal baseline and distinctive design excellence in all development proposals ...

SA17 – To minimise the adverse impacts of climate change in the move towards zero carbon growth through energy efficiency, promoting the use of renewable energy sources and green construction methods in accordance with best practice

Adopted CSS, pp. 32–34

1.7.2 Strategic centres

The CSS defines a hierarchy of strategic sub-areas within the NuL and SoT plan area. At the top of the hierarchy is the City Centre of SoT; at the bottom of the hierarchy is the Newcastle Rural Areas. Within the strategic sub-areas a 5-level hierarchy of strategic centres is defined. At the bottom of the hierarchy are 7 villages; these include Baldwins Gate/Whitmore; which is within the NA. No other settlements in the NA are included in the hierarchy. The CSS states of the village level:
No further growth is planned in these settlements, and efforts will be made to ensure existing services and activities within these villages are maintained.

Adopted CSS, p. 39, para. 5.8

1.7.3 Area Spatial Policy

Policy ASP6 of the CSS relates to specifically to the rural area of NuL:

**ASP6 Rural Area Spatial Policy**

1. There will be a maximum of 900 net additional dwellings of high design quality primarily located on sustainable brownfield land within the village envelopes of the key rural service centres (see Key Diagram), namely – Loggerheads, Madeley and the villages of Audley Parish, to meet identified local requirements – in particular, the need for affordable housing.

2. The Council will take a positive approach towards rural enterprise relating to the availability of the local workforce. In particular opportunities will be sought to encourage:
   - The sensitive and sustainable diversification of traditional rural economies
   - A positive contribution towards enhancing local landscape and biodiversity
   - Appropriate re-use, conversion, or replacement of existing buildings in sustainable locations
   - Provision of essential rural services

3. [Relates to Keele University, outside the NA.]

4. A positive approach will be taken towards development for supported and special needs housing where it supports the Housing Strategy for Newcastle Borough.

5. The quality of the village and canal conservation areas will be preserved and enhanced through the completion of a rolling programme of conservation area appraisals and management plans by 2012.

6. All new development will need to reflect the following policies: Design Quality, Built Heritage, and Natural Assets.

7. The implementation of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Staffordshire will work to facilitate the improved provision of off road routes for horses and cyclists and its integration with an enhanced public network.

8. [Relates to Apedale Community Country Park, outside the NA.]

9. In accordance with the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan a positive approach will be taken towards practical measures to improve accessibility by public transport. Such measures could include:
   - Subsidised bus services
   - Community transport schemes
The reasoned justification for this policy includes the following, which is relevant to the NA:

Para. 5.195: ... the importance of the rural area to the communities and economy of the plan area as a whole should not be underestimated. Its diverse range of rural economic activities; the distinctive rural landscape; the wealth of international, national and locally designated wildlife sites and nature reserves; and distinctive and attractive villages are all central to the image of the plan area as a pleasant and attractive location for both people and inward investment as well as bringing both social and economic benefits to its communities.

Para. 5.196: This strategy is intended to ensure that local rural housing needs are adequately met; the rural economy can continue to diversify, grow and prosper; access to essential services and facilities such as doctors, schools, shops and community facilities is maximised; and the area’s distinctive landscapes and natural resources are preserved.

Para. 5.197: ... to achieve genuinely sustainable rural communities and economies, it will be necessary to enable limited new housing to meet the needs of people working within the rural areas. Not to do so would result in a static and ageing population, increasing social exclusion, increased pressure upon social and health services, and economic stagnation. However, the strategy is clear that there is no scope for development of a scale beyond that required for natural growth and [sic] in locations where there are very few local services.

Para. 5.198: The Sustainability Appraisal clearly demonstrated that limiting rural growth to meet identified local requirements will provide the most effective approach towards minimising any undesirable impacts upon international, national and local designated wildlife habitats and geological features. In addition, the Sustainability Appraisal clearly identifies the spatial strategy as the most effective and sustainable approach towards supporting the regeneration of the Major Urban Area whilst simultaneously reducing the need to travel and preserving the Borough’s finite natural resources.

1.7.4 Core Spatial Policies

The following policies have relevance to the NA:

CSP1 – Design quality

New development should be well designed to respect the character, identity and context of Newcastle and Stoke-on-Trent’s unique townscape and landscape and in particular, the built heritage, its historic environment, its rural setting and the settlement pattern created by the hierarchy of centres.

...
3. Protect important and longer distance views of historic landmarks and rural vistas.
4. Contribute positively to an area’s identity and heritage (both natural and built) in terms of scale, density, layout, use of appropriate vernacular materials for buildings and surfaces and access.
5. Be easy to get to and to move through and around, providing recognisable routes and interchanges and landmarks that are well connected to public transport, community facilities, the services of individual communities and neighbourhoods ...
6. Have public and private spaces that are safe, attractive, easily distinguished, accessible, complement the built form and foster civic pride.
7. Ensure a balanced mix of uses that work together and encourage sustainable living in the use of water, energy and re-use of materials and minimises the impact on climatic change.
...
10. Be accessible to all users.
11. Be safe, uncluttered, varied, and attractive.
12. Contribute positively to healthy lifestyles.

Adopted CSS, pp. 108–109

CSP2 – Historic Environment
Both Councils will seek to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the historic heritage of the City and the Borough including buildings, monuments, sites and areas of special archaeological, architectural or historic interest.

Adopted CSS, p. 111

CSP3 – Sustainability and Climate Change
Development which positively addresses the impacts of climate change and delivers a sustainable approach will be encouraged.
The highest standards of energy and natural resource efficiency will be achieved by:
...
3. Requiring all new developments to incorporate the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SUDS).
4. Developing habitat systems which are resilient to climate change in accordance with latest best practice.
...

Adopted CSS, p. 112

CSP4 – Natural Assets
The quality and quantity of the plan area’s natural assets will be protected, maintained and enhanced through the following measures:
1. Working with relevant partners to enhance the plan area’s natural habitats and biodiversity to achieve the outcomes and targets set out UK Biodiversity Action Plan, the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan and the Staffordshire Geodiversity Action Plan;

2. Working with relevant partners to achieve significant improvements to the condition of the plan area’s internationally designated Ramsar sites, nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), locally designated Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) and Local Wildlife Sites, Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) and Local Nature Reserves;

3. Ensuring that the location, scale and nature of all development planned and delivered through this Core Spatial Strategy avoids and mitigates adverse impacts, and wherever possible enhances, the plan area’s distinctive natural assets, landscape character, waterways, network of urban green corridors and priority species and habitats identified in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan;

... Adopted CSS, pp. 113–114

**CSP5 – Open Space/Sport/Recreation**

The plan area’s open space, sports and leisure assets will be enhanced, maintained and protected through the following measures:

... 3. Ensuring that all new residential development will be linked to existing and new open spaces and sport and recreation facilities through a series of well defined safe routes/streets, incorporating pedestrian friendly routes and cycle ways

... Adopted CSS, p. 117

**Policy CSP6 – Affordable Housing**

1. All development involving housing above the following size thresholds must make provision for an element of affordable housing to meet identified need in the latest published evidence of need.

... 3. New residential development within the rural areas, on sites of 5 dwellings or more will be required to contribute towards affordable housing at a rate equivalent to a target of 25% of the total dwellings to be provided.

4. In some areas the local need for affordable housing may be for less than 25%. In this case a financial contribution to off site affordable housing provision will be required at the equivalent rate to meet priority needs elsewhere.

...
7. Within the plan area the affordable housing mix will be negotiated on a site by site basis to reflect the nature of development and local needs. Generally, affordable housing types will be expected to reflect that of the site as a whole.

8. Affordable housing units should be fully integrated with the market housing, be built to the same design, quality and space standards and should not be visually distinguishable from other development on site. It should be assumed that affordable housing will be required to be provided without subsidy.

Adopted CSS, p. 118–119

1.8  Saved policies of Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan 2011

The following saved policies of the Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan 2011 are relevant to the NA.

Policy S3: Development in the Green Belt

... there will be a presumption against any form of development, subject to the following policies:

iv) The well-designed extension or alteration of an existing dwelling, or its replacement, may be acceptable as long as it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwelling. Where replacement is proposed, the new dwelling must not be materially larger than the dwelling it replaces and the applicant must demonstrate that replacement rather than alteration is justified.

v) The re-use of an existing building, whether for residential or other uses, may be acceptable providing it does not have a materially greater impact than the present use on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it.

Policy H1: Residential development: sustainable location and protection of the countryside

Permission for residential development will only be given where one of the following requirements are satisfied:

... 

ii) The site is within one of the 'village envelopes' as defined on the Proposals Map.

iii) It is essential for the proper functioning of a viable enterprise of agriculture or forestry that residential accommodation for a person or persons engaged in that enterprise is available in the precise location proposed and there is no alternative.

iv) The development consists of affordable housing permissible under the terms of Policy H12.

v) The development consists of the conversion of a rural building in accordance with Policy H9.
Where permission is given under clauses (iii) or (iv), any new buildings should be sited within an existing group of dwellings or farm buildings and designed to fit in with them.

**Policy H9: Conversion of rural buildings for living accommodation**

Before the conversion of rural buildings for living accommodation can be considered, evidence must be provided to show that the applicant has made every reasonable attempt to secure a suitable business use for the premises, subject to Policy E12 (in Employment and Economic Development Section). So long as the above criterion is satisfied, conversion for living accommodation of a rural building in a sustainable location will be considered favourably provided that all the following requirements are met:

i) The Council must be satisfied that the building was constructed for, and has previously been used in connection with, an authorised activity.

ii) Convincing evidence must be produced that the superstructure of the buildings is of permanent and sound construction, it does not require reconstruction extension or substantial alteration and its form, bulk and general design is in keeping with its surroundings.

iii) Applications must include the details of the scheme proposed.

iv) All utility services for the proposed living accommodation must be underground.

v) New dwellings must not be established within 400 metres of an existing livestock unit.

vi) A survey must be undertaken to ascertain whether any statutorily protected wildlife species are present, and if so, measures must be taken to provide for their conservation.

vii) The Council must be satisfied that there will be no adverse effect from the activities associated with the use of the building for domestic purposes.

viii) The design of the proposal should support the conservation and enhancement of local countryside character and distinctiveness.

In relation to clause (vii) in particular, the Council may choose to remove 'permitted development' rights if permission is to be given.

**Policy H13: Supported housing**

Development for supported and special needs housing in accordance with the Council’s Housing Strategy will be encouraged. When considering any applications for such development, the positive contribution that it would make towards the Council's Housing Strategy would be weighed against any concerns raised in the context of other policies of the Plan.

**Policy H18: Design of residential extensions, where subject to planning control**

Proposals to extend dwellings will be favourably considered, subject to other policies in the Plan, so long as the following requirements are satisfied:
i) The form, size and location of each extension should be subordinate to the design of the original dwellings.

**Policy E12: The conversion of rural buildings**

The conversion of rural buildings for new employment purposes will, subject to amenity and highway considerations, be supported as a means of providing jobs in the rural areas, so long as the following requirements are met:

i) The Council must be satisfied that the building was constructed for, and has previously been used in connection with, an authorised activity.

ii) Convincing evidence must be produced that the superstructure of the building is of permanent and sound construction, it does not require reconstruction, extension or substantial alteration and its form, bulk and general design is in keeping with its surroundings.

iii) The use proposed must not involve any of the following:

(a) A significant extension of the building.

(b) The unsightly storage of, or work on, raw materials or goods outside.

(c) Operations that create an unacceptable adverse impact, are unsightly or create problems of traffic or parking in the neighbourhood.

(d) The use of an unsatisfactory access to and from the public highway.

(e) The introduction of significant additional traffic into environmentally sensitive areas or the creation or aggravation of traffic problems.

(f) Detriment to the building’s setting that cannot be overcome by external landscaping or treatment.

iv) The proposal must incorporate measures to provide for the conservation of statutorily protected wildlife species, if present.

v) The design of the proposed conversion should conserve or enhance local countryside character and distinctiveness and ensure that the historic character and setting of traditional rural buildings is maintained.

**Policy C22: Protection of community facilities**

When considering applications for development that would involve the loss of an important community facility, the need for the facility and the likelihood of its being able to be replaced will be a material consideration.

Where the community facility is a commercial enterprise, planning permission for alternative use may not be given unless the applicant can demonstrate that the business is not commercially viable.

ii) The materials and design of each extension should fit in with those of the dwelling to be extended.

iii) The extension should not detract materially from the character of the original dwelling or from the integrity of the original design of the group of dwellings that form the street scene or the setting.
Policy N8: Protection of key habitats

The Council will resist development that may harm, directly or indirectly, an ancient woodland site, unimproved lowland grassland or area of lowland heathland or peatland, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the need for the development clearly outweighs the need to safeguard the habitat. Where development affecting such habitats can be approved, appropriate measures will be required to minimise damage, to provide for appropriate habitat restoration and/or re-creation to compensate for any loss, and to assist where possible towards meeting the targets for habitat and species increase set out in the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan.

Policy N12: Development and the protection of trees

The Council will resist development that would involve the removal of any visually significant tree, shrub or hedge, whether mature or not, unless the need for the development is sufficient to warrant the tree loss and the loss cannot be avoided by appropriate siting or design.

Where, exceptionally, permission can be given and trees are to be lost through development, replacement planting will be required on an appropriate scale and in accordance with a landscaping scheme.

Where appropriate, developers will be expected to set out what measures will be taken during the development to protect trees from damage.

Policy N14: Protection of landscape features of major importance to flora and fauna

Development that may harm, directly or indirectly, the landscape features listed below which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that there are reasons for the development which clearly outweigh the need to retain the feature. Where development affecting such features is approved, appropriate measures will be required to minimise, restore and/or compensate for any loss of, or deterioration in, the nature conservation value of the feature.

Features covered by this policy:

• Hedgerows, drystone walls and similar established boundary features
• River and stream corridors (incorporating the river, its banks and associated wetland habitats)
• Canals
• Ponds, lakes and other permanent standing water features
• Woodlands
• Disused railways and mineral lines
• Green lanes
**Policy N17: Landscape character – general considerations**

Development should be informed by and be sympathetic to landscape character and quality and should contribute, as appropriate, to the regeneration, restoration, enhancement, maintenance or active conservation of the landscape likely to be affected. Proposals with landscape and visual implications will be assessed having regard to the extent to which they would:

i) Cause unacceptable visual harm

ii) Introduce (or conversely remove) incongruous landscape elements

iii) Cause the disturbance or loss of (or conversely help to maintain):

a) landscape elements that contribute to local distinctiveness

b) historic elements which contribute significantly to landscape character and quality, such as field, settlement or road patterns

c) semi-natural vegetation which is characteristic of that landscape type

d) the visual condition of landscape elements

e) tranquillity

**Policy N19: Landscape maintenance areas**

The Council will seek to maintain the high quality and characteristic landscapes in Landscape Maintenance Areas as shown on the Proposals Map. Where development can be permitted, it will be expected to contribute to this aim. Within these areas it will be necessary to demonstrate that development will not erode the character or harm the quality of the landscape.

**Policy N20: Areas of landscape enhancement**

Within Areas of Landscape Enhancement, as shown on the Proposals Map, the Council will support, subject to other plan policies, proposals that will enhance the character and quality of the landscape. Within these areas it will be necessary to demonstrate that development will not further erode the character or quality of the landscape.

**Policy B8: Other buildings of historic or architectural interest**

The Council will ensure the conservation of locally important buildings and structures by encouraging their retention, maintenance, appropriate use and restoration.

Where permission is granted for demolition or alteration of locally important buildings which would result in the loss of historic fabric, the Council will ensure that provision is made for an appropriate level of archaeological building recording to take place prior to the commencement of works.

**Policy B10: The requirement to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area**

Permission will be granted to construct, alter the external appearance or change the use of any building only if its proposed appearance or use will preserve or enhance
the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. This will be achieved by the following criteria being met:

i) The form, scale, bulk, height, materials, colour, vertical or horizontal emphasis and detailing respect the characteristics of the buildings in the area.

ii) The plot coverage characteristics respect those of the area.

iii) Historically significant boundaries contributing to the established pattern of development in the area are retained.

iv) Open spaces important to the character or historic value of the area are protected.

v) Important views within, into and out of the area are protected.

vi) Trees and other landscape features contributing to the character or appearance of the area are protected.

**Policy IM1: Provision of essential supporting infrastructure and community facilities**

Where a development proposal would require improvements to infrastructure or essential facilities to make it acceptable then the developer will be required to carry out or contribute to the funding of appropriate works.

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**1.9  Emerging Joint Local Plan 2013–2033**

The Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme Joint Local Plan 2013–2033 is currently in preparation. It is ‘provisionally timetabled for completion’ and submission to the Secretary of State in April 2020.

The Strategic Options consultation in July–August 2017 set out aims and objectives in 6 areas. The following objectives in each aim area are relevant to the NA:

**Aim 1 – UK central hub for innovation and investment**

• To support and boost existing and new opportunities for business growth, encouraging new investment and entrepreneurship.

• To diversify the employment base of all parts of the plan area both urban and rural.

• To support and prioritise job growth across the plan area.

**Aim 2 – Healthy and active communities**

• To ensure that new development makes adequate provision for all necessary community facilities including health care, education, sports and recreation and leisure and that the quality and accessibility of existing facilities are enhanced and retained where they provide for the justified community needs.
• To support and promote healthy and active communities and improve physical and mental health and wellbeing through the design and appropriate siting of development.

Aim 3 – Dynamic and diverse neighbourhoods
• To decrease net outward migration from Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme by improving economic competitiveness as well as supplying a balanced variety of housing to meet needs across the housing market area to retain and attract population in the rural and urban areas.
• To ensure a balance of housing choices from either new builds or addressing existing housing stock to meet local and aspirational need, strengthening local communities and creating a great place to live.
• Increasing the number of homes delivered across the Housing Market Area.
• To secure high quality sustainable design that enhances and reinforces local distinctiveness encapsulating both the urban and rural environment.

Aim 4 – Utilising our natural assets and resources
• To balance and minimise the adverse impacts of climate change through the promotion of renewable energy sources.
• To promote safe and resilient buildings and efficient management of land and resources.
• To promote the prudent use of natural resources.
• To protect and improve the countryside and the diversity of wildlife and habitats across the plan area.

Aim 5 – Strong city centre and market town with a diverse network of distinct towns and villages
• To promote appropriate growth and investment in a distinct network of larger towns, sustainable villages and local urban and rural centres across the Plan Area.

Aim 6 – Making our historic past work for the future
• To increase the attraction of the area as a tourist destination and increase the number of day and overnight visitors.
• To protect and enhance the historic heritage and the unique character of both rural and urban areas by ensuring new developments are appropriate in terms of scale, location and their context.
• Encourage the re-use of historic assets.

Appendix 1 of the JLP Strategic Options consultation identifies a number of key strategic issues and challenges. The following are relevant to the NA:
City, town, local and other centres

- Ensuring that development in existing rural settlements responds to the unique character and setting of each settlement.
- The existing designation of Rural Service Centres and village envelopes in Newcastle-under-Lyme will need to be reviewed.
- The service and infrastructure needs of both new and existing rural communities need to be considered.

Transport

- Providing walking and cycling infrastructure to support transport and leisure needs.
- Recognising and integrating connections to existing public rights of way.
- Improving connections between public transport services both within the plan area and to areas beyond.
- Working with partners to recognise and improve rural services.

Environment

- To ensure that developments positively influence health by being well designed, attractive, safe, well connected, permeable and prioritise walking and cycling over car use.
- Ensuring that housing developments consider flexible lifetime homes standards, permeable and inclusive neighbourhoods which promote walking and social interaction.

Heritage

- Making better use of vacant and underused heritage assets.
- To give the right protection to historic farmsteads.
- Recognising and preserving the rural settlement pattern.
- Integrating new development which meets the needs of rural areas.
- Ensuring that the setting of historic assets is taken into account.
- Recognising landscape setting and character.

Natural and rural environment

- Balancing the need to plan for new development with the protection and improvement of local natural assets.
- Ensuring that land of the lowest environmental value is prioritised for development.
- Ensuring future development strategies safeguard designated and characteristic landscapes ..., whilst taking opportunities to improve lower quality landscapes.
- Considering the role of landowners and voluntary/community groups in managing green infrastructure.
Energy and climate change

- Promoting renewable and low carbon energy sources in light of changing national policy and viability concerns, for all new development, including commercial development and particularly on smaller housing schemes.
- Ensuring that renewable energy production does not lead to other adverse impacts on the environment.
- Recognising how the design of new development can improve energy efficiency such as south facing roofs to increase the use of solar gain and increase daylight into properties.
- Providing low-cost renewable and low carbon energy to help address energy efficiency issues in existing housing ...

SoT and NuL JLP Strategic Options Consultation, pp. 61–65

1.10 Strategic sites

The Housing Technical Paper (December 2017) ‘sets out the technical evidence to support the information on housing development that is presented in the Joint Local Plan Preferred Options Consultation’ (1 February–1 March 2018).

The Housing Technical Paper states the following with regard to development in the rural area:

2.1 ... The aim of the Joint Local Plan is to direct and proactively support sustainable development which delivers homes and employment opportunities for local communities, whilst responding to opportunities to support growth. Therefore there has been a preference for sites within and around the urban centres and sustainable rural settlements.

2.2 All the SHLAA sites have been considered and the most deliverable and sustainable were selected to be the preferred housing allocation. The existing built up areas have been prioritised to start with, these include the urban areas of Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Kidsgrove as well as within the village envelopes of rural settlements. At this stage, this excluded potential expansion into the Green Belt or Open Countryside. Sites with extant planning permission within the Green Belt or beyond the boundaries of rural settlements not surrounded by Green Belt have also been included as preferred sites.

3.0 Preferred Option towards increasing housing provision in Newcastle-under-Lyme

3.3 While sites were also submitted for consideration within the open countryside, these were ultimately discounted on the basis that directing residential development to these locations does not accord with sustainability appraisal objectives or the emerging development strategy of the Joint Local Plan. Also, neither individually nor
collectively did sites within land beyond the Green Belt have the capability to form a self-sustaining settlement which would outweigh the advantages available at alternatives locations in terms of sustainability, particularly with regards to reducing the need to travel. In addition the use of sites in the open countryside would also undermine one of the primary functions of the Green Belt to prevent urban sprawl.

4.0 Preferred Option to Accommodating Newcastle’s Shortfall
4.1 ... the borough has been subject to a significant number of residential development permissions granted having benefitted from a prolonged period in which the authority has been unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, diminishing the effectiveness of Local Plan housing policies. This situation has resulted in a greater number of permissions for housing development in the rural area than was envisaged through the Adopted 2011 Core Strategy. In addition, this growth was not strategically planned for in terms of infrastructure provision and may have taken place in an unbalanced way.

4.2 Consequently, although in principle it is recognised that there could be an amount of housing development directed towards the rural area it is considered inappropriate to apportion more development to any one settlement without first understanding the implications of doing so and whether this would be in the interests of achieving sustainable development (the Green Belt paper presents considerations with regards to options to accommodate additional growth). Therefore, at this stage, proposing further incursions into the Green Belt or open countryside as part of the preferred option is not considered appropriate without further evidence to understand the implications of doing so.

Option 1: Urban Newcastle and Kidsgrove
4.4 This option is to accommodate the shortfall within the existing urban area ...

Option 2: Rural Settlements
4.5 Were insufficient capacity to be found from Option 1 to meet the shortfall, and potentially provide an appropriate buffer, further evidence will be obtained to ascertain what additional capacity there might be within and surrounding the borough’s rural settlements.

A third option would be to export housing need to neighbouring authorities.

The JLP Preferred Options Consultation document (February 2018) indicates that there are only 2 strategic housing site allocations within the NA. These are LW33 and LW36, both located within or adjacent to Baldwins Gate, the principal settlement of the NA. Both of these are currently under construction. LW33, land at Baldwins Gate Farm (outside the settlement boundary of Baldwins Gate) has permission for 109 dwellings; LW36, land adjacent to the Sheet Anchor (within the settlement boundary of Baldwins Gate) has permission for 7 dwellings.
Other sites that were considered but not included as proposed strategic allocations were LW6 and LW7, adjacent to Baldwins Gate. Planning applications on these two sites have been refused on environmental grounds.
2 Policies

Content of this chapter:

2.1 Introduction
2.2 Local Green Space designations
2.3 Biodiversity and natural environment policies
2.4 Community facilities policies
2.5 Design, character and built heritage policies
2.6 Economy and business policies
2.7 Housing growth policies
2.8 Appendix: Baldwins Gate Design Statement

2.1 Introduction

This chapter comprises the land-use policies of the Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore Neighbourhood Development Plan. The purpose of the policies is to guide the sustainable development of the NA and achieve the overall aim of the Plan, which is to protect the rural character of the NA while allowing for appropriate development.

The NPPF (para. 8) is clear that sustainable development has 3 ‘overarching objectives’: economic, social and environmental. Both the vision and aims of the Plan and the policies have been drawn up with these 3 interrelated dimensions in mind. It is the intention that this set of policies, taken as a whole, should achieve sustainable development in the NA over the period of the Plan.

The policies apply to all new development, comprising development on greenfield or brownfield sites, redevelopment of existing developed sites, and extensions of existing buildings. They are organised according to the policy themes identified in the vision and aims of the Plan (see Introduction, section 8). Where there is an element of overlap between policy themes a cross-reference is provided to the theme under which the policy has been placed (see the content list at the top of this chapter).

2.1.1 Vision for the Neighbourhood Area

The Neighbourhood Development Plan will maintain and enhance the rural character of the three parishes and protect and enhance the area’s built and natural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of all who live and work in the Neighbourhood Area, visit it or travel through it, now and in the future.
It will provide for a range of homes to meet the needs of community members and promote a truly sustainable community and a diversified rural economy. Residents and businesses will be encouraged to adopt a variety of renewable energy technologies that do not adversely impact on the landscape. The plan will promote health and well-being by providing space and facilities for exercise and other leisure activity.

### 2.1.2 Policies matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policies</th>
<th>Aims and policy themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biodiversity and natural environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE1 Natural Environment</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE2 Sustainable Drainage</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM1 Community Facilities</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM2 Local Green Space</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM3 Developer Contributions</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC1 Local Heritage</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC2 Sustainable Design</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC3 Public Realm and Car Parking</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC4 Connectivity and Spaces</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC5 Impact of Lighting</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC6 Housing Standards</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC7 Renewable Energy</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EB1 High-Speed Connectivity and Telecommunications</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EB2 Commercial and Tourism Development</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>HG1 New Housing</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HG2 Housing Mix</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HG3 Local Play, Sports and Recreational Facilities</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.1.3 Structure of the policies

Each policy is presented in the following standard structure:

- **Rationale**: a clear statement of purpose, based on the vision and aims of the Plan
- **Evidence**: supporting evidence, including: cross-references to the evidence presented in the earlier sections of the Plan; reference to local community views and other evidence gathered through the Residents’ Survey; and citation of current national and local policy and the emerging JLP
- **Policy**: the text of the policy, clearly identified by its boxed presentation and bold type
- **Interpretation**: interpretive text providing guidance as to how the policy should be applied.

2.2 Local Green Space designations

Green infrastructure contributes to the quality and distinctiveness of the local environment. It is important for local communities to have a diversity of green infrastructure in and around their neighbourhood as it affords opportunities for walking, play and other physical activity for all age groups and connects people to the living, natural environment.

Paragraph 99 of the NPPF states:

> The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them.

The criteria for designating Local Green Space in neighbourhood plans is set out in paragraph 100 of the NPPF:

> The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:
  > a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
  > b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
  > c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.
2.2.1 Green space audit and consultation

A green space audit of the NA was carried out in June 2017. This involved touring the NA and assessing and critically evaluating green spaces in terms of: what there is, location, type of space, quality, movement, amenity value and other relevant considerations.

The Residents’ Survey and residents’ participation in Roadshow events revealed that the aspects of the NA that are most important to residents are the area’s rural character, easy access to the countryside, the landscape and natural environment, and the local lanes, PRoWs and bridleways. In addition to the value assigned to these spaces by residents, the vision and aims of the Neighbourhood Plan and the value of the NA to a wider public were also taken into account. For this reason the Local Green Space audit focused on identifying:

- community spaces in settlements
- spaces that contribute to local rural character
- spaces connected to important local walking routes
- on primary routes (A roads), roadside verges that help to link up the NA’s fragmented network of lanes and PRoWs. Linking up the network in this way will complement the aims of Staffordshire County Council’s Rights of Way Improvement Programme.

The audit was followed by a Local Consultation of residents, landowners and other stakeholders in August 2017.

2.2.2 Designations

Local Green Space designations for the NA are listed in Table 2.1, which should be read in conjunction with policy COM2 Local Green Space. Full descriptions of each space are provided in Appendix 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audit reference</th>
<th>Address/location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapel and Hill Chorlton parish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSC1</td>
<td>Chapel and Hill Chorlton Public Right of Way No. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSC2</td>
<td>Verge at Romper’s Row, Chorlton Moss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSC3</td>
<td>Verges on lane from Romper’s Row to junction with Moss Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSC4</td>
<td>Grassed area by Chorlton Moss dog bin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>Address/location</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSC5</td>
<td>Chapel and Hill Chorlton Public Right of Way No. 5, section Moss Lane to Sewerage Works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSC6</td>
<td>Reed bed at Baldwins Gate Sewerage Works</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGSC7</td>
<td>A51 Verge, Sandy Lane to Arnside, Hill Chorlton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSC8</td>
<td>Green gap, junction Moss Lane and A51, Hill Chorlton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSC9</td>
<td>A51 Verges, Chapel Bend, Hill Chorlton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSC10</td>
<td>A51 Verges, Chapel House, Hill Chorlton to Kennels Lane layby</td>
</tr>
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<td>LGSC11</td>
<td>Kennels Lane layby, A51, Hill Chorlton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSC12</td>
<td>A51 Verges, Kennels Lane layby to Kennels Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSC13</td>
<td>Triangle at junction Kennels Lane and Mill Lane</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGSC14</td>
<td>A51 Verges, Kennels Lane to Coombesdale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSC15</td>
<td>A51 Verges, Coombesdale to Weston Lodge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSC16</td>
<td>A51 Verge, Weston Lodge to Stableford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSC17</td>
<td>Chapel Chorlton Village Green</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Maer and Aston parish**

<p>| LGSM1          | Triangle at School Lane, Aston |
| LGSM2          | Triangle at junction Minn Bank and Holloway Lane, Aston |
| LGSM3          | Triangle at junction Minn Bank and Maerway Lane, Aston |
| LGSM4          | Triangle at junction Maerway Lane and Maer Hills Road |
| LGSM5          | Verge and stream on Holloway Lane, Aston |
| LGSM6          | Maer Public Right of Way No. 4 |
| LGSM7          | Maer Public Right of Way No. 5 |
| LGSM8          | A51 Verges, county boundary to 172 London Road |
| LGSM9          | A51 Verges, 172 London Road to Willoughbridge crossroads |
| LGSM10         | A51 Verges, Willoughbridge crossroads |
| LGSM11         | A51 Verge, Minn Bank junction, Weymouth |
| LGSM12         | A51 Verge, Dorothy Clive Garden |
| LGSM13         | The Croft, Hungersheath Lane, Blackbrook |
| LGSM14         | Verge between The Croft and Wayside Farm, Hungersheath Lane, Blackbrook |
| LGSM15         | A51 Verges, Wayside Farm and St Margaret’s Chapel, Blackbrook |
| LGSM16         | A51 Verges, Maerway Lane to The Shippon, Blackbrook |</p>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audit reference</th>
<th>Address/location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LGSM17</td>
<td>A51 Verges, The Shippon to The Woodlands, Blackbrook</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGSM18</td>
<td>A51 Verges, The Woodlands to White Farm, Blackbrook</td>
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<td>LGSM19</td>
<td>A51 Verges, A53 junction to Wharmadine Lane</td>
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<td>LGSM20</td>
<td>A51 Verges, Wharmadine Lane to Brookfields Farm</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGSM21</td>
<td>A51 Verges, from field gates west of Maer lodge to Maer Lodge/Maer War Memorial</td>
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<td>LGSM22</td>
<td>Maer War Memorial</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGSM23</td>
<td>Beech Tree Copse at Maerfield Gate Farm</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGSM24</td>
<td>A51 Verges, Maer Lodge/Maer War Memorial to Maerfield Gate/Woodside</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGSM25</td>
<td>Sandy Low Plantation</td>
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<td>LGSM26</td>
<td>A51 Verge, Maerfield Gate/Woodside to Sandy Lane</td>
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**Whitmore parish**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LGSW1</td>
<td>A53 Verge, M6 motorway to Butterton crossroads</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGSW2</td>
<td>A53 Verge, M6 motorway to Butterton crossroads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSW3</td>
<td>Triangle at Shut Lane Head, Butterton</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGSW4</td>
<td>A53 Wildflower Verge between Trentham Road roundabout and Whitmore village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSW5</td>
<td>Triangle on Snape Hall Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSW6</td>
<td>Verge on Snape Hall Road, Heath House to Snape Hall Farm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSW7</td>
<td>Verges on Snape Hall Road, Snape Hall Farm to Heath Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSW8</td>
<td>Verges on Heath Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSW9</td>
<td>Woodland on Whitmore Heath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSW10</td>
<td>‘Raddle Hill’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSW11</td>
<td>Whitmore Village Hall Playing Field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSW12</td>
<td>A53 Verge, Whitmore Village Hall to Appleton Drive, Whitmore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSW13</td>
<td>Verges, Appleton Drive, Whitmore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSW14</td>
<td>A53 Verge at Sheet Anchor development site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSW15</td>
<td>A53 Verge, Appleton Drive to bus shelter, Whitmore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSW16</td>
<td>A53 Verge, railway bridge, Whitmore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSW17</td>
<td>Jubilee Gardens, Baldwins Gate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGSW18</td>
<td>Grassed area by BT telephone exchange, Fair-Green Road, Baldwins Gate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3 Biodiversity and natural environment policies

2.3.1 Natural environment

Rationale
• To protect, preserve, restore and promote the area’s natural heritage, landscape, habitats and biodiversity.
To protect valued near and distant views and the landscape settings of the settlements.

**Evidence**

The NA is rural in character and has a rich natural environment. For a general description see section 5.1. See also section 5.8 for a description of the relationship between the NA’s natural and built environments.

The NA comes under a hierarchy of environmental and landscape categorisations. At national level it is assigned to Natural England’s National Character Area 61, Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain (see section 5.2.1) and Natural Area 27, West Midlands Meres and Mosses (see section 5.2.2).

At a lower and more detailed level of the hierarchy SCC’s Planning for Landscape Change SPG classifies the NA under the Ancient Redlands and Sandstone Hills and Heaths landscape types (see sections 5.2.3 and 5.2.4 and Map 8) and locates it in the Woodland Quarter of NuL (see section 5.2.5).

SCC’s Planning for Landscape Change defines landscape policy areas and objectives for the county. Areas of landscape maintenance, enhancement and restoration are defined in the NA (see section 5.2.6 and Map 9). Regarding areas of landscape restoration, Planning for Landscape Change states that:

> A range of causes have contributed to the decline of these areas: ... in the deeper countryside it has often been a change to intensive arable farming that has led to the loss of landscape elements that formerly contributed to character and quality. In each case, enough of that character survives to guide restoration efforts, which must be pursued with some commitment if the decline in these areas is to be halted and reversed. (Vol. 2, p. 4)

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust’s SBAP and its Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping report for NuL advocate habitat restoration at a landscape scale (see section 5.7).

For a description of the NA’s geology, including its soilscape, peatland sites and RIGS, see section 5.3 and Map 12, and section 5.2.2 West Midlands Meres and Mosses (Natural England Natural Area 27).

The government’s 25 Year Environment Plan recognises the ecological and environmental value of England’s peatlands. Natural England’s report ‘England’s peatlands: carbon storage and greenhouse gases’ (NE257) states that ‘peatlands should be recognised as important
carbon stores that are vital to help regulate our climate. We should also value our peatlands for their benefits to managing the flow and quality of water’ (p. 35). The same report states: ‘The Planning and Climate Change supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 ... is clear that regional spatial strategies should “recognise the potential of, and encourage, those land use and land management practices that help secure carbon sinks”’ (p. 37).

For hydrology, including details of watercourses, standing water, wetlands, the principal aquifer and flood zones see section 5.4 and Maps 11 to 16.

For special designations (Green Belt and SSSI) see section 5.5 and Map 4.

For habitats and wildlife in the NA, including details of Local Wildlife Sites and other designated ecological sites, ancient woodland, Habitats of Principal Importance and wildlife, see section 5.6 and Maps 17a-b and 18.

For biodiversity opportunity zones in the NA as identified in Staffordshire Wildlife Trust’s SBAP and its Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping report for NuL see section 5.7.

For green infrastructure, wildlife corridors and areas of habitat distinctiveness see section 5.16 and Maps 25 and 26.

The Residents’ Survey showed that residents place a high value on the NA’s natural environment. The rural location is valued by over 97% of respondents (Question 1). Ninety-two per cent to 86% agreed that the most suitable uses of land were for agriculture, open space, woodland and forestry and nature reserves and trails (Questions 11). Seventy-six respondents named specific open spaces that were important to them (Question 6a).

**Policy NE1 Natural Environment** is in conformity with the principles of the following national and local policies and aims.

**NPPF (2018):**

| Para. 20 |
| Para. 118, esp. b) |
| Para. 149 |
| Para. 150 |
| Para. 170 |
| Para. 171 |
| Para. 174 |
| Para. 175 |
Para. 178
Para. 179
Para. 180
Para. 182

**Adopted CSS:**

Strategic Aim 15 – To protect and improve the countryside and the diversity of wildlife and habitats
Policy CSP 4 – Natural Assets

**NuL Saved Policies:**

Policy N8: Protection of key habitats
Policy N12: Development and the protection of trees
Policy N14: Protection of landscape features of major importance to flora and fauna
Policy N17: Landscape character – general considerations
Policy N19: Landscape maintenance areas
Policy N20: Areas of landscape enhancement

**Emerging JLP:**

Aim 4 – Utilising our natural assets and resources

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**NE1: Natural Environment**

New development must complement the landscape setting and character of the area. Development must preserve or enhance and not cause significant harm or degradation to the special rural character and ecological and environmental features of the area, including:

- wildlife areas, including designated Local Wildlife Sites (see Maps 17a and 17b), wildlife corridors, watercourses, sunken lanes, ponds and lakes, woodland, orchards
- the Lowland Raised Bog at Chorlton Moss and other peatland sites (see Maps 10, 11 and 12)
- the Functional Ecological Units of Chorlton Moss LWS, New Pool and Oak Wood LWS and Maer Pool SSSI (see Map 11)
- the Principal Aquifer lying beneath the majority of the Neighbourhood Area, including beneath and to the south of the village of Baldwins Gate (see Map 13)
Interpretation

The policy includes a general requirement to consider impacts on the natural environment and also highlights elements of the natural environment that are particularly sensitive.

Interference with peat deposits must be avoided.

Early engagement with relevant local organisations such as the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust is strongly encouraged.

Over-draining has led to the deterioration of the Lowland Raised Bog at Chorlton Moss, which Natural England has assessed to be capable of restoration. Over-draining must be avoided in future, both at this location and in other peatland areas.

Exterior lighting should point downwards and be designed to avoid spillage beyond the area to be illuminated. Sensor lights on individual timer controls and compliance with BS5489-1:2013 (or its successor) are to be preferred.

2.3.2 Sustainable drainage

Rationale

- To ensure that adequate on-site drainage is provided on all new developments; to avoid flood risk on new developments or increasing flood risk elsewhere.

Evidence

See Map 16, Environment Agency flood zones.

Policy NE2 Sustainable Drainage is in conformity with the principles of the following national and local policies and aims.
NPPF (2018):
Para. 150

Adopted CSS:
Policy CSP3 – Sustainability and Climate Change

**NE2: Sustainable Drainage**

All development proposals should be designed to include sustainable drainage and water management measures and must either demonstrate that the existing water drainage infrastructure is adequate, or include improvements to that infrastructure to accommodate any additional water run-off.

**Interpretation**

This policy requires sustainable drainage to be incorporated into development proposals. This should be demonstrated through a ground condition survey which provides details of how the sustainable drainage will operate and be maintained. In addition, developers should ensure that there is sufficient drainage infrastructure capacity to accommodate the proposed development and not cause flooding elsewhere.

Any proposed SUDS should not impact adversely on the existing natural environment and ecologically sensitive sites (see policy NE1).

Rainwater harvesting and provision for grey water recycling are strongly encouraged. To avoid flood risk and to protect wildlife corridors, culverting of existing watercourses and infilling of dry ditches should be avoided; wherever possible existing culverts should be opened up.

In locations that are not served by main sewerage network consideration should be given to provision of sustainable drainage systems that can be used in conjunction with septic tanks. This should be demonstrated through a foul sewage statement.

Further information on the application of SuDS can be found in NuL Borough Council’s List of Local Validation Requirements.
2.4 Community facilities policies

2.4.1 Community facilities

Rationale
- To identify existing and new buildings and land that are of importance to the community’s well-being.

Evidence
The NA has a limited number of community facilities. Refer to section 4.4, where facilities are listed by parish and Maps 5a and 5b. The majority of community facilities, including key services such as some shops, primary school and GP surgery, are located in Baldwins Gate and these are used by residents of all of the settlements in the NA.

See section 3.8 for a review of the NA’s access to key services.

The AECOM Townscape Character Assessment (TCA) report (2017) notes the lack of a defined village centre in Baldwins Gate:

- Residential functions dominate the settlement. A mixture of commercial and community functions are present along the intersecting A53; however, these are dispersed in location and cannot be read as a village centre. (p. 47)
- Community facilities are not obvious and there is no defined village centre, which can confuse the legibility. (p. 58)
- Evolution of the centre/facilities hasn’t kept up with settlement growth. (p. 58)
- The lack of a clear settlement centre leaves the village vulnerable to piecemeal development of facilities which, as a result, could become inaccessible to each other. (p. 59)
- Risk of becoming more unsustainable due [to] centre/facilities failing to evolve to keep up with settlement growth. (p. 59)

The Residents’ Survey showed that residents value the NA’s community facilities. The GP surgery, post office and local shops were rated as important by 91% to 86% of respondents; local pubs, restaurants and cafes and the village halls were rated important by 74% to 71% (Question 2). Fifty-seven per cent of respondents said that they shop regularly in the NA (Question 3). Community open spaces such as the playing field at Whitmore village hall, the Jubilee Gardens and Chapel Green in Baldwins Gate and Chapel Chorlton Green are also valued (Question 6). A few respondents suggested that additional retail and food services were needed. Facilities for community care for the elderly were also suggested (Question
2a). Respondents indicated a need for more space to be allocated to recreation and leisure, including better playing field space and more outdoor and indoor sports and exercise facilities for all ages, including tennis courts and facilities for the disabled, and a dog park (Question 8).

**Policy COM1 Community Facilities** is in conformity with the principles of the following national and local policies and aims.

**NPPF (2018):**

Para. 8  
Para. 83  
Para. 92

**Adopted CSS:**

Policy ASP6 Rural Area Spatial Policy

**NuL Saved Policies:**

Policy C22: Protection of community facilities  
Policy IM1: Provision of essential supporting infrastructure and community facilities

**Emerging JLP:**

Aim 2 – Healthy and active communities  
Aim 5 – Strong city centre and market town with a diverse network of distinct towns and villages  
Key strategic issues and challenges:  
City, town, local and other centres

**COM1: Community Facilities**

(a) New community facilities will be considered for approval in sustainable and/or accessible locations, provided that they would have no significant adverse impact on:

1. existing community facilities;  
2. the amenities of any nearby residential properties;  
3. road capacity and safety; and  
4. the local, natural and historic environment of the Neighbourhood Area.
(b) Any development proposals relating to existing community facilities will be considered for approval, provided that they would not have any significant adverse impact on the community value of the facility. For a list of these facilities refer to section 4.4. Maps 5a and 5b show the locations of these facilities.

Interpretation
This is an enabling policy for new community facilities in sustainable and/or accessible locations and further development of existing community facilities. This will help to ensure that the area is supported by a range of community facilities. Such Community facilities could include health, education, retail, tearooms/cafes, formal/informal meeting places, indoor and outdoor recreation, sport and leisure facilities, open space, public car parking facilities.

This policy should be applied with policy ASP6 of the Core Spatial Strategy and saved policy C22 of the Local Plan.

### 2.4.2 Local Green Space

**Rationale**
- To protect green areas of importance to the community.

**Evidence**
See sections 2.2 and 5.13, and Appendix 1, Local Green Space designations.

**Policy COM2** is in conformity with the principles of the following national and local policies and aims.

**NPPF (2018):**
- Para. 99
- Para. 100

**Adopted CSS:**
Policy CSP5 – Open Space/Sport/Recreation

**Emerging JLP:**
Aim 2 – Healthy and active communities
**COM2: Local Green Space**

Small-scale development may be considered within a Local Green Space, provided that it does not compromise the open quality of that space and enhances its overall community value.

**Interpretation**

This policy provides protection for Local Green Spaces, whilst enabling small-scale development that complements the community use of a specific Local Green Space. Examples would be a small storage and changing facility to support a sports or recreational use, or fixed play equipment. This policy also seeks to ensure that any such developments are accessible to the public.

**2.4.3 Developer contributions**

**Rationale**

- To ensure that new development is supported by the commensurate and appropriate augmentation of infrastructure, services and community facilities that are of importance to the community’s functioning and well-being.

**Evidence**

The NA has a limited number of community facilities, as described and listed in section 4.4. The majority of these facilities, including a few key services such as some basic shops, primary school and GP surgery, are located in Baldwins Gate. These are used by residents of both Baldwins Gate and the NA’s other settlements.

The AECOM TCA notes the lack of a defined village centre in Baldwins Gate:

> Residential functions dominate the settlement. A mixture of commercial and community functions are present along the intersecting A53; however, these are dispersed in location and cannot be read as a village centre. (p. 47)

and that

> Community facilities are not obvious and there is no defined village centre which can confuse the legibility. (p. 58)

The same report also states that in Baldwins Gate there is a
Risk of becoming more unsustainable due to centre/facilities failing to evolve to keep up with settlement growth. (p. 59)

and that

The lack of a clear settlement centre leaves the village vulnerable to piecemeal development of facilities which, as a result, could become inaccessible to each other. (p. 59)

The Residents’ Survey showed that the community facilities are valued by residents. The GP surgery, post office and local shops were rated as important by 91% to 86% of respondents; local pubs, restaurants and cafes and the village halls were rated important by 74% to 71% (Question 2). Fifty-seven per cent of respondents said that they shop regularly in the NA (Question 3). Community open spaces such as the playing field at Whitmore village hall, the Jubilee Gardens and Chapel Green in Baldwins Gate and Chapel Chorlton Green are also valued (Question 6). A few respondents suggested that additional retail and food services were needed (Question 2a). Facilities for community care for the elderly were also suggested. Respondents indicated a need for more space to be allocated to recreation and leisure, including better playing field space and more outdoor and indoor sports and exercise facilities for all ages, including tennis courts and facilities for the disabled, and a dog park (Questions 2a and 8a).

**Policy COM3 Developer Contributions** is in conformity with the principles of the following national policy.

**NPPF (2018):**

Para. 54
Para. 55
Para. 56

**COM3: Developer Contributions**

In considering Section 106 requirements or allocation of CIL monies, the following infrastructure priorities in the Neighbourhood Area should be considered:

1. Provision of social infrastructure to support growth, including health,
education, sport and leisure and other community facilities, e.g. care facilities and other services;

2 Provision of new open spaces and enhancement of existing open spaces, footpaths, bridleways and routes to support walking, cycling and recreational facilities; and

3 Provision of new bus stops and improved public transport services.

Interpretation
This policy sets out infrastructure priorities for the NA.

Where the upkeep of POS is to be secured by maintenance agreements, public access to POS and footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways over the POS should be secured and protected by appropriate conditions.

2.5 Design, character and built heritage policies

2.5.1 Local heritage

Rationale
- To protect, preserve and promote the area’s conservation areas and heritage assets.
- To find new uses for disused buildings that make a positive contribution to the local built heritage.
- To ensure that all new development, including replacement dwellings and extensions, is in conformity with the area’s rural character and local built heritage.

Evidence
The NA is rural in character and has a distinctive built character and heritage. For a description of the relationship between the NA’s natural and built environments see section 5.8 and for a general review of character see section 5.9.

For lists of Special Landscape and Heritage designations in the NA – scheduled monuments, listed structures, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas, locally listed structures
and sites recorded by the Staffordshire HER refer to section 5.10. For the locations of these features see Maps 19a–19c.

For specific types of historic structures in the NA that contribute to the NA’s rural character and built heritage, refer to the following sections: farmsteads, section 5.11 and Maps 20a–20c; workers’ cottages and council houses, section 5.12; schools, section 5.13; chapels, section 5.14; Cheshire railings, section 5.15 and Map 21. All of these structures are categorised as ‘non-designated heritage assets’ (see NPPF below).

Seventy-eight per cent of respondents to the Residents’ Survey agreed that vacant or derelict buildings would be suitable site for new homes.

**Policy DC1** is in conformity with the principles of the following national and local policies and aims.

**NPPF (2018):**

- Para. 79, esp. c) and d)
- Para. 146 d)
- Para. 197

**Adopted CSS:**

- Strategic Aim 14 – To protect and enhance the historic heritage and the unique character of the plan area
- ASP6 Rural Area Spatial Policy
- Policy CSP1 – Design quality
- Policy CSP2 – Historic Environment

**NuL Saved Policies:**

- Policy S3: Development in the Green Belt
- Policy H9: Conversion of rural buildings for living accommodation
- Policy B8: Other buildings of historic or architectural interest
- Policy B10: The requirement to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area
- Policy E12: The conversion of rural buildings

**Emerging JLP:**

- Aim 6 – Making our historic past work for the future
- Key strategic issues and challenges:
  - Heritage
**DC1: Local Heritage**

The appropriate and sensitive reuse and/or conversion of non-designated local historic buildings is strongly encouraged. This includes historic farmsteads, commercial buildings, places of worship and educational buildings. Conversion schemes will be considered for approval, provided that:

- they complement the character and appearance of the existing building;
- the scale and massing of any extension does not over-dominate the original;
- high-quality and durable materials are used.

**Interpretation**

Historic buildings refers to buildings in Conservation Areas and non-designated heritage assets. Complementing the existing structure is not necessarily about imitation, but can include well-designed contemporary interventions. High-quality materials could include well-finished and durable modern materials or authentic historic materials, including authentic vernacular materials such as Staffordshire Blue roof tiles and scalloped or fish-scale roof tiles. It would not include ‘mock’ traditional materials, such as plastic fascias or standard concrete roof tiles.

Attention should also be paid to treatments of boundaries and parking areas, to complement the setting of heritage assets.

This policy seeks to enable rural diversification and should be applied to all forms of development, not just residential, and should be applied with the other design policies DC2 and DC3 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

In applying the policy, consideration should be given to the [Staffordshire Farmsteads Assessment Framework](#).
2.5.2 Sustainable design

Rationale

- To ensure that all new development, including replacement dwellings and extensions, is in conformity with the area’s rural character and local built heritage.

Evidence

Both the AECOM TCA report and the AECOM Heritage and Character Appraisal (HCA) report (2016) document the rural character of the NA and its settlements.

Key rural characteristics

The AECOM HCA report defines the NA’s rural character in the following list of key characteristics:

- Strong rural area dominated by pastoral farming with a quiet and remote character, which generally results in a high degree of tranquillity
- Loose pattern of development with dispersed linear settlements, isolated dwellings, and farms at the ends of lanes
- The visual and audible prominence of the A51, A53 and West Coast Mainline in parts of the area
- A number and variety of historic buildings throughout the area, many of which are listed
- Fields generally larger in those parts of the area where (former) estates and parkland predominate, and smaller where tenant farming and smallholding has predominated. Most fields are bounded by hedgerows or woodland blocks
- Sunken, narrow, winding country lanes bounded by hedgerows, estate walls or house frontages
- Rolling lowland landscape enclosed by wooded ridges
- Parkland landscapes of estate lands, such as Maer, Whitmore and Madeley Park
- Suburban character and spacious layout of post-war estate developments in Baldwins Gate and Madeley Park Wood
- Significant area of commercial forestry to the north of Blackbrook.

AECOM, HCA, p. 18

The AECOM TCA report adds to the above by defining a ‘cumulative rural settlement character across the three parishes’ (p. 8). It defines and identifies a hierarchy of settlement types across the NA (see Table 5.5) and constructs a picture of the settlement character by defining historic morphology, land use distribution, landscape type, urban structure,
landform, building type and movement and legibility for each settlement type. In defining the rural character of the NA the report highlights the importance of the settlements’ relationship to the landscape:

The natural landscape provides a shared mutual identity for settlements across the Neighbourhood Area, and is considered to be one of the Neighbourhood Area’s most significant features. The undulating landform, and the numerous controlled views which this topography offers, are valuable assets to the Parishes, and are crucial in defining the character of the Neighbourhood Area. (p. 43)

**Issues to be addressed**

The HCA report identifies a range of issues to be addressed through new development or active management:

- Paving over of some front gardens in some settlements, and driveway parking in front of residences in newer estates in Baldwins Gate, contributing to car-dominated streetscapes.
- Lack of wooded margins to new developments, such as Fair-Green Road in Baldwins Gate and Walls Wood in Madeley Park Wood.
- High volumes of high speed traffic on the A51 and A53.
- The conversion of former estate buildings has introduced domestic and sometimes suburban architecture which at times jar with the historic landscape and parkland setting.
- Unsympathetic extensions, domestic porches to former agricultural buildings, the insertion or alteration of openings, the use of non-traditional materials in historic buildings, which cumulatively may undermine the historic character and appearance of the area.
- Newer development within the villages, particularly infill plots and the more recent estates in Baldwins Gate, have not respected the well-established post-war estate village style in terms of the established scale, height, massing, density, alignment and materials.
- Inappropriate boundary treatments, such as manor gates and railings and red brick walls, that are not in keeping with the rural character of many of the settlements.

**Boundary treatments**

Guidance on boundary treatments in the AECOM Baldwins Gate Design Statement is that:

Boundary treatments should be sympathetic to their location. Traditional treatments should be used along front boundaries. Where plots have boundaries onto public roads or footpaths, the use of hedging is preferred to high walls or fences....
Public-facing boundaries on plots in the NA’s other settlements likewise need to reflect the local character.

**Overdevelopment and inappropriate extensions**

The AECOM TCA identifies aspects of overdevelopment that threaten to undermine rural character. In Baldwins Gate:

- Overdevelopment of plots on more modern estates, with larger buildings/ smaller frontages and a closer relationship to the road, creating a suburban rather than rural character. (p. 59)

and:

- Housing extensions disproportionate to the existing housing profile and size risk undermining cohesiveness of the village’s character (p. 59)

In the smaller settlements the same report identifies:

- Inappropriate property extensions unsympathetic to the environment (p. 60)

**Sensitivities to change**

The AECOM HCA report also identifies elements that are particularly sensitive to change:

- Heritage buildings and their settings, in particular the clusters of listed buildings in the Whitmore, Butterton and Maer Conservation Areas
- Areas of ancient woodland and mature hedgerows and trees across the parishes
- The parkland landscapes of Maer and Whitmore, including the registered park and gardens of Maer Hall
- The wooded valley of the Meece Brook
- Wetland and peat bed areas around Baldwins Gate and in the Tern Valley
- The open farmland and woodland blocks which maintain separation between settlement areas

AECOM, HCA, p. 32

The AECOM TCA adds to the above in a SWOT analysis of the NA’s different settlement types that identifies the sensitivities of each to change (see Table 5.6).

A Design Statement for Baldwins Gate provides guidance for the design of future development in that settlement and is included as an Appendix to this chapter (see section 2.8). Together with the SWOT analyses in Table 5.6, descriptions of the building typologies
within each of the NA’s settlement types (see section 5.8.1.1) can guide design within the settlements.

**Recommendations**

In order to maintain and preserve the NA’s heritage assets and its essential rural character, the AECOM HCA report makes a number of recommendations.

Despite the area’s proximity to the urban area of Newcastle-under-Lyme, it has retained a strongly rural character and remains an attractive area of sparsely settled countryside. However, without further protection through planning policy, unsympathetic development, loss of open countryside, loss of heritage assets, including natural heritage and loss of mature vegetation in the area would have incremental impacts on the characteristics of the area which would result in a substantial cumulative impact on landscape character.

In order to address the issues highlighted above, managing change in this area should focus on sustaining and enhancing the defining rural character of the Neighbourhood Plan area and reinforcing the local distinctiveness conferred by its built, landscape and natural assets. The following principles should be considered when defining policies with respect to heritage and character:

- New developments should respect the layout, scale, mass, height and appearance of neighbouring buildings and buildings across the Neighbourhood Area and the rural character of settlements and should avoid urban dwelling types, styles and densities
- High quality materials and a high standard of workmanship should be applied in the repair, or other works, to the public realm
- Conserve and protect heritage assets and their setting, including those located outside the Maer, Butterton and Whitmore Conservation Areas
- Proposals to alter existing buildings should demonstrate a detailed understanding of the history and design qualities of the buildings and provide a clear rationale for how this is taken account of in the design of the alterations proposed
- Preserve the sense of enclosure in enclosed parts of the landscape by maintaining hedgerows and trees
- Protect the rural character of the landscape by maintaining or creating screening around the urban edges of settlements
- Proposals should retain or enhance well-vegetated front gardens that demonstrate a strong relationship with the street and the rural character of the area, and avoid substantial areas of paving for parking that create car-dominated streetscapes
- Contain any further expansion of the settlements within the Green Belt to protect its statutory functions
- Contain any further expansion of the settlements in the open countryside so as to maintain the existing loose pattern of settlement and avoid the visual or actual coalescence of settlements
• Maintain the openness of the landscape where it has been formed by parkland, (former) estate lands and farming estates
• Protect the area’s environmentally sensitive places such as wetlands, woodlands and Local Wildlife Sites, which contribute the richness of character in the rural landscape, from the encroachment of development.

AECOM, HCA, p. 33

Residents’ Survey

Responses to the Residents’ Survey showed the high value that residents place on the NA’s rural character and built heritage, with slightly more weight given to natural than to built heritage. In Question 9, 98% agreed that it is important to protect the landscape and natural environment; 94% assigned importance to the NA’s conservation areas and 65% to identifying further structures that should be protected. Responses to Question 10 further reflected the value placed on landscape and rural setting.

Policy DC2 Sustainable Design is in conformity with the principles of the following national and local policies and aims.

NPPF (2018):
Para. 124
Para. 125
Para. 127
Para. 128
Para. 130
Para. 131

Adopted CSS:
Strategic Aim 14 – To protect and enhance the historic heritage and the unique character of the plan area
Strategic Aim 16 – To eliminate poor quality development
Policy CSP1 Design quality
ASP6 Rural Area Spatial Policy

NuL Saved Policy:
Policy H18: Design of residential extensions, where subject to planning control

Emerging JLP:
Aim 3 – Dynamic and diverse neighbourhoods
Aim 6 – Making our historic past work for the future
Key strategic issues and challenges:
City, town, local and other centres
Heritage
Natural and rural environment
DC2: Sustainable Design

All new build development will be considered for approval provided that it:

1. Complements surrounding townscape in terms of urban form, spacing, enclosure and definition of streets and spaces;
2. Maintains the character and appearance of the existing residential area;
3. Is spaced and set-back to reflect surrounding properties;
4. Reflects the scale and massing of neighbouring residential properties;
5. Reflects the heights of surrounding properties;
6. Avoids the appearance of over development and over urbanisation, taking account of the rural character of the area;
7. Uses high-quality, durable materials, to complement the site and context;
8. Responds to and preserves views and landmarks visible from within sites in the design and layout of the development;
9. Includes high-quality boundary treatments to reflect the local rural character;
10. On the edge of the countryside, takes account of the transition between built area and open landscape, particularly in the built form, landscaping and boundary treatments; and
11. Responds appropriately to local topography.

Interpretation

The overall policy covers new development, replacement buildings, conversions and extensions. Obviously, some parts of the policy relate only to development that introduces new layout.

Design and access statements submitted with planning applications should make clear how the requirements of this policy have been met.
In terms of high-quality materials, the policy would be met by authentic local materials and other durable materials with a high standard of finish and durability. The policy would not be met by poor-quality imitation of traditional materials. Samples of materials could be submitted as a planning condition.

Planning applications should make clear how the NPPF’s (para. 128) encouragement for community engagement has been met, recognising that this is a material consideration. Community engagement should be focused on the pre-design stage, so that the community’s knowledge informs the design process. Late-stage engagement, focused on narrow and subjective aesthetic matters, offers little opportunity to influence the fundamental characteristics of a scheme.

For further guidance on local design characteristics in Baldwins Gate see the Baldwins Gate Design Statement (section 2.8). For design guidance for the NA’s other settlements and different settlement types see Table 5.5 ‘Settlement typology’, Table 5.6 ‘SWOT analysis of individual settlements’ and section 5.8.1.1, all quoted verbatim from the AECOM TCA report.

### 2.5.3 Public realm and car parking

**Rationale**

- To maintain and enhance connectivity within settlements and between existing and new development and promote ‘active travel’ (walking and cycling) within settlements.

- To protect rural character by ensuring an adequate level of parking provision within settlements and on new developments and avoid on-street parking and car-dominated street scenes.

- To minimise the impact of light pollution on the rural character and natural environment of the NA.

**Evidence**

**Connectivity**

The AECOM TCA report identifies poor connectivity of spaces within the settlement of Baldwins Gate:
The suburban layout doesn’t allow for connectivity across the settlement, as it tends to lineate out from the A53 at right angles, with little cross-connectivity. The cul-de-sac layout creates a road dominated environment. (p. 55)

There is an unclear street hierarchy within the settlement, with only a loose definition between residential streets and private accesses or unadopted roads. ... The unclear suburban layout does little to help in terms of legibility, especially as each street is of a varying style and layout. ... Cul de sac layouts and poor pedestrian linkages create inward looking estate parcels and tend to create car focused development. ...

These types of layout are today deemed to discourage walking and cycling, and best practice would suggest improvements in terms of orientating features, linkages and creating a more memorable urban form.

The standalone street pattern displayed by each estate has exacerbated a poorly legible urban form. (p. 49)

Poor connectivity resulting from piecemeal development creates silo developments.

The SWOT analysis of Baldwins Gate in the AECOM TCA report further identifies:

- WCML prevents east/west movement across village, except via the A53
- Poor interconnections between different parts of the village
- Unclear street hierarchy contributes to an illegible understanding of space which is difficult to navigate
- Impermeable culs-de-sac discourage active transport (ie walking and cycling)
  ...
- Additional piecemeal development would further worsen the village’s incohesiveness and illegibility (p. 59)

**Car parking**

See section 3.7 Transport and car ownership, for evidence on the low level of public transport provision in the NA and the high level of car ownership and dependence on travel by private car, especially Figures 3.23 and 3.25 and Table 3.6; and section 3.8 Accessibility of key services.

The AECOM Baldwins Gate Design Statement contains the following guidance on car parking:

**Guidance 12 (Parking Strategy):** Parking should be incorporated into the curtilage of building plot or within small-scale, landscaped parking courts where possible. New developments should submit a parking strategy which offers a suite of interventions which promote an attractive street-scape rather than a standardised solution. It should enhance the quality of the street-scape rather than detract from its architectural and public realm qualities, and its opportunities for movement.
Guidance 13 (On-Street Parking): Where on-street parking is necessary, the car parking design should be combined with landscaping to minimise the presence of vehicles on the street and as not to dominate the street-scene.

AECOM, TCA, p. 66

At the Kier development site, currently under construction at Gateway Avenue in Baldwins Gate, the developer has placed a planning condition on the properties and requires customers to enter into a covenant restricting the types of vehicles that residents may park within the curtilage of their home. The effect of this is to displace parked vehicles to other locations within the settlement, to the detriment of other residents. Although this is a planning matter, there is no provision in law for planning policy to deal with it. The ability of developers to impose such restrictions has the potential to create planning issues that could affect future developments.

**Lighting**

Insensitive or inappropriate lighting can have a negative impact on rural character and the natural environment. The AECOM TCA report notes that in the hamlet settlements:

- Street lighting would detract from the remote atmosphere and impact negatively on the night-time landscape (p. 62)

The Baldwins Gate Design Statement contains the following guidance:

Guidance 22 (Lighting): Private security lighting should be moderate and non-invasive, and should seek to minimise spillage which could disrupt long views from outside the settlement. Street lighting should respect the rural nature of Baldwins Gate

AECOM, TCA, p. 68

The same guidance is applicable to the NA’s other settlements and to isolated development.

**Policy DC3 Public Realm and Car Parking** is in conformity with the principles of the following national and local policies and aims.

**NPPF (2018):**

- Para. 104
- Para. 105
- Para. 180
Adopted CSS:

CSP5 – Open Space/Sport/Recreation

Emerging JLP:

Key strategic issues and challenges:
Transport
Environment

_DC3: Public Realm and Car Parking_

The form and layout of new development must demonstrate high standards of townscape and urban design, including:

1. Providing ease of movement for pedestrians and cyclists, including by connections to surrounding pedestrian and cycle routes and Public Rights of Way;
2. Catering for people with a range of mobility requirements;
3. Providing streets that encourage low vehicle speeds and which can function as safe, social spaces;
4. Providing a mix of car parking as an integral part of the layout, so that vehicles do not dominate the streets and spaces;
5. Ensuring that parking space provided within the curtilage of each dwelling is proportionate to the size of the property in terms of number of spaces;
6. Avoiding adverse impacts on the capacity of the highway network, including through generating additional on-street parking;
7. Improving and enhancing existing footpaths and pedestrian and cycle routes; and
8. Minimising the impact of outside lighting sources on the environment and wildlife and minimising light pollution.
Interpretation
Applying this policy will require consideration of the impact of the new development, together with the combined impact of other approved developments. The policy covers new development, replacement buildings, conversions and extensions.

The design of new developments should have regard to legibility of layout and connectivity with existing development and important local routes for ‘active travel’.

The car parking mix should comprise garage and driveway space suitable for a range of vehicle sizes and could include landscaped parking areas for visitors and overflow residential parking so as to avoid on-street parking and a car-dominated street scene.

Garage and within-curtilage parking space should not dominate frontages. Staffordshire County Council sets minimum internal dimensions for garages as 3m by 6m.

2.5.4 Connectivity and spaces

Rationale
- To encourage ‘active transport’ within settlements by providing a network of safe pedestrian and cycle routes and open spaces.
- To create safe links between new development and existing routes and open spaces.

Evidence
The AECOM TCA report identifies ‘Poor interconnections between different parts of the village’ (p. 58) in Baldwins Gate and that

The suburban layout doesn’t allow for connectivity across the settlement, as it tends to lineate out from the A53 at right angles, with little cross-connectivity. The cul-de-sac layout creates a road dominated environment. (p. 55)

Further, the layouts

are today deemed to discourage walking and cycling, and best practice would suggest improvements in terms of orientating features, linkages and creating a more memorable urban form.

AECOM, TCA, p. 49

In Madeley Park Wood

Access [is] achieved by self-serving routes, and there is a degree of disconnect between the PROW and roads to village centres

AECOM, TCA, p. 57
Policy DC4 Connectivity and Spaces is in conformity with the principles of the following national and local policies and aims.

**NPPF (2018):**
- Para. 98
- Para. 127

**Adopted CSS:**
- CSP1 – Design quality
- CSP5 – Open Space/Sport/Recreation

**Emerging JLP:**
- Key strategic issues and challenges:
  - Transport
  - Environment

**DC4: Connectivity and Spaces**

New build development adjacent to existing footpaths, Public Rights of Way, bridleways, cycle ways, green links or open spaces must take account of their proximity by avoiding negative impacts on amenity, safety, visual appearance, surveillance and functionality.

New development must also consider where possible making connections to the existing footpath and bridleway network.

**Interpretation**

This policy covers new development, replacement buildings, conversions and extensions.

Development should not turn its back on existing pedestrian, cycle and bridle routes or open spaces, for example by flanking them with hedges or fencing. It is essential that open surveillance be maintained.

It is highly desirable for new development to provide links to existing pedestrian, cycle and bridle routes and open spaces (see above, section 4.4.3 and Policy DC3 Public Realm and Car Parking).
2.5.5 Impact of lighting

Rationale
- To limit the impact of light pollution on local amenity, the night-time landscape and the NA’s wildlife.

Evidence
Insensitive or inappropriate lighting can have a negative impact on rural character and the natural environment. The NA is a rural area. The villages, hamlets and isolated developments are located in a setting of agricultural land and woodland. The largest settlement, the village of Baldwins Gate, is located in a broad, dark valley, surrounded by hills; a Local Wildlife Site is situated a short distance from the south-eastern boundary of the settlement (see Map 17b, site 73/99/98). The AECOM TCA report notes that in the hamlet settlements:

- Street lighting would detract from the remote atmosphere and impact negatively on the night-time landscape (p. 62)

Fully shielded lighting, with no light emitted directly upward, decreases skyglow by about half when viewed nearby, and by much greater factors when viewed from a distance.

Policy DC5 Street Lighting and Illuminated Signage is in conformity with the principles of the following national and local policies and aims.

NPPF (2018):
Para. 180

Adopted CSS:
Policy CSP 4 – Natural Assets

Emerging JLP:
Aim 4 – Utilising our natural assets and resources

DC5: Impact of Lighting
Floodlighting, signage and other illuminated features must be designed to maintain dark skies and to avoid impact on the rural environment local wildlife.
**Interpretation**

Lighting should point downwards and be focused as far as possible. Planning applications should include details how the requirements of this policy have been addressed.

### 2.5.6 Housing standards

**Rationale**

- To create safe, attractive and uncluttered developments.

**Evidence**

The local authority requires residents to separate certain recyclable items from household waste for separate collection. Storage areas for this waste and its containers needs to be provided outside living accommodation.

Permeable surfaces in hard landscaped areas help to meet the requirement for SUDS in developed areas.

It is government policy to encourage ‘active travel’ (walking and cycling). Residents need secure, covered space, in which to store cycles.

The government has announced that the manufacture and sale of petrol cars in the UK will cease in 2040 (7 years after the end date of this Plan). The number of electric and plug-in hybrid cars on the roads is steadily increasing. NA residents will need facilities to charge their cars at home.

Developments in renewable energy generation and storage technology enable electric cars to function as household energy stores and to provide energy for household use. This also requires vehicles to be plugged into the household energy network.

**Policy DC6 Housing Standards** is in conformity with the principles of the following national and local policies and aims.

**NPPF (2018):**

Para. 110

**Adopted CSS:**

CSP1 – Design quality
**DC6: Housing Standards**

New housing development must:

1. Include adequate screened storage space for bins and recycling;
2. Ensure permeable surfaces in hard landscape areas;
3. Provide secure, covered space for cycles;
4. Provide electrical car charging points within the curtilage of properties, accessible from parking areas.

**Interpretation**

The policy addresses variety of issues in housing development, including drainage and external storage, and the uptake of new transport technology. Secure, covered space for cycles could be provided within garage space.

**2.5.7 Renewable energy**

**Rationale**

- To encourage residents and businesses to adopt a variety of renewable energy technologies.

**Evidence**

The uptake of renewable energy technologies for both dwellings and businesses in the NA is currently slow. The Residents’ Survey showed low levels of support for large-scale renewable energy projects, with solar fields having the best support at 17%.

However, the NPPF is clear that ‘The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate’ and should ‘support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure’ (para. 148). It should help to ‘shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions’ (para. 148).

The rapid development of new materials and technologies for energy generation and storage means that the range of renewable energy technologies that are compatible with the NA’s rural character will continue to grow.
Distributed energy generation systems and microgrids are an appropriate and sustainable means for meeting the energy needs of small rural communities.

Policy DC7 is in conformity with the principles of the following national and local policies and aims.

NPPF (2018):
- Para. 148
- Para. 150, esp. b)
- Para. 151
- Para. 152
- Para. 153
- Para. 154

Adopted CSS:
- Strategic Aim A17 – To minimise the adverse impacts of climate change

Emerging JLP:
- Key strategic issues and challenges:
  - Energy and climate change

**DC7: Renewable Energy**

New developments should consider opportunities for the installation of renewable energy technologies either on an individual building basis or on a development-wide basis.

Community energy schemes and micro-generation schemes will be considered for approval, providing they would have no significant adverse impact on residential amenity or on the rural environment. This includes consideration of noise, disturbance, traffic movement, visual impacts, dust, vibrations and other impacts.

**Interpretation**

This policy is intended to encourage the uptake and use of renewable energy technologies within the Neighbourhood Area and to enable small-scale community energy. The policy requires impacts on residential amenity and on landscape and rural character to be considered carefully.
2.6 Economy and business policies

2.6.1 High-speed connectivity and telecommunications

Rationale

- To promote rural businesses that will contribute to the local and the wider economy.
- To promote home working and to provide suitable premises and communications technology to enable residents and employers to establish businesses in the Neighbourhood Area.

Evidence

Home working is a sustainable option for working-age people in rural areas. The NA has a significantly higher proportion of people working from home in comparison to NuL and England (see section 3.6.2.3 and Figure 3.14). Nine per cent of respondents to the Residents’ Survey identified themselves as working from home regularly, and 8% as working from home sometimes (Question 21).

Both home working and economic development through the growth of existing businesses or establishment of new businesses suited to the rural location require a high-quality telecommunications infrastructure.

Responses from the Residents’ Survey showed a low level of satisfaction with telecommunications, ranging from 34% for mobile voice signal to 26% for fixed line broadband (Question 5). Thirty-one residents who identified themselves as employers not currently operating a business in the NA cited internet access as a barrier (Question 23).

Superfast broadband is available in parts of the NA and still being rolled out (see Map 6). Mobile coverage is uneven across the NA and in some places is weak or non-existent (see Maps 7a and 7b).

Policy EB1 High-Speed Connectivity and Telecommunications is in conformity with the principles of the following national and local policies and aims.

NPPF (2018):

Para. 112
Adopted CSS:

- Strategic Aim 3 – To reduce the need to travel
- Strategic Aim 5 – To foster and diversify the employment base of all parts of the plan area

Emerging JLP:

- Aim 1 – UK central hub for innovation and investment

**EB1: High-Speed Connectivity and Telecommunications**

*New development, for both housing and commercial uses, must incorporate full fibre broadband connections and not impact negatively on the functionality of the existing telecommunications infrastructure.*

**Interpretation**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that new development (including replacement dwellings) is capable of connection to faster services. This promotes sustainable live/work patterns by enabling home working and supporting local business.

Developers should have early discussions with providers of telecommunications infrastructure to deliver the necessary physical infrastructure to accommodate information and digital communications networks as an integral part of all new developments.

A connectivity statement should be included with all relevant planning applications to demonstrate that broadband access and speed will be sufficient and that it is of no detriment to the existing users.

**2.6.2 Commercial and tourism development**

**Rationale**

- To provide suitable indoor and outdoor space for the enjoyment and leisure use of both residents and visitors.
- To promote the Neighbourhood Area’s built heritage and natural assets and incorporate them into the local economy.
- To provide the means for residents and visitors to learn about and enjoy the Neighbourhood Area’s natural and heritage assets.
Evidence

The NA’s economy has an existing leisure and tourism base that is supported by rural diversification, including sport- and leisure-based businesses and clubs, a variety of holiday accommodation, the reuse and redevelopment of disused buildings by a variety of businesses and the NA’s extensive network of PRoWs and lanes (see section 4.7). There is scope for further development of rurally oriented business, leisure and tourism activity in the NA and for growth in this sector of the NA’s economy.

The above facilities are also of value to and used by the NA’s residents. Further development of business- and club-based leisure and tourist facilities would be beneficial for NA residents.

Policy EB2 is in conformity with the principles of the following national and local policies and aims.

**NPPF (2018):**

Para. 83

**Adopted CSS:**

Strategic Aim 5 – To foster and diversify the employment base of all parts of the plan area

Strategic Aim 8 – To increase the attraction of the area as a tourist destination

**Emerging JLP:**

Aim 6 – Making our historic past work for the future

**EB2: Commercial and Tourism Development**

New development, or changes of use to create to create rural business space or to support rural diversification will be considered for approval, providing it has no significant adverse impact on residential amenity or on the local character.

Assessment of impacts may include consideration of noise, disturbance, traffic movement, visual impacts, dust, vibrations and other impacts.
Interpretation

This is an enabling policy and it applies to all business-related development, including space for micro-businesses, agricultural, equestrian, tourist and other rural uses.

The policy requires impacts to be assessed. Planning decisions will take account of technical data on impacts (for example highways and environmental health advice). A significant adverse impact would be indicated where development would be likely to result in legitimate complaints from nearby residents on grounds of public nuisance.

Technical reports submitted by developers will be checked by the local planning authority, in consultation with suitably qualified highways and health advisers.

Commercial schemes that incorporate sustainable construction and energy generation, such as solar powered energy systems or ground source heat pumps, are encouraged.

Employment development utilising brownfield sites is particularly welcomed.

This policy should be applied with policy ASP6 of the Core Spatial Strategy and saved policy E12 of the Local Plan.

2.7 Housing growth policies

2.7.1 New housing

Rationale

- To protect rural character while allowing for appropriate development.
- To provide a range of energy-efficient homes to meet the needs of residents of all ages, physical abilities and financial means.
- To identify sustainable locations/sites for housing.

Evidence

Rural character

See Tables 5.5 and 5.6, which summarise aspects of the rural character of the NA’s settlements.

The AECOM TCA report states:
Presently, the area to the west of Newcastle-under-Lyme has the greatest number of well-preserved rural settlements. A key aim of the Neighbourhood Plan is to preserve the unique character of the collection of small rural settlements and retain the much less developed overarching rural character. (p. 16)

In a cumulative description of land use distribution in the NA the same report states:

Farming is the predominant and most obvious land use, and is visually evident across the whole of the neighbourhood area with regard both to the fields and both large and small farmhouse and farmstead buildings. Farming activity within the neighbourhood area is chiefly focused on dairy and livestock farming, with a significant amount of arable. The open space between settlements is essential to this activity. Fields often extend up to settlement edges and domestic gardens, creating a close and sometimes blurred relationship between the agricultural and residential land uses, and further reinforcing the rural character of the area. This open farmland creates the separation between settlements, and is essential to the rural nature across the Neighbourhood Area. (p. 46)

Baldwins Gate is the largest settlement in the NA, at 315 dwellings and the only one of the NA’s settlements identified in the settlement hierarchy of the CSS. The AECOM TCA report notes that Baldwins Gate is at the tipping point of losing its rural character, is incongruous in the rural landscape and that further growth would risk creating visual coalescence with other settlements:

The predominance of the residential/suburban character is at the tipping point of going beyond what would be described as ‘rural’ character. (p. 44)

The development is relatively dense and concentrated compared to that of the rest of the Neighbourhood Area, and retains this form across the settlement to the boundaries. The result is an abrupt entry to and exit from the settlement, with little anticipation or build-up when travelling towards the village, and typically an abrupt development edge which leaves exposed edges to the surrounding fields. Although it is incongruous in the rural landscape, a tight village envelope could be easily drawn. (p. 45)

With development ongoing, the boundary of this higher order village continues to expand, with the risk that soon the concentration of development will skew the hierarchy of this settlement type to be beyond that which is defined as a higher order village. (p. 45)

The defensible Green Belt edge is described by the West Coast Mainline, which forms a strong edge. Openness to the west of this is not protected by this designation. In relation to the village envelope of Baldwins Gate, the potential for coalescence of settlements and the lessening of openness between the higher order village and neighbouring settlements needs to be considered. (p. 47)

Baldwins Gate is located on a flat expanse of land within the Whitmore Trough, allowing for a settlement which is much wider than the other settlement typologies.
The valley position of this higher order village with wooded hills in view provides a slight sense of enclosure, although the flat topography of the valley floor also creates an overriding sense of openness within the settlement. Its location in a broad, flat valley makes this settlement exposed and incongruous in the rural landscape. (p. 51)

Risk that further development would result in visual coalescence with neighbouring settlements. (p. 59)

The AECOM HCA report includes the issue of visual or actual coalescence of settlements in a set of character management principles:

- Contain any further expansion of the settlements in the open countryside so as to maintain the existing loose pattern of settlement and avoid the visual or actual coalescence of settlements. (p. 33)

The adopted CSS states:

The Sustainability Appraisal clearly demonstrated that limiting rural growth to meet identified local requirements will provide the most effective approach towards minimising any undesirable impacts upon international, national and local designated wildlife habitats and geological features. In addition, the Sustainability Appraisal clearly identifies the spatial strategy as the most effective and sustainable approach towards supporting the regeneration of the Major Urban Area whilst simultaneously reducing the need to travel and preserving the Borough’s finite natural resources.

The Borough’s Rural Services Survey (2007) has identified Loggerheads, Madeley and the villages of Audley Parish as providing the most comprehensive provision of essential local services....

Adopted CSS, p. 100, paras 5.198–199

**Green Belt and other constraints**

The settlement pattern of the NA consists predominantly of a number of small settlements set within the Green Belt and open countryside. Green Belt accounts for 40% of the NA (see Map 4). The defensible edge of the Green Belt is the WCML. The village of Baldwins Gate breaches this demarcation line and is partially surrounded by Green Belt. The NPPF (para. 79) discourages new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances.

The NA is heavily environmentally and infrastructurally constrained. Constraints on housing growth in the NA include:

- conservation areas
natural habitats and priority habitats, including SSSI, Local Wildlife Sites and wildlife corridors (see sections 5.6 and 5.16.2 and Maps 17a-b, 18, 25 and 26)

- significant peatland sites and the Functional Ecological Units of peatland sites (see section 5.3.2 and Maps 11 and 12) and principal aquifer (see section 5.4.4 and Map 13)

- sensitive landscapes with historical associations (see section 5.16.2.1 and Map 23)

- infrastructure deficiencies (see section 4.9), including: limited reach of the mains gas network (section 4.9.2), limited reach of the public sewerage network (section 4.9.3), capacity of the Baldwins Gate sewage treatment works and the terminal pumping station in Baldwins Gate (see further below and section 4.9.3)

- constraints imposed on movement within settlements by the presence of the strategic highway infrastructure and the WCML (AECOM, TCA, p. 58)

- Planned construction of HS2 Phase 2a (2020–2027).

**Location of growth**

The adopted CSS defines a hierarchy of strategic sub-areas within the NuL and SoT plan area (pp. 36–37, para. 5.7). At the top of the hierarchy is the City Centre of SoT; at the bottom is the Newcastle Rural Areas. Within this hierarchy of sub-areas a 5-level hierarchy of strategic centres is defined. At the lowest level of the hierarchy are 7 villages; these include the settlement of Baldwins Gate/Whitmore, which is within the NA. No other settlements within the NA are identified in the settlement hierarchy. The CSS states of the village level:

No further growth is planned in these settlements, and efforts will be made to ensure existing services and activities within these villages are maintained.

*Adopted CSS, p. 39, para. 5.8*

In its ‘reasoned justification’ of policy ASP6 the CSS states that

the strategy is clear that there is no scope for development of a scale beyond that required for natural growth and [sic] in locations where there are very few local services.

*Adopted CSS, p. 100, para. 5. 197*

It is therefore clear that the adopted CSS identifies (i) that there are very few local services in the settlement of Baldwins Gate/Whitmore, (ii) that there is no scope for development of a scale beyond that required for natural growth, (iii) there are no other settlements within the (subsequently designated) NA where growth would occur.
**Housing Needs Assessment**

A Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) for this Neighbourhood Plan was carried out by AECOM in 2016 as a technical assistance package provided by Locality. The conclusions are provided as Appendix 2 to this Plan; the full HNA report is available in the Evidence Base. The HNA was performed according to a standard methodology that is used in all AECOM HNAs for neighbourhood plans. It includes a thorough review of the housing stock and housing affordability in the NA on the basis of Census and other data from official sources and assesses the need for different types and sizes of housing.

The HNA identified 5 separate projections of dwelling numbers for the NA for the period 2013–2033, as set out below.

16. Our assessment of a wide range of data sources identified five separate projections of dwelling numbers for the Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston and Whitmore parishes NP area between 2013 and 2033 based on:

- A figure derived from the Adopted 2009 Joint Core Spatial Strategy (JCSS) for NuL and Stoke-on-Trent (which gives a total of 0 dwellings, or 0 per year);
- A ‘proportionate share’ derivation from the 2015 SHMA, Objectively Assessed Need\(^1\) (OAN) lower range figure of 1,177 dwellings per annum (367 per annum for NuL) (the demographically adjusted need\(^2\)), which gives a total of 148 dwellings (rounded to the nearest whole number), or 7.4 dwellings per annum;
- A ‘proportionate share’ derivation from the 2015 SHMA, OAN higher range figure of 1,505 dwellings per annum (the economic growth and housing affordability adjusted level of need\(^3\)), which would give a requirement of 197 dwellings (rounded to the nearest whole number) or 9.8 dwellings per annum;
- A projection forward of net dwelling completion rates 2001-2011, (which gives a projection of 80 dwellings, or 4 dwellings per annum); and
- A projection forward of net dwelling completion rates 2011-2015 (which gives a projection of 31 dwellings, or 1.56 dwellings per annum).

\(^1\) The OAN includes the baseline demographic need, plus any adjustments made to official forecasts to account for projected rates of household formation post 2021, past suppression of the formation of new households, the effect of past under-supply, employment forecasts, market signals and affordable housing need (as set out in paragraph ID2a-004 of the NPPG).

\(^2\) The starting point of the 2012-based Sub National Household Projections have been adjusted to account for a return to the rates of household formation for younger households seen in 2001, when house prices and affordability were more in line with longer term national trends.

\(^3\) In this projection, there has been further consideration of the level of growth in labour force required to support forecast job creation, which suggests that greater retention or attraction of people would be required to grow the labour force. In addition, this projection...
considers the need for affordable housing, including the need to clear the backlog of existing households on the waiting list.

AECOM, HNA, para. 16

The HNA also assessed factors acting to increase or reduce demand:

18. A further assessment applied to the five projections set out above indicates that the local market factors acting to increase demand for new housing in the NP area are outweighed by those acting to reduce demand for housing (see Table 1 below, which replicates Table 20 of our conclusions).

AECOM, HNA, para. 18

24. It is our evidenced conclusion that, taking into account that the factors acting constraining demand and the factors increasing demand (as set out in Table 1 above) tip in favour of lowering demand in Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston and Whitmore Parishes; that the level of unconstrained need will lie somewhere below the midpoint of the projections, with an appropriate range considered to be between 50 and 100 dwellings for the period 2013-2033.

AECOM, HNA, para. 24

**June 2017 SHMA update**

An update of the 2015 SHMA for the JLP was published in June 2017 covering the period 2013–2039 (6 years beyond the period of the JLP and the NDP). The housing market area (HMA) covers the administrative areas of SoT and NuL. The 2017 SHMA update allocates a higher ‘proportionate share’ of the HMA’s housing need to NuL than was the case in the 2015 SHMA (2017 SHMA Update, Table 5.1). It projects a ‘minimum demographic need for 1,064 dwellings per annum across the HMA’, of which 398 would be in NuL (2017 SHMA Update, para. 6.15). A market signals adjustment ‘indicates a slightly higher level of need for 1,084 dwellings per annum’, raising the need in NuL to 418 per annum (2017 SHMA Update, para. 6.26). On the basis of likely jobs growth, ‘The modelling developed in this update suggests that 1,390 dwellings per annum will be required to support forecast job creation of the period to 2039, of which 586 would be in NuL’ (2017 SHMA Update, para. 6.35 and Table 5.1). A proportionate share derivation for the NA would be 11.7 dwellings per annum.

**Government consultation: Planning for the right homes in the right places**

In September 2017 the Government put out to consultation a proposed methodology for calculating OAN. The accompanying ‘Housing need consultation data table’ showed that the indicative assessment of housing need for NuL borough for the 10-year period 2016–2026,
based on the Government’s proposed formula, is 361 dwellings per annum. A proportionate share derivation for the NA would be 7.2 dwellings per annum.

**Housing applications and completions**

Data held by the LPA on residential dwelling consents and completions shows that in years 1 to 4 of the 20-year plan period (1 April 2013 to 31 March 2017), consents were granted for 144 dwellings, of which 142 dwellings were not completed. The 2 dwelling completions during the period were both barn conversions in Whitmore parish. (See Tables 4.2 and 4.3)

If the higher level of growth were to be determined for an adopted JLP, the additional growth beyond the currently granted 144 dwelling consents, which have not been completed, could be accommodated during the course of the Plan by changes of use and small infills, given the heavily environmental and infrastructurally constrained nature of the NA, which is recognised in the adopted Local Plan (CSS, pp. 36–39, paras 5.7–5.8).

**JLP Preferred Options Consultation February 2018 (see section 1.10)**

**SHLAA**

The JLP Preferred Options Consultation document (February 2018) indicates that there are only 2 strategic housing site allocations within the NA. These are LW33 and LW36, both located within or adjacent to Baldwins Gate, the principal settlement of the NA. Both of these are currently under construction. LW33, land at Baldwins Gate Farm (outside the settlement boundary of Baldwins Gate) has permission for 109 dwellings; LW36, land adjacent to the Sheet Anchor (within the settlement boundary of Baldwins Gate) has permission for 7 dwellings.

Other sites that were considered but not included as proposed strategic allocations were LW6 and LW7, adjacent to Baldwins Gate. Planning applications on these two sites have been refused on environmental grounds.

**Development in the rural area**

The HTP is clear that the strategy of the JLP is to direct housing growth to the urban areas and that where ‘preferred sites’ in rural locations have been included in the SHLAA, either these are ‘within the village envelopes of rural settlements’ or they are ‘sites with extant planning permission within the Green Belt or beyond the boundaries of rural settlements not surrounded by Green Belt’.
Specifically on the subject of sites with planning permission in rural locations the HTP states that

the borough has been subject to a significant number of residential development permissions granted having benefitted from a prolonged period in which the authority has been unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, diminishing the effectiveness of Local Plan housing policies. This situation has resulted in a greater number of permissions for housing development in the rural area than was envisaged through the Adopted 2011 Core Strategy. In addition, this growth was not strategically planned for in terms of infrastructure provision and may have taken place in an unbalanced way. (para. 4.1)

The HTP also states that

While sites were ... submitted for consideration within the Open Countryside, these were ultimately discounted on the basis that directing residential development to these locations does not accord with sustainability appraisal objectives or the emerging development strategy of the Joint Local Plan (para. 3.3);

and that ‘the use of sites in the Open Countryside would also undermine one of the primary functions of the Green Belt to prevent urban sprawl’ (para. 3.3). The same paragraph also refers to ‘reducing the need to travel’.

The HTP states further that

although in principle it is recognised that there could be an amount of housing development directed towards the rural area it is considered inappropriate to apportion more development to any one settlement without first understanding the implications of doing so and whether this would be in the interests of achieving sustainable development. (para. 4.2)

**Sustainability, key services and infrastructure**

As noted above, the adopted CSS is clear that Baldwins Gate/Whitmore is a village on the bottom rung of the settlement hierarchy where no further growth is planned, and a location where there are very few local services.

From the late 1950s a focus on housing development in Baldwins Gate while neglecting social, economic, service and infrastructure development has resulted in a village infrastructure that has not kept pace with growth. The NA’s smaller settlements have lost the few services (both bricks-and-mortar and mobile) that they once had.

The NA has seen the most minimal of key service or infrastructure provision since 1968, when a new primary school was opened in Baldwins Gate. Since post-war housing growth
began in Baldwins Gate the village has lost a grocery store, which was closed in the late 1980s and subsequently demolished to create access to a new housing development. During the late 1960s and 1970s village schools, post offices and shops in some of the NA’s smaller settlements were closed. The only food shops in the NA are at Baldwins Gate and Blackbrook. Public transport has been severely reduced, no longer serves the smaller settlements and is dependent on the continuation of subsidies by SCC. For a list of community facilities in the NA see section 4.4; for public transport services see section 3.7.2; for the level of car ownership in the NA see section 3.7.3; for distances travelled to work see section 3.7.4; and for accessibility of key services see section 3.8.

There are currently 315 dwellings within the Baldwins Gate village envelope. In October 2016 reserved matters planning permission was granted for a development of 109 dwellings on land contiguous with the village boundary. This one development will increase both the number of dwellings and the village population by 35%. No provision of additional community facilities or infrastructure was offered by the developer or conditioned by the LPA to support the growth in population. The only highways measure conditioned is a new pedestrian crossing on the A53 at the halfway point of the village. Several months after the planning permission was granted it came to light that the Baldwins Gate Sewage Treatment Works at Chorlton Moss and the Terminal Pumping Station in Baldwins Gate have insufficient capacity to support the development and that the statutory undertaker’s 5-year plan (agreed with Ofwat) will not deliver necessary upgrades at the sewerage works until April 2020, after occupation of the development has commenced (see NuLBC planning application 16/01101/FUL).

In a SWOT analysis of Baldwins Gate the AECOM TCA identifies the following regarding community facilities in the village:

- Provision of a limited level of local services and facilities
- Community facilities are not obvious and there is no defined village centre which can confuse the legibility
- Bisection by the A53 and WCML rail line undermines the potential for a village ‘core’
- Evolution of the centre/facilities hasn’t kept up with settlement growth
The lack of a clear settlement centre leaves the village vulnerable to piecemeal development of facilities which, as a result, could become inaccessible to each other. Risk of becoming more unsustainable due to centre/facilities failing to evolve to keep up with settlement growth. Lack of public car parking.

The SWOT analysis also identifies poor connectivity between different parts of the village:

- WCML prevents east/west movement across village, except via the A53
- Poor interconnections between different parts of the village
- Unclear street hierarchy contributes to an illegible understanding of space which is difficult to navigate
- Impermeable culs-de-sac discourage active transport (ie walking and cycling)
- Additional piecemeal development would further worsen the village’s incohesiveness and illegibility

and the negative impact of the A53:

- Speed and volume of traffic on A53
- Increasing volume of traffic due to development outside the Neighbourhood Area
- Difficult vehicle access onto A53 from residential streets and from dwellings on A53
- Speed and volume of traffic on A53 creates an unpleasant pedestrian experience

All of the above undermine the settlement’s sustainability.

Any significant new growth in Baldwins Gate would be unsustainable and could not be supported without the following:

- comprehensive input and support from SCC and statutory undertakers for infrastructure improvements (see section 4.9)
- significant contributions from developers themselves, including but not limited to low-cost housing
- improvement of a range of community facilities so as to reduce the need to travel
- development of new employment opportunities, also so as to reduce the need to travel.

These measures would need to include:
• highways improvements and traffic calming measures
• upgrades or extensions to water, sewerage, electricity, gas, telecommunications and broadband services
• provision of new footpaths and cycle routes and connections into existing routes so as to create comprehensive connectivity between the different parts of the village
• expansion of GP service provision
• upgrade of existing community facilities and provision of new facilities, including comprehensive shopping facilities, community meeting spaces, indoor and outdoor recreation and sport facilities.

Village envelope of Baldwins Gate

Taking the above evidence into account, following the recommendations of the AECOM TCA and HCA reports, considering the overarching aim of the Neighbourhood Plan to protect rural character while allowing for appropriate development, and taking account of national and local policies and aims in relation to the countryside and rural settlements, changes are proposed to the village envelope of Baldwins Gate as shown on Map 33. These changes would take into the settlement boundary two areas that are contiguous with and currently outside the settlement boundary:

1. An area of land at the south-western end of the settlement comprising (i) No. 2 Lakeside Close, (ii) Holmcroft and (iii) land at Watering Close granted reserved matters planning consent in 2015 (15/00294/REM)

2. On the north-western side of the settlement, land at Gateway Avenue granted reserved matters planning consent in 2016 (16/00676/REM).

Policy HG1 New Housing is in conformity with the principles of the following national and local policies and aims.

NPPF (2018):

Para. 77
Para. 78

Adopted CSS:

 Strategic Aim 3 – To reduce the need to travel
 Strategic Aim 4 – To balance the supply and demand for quality housing
 Strategic Aim 12 – To renew the fabric of urban and rural areas
Strategic Aim 14 – To protect and enhance the historic heritage and the unique character of the plan area

**NuL Saved Policies:**

Policy H1: Residential development: sustainable location and protection of the countryside
Policy H13: Supported housing
Policy C22: Protection of community facilities
Policy N8: Protection of key habitats
Policy N14: Protection of landscape features of major Importance to flora and fauna
Policy IM1: Provision of essential supporting infrastructure and community facilities

**Emerging JLP:**

Aim 3 – Dynamic and diverse neighbourhoods
Key strategic issues and challenges:
City, town, local and other centres

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**HG1: New Housing**

New housing development will be considered for approval in sustainable locations. These are:

- within the village envelope of Baldwin’s Gate (see Map 33)
- as small-scale infill development within existing built frontages in other built settlements;
- as part of conversions of agricultural buildings.

To be sustainable, development must:

1. Be supported by adequate infrastructure, or provide any necessary infrastructure improvements as part of the development.
2. Not encroach into the open countryside;
3. Not involve the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land;
4. Avoid encroaching onto or impacting on sensitive landscapes and habitats;
5. Not involve the loss of any important community facility.
Interpretation
The policy seeks to focus development into existing settlements. This helps to make existing settlements more sustainable and prevents those settlements from encroaching into the open countryside or from merging into each other. The village envelope of Baldwins Gate has been extended to include additional land for housing (see Map 33).

Best and most versatile agricultural land is grades 1 to 3a as defined in the NPPF.

With regard to infill housing, interpretation of small-scale depends on the specific context. Housing should infill gaps in otherwise built frontages, without leading to an appearance of over-cramming.

2.7.2 Housing mix

Rationale
• To provide a range of homes to meet the needs of residents of all ages, physical abilities and financial means.

Evidence
The AECOM HNA (Table 2), identifies a demand in the NA for smaller (1–2 bedrooms) homes both to meet the needs of older residents for downsizing and to attract younger people and young families into the NA. Homes for downsizing could include both houses and bungalows. Lifetime homes should be encouraged. A need for affordable homes is also identified, and these too should be small, mainly 1–2 bedrooms. The majority of new homes should be detached or semi-detached, although affordable units could also be provided through a small flatted development or conversions. There is also a clear demand for some larger homes both for families and for people who work from home and these should be at least 3 bedrooms, with the majority four bedrooms or more. However, encouraging downsizing by providing more smaller homes would free up some of the existing stock of family homes. Monitoring is important to avoid an over-supply of larger homes.

See sections 3.4 and 3.5 for evidence on low-income households and deprivation, including disability and health, in the NA. The evidence supports the need for low-cost housing in the NA to meet the needs of younger people and families and to attract people who will work in
jobs the NA, and the need to provide housing types and facilities to meet the needs of older members of the community.

The Residents’ Survey asked a series of questions about future housing development in the NA. The local perception of a need for housing to meet the needs of older residents and for smaller dwellings suitable for both older residents and young families corresponds with the findings of the HNA. Respondents’ opinion was that the greatest need is for dwellings designated for older people and people with disabilities (55%), followed by bungalows (47%) and houses with 1 or 2 bedrooms and starter homes (both 41%). There was less support for homes with 3 or 4 bedrooms (27%). Larger homes and apartments each had only 12% support.

Residents’ moving intentions also provided an indication of future housing need in the NA and again confirm the greater need for smaller homes than for larger ones. Fifty-one per cent of respondents planned to stay in their own home during the Plan period. Twenty-four per cent planned to move to a smaller property in the NA, and 4% to move to a larger property, while 3% planned to buy their first home. Eleven per cent planned to move to specialist accommodation. Twenty-eight per cent of respondents indicated that they had family members who may either want or need to move into the NA in the next 15 years; these could be either younger families or older relatives. The 11% who planned to move into specialist accommodation indicate a demand for sheltered and other types of specialised housing for older people. If such a demand were met locally, at least some of these people would be able to remain in the NA, close to friends and (maybe) relatives.

**Policy HG2 Housing Mix** is in conformity with the principles of the following national and local policies and aims.

**NPPF (2018):**

- Para. 62
- Para. 63

**Adopted CSS:**

- Strategic Aim 4 – To balance the supply and demand for quality housing
- Policy ASP6 Rural Area Spatial Policy
- Policy CSP6 – Affordable Housing
Emerging JLP:

Aim 3 – Dynamic and diverse neighbourhoods
Key strategic issues and challenges:
Environment

HG2: Housing Mix

Residential developments of 5 or more dwellings must include a balanced mix of dwelling types to meet local need. This includes dwellings suitable for those wishing to downsize, young families and first-time buyers and specialist accommodation suitable for the elderly, vulnerable or disabled persons. The proportions of different dwelling types and sizes must be based on evidence of local housing need and this should be demonstrated as part of any planning application.

Affordable housing must be provided within the development or nearby within the neighbourhood area, and not through contributions to affordable provision elsewhere. Development must be tenure-blind, with affordable housing mixed in with the standard market housing.

Interpretation

Local evidence of need suggests an under-supply of smaller housing units and indicates a need for a higher proportion of smaller units in new developments. The mix should include both houses and bungalows to meet the needs of both young families and older people. Compliance with the Lifetime Homes standard is encouraged.

Gated developments fragment the community and will be discouraged.

The policy does not seek to modify the affordable housing requirements in the Local Plan in terms of numbers. However, it does make clear that affordable housing must be provided as an integral part of new development, rather than as financial contributions for affordable housing elsewhere.
3.7.3 Local play, sports and recreational facilities

Rationale

- To identify existing and new buildings and land that are of importance to the community’s well-being.
- To provide suitable indoor and outdoor space for the enjoyment and leisure use of both residents and visitors.

Evidence

For details of community facilities in the NA for play, sports and recreation see section 4.4.

Eighty per cent of respondents to the Residents’ Survey agreed that provision for outdoor sport and leisure is important, but only 50% agreed that there are enough opportunities to keep fit in the NA (Question 7). Respondents expressed a need for a larger and better playing field with more games/play facilities for all age groups, from children to adults. Other responses mentioned indoor as well as outdoor games/fitness facilities. Interest was expressed in having facilities such as tennis courts, a small indoor gym suitable for older people (and ‘Useful for everyone in the evenings’) or a leisure/fitness centre. A need for facilities for the disabled was also mentioned. Several people asked for a dog park (Question 8).

Policy HG3 Local Play, Sports and Recreational Facilities is in conformity with the principles of the following national and local policies and aims.

NPPF (2018):

Para. 96

Adopted CSS:

Policy CSP5 – Open Space/Sport/Recreation

Emerging JLP:

Aim 2 – Healthy and active communities

HG3: Local Play, Sports and Recreational Facilities

Residential development must take into account the need for accessible, high quality, local play, sports and recreational facilities in the rural location.
Interpretation

Meeting the policy requirement can include demonstrating how existing facilities or direct provision of new facilities within the development would serve the community. Where financial contributions are being made, these should be used for new facilities or upgrading of facilities within the neighbourhood area. The whole point is the provision of a sustainable and accessible range of local facilities and not remote provision.

This policy should be applied in conjunction with saved policy C4 of the Local Plan and with reference to the Newcastle-under-Lyme Open Space Strategy and the Green Infrastructure Strategy, adopted March 2017.
2.8 Appendix: Baldwins Gate Design Statement (AECOM, TCA, pp. 64–69)

The SWOT analyses as presented in Chapter 6 identified the opportunities and constraints of each settlement type. Given the weaknesses raised in relation to Baldwins Gate, and the potential for this settlement to be developed above its position in the settlement hierarchy, it was decided with the Neighbourhood Group that a Design Statement could be used as a tool to help guide future development.

The Neighbourhood Group were asked to identify four themes specifically which could be targeted through the statement. These themes include Morphology and Boundary Treatments, Facilities and Parking, Holistic Approach to Connectivity, and Architectural Detailing.

Morphology and Boundary Treatments

Baldwin’s Gate currently exhibits a stark settlement boundary and an untraditional density pattern. It is hoped that any development which occurs will help to blur the settlement envelope into the surrounding landscape and soften the settlement edge against the open countryside.

**Guidance 1 (Village Envelope):** New development should be contained within the village envelope, as defined within the adopted Neighbourhood Plan. Development which breaches the village envelope should be discouraged, and it should be recognised that growth may skew the size of the village to above its position in the settlement hierarchy.

**Guidance 2 (Hedgerow):** Existing hedging should be preserved and developers should be encouraged to retain, restore or reintroduce indigenous hedging into the public realm of any new development, so as to protect wildlife and maintain a natural landscape. Development on the edge of the envelope should use hedgerow and trees to blur into the surrounding landscape, and to act as screening.

**Guidance 3 (Landscape Blur and Views):** Any new development on the village periphery should complement the surrounding countryside, and give high priority to landscape design to protect and enhance the views of and from the village. Views from the surrounding hills into the village should especially be considered.

**Guidance 4 (Development Density):** New development should respect and complement the density of the neighbouring building forms, and should seek to ‘disperse’ out towards the village envelope boundary.

Boundary treatments within the village can also help to soften the development edge, and contribute to effective screening.

**Guidance 5 (Development Blur):** Space should be maintained around dwellings closest to the boundary envelope to avoid the loss of soft landscaping, and create the impression of dispersal into the surrounding countryside.

**Guidance 6 (Boundary Treatments):** Boundary treatments should be sympathetic to their location. Traditional treatments should be used along front boundaries. Where plots have boundaries onto public roads or footpaths, the use of hedging is preferred to high walls or fences. Inappropriate development of residential gardens should be resisted.

The scale of the individual plot and ratio of the built form to the garden space contribute to the density of the village.
Guidance 7 (Extensions – Plot): Extensions should respect the neighbours’ property, amenity and privacy, and seek to retain existing landscaping within the plot. Extensions should be designed as to avoid the creation of a terraced effect between neighbouring properties by ensuring adequate gaps are maintained between units.

Guidance 8 (Extensions – Scale): Extensions should be of an appropriate scale to the original building. Proportions of volume and architectural details should reflect the original unit, and have due regard for the street-scene.

Guidance 9 (Infill Development): Infill development should be discouraged. Where permitted, these should be designed to integrate well with the architectural features, size and scale of the existing units.

Table 5: Examples of effective boundary treatments which compliment local views and help to ‘blur’ the settlement into the local landscape.
It is considered important to protect the community functions and facilities which currently exist within Baldwin’s Gate, given the social dimension that these assets provide.

**Guidance 10 (Local Facilities):** The Whitmore Village Hall and Baldwin’s Gate CE Primary School should be maintained and retained as active assets of the community. The value of these facilities within the rural village should be recognised. Where possible, pedestrian and cyclist access to these facilities should be enhanced through high quality routes. Clear and attractive signage to these facilities should be provided, and the setting of the facilities should be maintained to be of a high quality.

**Guidance 11 (Public Open Space):** The public open space at Whitmore Village Hall should be protected from development and safeguarded for its social and community value. Opportunities to enhance this feature should be explored, as should the potential to enhance amenity spaces across the village where appropriate. This could be achieved through the introduction of benches, resting spaces or high quality landscaping.

On-street parking facilities threaten to undermine pedestrian and vehicle permeability, and can appear cluttered and unattractive. It is suggested that public parking facilities are also provided in order to prevent an increase of this on-street parking.

**Guidance 12 (Parking Strategy):** Parking should be incorporated into the curtilage of building plot[s] or within small-scale, landscaped parking courts where possible. New developments should submit a parking strategy which offers a suite of interventions which promote an attractive street-scape rather than a standardised solution. It should enhance the quality of the street-scape rather than detract from its architectural and public realm qualities, and its opportunities for movement.

**Guidance 13 (On-Street Parking):** Where on-street parking is necessary, the car parking design should be combined with landscaping to minimise the presence of vehicles on the street and so as not to dominate the street-scene.

**Holistic Approach to Connectivity**

Connectivity within the village is orientated around the A53, and there is little opportunity to move across the settlement without accessing/ navigating this route. The varied suburban layout of the streets of the village makes for an illegible environment which can be difficult to navigate, and the presence of culs-de-sac exacerbates this, and does little to help permeability. The guidance hopes to improve vehicle and pedestrian permeability across the village, and allow opportunities for movement which do not rely on the A53.

**Guidance 14 (Village Network):** The existing hierarchy of street[s], though weak, should be acknowledged and any new connections should seek to strengthen the broader network across the whole village.

**Guidance 15 (Permeability):** Streets and roads should be laid out in a permeable pattern, allowing for multiple connections and choice of routes beyond connection to the A53. The presence of disconnected culs-de-sac should be kept to a minimum.

**Guidance 16 (Pedestrian Linkages):** Existing Public Rights of Way should be protected and/or enhanced by future development. Opportunities to create safe and direct pedestrian/cyclist linkages between residential streets should be explored and developed.

**Guidance 17 (Street Hierarchy):** Road and paving materials should be used with consistency throughout the village, and should help to represent a hierarchy between primary routes, access routes and driveways. The retention and maintenance of the wide grass verges on the approach roads to the village should be encouraged as a way of indicating arrival into Baldwin’s Gate.
**Guidance 18 (Sustainable Impact):** In the event of possible future housing development, planners should consider the routes likely to be used by new residents travelling in and out of the village, and seek to keep congestion to a minimum. All development should give careful consideration to the impact of increased traffic through the village, especially in relation to the A53.

*Examples of attractive street design giving an indication of hierarchy*

*Example of attractive paving materials*  
*Pedestrian linkages could be enhanced*

**Architectural Detailing**

Development should enhance and contribute to the character and appearance of Baldwin’s Gate. Recognising that the village comprises many architectural styles and characters, the guidance seeks to maintain the character of the streets, but blur the stark distinctions between units. It is hoped that this can be achieved through consistent detailing and material choices which are sympathetic to the neighbouring units, whilst avoiding homogenisation.

**Guidance 19 (Village Design Study):** Where developments exceed 10 units, a village design study should be provided. This should appraise the features and layouts of the village, especially with regard to the neighbouring units, and have regard to the local setting and narrative.

**Guidance 20 (Architectural Cohesion):** Developments should avoid mixing incongruous styles and features within the same building, and should be designed to be sympathetic to the neighbouring built units. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring that bricks and roof materials are complimentary to those used on neighbouring properties.

**Guidance 21 (Replacement Features):** Replacement windows should be in keeping with the vernacular style of the property concerned. Where replacement of architectural features would be detrimental to the character of the building, it should be avoided.

**Guidance 22 (Lighting):** Private security lighting should be moderate and non-invasive, and should seek to minimise spillage which could disrupt long views from outside the settlement. Street lighting should respect the rural nature of Baldwins Gate.
**Guidance 23 (Planting):** Trees and natural features should be retained within plots when possible.

**Guidance 23 (Village Cohesion):** Where possible, development should seek to blur the distinctions between the streets of differing architectural styles within the settlement, and should seek to establish a consistent street-scape and landscaping arrangement. This involves:

- Using brick, roofing, and facade materials which are complimentary to those used in neighbouring developments.
- Respecting the existing roofline of the village, although subtle variation in building line and roof line are accepted as a way of avoiding monotony. Extensions should not exceed the height of the present building.
- Adopting traditional detail within the building which is not too elaborate in its quantity or mix.
- Encouraging pitched roofs rather than flat roofs
- Front gardens should have a strong border onto the street with traditional boundary treatment, rather than ornate/domestic planting.
Table 6: Examples of effective architectural detailing and principles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dark tile as a roof material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensions to be of a matching or complimentary material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development which respects the style/ pitch/ character of neighbouring property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensions which do not exceed the height of the original building unit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 Socio-economic context

Content of this chapter:

3.1 Demographic overview
3.2 Population profile
3.3 Population growth
3.4 Incomes
3.5 Deprivation
3.6 Employment trends
3.7 Transport and car ownership
3.8 Accessibility of key services
3.9 Sustainability and sustainable development

3.1 Demographic overview

At Census 2011 the NA population was 2,468, comprising 1,233 males and 1,235 females.

Table 3.1 provides a general overview of the population of the NA and its parishes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>Chorlton</th>
<th>Maer</th>
<th>Whitmore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All people</td>
<td>2468</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>1,554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>1233</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>1235</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 0–15</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working age</td>
<td>1440</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 65+</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census 2011, table KS102EW

3.1.1 Population density

Loggerheads and Whitmore ward, where the NA is located, is the most sparsely populated ward in NuL borough. From April 2018 new ward boundaries will take effect (see Box 1.1). The NA boundary will be contiguous with the new ward of Maer and Whitmore, which will be the least densely populated ward in the borough. Table 3.2 compares the population densities of the NA and its parishes to NuL and England.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>Chorlton</th>
<th>Maer</th>
<th>Whitmore</th>
<th>NuL</th>
<th>England</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census 2011, table QS102EW
The population density of the whole NA is only 10% of that of NuL. Maer parish has the lowest comparative density at 5.4% that of NuL, while Whitmore parish has the highest comparative density at 14.3% that of NuL.

The low density of the population reflects the dominant position of agriculture and forestry in the local economy.

### 3.2 Population profile

**3.2.1 Gender balance**

Figure 3.1 provides a percentagewise gender breakdown of the populations of the NA and its parishes and compares them to NuL and England. The gender balance of the populations of the NA and its parishes is broadly similar to that for NuL and England, with minor variation between parishes.

**3.2.2 Age composition**

Figure 3.2 compares the age composition of the NA’s population to NuL and England.

#### 3.2.2.1 Children (0–15)

At 16.2% across the NA as a whole, the proportion of children is slightly lower than those for NuL (-1%) and England (-2.7%); but there is strong variation between parishes.

- At 12.3% Maer has a significantly lower proportion in this age group.
- At 19.8% Chorlton has a higher proportion in this age group than the other parishes and NuL (+2.6%) and England (+0.9%).

#### 3.2.2.2 Working age group

The NA as a whole has a lower proportion of working age residents than NuL and England; but there is strong variation between parishes.

- At 66.3% Maer has a significantly higher proportion in the working age group, approximately 10% ahead of Chorlton and Whitmore; and 1.7% ahead of NuL and England.
- In Maer the significantly higher proportion in the working age group appears to be at odds with a significantly lower proportion in the 0–15 age group.
**Figure 3.1** Gender balance at Census 2011 (%), NA compared to NuL and England

Source: Census 2011, table KS102EW

**Figure 3.2** Age composition at Census 2011 (%), NA compared to NuL and England

Source: Census 2011, table KS102EW

### 3.2.2.3 65+ age group

The NA and each of the parishes has a significantly higher proportion in the 65+ age group than either NuL or England; but there is significant variation between the parishes.
3.2.3 Dependency ratio

The dependency ratio is a measure of the proportion of working age to non-working age population. A higher ratio indicates a lower proportion of working-age people. (Table 3.3)

**Table 3.3** Dependency ratio of the NA and parishes compared to NuL and England

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>Chorlton</th>
<th>Maer</th>
<th>Whitmore</th>
<th>NuL</th>
<th>England</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: ACRE Rural community profiles*

The NA’s high dependency ratio is largely due to the high proportion of people in the 65+ age group, although in Chorlton, which has the highest dependency ratio also has a significantly higher proportion in the 0–15 age group.

**Box 3.1 Issues: an ageing population – implications for service provision and housing**

The above has implications for provision of services and housing in the NA.

- The unusually high proportion of the 65+ age group indicates a need for a range of housing types and services to meet their needs.
  - Housing types for which a need can be predicted are:
    - smaller units for downsizing/lifetime dwellings
    - serviced area with warden
    - care home (i.e. residential, not nursing/medical care)
    - low-cost housing for people providing care services
  - Services for which a need can be predicted are:

(See also below, Box 3.5)
Opportunities: an active ageing population

An ageing population can also be an active population making a significant contribution to the life of the community. This also has implications for services, community facilities and activity in the community.

An active ageing population can be involved in a wide range of leisure activities, including sport and other outdoor activities, education and learning and a variety of volunteering services in the community. Frequently, the active ageing are now involved in providing childcare for grandchildren while parents are at work. This is seen in the NA where the older or younger generations of a family move into the NA to be close together, as noted in section 1.5.1.

3.3 Population growth

The population of the NA as a whole grew significantly over the course of the 20th century, although sustained and significant growth was confined to Whitmore parish. Chorlton and Maer parishes saw some decline in population following mid-century growth (see below, Box 3.3).

Whitmore parish is set to see further significant growth with the development of the Kier site in Baldwins Gate from 2016 (109 dwellings) and two minor developments from 2017 (11 dwellings), bringing an anticipated increase of around 288 in the settlement’s population.

Box 3.2 Issue: critical implications for infrastructure and services

Imminent growth in Baldwins Gate, and other growth in the NA during the plan period, will have implications for infrastructure, services (including education and health) and community facilities to serve the population of the entire NA, across all age groups. This is critical, given the general failure of successive Local Plans from the late 1950s to develop local infrastructure and services in line with population growth, and the actual decline or loss of some services over the same period. (See also section 1.1.)
Box 3.3 Population growth in the three parishes over 110 years

Census data in Table 3.4 and Figure 3.3 shows how the populations of the three parishes have grown over a 110-year period (1901–2011), with a projection to 2021 for Whitmore parish. Populations grew in the decades following World War I (i.e. 1920s onwards), with the beginnings of housing development in the countryside.

Table 3.4 Population growth in the parishes, 1901–2011, with projection to 2021 for Whitmore

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Chorlton</th>
<th>Maer</th>
<th>Whitmore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>443</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>1842</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3.3 Population growth in the parishes, 1901–2011, with projection to 2021 for Whitmore

Note: No census in 1941; data for 1971 not accessible.

From the 1951 to 2001 the populations of Chorlton and Maer parishes fell significantly, due to changes in the agricultural economy and social organisation of the countryside. From 1961 to 1981 an additional factor in the decline will have been the departure of ‘baby boomer’ children from parental homes. During the first decade of the 21st century there
was no growth in Maer parish. Minor growth in Chorlton parish was due to the new Lakeside estate in Baldwins Gate being partially located in that parish.

Whitmore, by contrast, has experienced continuous growth since the beginning of the 20th century, with dramatic growth after the end of World War I, and again from 1961 onwards due to housing development in Baldwins Gate, Whitmore Heath and Madeley Park Wood and the influx of an urban population. (It should be noted that parish boundary revisions in 1974 transferred, Sandyfields and Gateway estates in Baldwins Gate and Madeley Park Wood from Madeley parish into Whitmore parish.) By 2011 the population of the NA as a whole had grown by 218% since 1901; and by 234% since the low point at the end of World War I. However, in 2011 the combined population of Chorlton and Maer parishes was only 15% greater than in 1901, whereas that of Whitmore had increased by 505%.

The projection to 2021 for Whitmore parish is based on 2.4 persons per household. Completion of the Kier site at Gateway Avenue and two minor developments currently in progress will see the population of the parish 18% greater in 2021 than in 2011.

### 3.4 Incomes

Average estimated weekly household incomes are the same across the NA. Data in Figure 3.4 from the ACRE Rural community profiles is for 2007/08. Incomes are significantly higher than in NuL as a whole and also higher than the England average. The chart also shows that housing costs are greater than for NuL and England.

Although high average weekly household incomes may be taken to indicate an affluent area, they can equally indicate households where adult children are living at home. In such cases several individual incomes will combine into a higher overall household income.

#### 3.4.1 People living on low incomes

Although onlookers generally consider the population of the NA to be affluent, in all three parishes there are people and families living on low incomes. Across the NA there is little variation in the proportion of benefit claimants and low-income households, although Maer parish had a higher percentage of Pension Credit claimants (+2.9%) than the other two
parishes in August 2012 (Figure 3.5). Generally speaking, the proportion of benefits claimants in the NA is about one-third of the level for NuL as a whole.

**Figure 3.4** Average weekly household income estimates (2007/08), NA compared to NuL and England

![Average weekly household income estimates chart](chart.png)

Source: ACRE Rural community profiles

**Figure 3.5** Benefit claimants (%), parishes compared to NuL and England

![Benefit claimants chart](chart.png)

Source: ACRE Rural community profiles
The NA’s proportion of households below 60% of median income after housing costs is somewhat higher, at 11.5% across the NA and two-thirds of the level for NuL (Figure 3.6). A household living below 60% of median income after housing costs is considered to be living in poverty. In such households members of working age may be out of work or in low-paid jobs. As well as being a measure of income, this statistic is also an indicator of the relatively high cost of housing in the NA and the level of need for affordable housing. In this respect, the AECOM Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) for NA states that 45.3% of households in the Rural South sub-area (Loggerheads and Whitmore ward) of NuL could afford to purchase an entry-level home in 2016 (HNA, p. 34).

### 3.4.2 Fuel poverty

The proportion of households in the NA estimated to be in fuel poverty is around 2.6% higher than for NuL, and 6% higher than for England (Figure 3.7). While this reflects the condition and characteristics of older housing stock in a rural area it also indicates the higher cost of fuel in areas with no mains gas supply, where households depend on oil, LPG or electricity for heating and cooking (see also section 4.9 below).

#### Box 3.4 Issue: need for low-cost and affordable housing

The data in this section on incomes and areas of poverty, and the data below on deprivation and employment, shows that although the NA is generally regarded by outsiders as affluent, the local community includes people and families who are not well off and who have needs for low-cost and affordable housing.

**Opportunity**

The Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity to make the case for provision of an adequate level of affordable and low-cost housing to meet the needs of lower-income members of the local community.

### 3.5 Deprivation

The NA is in the 3rd decile on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), where the 1st decile is least deprived. The IMD is a measure based on income, unemployment, health, education
and skills, housing, crime, environment and access to services, and a household is considered to be deprived if it is experiencing deprivation in 4 or more dimensions of deprivation.

**Figure 3.6** Percentage of households below 60% of median income (2007/08), parishes compared to NuL and England

![Bar Chart](chart1.png)

*Source: ACRE Rural community profiles*

**Figure 3.7** Percentage of households estimated to be in fuel poverty (2011), parishes compared to NuL and England

![Bar Chart](chart2.png)

*Source: ACRE Rural community profiles*

**Figure 3.8** shows the proportion of households experiencing multiple deprivation in the 3 parishes.
With the exception of Maer parish, the proportion of households experiencing deprivation in the NA is higher than in NuL. In Chorlton parish it is significantly higher than for both NuL and England. While the measure indicates in part the low level of access to services in a very rural area, Figure 3.8 provides a strong corrective to onlookers’ perception of homogeneous affluence within the NA.

**Figure 3.8** Percentage of households experiencing multiple deprivation (2010), parishes compared to NuL and England

3.5.1 **Disability and health**

3.5.1.1 **Disability**

In August 2012 the population of the NA had a lower level of Attendance Allowance (AA) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) claimants as compared NuL or England (Figure 3.9). There was little variation between the parishes for DLA, but Maer parish had a somewhat higher proportion of AA claimants.

AA is a benefit available to severely disabled people aged 65+ who need help with personal care; DLA is available to disabled under-65s to help with the extra costs of living with a disability. The generally lower levels of claimants for both allowances in the NA may reflect...
lower levels of severe disability and need for assistance with personal care in the NA as compared to NuL and England. However, it is well known that the level of take-up of such benefits is generally well below the actual level of qualification to receive them. Rather than a low level of disability and care need, the low level of claimants in the NA, especially for AA, may indicate (i) a generally low level of take-up, (ii) in some instances possibly combined with favourable financial circumstances, (iii) reliance on a spouse or other family members and friends for assistance.

**Figure 3.9** Percentage of persons claiming attendance/disability allowances, NA and parishes compared to NuL and England

Figure 3.9 Percentage of persons claiming attendance/disability allowances, NA and parishes compared to NuL and England

![Percentage of persons claiming attendance/disability allowances, NA and parishes compared to NuL and England](image)

*Source: ACRE Rural community profiles*

### 3.5.1.2 Health

Limiting long-term illness (LLTI) in the 0–64 age group is less across the NA than for NuL and England, but there is significant variation across the parishes (Figure 3.10). In 2011 the level in Whitmore parish was about half that of NuL. Chorlton and Maer parishes had 4.6% and 3.8% more LLTI than Whitmore, and in Chorlton parish the level was very close to that for England.

In 2011 the percentage of LLTI across all age groups was twice that for the 0–64 age group. This provides an indication of the higher levels of LLTI among the 65+ age group. On the other hand, among the 0–64 age group there was a lower percentage of LLTI in the NA than
in NuL and England. At 19% across the NA for all age groups, the percentage of LLTI was only 1.8% below NuL, and 1.4% greater than for England as a whole. The lowest level of LTTI was 17.4% in Whitmore parish, where it was equal to England. Chorlton parish had the highest level of LTTI: at 24.7% it was 3.9% greater than for NuL and 7.1% greater than for England.

**Figure 3.10** Percentage of persons experiencing limiting long-term illness, NA and parishes compared to NuL and England

_box 3.5 issues: providing for care needs in the local community_ 

Generally speaking, the lower levels of AA and DLA claimants and of LLTI among the 0–64 age group in the NA indicate a good level of health among the population, and the figures for LLTI among the under-65 population show somewhat better health in the NA than in NuL as a whole.

**Disability**

Nevertheless, at 11.1% in 2012 the number of AA claimants in the NA indicates a significant proportion of the population aged 65+ who are in need of assistance with personal care. Taking into account the ageing population profile and the possibility that the low numbers
of claimants may mask a hidden need, this has implications for the provision of social care and other facilities for an ageing population in a rural area (see also above, Box 3.1).

**LLTI**

The percentages of LLTI across all age groups as compared to the 0–64 age group are indicative of the level of LLTI among the older population. Again, this has major implications for social and healthcare and medical services provision for an ageing population in a rural area, including both local provision and emergency and out-of-hours care and hospitalisation.

**Social care**

An inadequate supply of low-cost housing in the NA leads to difficulty in obtaining social care for an ageing population. Care providers must travel long distances from the urban area and this, combined with long distances between clients, leads to scheduling difficulties. Individuals in need of care assistance may find it difficult or impossible to obtain care, and residents who would prefer to continue living in the NA are sometimes forced to move into the urban area or into care homes. The difficulties of arranging for social care in the rural area can also have implications for discharge of patients from hospital.

**Opportunity**

There is an opportunity for the 3 parish councils to work together to establish a non-profit social care agency in the NA along the lines of NED Care (North East Dartmoor Care, www.nedcare.org). The agency would employ care staff who would provide a service within the three parishes, and the parish councils would ensure that low-cost housing was available within the NA to enable carers to live locally. A social enterprise of this kind could evolve from providing care for people in their own homes to eventually establishing sheltered housing and/or a care home to cater for the needs of NA residents needing a higher level of care. The possibility of providing a service in partnership with the local GP practice could also be explored.

> People in lower-waged occupations are needed in the rural area to fulfil roles in the social sector. Businesses and schools need cleaners, elderly and disabled people need carers. Where do our caring professions come from now? They come out from the town and drive long miles to visit their rural clients.
Isn’t there a case to build housing for people in low-waged occupations? Otherwise, farmers will continue to have to provide housing on agricultural tenancies for their workers, and other low-waged people such as carers will continue to drive long miles from town to serve their clients.

http://www.cmaw-neighbourhoodplan.org.uk/blog, report on Roadshow at Stableford, 8 December 2015

3.6 Employment trends

3.6.1 Economic activity

At Census 2011 the level of economic activity among the working-age population across the NA was marginally higher than for NuL and slightly lower than for England (Figure 3.11). There was small variation between the parishes, with Whitmore having the highest level of activity at 68.6% and Chorlton lowest at 64.2%. The proportion of economically inactive residents was marginally lower across the NA than for NuL and slightly higher than for England, again with small variation between the parishes. Chorlton had the highest level of economic inactivity at 35.8%. The ‘economically inactive’ group is defined as including students, home-makers, carers and retired people.

3.6.2 Modes of employment

3.6.2.1 Self-employment

Within the economically active population, the NA has a significantly higher level of self-employment than NuL and England (Figure 3.12). At Census 2011 self-employment across the NA was 242% the level in NuL, and in Maer parish it was 282% the level in NuL.

3.6.2.2 Full- and part-time employment

The level of part-time employment was very similar in the NA to both NuL and England, with little variation between the parishes (Figure 3.13). Across the NA the level of full-time employment was 6% less than for NuL and England, with small variations between parishes.

3.6.2.3 Working from home

Within the working-age population group at Census 2011 the proportion of people working from home in the NA was 3.5 times greater than in NuL or England (Figure 3.14). The proportion was greatest in Maer parish (5 times greater), and least in Whitmore parish (2.7 times greater).
**Figure 3.11** Economic activity (% of age group 16–74), NA and parishes compared to NuL and England

![Bar chart showing economic activity](chart)

- **Note:** ‘Economically inactive’ includes students, home-makers, carers, retired people.
- **Source:** Census 2011, table KS601EW

**Figure 3.12** Percentage of people self-employed (age group 16–74), NA and parishes compared to NuL and England

![Bar chart showing self-employment](chart)

- **Source:** Census 2011, table KS604EW
**Figure 3.13** Full-time and part-time employment (% of age group 16–74), NA and parishes compared to NuL and England

![Graph showing full-time and part-time employment percentages for NA, Chorlton, Maer, Whitmore, NuL, and England.]

*Source: Census 2011, table KS604EW*

**Figure 3.14** People working from home (percentage of age group 16–74), NA and parishes compared to NuL and England

![Graph showing percentage of people working from home for NA, Chorlton, Maer, Whitmore, NuL, and England.]

*Source: Census 2011, table KS604EW*
3.6.3 Sectors of employment

Employment in the public sector is slightly less across the NA than in NuL and England (Figure 3.15). At Census 2011 there was a variation of 6.9% between the parishes. Maer parish had the least amount of public sector employment (23.9%), which tallies with it also having the greatest proportions of self-employment and working from home. Conversely, Whitmore parish, which had the least proportion of people working from home and slightly below the NA average for self-employment, had the greatest proportion of public sector workers (30.8%).

Figure 3.15 Percentage of people employed in public or private sector (age group 16–74), NA and parishes compared to NuL and England

Source: Census 2011/ACRE Rural community profiles
Box 3.7 Issue: serving the day-time population

The economically inactive, home-workers and part-time employees comprise a segment of the adult population many of whom may be in the local area during the day and therefore in need of services and facilities or making use of community facilities.

On the assumption that there is no overlap between home-workers and part-time employees, across the NA 55% of the working-age population (equalling 38% of the total NA population) may be in the NA during the day on working days.

The group analysed here is the 16–74 years age group; to the numbers who may be in the NA during the day should be added those aged 75+, another 11% of the NA population, making a total of 49%. In other words, up to half of the adult population may be present in the NA during the day on working days. As in other instances, there will some small variation between the parishes.

Opportunity

The above suggests that there is a need in the NA for further development of community facilities, including a small community drop-in/café, retail businesses, services and voluntary activities, to serve the daytime population. The parish councils, in particular Whitmore Parish Council need to be alert to opportunities to meet needs in these areas.

3.6.4 Out-of-work benefits

There is a very low level of unemployment among residents across the NA. Levels of Jobseekers’ Allowance and incapacity benefits are significantly lower in the NA than for NuL or England (Figure 3.16). Across the NA Jobseekers’ Allowance claimants were 35% of the level in NuL in February 2013, while the numbers receiving incapacity benefits were 50% of the level in NuL in August 2012.

3.6.5 Qualifications, industry and occupations

3.6.5.1 Qualifications

Across the NA qualifications are significantly higher than in NuL and England (Figure 3.17).
**Figure 3.16** Percentage of people receiving Jobseekers’ Allowance and incapacity benefits (age group 16–74), NA and parishes compared to NuL and England

![Chart](image)

*Source: DWP/ACRE Rural community profiles*

**Figure 3.17** Qualifications (percentage of people aged 16+), NA and parishes compared to NuL and England

![Chart](image)

*Source: Census 2011, table KS501EW*
At Census 2011 37.9% of the NA population aged 16+ had Level 4+ (degree level) qualifications, as compared to 22.5% in NuL. The proportion of people with Level 3 (A level or equivalent) and above qualifications was 49%, as compared to 37% in NuL. Across the NA the proportion with no qualifications was correspondingly low at 18.6%, as compared to NuL (26.8%). Chorlton parish had the highest proportion of 16+ residents with no qualifications, at 23.8% – slightly higher than for England but still below NuL.

### 3.6.5.2 Industry of employment

Across the NA the 3 largest industries of employment at Census 2011 were Retail, Human health and social work, and Manufacturing, together accounting for 40% in the working-age group. This is broadly similar to NuL, where the same industries predominate and account for 45.4%. Figure 3.18 illustrates employment in these 3 industries and contrasts it with NA’s major economic sector, Agriculture, forestry and fishing.

The three main sectors are fairly comparable in size to NuL. The biggest differences between the NA and NuL (not charted here) are in Agriculture, forestry and fishing, Information and communications, and Professional, scientific and technical, which together account for 15.6% of the working-age group in the NA, as compared to 7.7% in NuL and 11.6% in England.

### 3.6.5.3 Occupational groups

Across the NA at Census 2011 the 3 largest occupational groups were Managers and senior officials, Professional occupations, and Skilled trades occupations, accounting for 54.2% of the working-age population (Figure 3.19). This is markedly different from NuL and England, where the same groups account for 38.1% and 39.8%, respectively. Figure 3.19 contrasts these groups with elementary occupations, which accounted for 6.6% in the NA, as compared to 13.1% in NuL. There is a marked difference between the parishes, with Chorlton parish having the highest proportion in elementary occupations at 10.6% (close to the level for England) and Whitmore the lowest at 5.8%.

Smaller occupational groups represented in the NA and not charted in Figure 3.19 are Associate professional and technical, Administrative and secretarial, Personal service, Sales and customer service, Process, plant and machine operatives, which together account for 35.9% of occupations, as compared to 48.8% in NuL.
Figure 3.18 Percentage of people employed in three main industries and in agriculture, NA and parishes compared to NuL and England

![Bar chart showing employment percentages]

Source: Census 2011, table KS605EW

Figure 3.19 Occupational group (percentage of people aged 16–74), NA and parishes compared to NuL and England

![Bar chart showing occupational groups]

Source: Census 2011, table KS608EW
Box 3.8 Issue: urban-focused occupations

- The largest industries of employment represented among the NA population are not typically rural and are not industries of high employment in the NA. Together, these major industries of employment and the high levels of managerial and professional occupations and predict a high level of commuting to work (see below, section 3.7).
- While agriculture is the single largest sector of economic activity in the NA, it employs only 4.1% of the NA population. This reflects the long-term trend of mechanisation and automation and consequent declining employment in agriculture. The trend is set to continue with the ongoing development of new technologies and computerisation, such as driverless machinery and computerised dairy and herd management.
- Overall, the qualifications, occupations and industries represented in the NA, together with the population growth already noted, indicate a major social disruption in the countryside and the influx of a predominantly urban population.

Opportunity

The NA has a high level of qualifications and skills, as shown in Figure 3.17. People with a high level of qualifications and/or skills are more likely to run or start their own business, and this is reflected in Figure 3.12 by the high proportion of self-employment in the NA. This presents opportunities for establishment of businesses in the NA and development of the local economy.

Box 3.9 Issue: providing for a local labour force

In order for local businesses to establish and grow, the NA needs housing types and a transport system that will enable employees to live and work in the NA.

Aston is a pretty good place to run a business – provided that it doesn’t grow, you have no employees and it doesn’t make too many demands on the internet. The lack of transport has forced one resident to move his business from Aston into Stoke because he can’t get people to come to work in Aston. ‘I could employ people here, but . . .’
Here we have a triple conundrum: there are no local jobs because the place is so isolated as to make them inaccessible; but equally, there are no people locally to work in the kinds of jobs that would be on offer; and the dwellings in Aston are not affordable by the people who would be employed by local businesses. This is not merely an economic problem, but a socio-economic problem.

www.cma-w-neighbourhoodplan.org.uk/blog/, report on roadshow at Aston 26 November 2015

Box 3.10 Residents’ Survey

The Residents’ Survey asked employers who were not currently operating a business in the NA to indicate the barriers that prevented them from doing so. The 16 who responded ‘Other’ stated that their business was not suited to the NA. This supports the conclusion drawn from evidence in the ACRE reports, that the industries of employment represented among the NA population are predominantly urban-based, not rural.

23. If you are an employer but not currently operating a business in the Neighbourhood Area, what are the barriers that stop you from doing so?

| Lack of suitable skills in the Neighbourhood Area | 2 |
| Need for employees to travel to workplace | 8 |
| Transport infrastructure | 10 |
| Lack of suitable premises | 24 |
| Internet | 31 |
| Other* | 16 |

3.7 Transport and car ownership

3.7.1 Overview

The information and data presented in the following subsections illustrates the very limited public transport provision in the NA, the distances from the NA to workplaces and services and the consequent extraordinarily high dependence on private cars across the NA. The following points emerge from a critical analysis of the data.
• Access to employment and services is a major factor in quality of life.

• The limited public transport provision in the NA makes dependence on private motor cars the only option for access to many services, including at certain times of day (e.g. evenings) and at weekends and on bank/public holidays.

• Access to services can be especially difficult for people in older and younger age groups, and for those who cannot drive or with limited mobility.

• The need for older teenagers / young adults living with their parents to be independent in terms of transport contributes to the high level of car ownership.

3.7.2  Public transport services

3.7.2.1  Bus service

Scheduled public transport is limited to a single bus service operating on a route along the A53, with a short stretch on minor roads and the A51 between Blackbrook and Baldwins Gate.

The 164 bus service Shrewsbury–Market Drayton–Newcastle–Hanley is operated by Arriva West Midlands and runs Monday–Friday and Saturday during working hours only. The last bus home from Shrewsbury and Market Drayton leaves Shrewsbury at 1615hrs and Market Drayton at 1711hrs (Figure 3.20). The last bus home from Hanley and Newcastle on weekdays leaves Hanley at 1815hrs. On Saturdays the last bus home is 1 hour earlier in each direction. There is no Sunday service.

There are a total of 13 bus stops in each direction in Maer parish and Whitmore parish, including at Blackbrook, Baldwins Gate and Whitmore village (Figure 3.21). Some bus stops are located on a footway, some have on a small tarmacked refuge by the roadside and some have no off-road provision for waiting passengers.

• Blackbrook residents have a choice of 3 stops. The westbound stop on the A51 at White Farm and the stop in Hungersheath Lane have no off-road refuge.

• Maer village residents walk to the stops at Maer War Memorial. The route has no footway but there is off-road provision at the stops.

• Hill Chorlton residents walk to the stops in Woodside at Maerfield Gate. The route along the A51 has a footway and the bus stops have off-road refuges.
**Figure 3.20** Service 64/164 Shrewsbury to Hanley bus timetable, revised at September 2017

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**Monday to Friday - towards Hanley Bus Station**

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**Source:** [https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/GetTimetable/?guid=f2b29056-0724-4891-a45b-5203f8fa3255&date=30600&date=170902-180111](https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/GetTimetable/?guid=f2b29056-0724-4891-a45b-5203f8fa3255&date=30600&date=170902-180111)
Figure 3.21 Service 64/164 Shrewsbury to Hanley bus route through the NA

- Residents at the northern end of Woodside and Sandy Lane walk to the stop at the northern end of Woodside. There are no footway and no off-road refuges.
- Baldwins Gate residents walk to the stops on the A53 at Sandyfields or the Sheet Anchor. The stops are on the footway.
- Whitmore Heath residents walk to the stops on the A53 at the Sheet Anchor or near the Common Lane junction. The route to the A53 has no footway.
- Whitmore village residents walk to the stops on the A53. The route has a footway.
- Acton residents walk to the stop on the A53 at the Trentham Road junction. The route to the A53 has no footway but the stop has an off-road refuge.
- Butterton and Shut Lane residents walk to the stops on the A53 at Shut Lane Head. The route to the A53 has no footway. The westbound stop has an off-road refuge, the eastbound is on the footway.
• The Lymes residents walk to the stop on the A53 at Butteron cross-roads. The route to the A53 has no footway but the stops are on the footway.

Residents at Chapel Chorlton, Stableford, Weymouth/Willoughbridge, Aston, Manor Road and Madeley Park Wood and in other isolated parts of the NA have no access on foot to the bus service.

**Box 3.11 Issue: limitations of bus service – a Planning Inspector’s comments**

The limitations of the bus service were highlighted by a Planning Inspector in January 2017. The appeal in question concerned a site at Maerfield Gate in Maer parish adjacent to a stop on the 64/164 bus route.

19. The appellant has referred to a bus service which operates the route between Shrewsbury and Market Drayton and also Newcastle and Hanley to Market Drayton. However as noted by [a] previous Inspector, there are limitations to the service. These include two early morning buses ..., no service in the evenings and no service on Sundays (the timetable states Mondays to Saturdays). Whilst the service may be hourly during the day, that is not always convenient for commuting purposes or for a specific timed appointment such as for a dentist or doctor as arrival or departure times may not always exactly correspond with the desires of future occupants [of the proposed development]. Future occupants [of the proposed development] might also work elsewhere other than the locations served by the bus service.

20. There is no specific information before me as to the exact distance of goods and services that future occupants would be reliant upon, such as supermarkets, the nearest GP practice or school, from the appeal site and whether or not these would be readily accessible via the bus route. Additionally, future occupants undertaking large weekly food shops or travelling with children may well view the use of the private car as more convenient to undertake trips as it is often easier to carry large volumes of shopping or bulky items such as prams this way. For these reasons, whilst there is a bus service available that future occupants could use, I consider it likely that future occupants would be likely to undertake the majority of trips via the car as this would be likely to be seen as a more convenient option.

Appeal Decision APP/P3420/W/16/3163358, 24 January 2017

The Inspector’s comment that future occupants would be likely to take the majority of trips by car, for the reasons stated in paragraphs 19 and 20, is applicable across the NA area.
3.7.2.2 Border Car

The Border Car is a 12-seater minibus operated and subsidised by Staffordshire County Council (SCC) and runs during the day time, Monday–Friday. It offers ‘dial-a-ride’ transport to and from Market Drayton or interchange points at Baldwins Gate, Ashley and Loggerheads, from where users can link to other bus services. It can be used by anyone in the operating area who doesn’t have access to a regular bus service or who needs help in using the bus due to disability or mobility problems. There are standard single and return adults’, children’s and concessionary fares. The service was to be withdrawn in April 2018 following a decision by SCC to cut subsidies to public transport. However, the decision was ‘called in’ by several councillors. Following a further review, the service will continue in its current form for the foreseeable future.

Figure 3.22 Staffordshire Border Car operating area

3.7.2.3 Rural Runabout

The Rural Runabout is operated by the Newcastle-under-Lyme Rural Parishes’ Transport Scheme and operates an 11-seater minibus that is available to residents across the rural area. The minibus is driven by volunteer drivers and can be hired by groups of residents (not
necessarily formally constituted groups) for a variety of trips such as shopping, theatre
visits, days out etc.

**Box 3.12 Residents’ Survey**

Comments on public transport.

‘Disappointed with the lack of bus services between Blackbrook and Woore/Pipe Gate. It is difficult for non-drivers to get into local towns.’

‘Why can there not be a circular bus route between Newcastle, Baldwins Gate and Madeley?’

‘If you cannot drive or afford a car in Chapel Chorlton you are trapped.’

‘I wouldn’t want a bus to come through the village of Aston but one stopping on the main road would be useful.’

### 3.7.2.4 School and college transport

SCC provides bus transport for secondary school children attending the high school in Madeley. The main stop is outside Baldwins Gate primary school and routes are planned so as to pick up/set down children living in other settlements and isolated locations.

SCC also provides some bus transport for pupils attending the primary school in Baldwins Gate. A number of routes serve both this school and Madeley High School.

A private minibus is available for secondary school children attending the fee-paying school in Newcastle; otherwise children must travel on the 64/164 bus service.

Students attending college in NuL or SoT must use the 64/164 bus service.

### 3.7.2.5 Taxi service

There is currently no locally based hackney carriage taxi service. Residents needing a taxi must hire from a service based outside the NA, i.e. NuL and Market Drayton. Other services may also be available.

**Box 3.13 Issues: public transport**

**Bus routes and times**

- In terms of destinations served, the existing bus routes and minibus services do not meet all public transport needs in the NA. Residents express a need for public transport
to other destinations where shopping and services are available, specifically to Woore and to Madeley (see Box 3.12)

- The limited times of the 64/164 bus service mean that it is a not travel-to-work option for people working shifts or whose work schedule requires early or late starts/finishes. See also Box 3.11 regarding a Planning Inspector’s comments on the limitations of the bus service both as a means of travel to work and for appointments and shopping in the urban area.

**Publicity for minibus services**
- It is clear from comments received in the Residents’ Survey that the minibus services need to be better publicised in the NA (see Box 3.12).
- Better communication is needed from all 3 parish councils to residents via newsletters and parish notice boards.

**School transport**
- Although SCC provides some transport to the primary school, many children from outside Baldwins Gate must be brought to school by car, as the combination of distance, lack of footways on minor roads and the traffic conditions on the A53 make it unsafe for children to walk or cycle to school unaccompanied.

**Opportunities**
- There are opportunities for the 3 parish councils to work with the County Council and the parish councils of neighbouring NAs to define new bus routes that would serve the locally defined needs of the rural population.
- There is scope for a resident hackney carriage taxi driver to be based in the NA. There has been such a service based in Baldwins Gate in the recent past, but it has not been replaced since the taxi driver retired.

### 3.7.3 Car ownership

The level of car ownership in the NA is significantly higher than for the borough of NuL as a whole and for England (Figure 3.23). At Census 2011 only 5.3% of households across the NA had no car, as compared to 22.1% in NuL. Ownership of 2 cars per household was the norm in the NA (44.9%), compared to 1 per household in NuL (42.7%). Across the NA 3-car
households were twice as common as in NuL; the proportion of households with 4+ cars was 4 times greater in the NA than for NuL and England. The proportion of multiple-car households was highest in Maer parish and lowest in Chorlton parish.

**Figure 3.23** Car/van ownership per household (percentage), 2011 Census, NA and parishes compared to NuL and England

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Source: Census 2011, table KS404EW/ACRE Rural community profiles

**Box 3.14 Issue: car dependence**

The high level of car ownership in the NA reflects the limitations of the public transport offer in relation to the actual needs of the community.

**3.7.4 Distance travelled to work**

NA residents travel greater distances to work than do residents of NuL or of England (Figure 3.24 and Table 3.5). Across the NA at Census 2011 only 4.3% travelled up to 5km to work, as compared to 39.8% in NuL. In Chorlton parish as few as 2.8% travelled up to 5km, while in Whitmore parish the proportion was 7.3%.

Across the NA more than half (52.9%) travelled between 5km and 20km to work, as compared to 32.7% for NuL and England. The proportion of journeys greater than 20km was very similar for both the NA (13%) and NuL and England.
The average distance travelled to work was 20.9km, as compared to 14.1km for NuL and 14.9km for England.

The proportion of residents working mainly from home was 20.9% across the NA, as compared to 8.7% for NuL and 10.3% for England.

**Figure 3.24** Distances travelled to work (percentages), 2001 Census, NA compared to NuL and England

![Distance travelled to work (percentages), 2001 Census, NA compared to NuL and England](image)

*Source: Census 2011, table QS702EW (data from Nomis 2 June 2017, percentages calculated)*

**Box 3.15 Residents’ Survey**

**Distance travelled to place of work/study**

Of those completing the Residents’ Survey who were in work, 4.6% travelled up to 5km to work; 56.4% travelled between 5km and 20km; 25.8% travelled 20km or more; and 13.2% worked at home.

**Place of work**

Responses to the Residents’ Survey (Question 27) showed that while the majority of residents in employment worked in the urban NuL and SoT post code areas, others work further afield. Places include Staffordshire Moorlands, Stafford, Crewe, Manchester, Wigan,
Birmingham, Walsall, Coventry, Dudley, Nottingham, Watford, London, Edinburgh. These will include some people who reported that they work partly at home.

**Table 3.5** Distances travelled to work (percentages), 2001 Census, NA compared to NuL and England

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>Chorlton</th>
<th>Maer</th>
<th>Whitmore</th>
<th>NuL</th>
<th>England</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 2km</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–5km</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5–10km</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–20km</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20–30km</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30–40km</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40–60km</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60km and over</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works mainly at home</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total distance (km)</td>
<td>17,654</td>
<td>2,620</td>
<td>3,339</td>
<td>11,695</td>
<td>681,637</td>
<td>304,789,308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average distance (km)</td>
<td>20.9km</td>
<td>19.7km</td>
<td>21.3km</td>
<td>21.1km</td>
<td>14.1km</td>
<td>14.9km</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Census 2001, table QS702EW (data from Nomis 2 June 2017, percentages calculated)*

**Box 3.16 Issues: commuting**

**Distance travelled to work**

The Census 2001 results show that in the NA significantly fewer people work close to home and more people travel longer distances to work, as compared to NuL and England. Only 6.3% of NA residents travel up to 5km, as compared to 39.8% in NuL. This reflects a lack of suitable local employment opportunities in the NA for NA residents.

- The proportion of NA residents travelling 10–20km is more than double the proportion for NuL. This distance encompasses travel to workplaces outside NuL and SoT; even a journey from the NA of less than 10km can be to a workplace outside NuL and SoT.
• The percentage of residents travelling over 20km and ‘other’ (e.g. not working on the UK mainland) is 20%. These residents are unlikely to be working in the NuL and SoT economy.

• At 20.9km the average distance to work for NA residents is 1.5 times greater than that for NuL. Although a significantly higher proportion of NA residents work mainly from home (20.9%, as compared to 8.7% for NuL), any cumulative advantage in terms of miles saved is more than cancelled out by the significantly longer average distances for those who do travel to work.

**Employment in local businesses**

Question 22 of the Residents’ Survey asked employers in the NA how many employees they have. Nineteen employers responded to this question and their responses indicated that between them they employed a minimum of 155 people. Of these a minimum of 42 were working part time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>22. If you are an employer in the Neighbourhood Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>In the next 18 years how many employees do you have?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>How many of your employees work part time?</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>How many employees do you have?</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 27 of the Residents’ Survey asked the postcode of people’s main place of work/study. Forty-three out of 174 respondents gave a postcode in the NA. Of these 43, 27 were working at home. It can be assumed that the remaining 16 (or 9.2% of 174 respondents) were employed by businesses in the NA.

**Digital commuting**

Many residents who work at home or mainly from home are commuting digitally and are not limited by distance. There is a strong possibility that they will be working for employers or clients based outside NuL and SoT, in which case they will not be contributing to the local
Because digital commuting is not limited by distance, when these residents do travel to a workplace the likelihood is that they will be travelling longer distances.

### 3.7.5 Method of travel to work

The Census records method of travel to work on Census day. Across the NA as a whole on Census day 2011 87.9% of people who travelled to a workplace did so driving a car or van, as compared to 74% for NuL and 60.2% for England as a whole (Table 3.6 and Figure 3.25). Only 3.4% were passengers in a car or van, as compared to 7.8% in NuL and 5.3% in England. Just 1.1% travelled by bus or minibus, as compared to 4.8% in NuL and 5.6% in England.

Five per cent walked to work, and 0.1% travelled by a bicycle. For NuL, walking and bicycle were 9.1% and 1.2% respectively, and for England, 11.3% and 3.1%.

**Table 3.6** Method of travel to workplace (percentage), Census day 2011, NA compared to NuL and England

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>Chorlton</th>
<th>Maer</th>
<th>Whitmore</th>
<th>NuL</th>
<th>England</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Underground, metro, light rail, tram</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus, minibus or coach</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycle, scooter or moped</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving a car or van</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>86.8</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>60.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passenger in a car or van</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On foot</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other method of travel to work</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Census 2011, table QS701EW [percentages calculated]*
**Box 3.18 Issues: travel to work**

- NuL as a whole has a significantly higher proportion than nationally of travel to work driving a car. This is attributable in part to the limitations of the public transport service in the polycentric urban area of NuL and SoT.
- Travel to work driving a car is 13.9% more in the NA than in NuL, whereas travel by bus, as a passenger in a car, by bicycle or on foot is 13% less. The limitations of the bus service, the greater distances travelled and the conditions on the roads will all be factors in the higher proportion of driving and lower proportion of other modes of travel.
- Across the NA the low level of travel to work by bus or minibus (one fifth of the level in NuL and one seventh of the national level) reflects the limited possibilities for travel to work by public transport or by transport provided by employers, and travelling to workplaces that are outside NuL and SoT.
- The lower level of travel to work as a passenger in a car or van (44% of the level for NuL) may reflect lack of options for sharing transport, due to shifts or part-time working, or to travel patterns arising from the polycentric nature of NuL and SoT; it may also reflect level of commuting to workplaces outside NuL and SoT.
• The 5% of NA residents who walk to work can be assumed to work in the NA. Some of those who travel up to 5km to work may also work in the NA (6.3%, see Table 3.5).

**Box 3.17 Residents’ Survey**

**Means of travel to place of work/study**

Of those completing the Residents’ Survey who travelled to work, 94.1% travelled by car or van; 2.1% walked, 1.7% cycled and 3.8% travelled by bus; 3.8% travelled by train, and very likely belong to a group that works partly from home.

There was a lower level of engagement with the Residents’ Survey among the 19–55 age group than among over-55s. However, the results for this question can be considered to be comparable to the Census data.

### 3.8 Accessibility of key services

Accessibility of key services is taken to be a measure of the sustainability of a location. The standard list of key services includes employment centre, further education centre, GP surgery, hospital, Job Centre, post office, public house, primary school, secondary school, supermarket and town centre. Accessibility is measured in terms of average travel times by walking/public transport and road distance to services.

The Rural Accessibility Appraisal for Newcastle under Lyme prepared by Staffordshire County Council in September 2015 reproduces maps illustrating times to access employment centres, secondary schools, primary schools, supermarkets, GP surgeries, hospitals, town centres and local centres.

#### 3.8.1 Average travel times by walking/public transport to key services

Average walking/public transport travel times to 8 key services are significantly greater for the NA than for NuL. The differences in time range from 190% (further education institution) to 360% (supermarket) (Figure 3.26).
**Figure 3.26** Average travel times (minutes) to key services by walking/public transport, NA compared to NuL and England

![Graph showing travel times](image)

*Source: DfT 2011/ACRE Rural community profiles*

### 3.8.2 Road distance to services

Road distances from the NA to 5 key services, as compared to NuL and England, are illustrated in Table 3.7 and Figure 3.27. The greater distances to services in the NA than in NuL range between 133% and 470%.

**Table 3.7** Road distance to services (km), parishes compared to NuL and England

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Chorlton</th>
<th>Maer</th>
<th>Whitmore</th>
<th>NuL</th>
<th>England</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Centre</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GP</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public house</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Office</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Commission for Rural Communities 2010/ACRE Rural community profiles*
Box 3.19 Issues: access to key services

- The longer travel times and road distances to key services by walking/public transport, combined with the limitations of public transport (hourly service on a single route) are a significant factor in car dependency in the NA.
- Without a full-time GP surgery in Baldwins Gate, the travel times and distances to a GP listed in Figures 3.26 and 3.27 and Table 3.7 are of limited relevance, as patients frequently have to travel to the main surgery in Madeley.

3.9 Sustainability and sustainable development

A presumption in favour of sustainable development is central to the NPPF (para. 10). Sustainable development has three overarching and interdependent objectives: social, economic and environmental (para. 8).

This chapter has uncovered a number of issues with implications for the NA’s sustainable development, which are reviewed below in Box 3.20.
Box 3.20 Issues: sustainability

- There are people in the NA who experience a range of types of deprivation, including multiple deprivation.

- Data on employment, travel and transport and access to key services illustrates the level of dependence of the NA’s population on the urban area. By definition, a rural area that is so dependent on an urban area that it could not sustain itself economically and socially if it were cut off from the urban area cannot be said to be sustainable.

- Residents have a significantly greater need to travel, and have to travel greater distances, to access employment and other essential services than does the population of NuL or of England generally.

- Older residents with a variety of health and care needs experience difficulty accessing needed services, and while they may wish to continue living in the NA some are eventually forced to move into or closer to urban areas.

- The limited available transport options make the NA’s population highly dependent on private car ownership and use. Those who are dependent on public transport may have difficulty accessing key services.

- While the NA has a significantly higher proportion of home workers and self-employed than NuL or England generally, the number of residents whose work is based in the NA is not sufficient to avoid a high proportion of the population travelling above-average distances to work by car.

- Local planning policy and decisions from the late 1950s to the present have encouraged an essentially urban-oriented population into a highly rural NA and have not attended to the need of maintaining a thriving rural economy and society. Policies can be made and actions can be taken to achieve a measure of sustainability by supporting home working and the development of local rural businesses and by attracting a population that will live and work in the NA. However, the data on qualifications, occupational groups and sectors of employment indicates that the greater proportion of the NA’s working-age population is urban oriented and must look to the urban area because they are working in sectors and at occupational levels for which by definition a rural economy offers few or no opportunities in. Further, working from home and developing the local economy
can be only a partial solution, as it does not reduce dependence on the urban area for other key services.

**Opportunities**

The Neighbourhood Development Plan provides opportunities to establish policies and initiate actions to curtail the trend of unsustainable development and embrace a plan-led, sustainable development pattern in the NA.

Given the conditions described in this chapter, it appears that the opportunities and the greater needs to achieve sustainable development in the NA are for:

(i) economic development to create the types of jobs and businesses that the NA can sustain and that can sustain the NA

(ii) a focus on providing dwelling types and low-cost/affordable housing that will enable people working in the rural economy and providing services that meet the needs of the local population to live close to their work in the NA.

Remediating the effects of nearly six decades of poor planning is a long-term project that will not be accomplished over the period of a single Neighbourhood Plan, but that can be built on and achieved over successive plans.
4 Land use

Content of this chapter:

4.1 Predominant land uses
4.2 Housing
4.3 Dwelling consents and completions
4.4 Community facilities
4.5 Sport and exercise facilities
4.6 Other land uses
4.7 Leisure and tourism
4.8 Roads and traffic data
4.9 Infrastructure and infrastructure deficiencies
4.10 Appendix: Analysis of traffic flows

4.1 Predominant land uses

The NA has an area of 4290ha. Table 4.1 shows land use statistics for the NA from the government’s Generalised Land Use Database (January 2005). Figure 4.1 presents the same data graphically.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total area</th>
<th>Domestic buildings</th>
<th>Non domestic buildings</th>
<th>Road</th>
<th>Path</th>
<th>Rail</th>
<th>Domestic gardens</th>
<th>Green space</th>
<th>Water</th>
<th>Other land uses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4290</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>4026</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Generalised Land Use Database (January 2005)

![Figure 4.1 Land uses in the NA (hectares)](image-url)

Source: Data from Generalised Land Use Database (January 2005)
Green space accounts for 94% of land use and has the following uses: agriculture, woodland, orchards, Environmental Stewardship, horticulture. The next greatest land uses are domestic gardens (2.1%) and road (1.8%).

4.1.1 Agriculture

Agriculture is the single greatest land use, predominantly for intensive diary farming, beef cattle and sheep grazing. Arable farming is predominantly fodder crops for livestock and cereals. Other production is oilseed rape, poultry farming, potatoes and vegetables.

4.1.2 Woodland

Woodland is the second largest land use, comprising commercial conifer forestry, broadleaf and mixed plantations and managed woodland, unmanaged scrub woodland, estate and parkland plantings, copses and windbreaks on agricultural land, wooded areas on smallholdings and large domestic plots, hedgerow trees and individual trees in the landscape.

4.1.3 Orchards

Across the NA there are orchards of varying sizes and ages on smallholdings and large domestic plots.

4.1.4 Environmental Stewardship

A number of farm holdings in the NA are under Environmental Stewardship (ES). ES is a scheme managed by Natural England on behalf of Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) that rewards farmers/landowners for adopting environmentally sensitive land management practices.

Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) includes practices such as creating buffer strips of 2m to 6m wide around field margins to benefit wildlife or protect watercourses, as well as hedgerow and ditch management. Organic Entry...
Level Stewardship (OELS) is the version of this scheme that operates for organic farms.

Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) is usually combined with ELS or OELS and aims to deliver significant environmental benefits in high-priority situations and areas. Options include wetland or woodland creation, restoration or maintenance; hedgerow restoration; maintenance or restoration of lowland raised bog.

In the NA two landowners are known to operate HLS, one farm operates OELS and there are other farms operating ELS, but not all farms in the NA are in the ES scheme.

### 4.1.5 Horsiculture

Horsiculture comprises several equine-based businesses, including a race horse establishment, an equestrian centre with a range of facilities for horse owners and riders, livery stables and a riding school. A stud farm based outside the NA has grazing land in the NA. Horses are also kept domestically as pets or as a hobby.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 4.1 Residents’ Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Residents’ Survey (Question 11) asked about the suitability in the NA of 18 different uses of land. Support was highest for agriculture, open space, forestry and nature reserves and trails, ranging from 92% to 83%. Horsiculture and equestrian uses received 68% and 50% support, respectively. The 4 uses with lowest support were caravan and camping sites, wind turbines, fracking and mineral extraction (10% to 2%).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.2 Housing

A Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) for this Neighbourhood Plan was carried out by AECOM consultants in 2016 as a technical assistance package provided by Locality and is presented here as an Appendix to the Plan. The HNA was performed according to a standard methodology that is used for all AECOM HNAs for neighbourhood plans. It includes a thorough review of the housing stock and housing affordability in the NA on the basis of Census and other data from official sources and assesses the need for different types and sizes of housing.
4.2.1 Summary of HNA findings

4.2.1.1 Quantity of housing

The HNA identified 5 separate projections of dwelling numbers for the NA for the period 2013–2033, as set out below.

16. Our assessment of a wide range of data sources identified five separate projections of dwelling numbers for the Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston and Whitmore parishes NP area between 2013 and 2033 based on:

- A figure derived from the Adopted 2009 Joint Core Spatial Strategy (JCSS) for NuL and Stoke-on-Trent (which gives a total of 0 dwellings, or 0 per year);
- A ‘proportionate share’ derivation from the 2015 SHMA, Objectively Assessed Need\(^1\) (OAN) lower range figure of 1,177 dwellings per annum (367 per annum for NuL) (the demographically adjusted need\(^2\)), which gives a total of 148 dwellings (rounded to the nearest whole number), or 7.4 dwellings per annum;
- A ‘proportionate share’ derivation from the 2015 SHMA, OAN higher range figure of 1,505 dwellings per annum (the economic growth and housing affordability adjusted level of need\(^3\)), which would give a requirement of 197 dwellings (rounded to the nearest whole number) or 9.8 dwellings per annum;
- A projection forward of net dwelling completion rates 2001–2011, (which gives a projection of 80 dwellings, or 4 dwellings per annum); and
- A projection forward of net dwelling completion rates 2011–2015 (which gives a projection of 31 dwellings, or 1.56 dwellings per annum).

\(^1\) The OAN includes the baseline demographic need, plus any adjustments made to official forecasts to account for projected rates of household formation post 2021, past suppression of the formation of new households, the effect of past under-supply, employment forecasts, market signals and affordable housing need (as set out in paragraph ID2a-004 of the NPPG).

\(^2\) The starting point of the 2012-based Sub National Household Projections have been adjusted to account for a return to the rates of household formation for younger households seen in 2001, when house prices and affordability were more in line with longer term national trends.

\(^3\) In this projection, there has been further consideration of the level of growth in labour force required to support forecast job creation, which suggests that greater retention or attraction of people would be required to grow the labour force. In addition, this projection considers the need for affordable housing, including the need to clear the backlog of existing households on the waiting list.

AECOM, HNA, para. 16

18. A further assessment applied to the five projections set out above indicates that the local market factors acting to increase demand for new housing in the NP area are outweighed by those acting to reduce demand for housing (see Table 1 below, which replicates Table 20 of our conclusions).

AECOM, HNA, para. 18

24. It is our evidenced conclusion that, taking into account that the factors acting constraining demand and the factors increasing demand (as set out in Table 1 above) tip in favour of lowering demand in Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston and...
Whitmore Parishes; that the level of unconstrained need will lie somewhere below the midpoint of the projections, with an appropriate range considered to be between 50 and 100 dwellings for the period 2013-2033.

AECOM, HNA, para. 24

**Box 4.2 Issue: Government consultation: Planning for the right homes in the right places**

In September 2017 the Government put out to consultation a proposed methodology for calculating Objectively Assessed Need. The accompanying ‘Housing need consultation data table’ showed that the indicative assessment of housing need for NuL borough for the 10-year period 2016–2026, based on the Government’s proposed formula, is 361 dwellings per annum. A proportionate share derivation for the NA would be 7.2 dwellings per annum.

4.2.1.2 Dwelling types

Tables 2 and 21 of the HNA summarise local factors in the NA that have a potential to influence housing characteristics

The HNA identifies a need to ensure that affordable housing needs are met, mostly with smaller units of 1–2 bedrooms. A need above the adopted CSS target of 25% affordable housing on new developments was not identified.

The report identifies that a proportion of smaller dwellings both for downsizing by the older population and for younger families and those in local rural occupations is needed. Small affordable units could be provided as flats or through conversions. Homes to enable older people to live independently in the NA could include small detached houses or bungalows.

A policy supporting downsizing would free up larger stock for incoming families, but there remains a need for larger homes. Monitoring is important to avoid an over-supply of larger homes, which should be at least 3 bedrooms, with the majority 4 bedrooms or more.
**Box 4.3 Residents’ Survey**

The Residents’ Survey asked a series of questions about future housing development in the NA. The local perception of a need for housing to meet the needs of older residents and for smaller dwellings suitable for both older residents and young families corresponds with the findings of the HNA. Responses to the survey indicate if the need for smaller homes for downsizing could be met a significant supply of larger homes would be freed up for new occupants.

**Dwelling types and sizes**

Respondents’ opinion was that the greatest need is for dwellings designated for older people and people with disabilities (55%), followed by bungalows (47%) and houses with 1 or 2 bedrooms and starter homes (both 41%). Homes with 3 or 4 bedrooms received less support (27%) and larger homes and apartments each had only 12% support. Support for rented housing of any kind was also low (17% social, 14% private).

Participant discussions at the Roadshows have also expressed local opinion about the need for smaller homes and a feeling that if suitable housing were available for older people to downsize, then enough larger homes would become available to meet an ongoing need for larger homes.

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We need to meet the needs of the population both now and in the future. But where can people in low-paid occupations live when the farmworkers’ cottages have been taken over and converted into big, expensive houses? There is a need for larger houses too, because anyone who runs a small business from home does need a place of sufficient size to accommodate their office or workspace.


A very interesting suggestion was that we need to look at subdividing larger houses into smaller units. … Little cottages have been joined together to make larger houses, or demolished to make way for large replacements. But now people voice a need for smaller dwellings for longer-term residents who want to downsize. And to enable younger people to live here and create a place for themselves in the local economy we need accommodation that will provide those lower rungs on the housing ladder.

Moving intentions

Fifty-one per cent of respondents planned to stay in their own home during the Plan period. Twenty-four per cent planned to move to a smaller property in the NA, and 4% to move to a larger property, while 3% planned to buy their first home. Eleven per cent planned to move to specialist accommodation. Twenty-eight per cent of respondents indicated that they had family members who may either want or need to move into the NA in the next 15 years. These could be both younger families and older relatives. The 11% who planned to move into specialist accommodation indicate a demand for sheltered and other types of specialised housing for older people. If such a need were met locally, at least some of these people would be able to remain in the NA, close to friends and (maybe) relatives.

These intentions provide an indication of the type of housing need in the NA and again confirm the greater need for smaller dwellings than for larger ones. The 3% who planned to buy their first home could be young adults living with parents, indicating ‘hidden families’; equally, they could be renters looking to buy.

Suitable sites and sizes for developments

Brownfield land and vacant/derelict buildings received 82% and 78% support, respectively. Support for building on greenfield land was only 7%.

For new housing in Baldwins Gate, small infills had the greatest level of support (63%), followed by small-scale developments of up to 9 homes (48%). Larger developments had significantly lower support (15%), and developments of 50+ homes only 5%. Only 15% agreed that the village envelope of Baldwins Gate should be extended to allow the village to grow. In the smaller settlements, infills of up to 4 dwellings were the most acceptable (63%); support for developments of up to 9 homes was significantly less than in Baldwins Gate, at 33%.

Property features

A property with its own garden was important for 96% of respondents, followed by adequate off-street parking (90%). The importance of a property with room for an office, space for a dependent person or space for a workshop ranged between 35% and 28%, pointing to some need for larger homes.
4.3 Dwelling consents and completions

Data held by the LPA on residential dwelling consents and completions shows that from 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2017 consents were granted for 144 dwellings and 142 dwellings were not completed (Table 4.2). There were 2 dwelling completions during the period, comprising two barn conversions in Whitmore parish (Table 4.3).

Table 4.2 Residential dwelling consents in the NA, 1 April 2013–31 March 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning application number</th>
<th>Development address and location</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Dwelling consents</th>
<th>Consent date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13/00523/FUL</td>
<td>Whitmore Riding School Shut Lane Head Staffordshire ST5 4DS</td>
<td>Conversion of barn into a single dwelling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17/09/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13/00599/FUL</td>
<td>Nags Head Farm Nantwich Road Blackbrook Staffordshire, ST5 5EH</td>
<td>Conversion of 3 holiday lets into single dwelling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23/09/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14/00654/OUT</td>
<td>Land south of Appleton Cottage Coneygreave Lane Whitmore Newcastle under Lyme Staffordshire</td>
<td>Residential development of four detached properties</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30/10/2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14/00669/FUL</td>
<td>181 Aston Market Drayton Shropshire TF9 4JF</td>
<td>Conversion of barn to residential use</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14/11/2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/00134/FUL</td>
<td>The Old Dairy House Shut Lane Head Newcastle under Lyme Staffordshire ST5 4DS</td>
<td>Change of use to dwelling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22/04/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/00238/COU NOT</td>
<td>Lilac Cottage Acton Lane Acton Staffordshire ST5 4EF</td>
<td>Conversion of agricultural building to residential use</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15/05/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/00281/FUL</td>
<td>Plot 37 Birch Tree Lane Whitmore Newcastle under Lyme Staffordshire ST5 5HS</td>
<td>Detached dwelling and new accesses</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26/06/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/00294/REM</td>
<td>Land off Watering Close Newcastle Road Baldwins Gate</td>
<td>Application for the approval of the details relating to 13/00551/OUT for 4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10/06/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning application number</td>
<td>Development address and location</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Dwelling consents</td>
<td>Consent date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/00319/FUL</td>
<td>Staffordshire ST5 5DA 1-2 Moss Cottages Moss Lane Baldwins Gate Staffordshire ST5 5D</td>
<td>Detached dwellings with associated car parking and amenity area</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20/08/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/00376/FUL</td>
<td>Plot 34 Eastwood Rise Baldwins Gate Newcastle under Lyme Staffordshire ST5 5EX</td>
<td>Detached dwelling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11/08/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/00541/OUT</td>
<td>The Cottage Newcastle Road Baldwins Gate Newcastle under Lyme Staffordshire ST5 5DA</td>
<td>2 no. proposed 5 bedroom detached houses within rear garden</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15/10/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/00878/FUL</td>
<td>Red Gates Haddon Lane Chapel Chorlton Staffordshire ST5 5JL</td>
<td>Detached dwelling, double garage, alterations to vehicular access</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19/06/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/01140/FUL</td>
<td>Swinchurch Farm Haddon Lane Chapel Chorlton Staffordshire ST5 5JP</td>
<td>Retention of conversion of existing farmhouse into two dwellings</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10/02/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/00066/FUL</td>
<td>Aston Manor Barns Aston Staffordshire TF9 4JB</td>
<td>Removal of condition 3 of planning permission 09/00531/FUL to allow residential use of two units</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17/03/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/00080/ELD</td>
<td>Building at Rook Hall Farm Trentham Road Acton Staffordshire ST5 4DX</td>
<td>Conversion of barn into dwelling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24/03/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/00577/COUNT</td>
<td>Rook Hall Farm Trentham Road Acton Staffordshire ST5 4DX</td>
<td>Conversion of agricultural building to a dwelling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8/09/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/00609/FUL</td>
<td>Land adjacent the Sheet Anchor Newcastle Road Whitmore Newcastle under Lyme Staffordshire ST5 5BU</td>
<td>7 houses with access road and associated landscaping</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16/12/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning application number</td>
<td>Development address and location</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Dwelling consents</td>
<td>Consent date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
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<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/00676/RE</td>
<td>Land at end of Gateway Avenue Baldwins Gate Newcastle under Lyme Staffordshire</td>
<td>Residential development of 109 dwellings</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>20/10/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/00962/COU</td>
<td>Holloway Farm Aston Market Drayton Shropshire ST5 5EP</td>
<td>Conversion of agricultural building to residential use</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23/12/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/00986/FUL</td>
<td>Land adjacent Holmcroft Newcastle Road Baldwins Gate Staffordshire ST5 5DA</td>
<td>Erection of single storey bungalow</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16/01/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/01064/FUL</td>
<td>H E Butters Newcastle Road Baldwins Gate Newcastle under Lyme Staffordshire ST5 5DA</td>
<td>Demolition of existing workshop, store and garage. Construction of two detached dwellings</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14/03/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>144</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from NuL Borough Council planning applications database.

### Table 4.3 Residential dwelling completions in the NA, 1 April 2013–31 March 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning application number</th>
<th>Development address and location</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Dwelling completions</th>
<th>Completion date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13/00523/FUL</td>
<td>Whitmore Riding School Shut Lane Head Staffordshire ST5 4DS</td>
<td>Conversion of and extension to barn to form dwelling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>08/10/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/00080/ELD</td>
<td>Rook Hall Farm Trentham Road Acton Staffordshire ST5 4DX</td>
<td>Conversion of barn into dwelling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>06/14/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Completions information supplied by NuL Borough Council planning policy unit.
Box 4.4 Issue: housing land supply in the NA

From 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2017 planning consents were granted for 144 dwellings in the NA (see Table 4.2).

At the upper level of ‘proportionate share’ housing growth identified by AECOM in the HNA report, these planning consents have created a 14.7 years’ supply of housing land in the NA.

At the lower level of ‘proportionate share’ growth identified in the HNA, the consents have created a 19.5 years’ supply of housing land.

If the higher level of growth were to be determined for an adopted JLP, the additional growth beyond the currently granted 144 dwelling consents could be accommodated during the course of the Plan by changes of use and small infills.

The Government’s September 2017 consultation on a proposed methodology for calculating Objectively Assessed Need indicatively suggests that a lower range figure of 7.2 dwellings per annum for the period 2016–2026 would be more applicable to the NA.

4.4 Community facilities

Community facilities and services are mainly concentrated in the village of Baldwins Gate, which is the largest settlement in the NA and at the NA’s geographical centre. In some settlements the only facilities are a letterbox, and sometimes a parish noticeboard. The following subsections review the facilities and services in each parish (see Maps 5a and 5b).

4.4.1 Chapel and Hill Chorlton parish

- Letterboxes at Chapel Chorlton, Hill Chorlton and Stableford
- Parish noticeboards at Chapel Chorlton and Hill Chorlton
- Licensed club and bar at the Stableford caravan park
- Village green at Chapel Chorlton
- C of E church and churchyard at Chapel Chorlton
Box 4.5 Opportunity

The large village green at Chapel Chorlton is valued by both residents and visitors. It is used for community events in the summer months and visitors picnic there. A small parking area on the green allows walkers to use Chapel Chorlton as a base. Other visitors often park on the green to watch the waterfowl and other wildlife on the nearby pond.

There is scope for the green to be used for a variety of events to promote the leisure opportunities offered by the NA, for example the footpaths and natural and historical heritage. There is also scope to install an information board with details of PRoWs, local walks and other information of local interest, or to convert the disused telephone kiosk into an information booth.

Box 4.6 Residents’ Survey

The Residents’ Survey revealed how the NA residents value the area’s community facilities. The following ‘key’ facilities were rated as important or very important by 91% to 82% of respondents (in descending order): doctor’s surgery, post office, local shops. The fire and rescue service, community police, first responders (all based at Loggerheads and/or Madeley) were also rated in this band. (Question 2)

Although the local shops received a high importance rating, only 63% of respondents said that the shops meet their day-to-day needs and only 56% shop regularly in the NA; 75% do their regular shopping in the urban area. This reflects the limits of the service that the local shops can offer in the face of competition from urban supermarkets and the high level of daily commuting into the urban area. (Question 3)

A 71% rating of importance for the village halls matched the 73% rating of importance for ‘feeling part of the community’. Lower ratings for the primary school and toddlers’ playgroup reflect the age profile of the community and of survey respondents. (Question 2)
4.4.2 Maer and Aston parish

- Letterboxes and parish noticeboards at Maer village, Blackbrook, Weymouth and Aston
- Brookfields farm shop on the outskirts of Blackbrook
- Public house/restaurant at the Swan with Two Necks, on the outskirts of Blackbrook (a ‘drive to’ destination); public house/restaurant with hotel accommodation at Slaters at Maerfield Gate
- Village halls at Maer village and Aston
- C of E church and churchyard at Maer; C of E chapel in Aston village hall
- War memorial by A51 roadside at Maer

4.4.3 Whitmore parish

- Letterboxes at Baldwins Gate (2), Butterton, Acton, Whitmore village and Madeley Park Wood
- Parish noticeboards at Baldwins Gate, Butterton, Acton and Madeley Park Wood
- Public house at the Mainwaring Arms in Whitmore village and a teashop
- Whitmore village hall in Baldwins Gate village
- Playing field at Whitmore village hall, with outdoor gym and children’s playground
- C of E churches and churchyards at Whitmore and Butterton; Methodist chapel in Baldwins Gate
4.4.3.1 Facilities in Baldwins Gate village

- Station Stores general store/post office/newsagent
- Hair/beauty salon
- Sheet Anchor public house/restaurant (a ‘drive to’ destination)
- Filling station and tool shop
- Plant and Wilton butcher’s and delicatessen shop
- Car maintenance and repair business
- Primary school
- Part-time GP surgery (15 hours per week; doctor in attendance 9 hours per week)
- Open space at Jubilee Gardens and Chapel Green; private open space at Lakeside estate

Box 4.7 Issue: lack of defined village centre in Baldwins Gate

The early growth of Baldwins Gate as a ribbon settlement and piecemeal growth with planning for community facilities means that the village has no defined centre. Facilities within the settlement boundary are dispersed along a 740-metre stretch of the A53. The three premises housing retail businesses are separated by distances of 295 metres and 165 metres. Parking at two of these premises is very limited and the settlement itself has no public parking.

The AECOM TCA report notes that in Baldwins Gate ‘A mixture of commercial and community functions are present along the intersecting A53; however, these are dispersed in location and cannot be read as a village centre’ (p. 47). This has implications for the further development of facilities and for community feeling and participation within the settlement.

In a SWOT analysis of Baldwins Gate the AECOM TCA report (pp. 58–59) notes the following negative aspects of this issue:

Weaknesses: ‘Community facilities are not obvious and there is no defined village centre which can confuse the legibility’; and ‘Evolution of the centre/ facilities hasn’t kept up with settlement growth’.
**Threats:** ‘The lack of a clear settlement centre leaves the village vulnerable to piecemeal development of facilities which, as a result, could become inaccessible to each other’; and ‘Risk of becoming more unsustainable due centre/ facilities failing to evolve to keep up with settlement growth’.

**Opportunities**

Whitmore Parish Council needs to be alert to any opportunities that might arise for developing a defined village centre, including a small community drop-in/café. However, this would have to be achieved without harming existing facilities (see also above, Box 2.7)

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**Box 4.8 Issue: impact of settlement growth**

There are currently 315 dwellings within the Baldwins Gate village envelope. Completion of consents granted from 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2017 for new dwellings on land within and contiguous with the village envelope will add 129 dwellings, taking the settlement size to 444 and adding 41% to the population. This will have an impact on community facilities and services for the enlarged community and the surrounding settlements. Any changes or additions to facilities and services must be implemented in such a way as to avoid negative impacts on existing facilities and services.

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**Box 4.9 Issue: Baldwins Gate primary school**

The school serves families living in Baldwins Gate and the other village and hamlet settlements of the NA. Its current published capacity is for 105 pupils and there are 120 pupils on roll.

The education authority announced a public consultation in October–November 2017 on plans to enlarge the school by building two additional classrooms and additional pupil toilets and providing additional playground and parking space to enable all class sizes to increase by 5 and to provide for a total pupil increase of 35, due to current new development at the
Gateway Avenue site in Baldwins Gate. The proposed enlargement was approved by the SCC Cabinet at its meeting of 17 January 2018 and went forward for further public consultation. The proposed new classrooms would be ready for occupation in September 2020.

**Figure 4.4** Baldwins Gate primary school catchment area

Source: [https://www.schoolguide.co.uk/schools/baldwins-gate-cofe-vc-primary-school-newcastle](https://www.schoolguide.co.uk/schools/baldwins-gate-cofe-vc-primary-school-newcastle)

### 4.5 Sport and exercise facilities

In addition to the outdoor exercise facilities at the Whitmore village hall playing field, a variety of exercise and movement classes are held in the village halls both during the daytime and in the evenings, ranging from karate to ballroom dancing. The NA also has a number of sport facilities that are run either as clubs or as commercial enterprises.

#### 4.5.1 Maer and Aston

Chipperfield rifle range at Red Hills; Aston Manor livery stables; Slaters bowling club; clay pigeon shooting

#### 4.5.2 Whitmore

Cudmore Fishery; Whitmore Cricket Club; Whitmore Riding School; Acton Equestrian Centre; North Stafford Sport Ground at Whisper Lane (football, rugby union, cricket).
Box 4.10 Residents’ survey

It is clear from responses in several parts of the Residents’ Survey that the NA’s most important leisure and exercise facility is access to the local lanes and footpaths for walking and running.

Eighty per cent agreed that provision for outdoor sport and leisure is important, but only 50% agreed that there are enough opportunities to keep fit in the NA (Question 7). From answers to Question 8, ‘How could opportunities for recreation and leisure in the NA be improved?’ it appears that there is not widespread awareness of the range of fitness activities in the village halls and that these could be (a) better promoted and (b) more varied to meet a wider range of needs.

A need for a larger and better playing field was expressed, with more games/play facilities for all age groups, from children to adults. Interest was expressed in having facilities such as tennis courts, a small indoor gym suitable for older people (and ‘Useful for everyone in the evenings’) or a leisure/fitness centre. A need for facilities for the disabled was also mentioned. Several people asked for a dog park.

Opportunity

Additional sport and exercise facilities in the NA could be provided either as community facilities or on a club/business basis. If on a club/business basis, this would contribute to the local economy and could have the additional economic benefit of bringing people into the NA to use the facilities.

4.6 Other land uses

4.6.1 Chapel and Hill Chorlton

- A small rural sewage works with reed bed is located on Chorlton Moss and serves the village of Baldwins Gate, dwellings at Parkwood Drive South and Walls Wood in Madeley Park Wood, and Maer village. It discharges into an ordinary watercourse that runs under the West Coast Mainline and flows into the Meece Brook in Whitmore parish. It is operated and managed by Severn Trent Water. The reed bed and its surroundings
contribute to the local green infrastructure.

- A 33kV electricity sub-station serving the area is located in Hill Chorlton and is managed by Western Power Distribution. Power is transmitted over 33kV overhead lines.

  \textbf{Figure 4.5} Reed bed at Baldwins Gate sewage works

- A static caravan site at Stableford has both permanent residences and holiday homes.
- Copeland Cottage Brownie and Guide Camp site on Haddon Lane is owned by the Guiding Divisions of Stoke, Longton and Newcastle-under-Lyme.

\textbf{4.6.2 Maer and Aston}

- A small sewage pumping station beside the A51 and SE of Maer War Memorial is operated and managed by Severn Trent Water.
- A communications mast on Camp Hill is believed to belong to Manchester University. Several mobile phone masts are attached to the structure.
- The Dorothy Clive Garden at Willoughbridge is a 12-acre ornamental and landscape garden owned by a charitable trust and is open to the public on a fee-paying basis.

\textbf{4.6.3 Whitmore}

- A garden waste composting site is operated in a worked-out sand and gravel quarry at Acton. It accepts domestic green waste for composting from a number of local authorities, including NuL borough council.
Network Rail operates a maintenance yard at the site of the former Whitmore station goods yard in Baldwins Gate.

- BT operates a local telephone exchange in Baldwins Gate.

### 4.7 Leisure and tourism

An established leisure and tourism base is supported by a variety of land uses in the NA, including through the diversification of land-based businesses and redevelopment of disused buildings. Many visitors to the NA bring custom to a variety of local businesses. The NA’s rural character and the variety of attractions are mutually supportive.

Easy access by road to places such as Shrewsbury, Chester and the Peak District as well as the NA’s own countryside and network of PRoW, and a choice of farmhouse and village bed and breakfasts, hotel accommodation and self-catering cottages make the NA an attractive place for holiday makers to stay.

The Maer Hills, the NA’s network of PRoWs and minor roads and lanes and its variety of tranquil places bring walkers, cyclists and countryside and nature lovers into the area.

The Grade I listed Whitmore Hall and the Dorothy Clive garden at Willoughbridge are open as fee-paying visitor attractions.

A number of equestrian businesses offer livery and other facilities for horse owners and riders, as well as riding lessons. The Cudmore Fishery in Whitmore parish, one of the largest fisheries in the country, attracts anglers from both the North Staffordshire area and further afield. Other sporting attractions are run on a club membership basis (see section 4.5).

The redevelopment of public houses as gastro-pubs and several ‘destination’ retail businesses also bring visitors into the area.
4.8  Roads and traffic data

A strategic description of the NA’s transport network is provided in section 1.3.

Residential and business development beyond the NA is creating ever-increasing pressure on the highway network from through traffic. Highways issues are the biggest single set of issues facing NA residents but there are no comprehensive plans for highway improvements in the NA. A detailed review of issues, and opportunities for remediation or improvements, is presented in section 7.6.

4.8.1  A53

4.8.1.1  Description

The A53 is a single-carriageway primary route linking the North Staffordshire conurbation and the M6 (via the A5182) to Shrewsbury and routes into Wales. It enters the NA at the M6 motorway bridge east of Butterton cross-roads and traverses the NA east–west for a distance of 7.7km, passing through Whitmore village and Baldwins Gate to Blackbrook. The A5182 joins from the south at a roundabout 1.8km west of the M6, and traffic from the M6 and A500 joins the A53 at the A5182 roundabout. There is a speed limit of 40mph on the approaches to and through Whitmore village, where a pedestrian crossing enables safe crossing of the road. There is a speed limit of 30mph on the approaches to and through Baldwins Gate. Near the eastern end of Baldwins Gate, about 340 metres from the village boundary, the road crosses the West Coast Mainline on an overbridge. There is a pedestrian crossing at the eastern end of the bridge. On the western side of Blackbrook the A53 merges with the A51, which takes precedence for a distance of 320 metres. The A53 then turns south off the A51 and leaves the NA at the boundary with Loggerheads parish.

4.8.1.2  Footways

There is footway on the north side of the A53 carriageway from the M6 to Holly Bush Lane, 650 metres west of Baldwins Gate Farm. In Baldwins Gate there is also a footway on the south side of the carriageway, from Whitmore Village Hall near the eastern end of the village to the Woodside junction beyond the western end. In the centre of Baldwins Gate, for a distance of about 140 metres from Tollgate Avenue to Meadow Way, both the carriageway and the footways are of substandard width.
There are no grass verges on the northern footway in Baldwins Gate, and from Tollgate Avenue westwards the footway is narrow and there is little distance between pedestrians and passing vehicles. The footway on the south side has grass verges from Whitmore village hall to Appleton Drive, from Fair-Green Road to Tollgate Avenue and from Meadow Way to the butcher’s shop. These provide pedestrians with some defence against passing traffic and protection from road spray in wet conditions. From Station Stores to Fair-Green Road, where the road is on the overbridge, the verge is on the inside of the footway, against the bridge parapet. From Tollgate House to Meadow Way and from the butcher’s shop to Woodside there is no verge.

4.8.1.3 Traffic incidents

- The cross-roads in Whitmore village at the Bent Lane and Three Mile Lane junction is a known accident spot.
- There have been severe incidents, including fatalities, on the hill between Whitmore village and Baldwins Gate, some involving farm vehicles.
- There is a history of minor collisions and more serious incidents on the A53 all the way through Baldwins Gate.

Figure 4.6 HGV passing pedestrians in centre of Baldwins Gate
There is a history of traffic incidents, some severe and involving fatalities, between Lakeside estate and Baldwins Gate Farm and at Woodside junction/Baldwins Gate Farm. Many of these are due to excessive speeds on the bend at Baldwins Gate Farm. Most recently, there was a fatality at this site resulting from a crash during a police pursuit on 24 July 2016: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-stoke-staffordshire-36881671.

There is a history of traffic incidents, some severe and involving fatalities, at and near to the Holly Bush Lane junction.

There are frequent traffic incidents at Blackbrook at the staggered A51/A53 cross-roads.

### 4.8.1.4 Traffic volumes, flows and speeds

The Steering Group was unable to obtain up-to-date traffic survey data from SCC Highways for either the A53 or the A51. Data from surveys carried out in the area by HS2 Ltd between November 2015 and July 2016 was published by HS2 Ltd in summer 2017 and has been used to analyse the flow of traffic through Baldwins Gate and at the A51/A53 staggered cross-roads at Blackbrook (see section 4.10).

The Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) figures published by HS2 Ltd show that 12,329 vehicles leave/enter the eastern end of Baldwins Gate (Common Lane). Calculations from readings at other survey points between Common Lane and Blackbrook indicate that on a
daily basis 1,216 vehicles begin or end a journey in Baldwins Gate between Common Lane and Woodside.

At Blackbrook the A53 crosses the A51 by means of staggered junctions; A53 traffic travels on the A51 for a distance of 300 metres. HS2 Ltd’s survey readings show that 13,636 vehicles travel on this 300-metre stretch on a daily basis. The eastern leg of the A53 (to/from Baldwins Gate) carries 10,270 vehicles and the western leg (to/from Loggerheads) carries 9,259 vehicles. The eastern leg of the A51 (to Stableford) carries 3,366 vehicles and the western leg (to Woore) carries 4,377 vehicles. HS2 Ltd states that ‘the A53 Newcastle Road arm’ ‘operates close or over its capacity … in the AM and PM peak periods’ and that the western arm ‘is approaching capacity … in both the AM and PM peak periods’.\(^4\)

A traffic survey was performed in Baldwins Gate, 7–13 March 2017, in connection with a planning application. Key data from the survey is summarised in Table 4.4. The March 2017 survey shows the AADT in Baldwins Gate to be 12,457, which is comparable to the numbers recorded by HS2 Ltd. Goods vehicles account for 6.5% of all traffic, or 810 vehicles per day.

The increase in traffic volumes on the A53 due to the amount of residential development beyond the NA, especially at Pipe Gate and Woore, and residential and business development at Market Drayton is a major concern. The Muller Dairy UK headquarters at Market Drayton and associated Culina logistics is the biggest single contributor to HGV traffic on the A53. Plans for further expansion of the facility were announced in September 2017: [https://www.shropshirestar.com/news/business/2017/09/19/muller-to-expand-shropshire-factories-as-part-of-100m-investment/](https://www.shropshirestar.com/news/business/2017/09/19/muller-to-expand-shropshire-factories-as-part-of-100m-investment/) (web link may need to be copied and pasted into browser).

Table 4.4 Key data from traffic survey on A53, Baldwins Gate, 7–13 March 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NE bound (to Newcastle)</th>
<th>SW bound (from Newcastle)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-day daily average no. of vehicles</td>
<td>6981</td>
<td>6734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-day daily average no. of vehicles</td>
<td>6465</td>
<td>5992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most vehicles on one day</td>
<td>7592 (Friday)</td>
<td>6922 (Tuesday)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Least vehicles on one day</td>
<td>4808 (Sunday)</td>
<td>4906 (Sunday)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cars, LGVs, caravans</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinary goods vehicle class 1 (OGV1),a bus</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinary goods vehicle class 2 (OGV2)b</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average speed</td>
<td>28.5mph</td>
<td>28.3mph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85th percentile</td>
<td>34.6mph</td>
<td>34.3mph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of vehicles above 30mph (Monday–Friday)</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of vehicles travelling above 30mph (Saturday–Sunday)</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: a OGV1 = all larger rigid vehicles with 2 or 3 axles, including vehicles with double rear wheels, tractors without trailers; b OGV2 = all rigid vehicles with 4 or more axles, all articulated vehicles, OGV1 vehicles towing a caravan or trailer.

4.8.2 A51

4.8.2.1 Description

The A51 is a single-carriageway primary route originating from Kingsbury, Warwickshire and linking Lichfield and Rugeley to Chester. It enters the NA at Stableford Bridge over the Meece Brook, a few metres west of the WCML overbridge. It traverses the NA west–east for a distance of 8.1 km, passing through Stableford, Hill Chorlton, Blackbrook, Willoughbridge and Weymouth, and leaves the NA at the county boundary 360 metres west of Willoughbridge cross-roads. There is a speed limit of 50mph from Stableford to Hill Chorlton; and a limit of 40mph on the approaches to and through Hill Chorlton to east of Maerfield Gate, where the limit returns to 50mph, continuing to west of Blackbrook. The A53 merges with the A51 for a distance of 320 metres at the Blackbrook staggered cross-roads. For much of its length through the NA the carriageway is of substandard width.
4.8.2.2 Footways

Along much of the A51 through the NA there are no footways: from the former Cock Inn car park at Stableford to Chapel House, Hill Chorlton; from Maerfield Gate to Maer War Memorial; from Maer War Memorial to the Barbour clothing store, Blackbrook; from White Farm to Lilac Cottage, Blackbrook; from Maerway Lane to Minn Bank junction, Weymouth; from Weymouth Farm to Willoughbridge cross-roads; from Willoughbridge cross-roads to the county boundary with Shropshire, east of Pipe Gate.

At Stableford there is a footway on the north side of the carriageway, from Stableford Bridge to the site of the former Cock Inn car park.

At Hill Chorlton there is a footway from Chapel House, through the hamlet of Hill Chorlton to the Woodside junction at Maerfield Gate, where there is a bus stop in Woodside. From Chapel House to the access to the Old Cheese Factory there is a wide grass verge on the outside of the footway. From the Old Cheese Factory to Rose Cottage there is a narrow footway with a narrow grass verge on the outside. The condition of the verge has deteriorated over the years due to the increase in traffic volumes and vehicle sizes. During the growing season the hedge of the adjacent field boundary encroaches over the footway and bracken falls across the pavement, forcing pedestrians out to the edge of the footway.

From Rose Cottage to Moss Lane and from Moss Lane to Arnside there is no verge. Along this stretch, for a distance of 190 metres between Moss Cottage and Arnside, both the footway and the carriageway are below standard width and pedestrians have no protection from passing vehicles. Air turbulence from passing HGVs and the closeness of vehicles are unpleasant and intimidating. Overtaking by speeding westbound vehicles is a serious hazard for pedestrians.

From Arnside to Sandy Lane and from Sandy Lane to Maerfield Gate there is a verge on the outside of the footway. The footway from Sandy Lane to Maerfield Gate is broken, uneven, overgrown with weeds and has not been maintained since it was first laid in 1968. This footway is the route to the bus stop serving Hill Chorlton residents.

At Blackbrook there is a footway on the south side of the carriageway from the Barbour clothing store (former Maer primary school) to the western junction with the A53 at White Farm. Further west, still at Blackbrook, on the south side of the carriageway there is a layby
at Lilac Cottage from where a footway runs to the junction with Hungersheath Lane. There is a wide grass verge on the outside of the footway.

At Willoughbridge there is a very narrow footway on the north side of the carriageway for a distance of 100 metres from the Minn Bank junction to 167 London Road. There is no grass verge and pedestrians have no protection from passing vehicles. The carriageway is of substandard width.

4.8.2.3 Traffic volumes and speeds

No recent traffic speed survey data is available for the A51. The last known survey by SCC Highways was undertaken in Hill Chorlton in 2013, following implementation of new speed limits from Stableford to Blackbrook. Traffic speeds are a particular concern to residents on the A51 in Hill Chorlton and at Weymouth.

HS2 Ltd has published traffic counts from surveys taken in 2015/2016 (see below). The A51 is a less busy road than the A53, none the less since 2000 residents report a significant increase in commuter traffic travelling eastbound in the mornings and westbound in the evenings. Much of this increase is likely to be due to the growth of residential development in Pipe Gate and Woore and business centres in the towns of Stone and Stafford.

There is a significant amount of HGV and other goods/commercial traffic, the majority of which leaves or joins the A51 at Blackbrook. The Müller Dairy UK headquarters at Market Drayton and associated Culina logistics is the biggest single contributor to HGV traffic between Stableford and Blackbrook.

The road also carries a large amount of agricultural traffic, including tractors towing large waggons or with mounted machinery, and harvest machines. Some vehicles are wider than the lane widths. At harvest times convoys of machinery and waggon travel in both directions. The volume of agricultural traffic is greater on the A51 than on the A53.

The A51 is a relief road when carriageways are closed on the M6 motorway. It is also a popular biker route.
4.8.2.4 Traffic incidents

A series of bends between Stableford and the Coombesdale junction are very hazardous. There have been serious traffic incidents and fatalities on the bend at Weston Lodge. From time to time there are incidents involving motorcycles and incidents involving slow-moving agricultural vehicles pulling out onto the A51 at junctions, e.g. the Kennels Lane junction. SCC Highways has recorded 11 accidents in 5 years at the A51/53 staggered cross-roads at Blackbrook (the actual number of incidents is higher, but SCC Highways and the police do not log incidents below a certain level of severity).

Box 4.11 Transport network and highways issues

Highways issues emerged in discussion at the Roadshows in November and December 2015 as the biggest single set of issues facing residents. They were also the greatest single topic of comment in the Residents’ Survey in September 2016. A specific question on highways issues (28a ‘Do you have any other comments about traffic and transport in the Neighbourhood Area?’) drew 154 responses. Question 4a ‘Are there any other issues of concern to you that are not mentioned in Question 4?’ also drew 69 comments on highways issues (out of a total 99 comments). (See Introduction.6.2 ‘Community engagement’ and report on Residents’ Survey.)

A wide range of highways issues discourage active travel (walking and cycling) and increase reliance on private motor cars. For further information on highways issues see Chapter 7.

4.9 Infrastructure and infrastructure deficiencies

Infrastructure refers to the basic physical systems and services that a society or an economy requires in order to function effectively.

4.9.1 Electricity

Across much of the NA the electricity supply is carried on overhead lines. In recent years Western Power Distribution has carried out intensive programmes of tree felling and lopping to protect the lines from storm damage. This has led to the loss of some significant trees in parts of the NA (Figure 4.8).
The government has announced that the manufacture and sale of petrol and diesel cars will cease from 2040. Over the course of the Plan the number of hybrid plug-in cars in the NA can be expected to grow. The resulting rising demand for electricity will place a burden on the network and distribution system across the NA, necessitating significant infrastructure upgrades.

Under the UK’s legally binding carbon reduction targets the burning of gas in home heating systems could be phased out as soon as 2030. As householders switch to non-gas heating systems, and when the final changeover happens, a further burden will be placed on the local electricity infrastructure.

**Figure 4.8** Stump of mature hedgerow oak felled near overhead power lines

### 4.9.1.1 Renewables

Paragraph 148 of the NPPF states that ‘The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate’, including by ‘support[ing] renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure’. There is a ‘responsibility on all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources’.

To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:

- provide a positive strategy for energy from [low carbon] sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);

- identify opportunities where development can draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.

Local planning authorities should support community-led initiatives for renewable
None of the housing developments currently permitted in the NA includes provision for renewable and/or low-carbon energy installations of any kind.

At present there is also very limited take-up of renewable energy technologies on existing development within the NA, either residential or business. Some residents and businesses have solar panel installations. A producer of free-range eggs in the NA has installed a solar field to power its operation.

**Box 4.12 Residents’ Survey**

The Residents’ Survey showed little support for renewable energy at scale: 17% each for solar fields and biomass energy, and 8% for wind turbines.

Of the 21 responses to question 11a ‘Other (please specify) [appropriate uses of land in the Neighbourhood Area]’, 8 were comments on the siting of solar fields and wind turbines. Only 2 responses were completely negative; 6 expressed the acceptability of such projects when carefully sited.

> ‘I know we need energy but we all become selfish and say not on our patch, but it has to be on someone’s patch. If we can produce energy that does not spoil the landscape then great.

> ‘Farms and other rural businesses should be allowed to install renewable energy installations such as wind turbines and/or solar fields to meet their operational energy needs.’

**4.9.2 Gas**

Mains gas supply is limited to Baldwins Gate, Madeley Park Wood, Heath Road on Whitmore Heath and the Swan with Two Necks public house at Blackbrook. Other parts of the NA are dependent on electricity, bottled gas, oil and LPG for cooking and heating, all of which are more expensive.

**4.9.3 Sewerage**

Mains sewerage is limited to Baldwins Gate, the Parkwood Drive South and Walls Wood developments in Madeley Park Wood, and Maer village. All disposal is to the Baldwins Gate
sewage works at Chorlton Moss. At The Croft former council houses at Blackbrook a small private sewage works serves the development. In all other locations sewage disposal is by septic tank, cess pit or package treatment plant.

**Box 4.13 Issue: capacity of sewerage system**

Severn Trent has indicated that the Baldwins Gate sewage works and the terminal pumping station at Baldwins Gate are currently under pressure and do not have capacity to serve the Kier site for 109 dwellings currently under development in Baldwins Gate. Upgrades are planned for completion during Severn Trent’s current planning cycle, which ends in April 2020 (see Severn Trent consultation responses in NuL Borough Council planning application 16/01101/FUL).

### 4.9.4 Telecommunications

A small telephone exchange in Baldwins Gate serves the majority of the NA for fixed-line telephone and broadband.

**Box 4.14 Residents’ Survey**

Both the mobile and broadband services received poor ratings in the Residents’ Survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. Telecommunications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My mobile voice signal is excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My mobile data service is excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My fixed line broadband is...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4.9.4.1 Broadband internet

Broadband internet is variable in quality across the NA. Map 6 illustrates the status of superfast broadband rollout in the NA and surrounding areas at September 2017.
4.9.4.2  **Mobile communications**

Mobile phone and data service is patchy across the NA. Some areas have no service at all; others are served by a limited number of providers and the quality of service is not uniformly good. 4G is available in some parts of the NA. Maps 7a and 7b show coverage by all providers of 2G/3G and 4G services.

4.10  **Appendix: Analysis of traffic flows in Baldwins Gate and at Blackbrook staggered junctions**

*By Richard Latham, IEng., FIHIE (Retired)*

This appendix deals with traffic situations now and for the foreseeable future in the NA.

Figures are taken from the most recent available data, High Speed Rail (West Midlands – Crewe), *Environmental Statement Volume 5: Technical Appendices – Transport Assessment (TR-001-000) Part 1* (July 2017).

Figures on the accompanying linear drawings (Plan 1 and 2) show the *total* average daily flow (i.e., both directions added together), known as the Annual Average Daily Total or AADT.

It must be emphasised that traffic data was obtained at different times between November 2015 and July 2016, and therefore strict mathematical calculations are not possible, owing to differing recorded volumes.

The NA is served by two major routes: A51 Stone to Nantwich road and A53 Newcastle to Market Drayton road. Numerous side roads intersect with these two and connect with areas such as Keele, Stableford, Chapel Chorlton, Maer, Madeley and Aston. A51 and A53 intersect at Blackbrook, where they run together as A51 for 300 metres before dividing.

This appendix deals with two areas of principal concern, Baldwins Gate (in Whitmore parish) and Blackbrook (in Maer parish).
4.10.1  Baldwins Gate

Plan 1 shows the diagrammatical layout of the area together with HS2 traffic figures underlined. Computed volumes have been extrapolated from this information and the calculations are shown; these are in **bold italics**.

There is one anomaly of particular note: to the west of Holly Bush Lane there is a recorded volume of 9,855 but at Blackbrook (see Plan 2) there is a computed volume of 10,270 – a difference of 415 and with no junctions of note between the two sites. Consequently, the mean of these two, i.e. 10,063, is considered in the following calculations. Deducting Holly Bush Lane traffic of 542 suggests 9,521 vehicles pass the end of Madeley Road.

Consideration should now be given to Manor Road (referred to as Madeley Road by HS2) and Woodside. On Madeley Road 1,592 vehicles are recorded; allowing a 50/50 split of this traffic between A53 to/from the east with Woodside, then 796 vehicles can be added to the 9,521 above. Local knowledge and experience suggests that a similar amount of A53 traffic to/from the east uses Woodside. Adding these in results in an estimated AADT at the western end of Baldwins Gate of 11,113 (9521 +796 + 796).

Moving to the eastern end of the village, 12,672 vehicles are recorded on A53 east of Common Lane, which itself carries 343 vehicles. As most of these will travel to/from the east, it is reasonable to say that 12,329 vehicles (12,672 – 343) will enter Baldwins Gate.

In conclusion, it can therefore be realistically assumed that on a daily basis 1,216 vehicles (12,329 – 11,113) vehicles start or finish a journey in the Baldwins Gate area between Common Lane and Woodside.

4.10.2  Blackbrook

A51 passes through the area of Blackbrook and is crossed by A53 by means of staggered junctions, i.e. A53 runs within A51 for 300 metres. Although A53 traffic is required to give way or stop where it intersects A51, it carries the heavier volume of traffic. The area is subject to a 50mph speed limit.

Because the heavier traffic flows are on A53 queuing is inevitable at the junctions with A51. Dealing first with the eastern-most of these, Table 79 of the HS2 Ltd *Technical Appendices*
turning volumes, and paragraph 5.6.26 states: ‘The model shows that this junction operates close or over its capacity on the A53 Newcastle Road arm in the AM and PM peak periods.’

Turning to the western intersection, Table 85 of the HS2 Ltd *Technical Appendices* shows the turning volumes, and paragraph 5.6.38 states: ‘The model shows that this junction is approaching capacity on the A53 arm in both the AM and PM peak periods.’

**Plan 2** shows the diagrammatical layout of the area, together with HS2 Ltd’s traffic figures underlined. Computed volumes have been extrapolated from this information and the calculations are shown; these are in **bold italics**.

It is evident that these two intersections will become seriously overloaded with natural traffic growth and, more importantly, by HS2 construction traffic, most of which will be HGVs. (Figures are available at Table 338 of the HS2 Ltd. HS2 Ltd *Technical Appendices*.

Implementation of junction improvements prior to the commencement of HS2 phase 2a construction is essential.
Plan 1 Baldwins Gate A53
Plan 2 Blackbrook A51 and A53
5 Environment

Content of this chapter:

5.1 Character
5.2 Landscape and natural environment categorisations
5.3 Geology
5.4 Hydrology
5.5 Special designations (landscape and natural environment)
5.6 Habitats and wildlife
5.7 Biodiversity opportunity zones
5.8 Built environment
5.9 Historic environment
5.10 Designated heritage assets
5.11 Non-designated heritage assets
5.12 Quality of environment
5.13 Local Green Space and green infrastructure
5.14 Key routes and spaces
5.15 Environmental issues

The NA has a rich natural and historic environment, as described in the following sections.

5.1 Character

The NA is a rural area, comprising 50% of the total area of the ‘Rural South-West’ of NuL borough. It is an agricultural area with predominantly dairy and livestock farming and a lower proportion of arable. There is also a significant amount of woodland. Across the NA development consists of a series of small villages (lower order villages), hamlets and cluster hamlets and isolated dwellings and farms that were established in historical times (some settlements have Saxon origins). Three larger settlements, comprising a higher order village in the centre of the NA and two modern wooded settlements grew up during the 20th century (AECOM, TCA, 2017).

The AECOM TCA provides the following cumulative description of the area:

The natural landscape provides a shared mutual identity for settlements across the Neighbourhood Plan Area, and is considered to be one of the Neighbourhood Area’s most significant features. The undulating landform, and the numerous controlled views which this topography offers, are valuable assets to the Parishes, and are crucial in defining the character of the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Development and infrastructure are settled in the landscape and often screened [Figure 5.1]; as such, there is a high scenic quality across the landscape. This is
punctuated in parts by isolated farmsteads and nucleated settlements which are notable in views, given that the area is generally defined by the pastoral landscape of medium-scale fields and hedgerow boundaries.

Roads and lanes are generally narrow and sunken, and have a low visual presence due to being effectively screened by roadside vegetation. This almost eliminates them from view, helping to reduce their visual impact on the Neighbourhood Area and again reinforcing notions of seclusion.

The agricultural narrative is common across the Neighbourhood Area, with settlements often enclosed by open farmland. Despite the presence of the WCML and the A51/A53, the overall impression across the neighbourhood area is one of tranquillity.

Woodland blocks and ridges help to frame the higher elements of the rural landscape and provide strong skylines against the open views. Tree lined wetlands and ditches contribute to the landscape value of the valleys, whilst narrow roads and sunken lanes create loose linkages between the settlements.

Development is generally well screened from the long views across the Neighbourhood Area. Where the views are interrupted, this is usually in the form of singular units. The sensitivity with which these units have been built in relation to these long views varies, with some contributing to the scenic rural landscape whilst others are more prominent and modern in appearance, and can detract from local character.

The location of the West Coast Mainline following the Meece Valley and the Whitmore Trough means that the railway line and its supporting infrastructure are common in many local views in Chapel and Hill Chorlton parish and in the south-eastern and western part of Whitmore parish.

Settlements and lanes have a close relationship to the local topography, creating an awareness of the landscape when moving through the Neighbourhood Area.

*Figure 5.1* ‘Development and infrastructure are settled in the landscape.’ Rooftops of Acton village viewed from Chorlton PRoW No. 8 (left); Maer village from Haddon Lane (right)
Views are subject to seasonal change due to the growth of vegetation, and proximity of this vegetation to the road and recreational networks. As such, the visual experience across the neighbourhood changes through the year.

AECOM, TCA, p. 43

5.2 Landscape and natural environment categorisations

The environmental and landscape setting of the NA is assigned to a number of categorisations, as follows.

- Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain (Natural England, National Character Area (NCA) 61)
- West Midlands Meres and Mosses (Natural England, Natural Area 27)
- Woodland Quarter (Staffordshire County Council (SCC), Planning for Landscape Change SPG)
- Ancient Redlands (SCC, Planning for Landscape Change SPG)
- Sandstone Hills and Heaths (SCC, Planning for Landscape Change SPG)

5.2.1 Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain

The NA is located on the eastern side of the Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain, Natural England’s NCA 61. To the east, the NA borders NCA 64, Potteries and the Churnet Valley.

5.2.1.1 Landform

The NA is characterised by a series of sandstone ridges, small plateaux, steep hillsides, hollows and deep coombes and is dominated by the Maer Hills (within the NA) and the Hanchurch Hills (adjoining to the east, Figure 5.2), both of which are under commercial conifer forestry.

The Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain National Character Area (NCA) comprises most of the county of Cheshire, the northern half of Shropshire and a large part of north-west Staffordshire. This is an expanse of flat or gently undulating, lush, pastoral farmland ...

A series of small sandstone ridges cut across the plain and are very prominent features within this open landscape. The Mid-Cheshire Ridge, the Maer and the Hanchurch Hills are the most significant. They are characterised by steep sides and woodland is often ancient semi-natural woodland ...
The landscape character of the plain owes much to its glacial origins. A thick layer of glacial till covers the lower slopes of the ridge and the surrounding plain and is punctuated by numerous ponds and meres. Subsequent colonisation by vegetation has resulted in the establishment of large areas of bog, known as mosses. ... The meres and mosses of the north-west Midlands form a geographically discrete series of nationally important, lowland open water and peatland sites; the finest examples are considered to be of international importance.

The NCA is important for food production. Throughout the plain, the water retention and fertility of the clay soils support lush pastures for grazing dairy cattle. ... The lighter soils in Staffordshire and parts of Shropshire support more mixed farms, combinable crops and potatoes in rotation.

Natural England, NCA profile 61, p. 4

**Figure 5.2** The Hanchurch Hills dominate the NA to the east: views from Whitmore Heath and Chorlton PRoW No. 19

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**Box 5.1 The 1951 County Plan**

The first County Plan for Staffordshire under the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 designated 6 Special Landscape Areas, one of which was Maer and Hanchurch Hills, described in the Plan as follows:

*Maer and Hanchurch Hills* (area about 22 sq. miles). – This area extends from the Maer Hills at the north-west to Trentham Park at the north-east and includes Whitmore and Swynnerton Old Park. Towards the south-west the boundary extends to near Ashley and at the south it includes the villages of Maer and Swynnerton. Tittensor Common and Bury Bank are included at the south-east.

The area (Figure 5.3) covered the whole of Chorlton parish with the exception of Swinchurch and the southernmost tip of the parish; Maer parish south of Radwood Lane and east of
Maerway Lane and Hungersheath Lane; and the southern part of Whitmore parish, including Madeley Park Wood, the whole of Whitmore Heath, Moat Wood and Brick Kiln Wood, Whitmore village and the park and grounds of Whitmore Hall and land to the south-west of Acton.

Figure 5.3 Maer and Hanchurch Hills Special Landscape Area – hatched area on the 1951 County Map

5.2.1.2 Views

From high points in the NA there are distant views to the Wrekin in Shropshire (Figure 5.4), Welsh mountains, Pennines and Peak District and across the Cheshire Plain.

The plain is visually constrained by the higher land around it. In the south, there are long views from the plain to the prominent hills of the Shropshire Hills NCA, notably the Wrekin and Wenlock Edge. The foothills of the Welsh mountains can be seen from areas in the west. In the east, the peaks of the Pennines and Peak District can be seen.

Natural England, NCA profile 61, p. 6
5.2.1.3 Transport network

An extensive transport network crosses the plain: the M6, ... and a web of railway lines which emanate from Crewe, an important node in the national rail network.

Natural England, NCA profile 61, p. 7

Figure 5.4 The Wrekin, Shropshire, viewed from Haddon Lane, Chapel Chorlton

The area is bounded on its north-eastern side by the M6 and is crossed from east to west by the A51 and A53. The West Coast Mainline (WCML), with its nearest stations at Crewe (north) and Stafford (south) crosses the NA from north-west to south-east. The proposed High Speed 2 (HS2) railway will cross the NA, shadowing the path of the WCML.

5.2.2 West Midlands Meres and Mosses

The NA is located on the eastern side of the West Midlands Meres and Mosses, Natural England’s Natural Area 27, which covers most of Cheshire, the northern half of Shropshire and part of north-west Staffordshire.

[Ecologically, the Meres and Mosses landscape [Figure 5.5] is valued on a par with the Norfolk Broads and the Lake District [...] the open water of the meres and the lowland raised bogs of the mosses ... are the primary habitat interest, although associated swamp, fen and wet woodland habitats are of secondary interest.

These wetlands have not only an international importance for nature conservation but also provide evidence of glacial retreat in their mineral soils and local records of the vegetation colonisation of those bare soils to the present day, from the layers of preserved pollen found in the peatland ‘archives’.

Although dominated by the low lying plain, there are scattered outcropping sandstone hills, glacial moraine and steep stream and river valleys, which provide relief to this otherwise homogeneous landscape. These features also endow this area with a variety of habitat types such as ... heath which are able to survive where intensive agriculture is not possible due to factors such as the steepness of slope, or the poorness/acidity of the sandy soils.

Natural England, Natural Area profile 27, p. 6

**Figure 5.5** Meres and Mosses landscape at Chorlton Moss in winter (Photos: Richard Oppenheimer)

The boundary to the south east in Staffordshire is less well defined and landscape and ecology merge gradually into the Trent Valley system. In this transitional corner of the Natural Area are dry and marshy grasslands on mineral soils which are infrequently encountered across the plain to the north west.

Natural England, Natural Area profile 27, p. 7

Human activity has contributed both positively and negatively to the nature conservation resource of this area, as a by-product of agricultural and industrial activity and as a consequence of direct action. ... the greatest pressures on the resource are from intense agricultural activity, transport infrastructure, housing and waste disposal. This invariably results in the continued loss, fragmentation and degradation of remaining sites and their linking habitats with the inevitable consequential loss of biodiversity and viability of populations of rare species characteristic of the Natural Area.

Natural England, Natural Area profile 27, p. 6
A key feature of the Mosses is the preservation within the peat of pollen from plant species growing in and around the moss since the last glaciation. By taking cores of peat it is possible to ‘read’ the sites’ vegetational history in the layers of peat up to the present day.

Natural England, Natural Area profile 27, p. 52

5.2.3 Ancient Redlands

Almost the whole of Whitmore parish and the Chorlton Moss area and the northern end of Chorlton parish come under this landscape type (see Map 8). The following extracts from Planning for Landscape Change SPG by Staffordshire County Council (SCC) briefly summarise the characteristics of this landscape.

**Visual character**

... Landform variations are very important in defining the differing scales and character, with areas of rolling or strong small-scale landform undulations allowing or controlling views across the landscape. ... The woodlands ... have a large visual influence on the landscape ... enclosing views and giving the whole area an impression of being well wooded in character. The numerous mature hedgerow oaks ... reinforce the land cover pattern and wooded appearance of the landscape ...

Settlement within this landscape reflects its ancient character, with narrow winding lanes, often sunken [Figure 5.6], linking hamlets, scattered houses and farms. Medium sized farms of Staffordshire red brick and halls with associated parkland impart a localised, distinctive character ...

Generally, this is a landscape where everything is on view, including intrusive elements such as commuter properties, main roads and electricity pylons.

**Characteristic landscape features**

Hedgerow field pattern with mature hedgerow oaks and some ash; broadleaved woodland; pronounced rolling landform; narrow sunken lanes; steep sandy slopes; well treed stream corridors and field ponds; parkland and pasture farming; isolated red brick farmhouses; straight lanes.

**Incongruous landscape features**

Expanding urban edge; busy main roads; power lines.


5.2.4 Sandstone Hills and Heaths

Chorlton and Maer parishes come under this landscape type, as well as three small areas of Whitmore parish: land south of Acton; Madeley Park Wood and hillside west of Manor
Road; land west of Radwood (see Map 8). The following extracts from SCC’s Planning for Landscape Change SPG briefly summarise the chief characteristics of this landscape.

**Visual character**
... a landscape varying from intensive arable and pastoral farming, where hedgerows are closely trimmed and in decline, to small-scale intimate areas in which large grown-up intact hedges and numerous hedgerow oaks limit views ...

... steep sided valleys and associated extensive broadleaved woodlands [are] important factors in controlling scale. In these smaller scale valley landscapes ... commuter pressures are apparent and these are subtly changing the character of settlements.

... winding ancient lanes ... often sunken ... dictate views and give a very rural feel to the landscape. Areas of former heathland are apparent ... and ... are often associated with newer rural properties.

... The open flatter areas where everything is on view ... are characterised by medium sized farms and large estates, ... the ancient pattern of small fields ... of the steep valleys imparts a more peaceful character to the areas of smaller scale.

**Characteristic landscape features**
Strongly undulating landform with steep sided valleys; a well treed landscape of field ponds, stream valleys and meres; ancient narrow sunken lanes; farms of traditional red brick; intensive arable and pasture farming; hedged field boundaries; hedgerow oaks; broadleaved and conifer woodlands.

**Incongruous landscape features**
Introduction of extensive post and wire fencing; field trees; modern housing; industrial development; busy main roads.


### 5.2.5 Woodland Quarter

The NA is located in the ‘Woodland Quarter’ of Newcastle-under-Lyme. The following extracts briefly summarise the chief characteristics of the landscape.

This is a local name, of unknown provenance, for a distinctive region of sandstone hills and large woodlands to the south west of Newcastle-under-Lyme. At its core is an area of strongly rising landform, culminating in the Maer and Hanchurch hills, with their extensive conifer plantations and remnant heathland character ... This is predominantly a livestock farming area with dairying the main farm type. Cereals and other more demanding arable crops including potatoes are grown mainly in the south and west of the area where land quality is generally better than further north.

...
The undulating landform is a unifying feature; to the west of the core area, approaching the boundary with north Shropshire, it supports a medium scale landscape with an intact field pattern and conifer woodlands on a pronounced rolling landform, whilst to the south it develops into an elevated plateau of intensive farmland and dispersed hamlets. This is an area of scattered woods and regular to semi-regular medium sized fields, where the mixed arable and pastoral farming, with few trees, sculpted hedges and strong landform, results in extensive views across the landscape.


**Box 5.2 Issue: trees in the landscape**

In parts of the NA there are isolated trees, significant groups and larger plantings of mature and over-mature trees in the landscape that are at risk due to decay, lack of maintenance and absence of succession planting. Some of these trees are protected under Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).

**Opportunity**

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 s.206 places a duty on landowners to replace a protected tree that is removed, uprooted or destroyed in contravention of the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012, or a tree that is removed,
uprooted or destroyed because it is dead or presents an immediate risk of harm.

There is an opportunity for the parish councils to work with landowners and landscape officers at NuL Borough Council to ensure that replacement planting is carried out as required under the Act.

5.2.6 Landscape policies in Planning for Landscape Change SPG

Planning for Landscape Change SPG has defined landscape policy areas and objectives for the Staffordshire landscape and also identifies areas of landscape sensitivity.

5.2.6.1 Landscape policy objectives

Planning for Landscape Change SPG identifies landscape policy areas in the NA (see Map 9), to which the following policy objectives apply.

5.2.6.1.1 Landscape maintenance

In most cases the existing economically-determined pattern of land use has resulted in these landscapes of high quality. There is therefore a lesser need for the targeting of landscape conservation resources to these areas. However, there is a danger that a change in the farming or land use pattern could have rapid and serious consequences for landscape quality. Such changes may already be underway, with their effects on the landscape currently not apparent. They could also be precipitated by future developments in national or international agricultural or forestry support policies, by the introduction of new technologies, or by novel misfortune with consequences similar to those of Dutch elm disease or BSE. There is a particular need for vigilance in these areas, and for a means of predicting and moderating the impact of changes in land use policy.


5.2.6.1.2 Landscape enhancement

These areas have suffered some erosion of strength of character and loss of condition of landscape elements. In some, but by no means all cases, this appears to be linked to a change in the farming pattern, from grassland to arable production. It may be that in time a new character will emerge from that change, but it is unlikely that the condition of traditional features such as small woodlands and hedges will improve without intervention. There is a particular need, therefore, to encourage relatively small-scale landscape conservation schemes such as hedgerow maintenance, habitat creation and tree and woodland planting, to stem the decline in landscape quality that will otherwise become more evident.

5.2.6.1.3 Landscape restoration

A range of causes have contributed to the decline of these areas: in some it has been mineral working and industrial activity which has left dereliction in its wake; in others the problems are largely those of the urban fringe, and in the deeper countryside it has often been a change to intensive arable farming that has led to the loss of landscape elements that formerly contributed to character and quality. In each case, enough of that character survives to guide restoration efforts, which must be pursued with some commitment if the decline in these areas is to be halted and reversed.


Box 5.3 Issue: areas of landscape restoration

- The landscape quality designations and policies from the Planning for Landscape Change SPG have been translated into the NuL Local Plan 2011 as policies N18–N22 and are shown on the Proposals Map. NuL Saved Policy N21: Areas of landscape restoration states that:

  Within Areas of Landscape Restoration, as shown on the Proposals Map, the Council will support, subject to other plan policies, proposals that will help to restore the character and improve the quality of the landscape. Within these areas it will be necessary to demonstrate that development will not further erode the character or quality of the landscape.

Saved Policy N21 does not fully translate the policy intention of Planning for Landscape Change SPG and allow that landscape restoration in the countryside should focus on halting decline in landscape quality and be guided by surviving landscape character. Consequently, the policy has been used by developers to justify large-scale housing development in the open countryside on the premise that the landscape in these areas is of low value and that the introduction of development would constitute landscape restoration. This approach has not been resisted by planning officers.

- The area of landscape restoration defined in the NA includes all of the peatland areas in the west and south of Whitmore parish, including the lowland raised bog habitat at
Chorlton Moss Local Wildlife Site (Maps 10 and 12), which has deteriorated as a result of historical land enclosure, over-draining of the land and the intensification of agriculture.

Maer and Hanchurch Hills (area about 22 sq. miles). – This area extends from the Maer Hills at the north-west to Trentham Park at the north-east and includes Whitmore and Swynnerton Old Park. Towards the south-west the boundary extends to near Ashley and at the south it includes the villages of Maer and Swynnerton. Tittensor Common and Bury Bank are included at the south-east.

The area (Figure 5.6) covered the whole of Chorlton parish with the exception of Swinchurch and the southernmost tip of the parish; Maer parish south of Radwood Lane and east of Maerway Lane and Hungersheath Lane; and the southern part of Whitmore parish, including Madeley Park Wood, the whole of Whitmore Heath, Moat Wood and Brick Kiln Wood, NuL Borough Council’s misapplication of the SCC policy for this landscape designation puts these ecologically sensitive, fragile and important areas at risk.

Opportunities

- The Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity to protect the rural character of the NA and to promote appropriate actions in areas of landscape restoration. This is supported by the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan and its objective of carrying out habitat restoration work at landscape scale.
- By highlighting the Borough Council’s misapplication of county-level policy the parish councils can work to protect the biodiversity and environment of these sensitive areas.
- There is scope to work with landowners and the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust to carry out landscape-scale habitat restoration at Chorlton Moss and to combine restoration of the habitat with educational objectives. (See also section 5.7, Biodiversity opportunity zones.)
- See also below section 5.3.2, Peatland sites

5.3 Geology

The underlying geology of the NA is Triassic sandstone, overlaid with clay, sand and gravel deposits formed during the retreat of ice at the end of the last Ice Age. The geological
formation is the source of the peatlands in the valley areas of all 3 parishes (Map 12) and the regionally important Meres and Mosses landscape that characterises parts of the NA.

The underlying geology of the area is mostly Triassic rocks formed between 195 to 225 million years ago. These rocks have been covered with a layer of clays, sands and gravels, deposited by the retreating glaciers of the late Pleistocene era (which ended approximately 12,000 years ago). It is these glacial sediments which have produced the characteristic landforms and features within the Meres and Mosses Natural Area.

Natural England, Natural Area profile 27, p. 51

Glacial activity has affected the whole plain by rounding off hard outcrops of sandstone, creating meltwater channels and lake beds and depositing a variety of materials from boulder clay to marls, sands and gravels. These deposits have in places caused the formation of a number of shallow meres and some peat filled mosses.

Natural England, NCA profile 61, p. 29

**Box 5.4 The Whitmore Trough**

The Whitmore Trough is a long, wide valley with virtually no drainage that runs in a south-easterly direction from the disused Silverdale–Market Drayton railway line and joins the Meece Brook to the south-east of Baldwins Gate. A shallow watershed between the Trent and Mersey drainage systems runs through Baldwins Gate.

The northern part of the trough is about 0.4km wide. About 0.4km south of Madeley Park Farm it widens out to the west to form the broad, flat valley about 0.8km wide in which the village of Baldwins Gate is situated. About 0.8km south-east of Whitmore station it makes a double bend towards the east, joining with the Meece Valley 1.5km from Whitmore station. At its widest point south of Whitmore station the trough is 1km in width (Figure 5.7).

‘The trough at its maximum height of 384 feet AOD, at Whitmore Station, is an imperceptible watershed which is part of the divide between the North Sea and Irish Sea drainage’ (Yates and Moseley, 1957). North of Whitmore station the trough extends for

---

4.8km until it meets the valley of the River Lea. At the Silverdale railway line the valley floor is 365 feet AOD, i.e. over a distance of almost 4.8km there is a fall of a mere 19 feet and the valley has virtually no drainage. At the point where the trough meets the Meece Brook the level is 371 feet AOD, i.e. the area south of Whitmore station also has virtually no drainage. The sand deposits at Whitmore Station are 20 feet deep; peat deposits north of Whitmore station are ‘usually 5 feet thick, resting on sand’. South of Whitmore station the peat deposits form Chorlton Moss and the Chorlton Moss lowland raised bog.

**Figure 5.7 The Whitmore Trough**

![Map of the Whitmore Trough](source: Yates and Moseley, Figure 1)

**Box 5.5 Historic mineral extraction in the NA**

- A fine white sandstone was quarried at Chapel Chorlton in the 18th and early 19th centuries. St George’s church on The Brampton, Newcastle-under-Lyme, was built of Chapel Chorlton stone in 1828. *(The Life and Times of the Villages* [2012], Chapel and Hill Chorlton, pp. 24–25).
- In the 19th and 20th centuries sand was quarried in Chorlton and Whitmore parishes, on land immediately north of Chorlton Moss, on Whitmore Heath and at Acton.
Throughout the NA there are old clay and marl pits where clay was dug for brickmaking and marl for spreading on the fields. Some pits have now been filled in (e.g. at Chapel Chorlton); others survive as ponds.

5.3.1 Soilscape

The NA has a varied but acid soilscape, comprising 8 of the 27 soil types defined in the soilscape of England. (Table 5.1 and Map 12)

5.3.2 Peatland sites

England’s peatlands perform important ecosystem services, through carbon capture and storage and flood control, and are a source of 70% of the country’s drinking water. The NPPF (para. 118b) states that planning policies and decisions should recognize that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production.

In July 2017 Defra announced a £10 million grant scheme for the restoration of England’s peatlands.

Peatlands comprise approximately 220ha (5%) of the NA (see Map 12) and overlie a principal aquifer (see section 5.4.4). Geological surveying has shown that fen peat deposits in the Whitmore Trough are ‘usually about five feet thick’ (see above, Box 5.5).

- In Whitmore and Chorlton parishes a continuous strip of fen peat runs south-east from the NA boundary at the Silverdale–Market Drayton railway line, along the Whitmore Trough and WCML, through Baldwins Gate to Chorlton Moss and the Meece Valley (Map 12).

- Snape Hall Bogs, at the northern end of the Whitmore Trough, was formerly a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) but was downgraded as a result of the land being ploughed.

- Chorlton Moss LWS, a Meres and Mosses site, is one of only two lowland raised bogs in Staffordshire. In their response to the HS2 Phase 2a Hybrid Bill Environmental Statement SCC and district councils note the need to protect the peatland in this area:
### Table 5.1 Soil types in the NA (see Map 12 legend)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Freely draining slightly acid loamy soils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Freely draining slightly acid sandy soils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Freely draining very acid sandy and loamy soils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Loamy and clayey floodplain soils with naturally high groundwater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Loamy and sandy soils with naturally high groundwater and a peaty surface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Fen peat soils</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CT-06-229 The route crosses river valley peat associated with the Meres and Mosses NIA [Nature Improvement Area] Chorlton Moss Site of Biological Importance (LWS) at E5-F5. As stated in the Working ES response, a slight northwards readjustment of the proposed viaduct, supported by soils mapping to identify the peat area, would maximise the peat area to be retained and allow for specialised wetland habitat creation to contribute to NIA objectives while avoiding the need to realign Meece Brook.

(Map 10. See above, Box 5.3, for opportunities to restore the site.)

- Maer Pool SSSI and New Pool and Oak Wood LWS in Maer parish are 2 further Meres and Mosses sites in the NA.
- The Bogs LWS and Maer Moss in Maer parish are fen peat sites in the Tern valley. Charles Darwin first observed the action of earthworms on the soil at a field on Maer Moss.

(See also below, section 5.4.3)

### Box 5.6 Issues affecting peatland sites

Land drainage and the general intensification of agriculture since the 19th-century land enclosures has put pressure on the NA’s peatlands.

- Chorlton Moss LWS, Maer Pool SSSI and New Pool and Oak Wood LWS are sensitive Meres and Mosses sites that are dependent on their associated water catchments (Map 11).
• Over-draining of land at Chorlton Moss has enabled trees to become established on the lowland raised bog, resulting in the drying out of the habitat. Natural England has assessed that although the habitat is degraded it is capable of restoration.
• In recent times land at Snape Hall Bog at the northern end of the Whitmore Trough, formerly designated as a Local Wildlife Site (LWS), has been ploughed, resulting in the LWS being delisted.
• Drainage work continues to be carried out on agricultural land north of Baldwins Gate.

**Opportunity**

The NDP provides an opportunity to establish policies and promote actions that will contribute to the protection of peatland sites from certain types of damage.

### 5.3.3 Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS)

The NA has two RIGS.

**Figure 5.8** Darwin’s Dyke at Butterton Church Quarry RIGS (Photo: Colin Perry)

• To the west of Baldwins Gate the Red Hill Rifle Range in Maer parish was designated in 2003 for its examples of Triassic braided riverplain and aeolian dunefield sedimentary structures.
• At Butterton in Whitmore parish Butterton Church Quarry was designated in 2003 as being a prime example of the effects of an igneous dyke (Darwin’s Dyke) intruding into sandstone (Figure 5.8).
5.4 Hydrology

The NA lies on the watersheds of three of England’s great river systems: the Trent, the Severn and the Mersey.

Although relatively flat, this NCA is a watershed for several major river systems. (Natural England, NCA profile 61, p. 6)

The Meece Brook, a tributary of the River Sow and hence the Trent, rises north of Whitmore Hall and flows southwards through Whitmore and Stableford, towards Stafford. Chorlton Moss, a peat wetland area to the south of Baldwins Gate, drains into the Meece. The River Lea, a tributary of the River Weaver and hence the Mersey, rises east of Aston and flows east and then north of the area, through Madeley. The River Tern, a tributary of the River Severn, flows inside the south-western perimeter of the area. Its source is considered to be the lake in the grounds of Maer Hall.

In the centre of the area Baldwins Gate is located in a broad, flat valley that links the Whitmore Trough to the Meece valley. An imperceptible watershed between the Trent and Weaver catchments runs through the village. About 1km south-west of Baldwins Gate a col separates the Severn and Trent catchments. A major aquifer lies below and to the south of Baldwins Gate. Artesian wells sunk near to Whitmore Station in the early 1860s supplied water for the railway and the locomotive works at Crewe, and also to the town of Crewe (1866–1940). Severn Trent operates a borehole near to Stableford. (AECOM, HCA, p. 19)

5.4.1 Watercourses

The land is drained by both main rivers and ordinary watercourses. Main rivers are designated by the Environment Agency. All watercourses that are not so designated are ordinary watercourses.

5.4.1.1 Main rivers

The NA has one main river, the River Lea, which forms the NW boundary of the NA from Lea Head Manor NW of Aston village, to north of Aston Cliff Farm.

5.4.1.2 Ordinary watercourses

Ordinary watercourses are found across the NA.

The Meece Brook rises in Whitmore parish, north of Whitmore Hall and flows southwards through Whitmore village. It then flows through farmland on the eastern side of the WCML and crosses under the railway line into Chorlton parish just north of Chorlton Mill. From
here it follows a very twisting and meandering course, forming the south-eastern boundary of Chorlton parish. It is designated a main river at the boundary of Chorlton and Standon parishes.

**Figure 5.9** The Meece Brook in Whitmore village

Swinchurch Brook rises east of Weston Meres Farm in Maer parish and generally forms the south-western boundary of Chorlton parish with Maer and Standon parishes. Its natural course appears to have been modified in the past: for a distance of about 800m the course south and south-west of Swinchurch Farm is smoothly curved and no longer matches the tightly twisting and meandering parish boundary. Swinchurch Brook joins the Meece Brook east of Butt House, near the southern tip of Chorlton parish.

The River Tern emerges from Maer Pool. For the first few kilometres its course appears to have been straightened in past times to serve as a drain, as it follows a straight course west and north-west along field boundaries to Willoughbridge. It then flows west and south-west and enters Loggerheads parish at Dorrington Bogs. The very twisting and meandering parish boundary to the south of the watercourse from Blackbrook to Dorrington Bogs suggests that the river’s course has changed over time and that it may have originally formed the parish
boundary. It is designated a main river after leaving Loggerheads parish at the county boundary with Shropshire.

- Chorlton parish has a network of drains on Chorlton Moss.
- In Maer parish there is a network of drains in the Tern valley, on Maer Moss and The Bogs and at Blackbrook.
- In north-western Whitmore parish there is a network of drains in the Whitmore Trough: east of the WCML, below Whitmore Heath and Whitmore Wood; and further north, on Snape Hall Bogs, west of the WCML.

![Figure 5.10 Watercourse on Chorlton Moss](image)

In northern Chorlton parish the ditches and field drains flow east to join the Meece Brook; in the southern part they flow south to join Swinchurch Brook.

In Maer parish south of Aston ditches and field drains flow south and west to join the River Tern. North of Aston they flow east and join the River Lea in Madeley parish.

In western Whitmore parish ditches and field drains flow north to join the River Lea in Madeley parish. In the northern part of the parish they flow south-east, south and south-west to join the Meece Brook. In the north-eastern part of the parish (Butterton) they flow north and north-east out of the parish and join watercourses that flow into the River Trent.

### 5.4.2 Standing water

#### 5.4.2.1 Maer Pool SSSI

Maer Pool, in the grounds of Maer Hall, is a Meres and Mosses site. It is a small, shallow mere in a setting of parkland and mixed woodland and is the source of the River Tern. It is a good example of a naturally eutrophic (nutrient rich) water body with marginal fen and well-developed reedswamp, and is of special interest for its freshwater invertebrates.

... Around much of the pool margin there is a narrow fringe of emergent vegetation ... This zone grades into species-rich marginal fen with plants such as meadowsweet
Filipendula ulmaria, greater tussock-sedge Carex paniculata, cyperus sedge C. pseudocyperus, water-plantain Alisma plantago-aquatica, water dock Rumex hydrolapathum and bittersweet Solanum dulcamara. At the north end of the mere this fen community broadens into reedswamp dominated by common reed Phragmites australis, with most of the aforementioned emergent plants occurring locally. Reed beds are rare habitats in Staffordshire and their associated fauna is correspondingly restricted. An example of this fauna is the reed warbler Acrocephalus scirpaceus which breeds here. ...

The assemblage of aquatic invertebrates is typical of small eutrophic meres where a relatively high degree of naturalness has prevailed. Drainage and pollution have commonly modified the invertebrate community of many Midlands meres of this type and such intact examples are increasingly scarce. The invertebrate fauna includes representatives of most aquatic groups and is particularly important for the variety of water bugs Hemiptera and snails Mollusca. Several regionally or locally uncommon species are recorded including the water boatmen Sigara concinna and Hesperocorixa linnei and the giant water flea Daphnia magna – this last is found in very few of the meres. The water beetles have received little attention to date but the nationally uncommon Ilybius fenestratus is present.

Natural England, Designated Sites View, Maer Pool SSSI, Citation https://necmsi.esdm.co.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/1000283.pdf

The site is 9.25ha in area. The Functional Ecological Unit (FEU) and water catchment of Maer Pool are shown on Map 11.

5.4.2.2 Ponds

There are many small natural and manmade ponds across the NA.

Figure 5.11 Roadside pond, probably an old marl pit, in Whitmore parish
The natural pool at New Pool and Oak Wood LWS in Maer parish is a sensitive Meres and Mosses site. Its FEU and associated water catchment are shown on Map 11.

Some ponds have formed in areas where clay and marl have been extracted for brickmaking and for spreading on the fields. There is a notable concentration of such ponds at Chapel Chorlton.

North of Whitmore Hall the Meece Brook has been dammed to create a lake in the grounds of the hall. Further to the north, the watercourses feed a series of manmade pools at Cudmore fishery.

### 5.4.3 Wetlands

See above, Box 5.4, section 5.3.2 and section 5.4.2.1. All of these are wetland areas. In the Meece Valley south of Whitmore village and in Chorlton parish the watercourse is bordered by marshy land (see Map 12).

### 5.4.4 Principal aquifer

A principal aquifer and high groundwater vulnerability zone underlies much of the NA (Maps 13 and 14). Severn Trent operates water extraction boreholes to the north of Stableford, a short distance east of the NA boundary, and at Blackbrook, a short distance south of the NA boundary (Map 15).

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**Box 5.7 Water extraction in Whitmore parish**

For a period of 76 years, from 1864 to 1940, domestic water supplies to Crewe came from artesian wells sunk into the aquifer at Whitmore (Baldwins Gate). In the early 1860s a reliable water supply for the LNWR Locomotive Works at Crewe was sourced from Whitmore. The LNWR (additional powers, England) Act, 1865, s.75 gave the Company powers to supply water to the town of Crewe; in 1880 a new Act conferred these powers indefinitely. Water supplied to the town was always surplus to the requirements of the locomotive works.
In 1874 town residents’ water consumption was 6 gallons per head per day; by 1911 it had risen to 14.2 gallons per day. By 1936 the town’s daily water consumption was 809,000 gallons (this excludes water consumed by the locomotive works and the population housed by the LNWR on its estate).

During the 1930s Crewe Town Council searched for a new water supply that would be under its own control. The town’s supply from Whitmore ceased in 1940, but Whitmore continued to supply water to the locomotive works and to the railway troughs at Whitmore. In 1976 during the summer drought Whitmore supplied water to Crewe Town to alleviate the shortage of the municipal supply.


5.4.5 **Flood zones**

The valley of the Meece Brook is a continuous Flood Zone 3 from Cudmore fishery in the north of Whitmore parish to the southernmost boundary of Chorlton parish. In the Whitmore Trough there is a continuous Flood Zone 3 from SJ 79376 40809 north-west of Baldwins Gate to SJ 78002 42628 on the northern boundary of the NA; and a small Flood Zone 3 at SJ 79348 40610 on the WCML west of New House Farm, Baldwins Gate (Map 16).

5.5 **Special designations (landscape and natural environment)**

5.5.1 **Green Belt**

The North Staffordshire Green Belt extends over about 83% of Whitmore parish, from the M6 motorway in the east to the WCML in the west. A small area of land in the south of Chorlton parish lies on the eastern side of the WCML and is therefore in the Green Belt. (See Map 4 and section 1.6.)

5.5.2 **Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)**

See above, section 5.4.2.1 Maer Pool SSSI.

5.6 **Habitats and wildlife**

The NPPF recognises the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Paragraph 170 states:
Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;

... 

d) minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;

e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. ...; and

f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

5.6.1 Designated ecological sites (Maps 17a–b)

The NA has 1 SSSI (see above) and 21 sites designated by Staffordshire Wildlife Trust as follows: 17 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS); 1 Retained Grade 1 Site of Biological Importance (SBI); 3 Retained Biodiversity Alert Sites (BAS). Retained SBI and Retained BAS are considered to be equivalent to LWS (Staffordshire Ecological Record, SBI Guidelines Appendix 1: SBI Criteria Definitions). Most of these sites are on private land with no public access. The following site descriptions have been supplied by the Staffordshire Ecological Record. Where a PRoW crosses the site this is noted in parentheses.

5.6.1.1 Retained Grade 1 SBI

- Hatton Mill (partly in Chorlton parish): ‘The area marked as woodland on the OS map has been felled recently [1979] and much of it has been replanted with poplars and conifers. There is also some oak and birch regeneration.’

5.6.1.2 Retained BAS

- New Pool and Oak Wood (Maer parish, partly in Loggerheads NA): ‘Pool with emergent vegetation and with developing deciduous woodland.’
• Radwood Copse and Railway Verges (Maer parish): ‘A birch dominated canopy over a heavily grazed turf.’

• Maer Hills (Maer parish): ‘A predominantly coniferous plantation over dry heath and acidic ground flora. The hills are bisected by many paths that reflect a slightly different flora which are consistent throughout.’ (PRoWs Maer 4 and Maer 5)

**Figure 5.12** Heathland habitat under the canopy on Maer Hills

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5.6.1.3 Local Wildlife Sites

5.6.1.3.1 Chorlton parish

• Bluebell Bank: ‘A complex of habitats have developed on a steep slope that adjoins an improved pasture. The habitats present include predominantly ash woodland, bracken with scattered broadleaved trees and a small area of unimproved acidic grassland.’ (PRoWs Chapel and Hill Chorlton 12, 13 and 14)

• Broughton Plantation and Coombes Dale: ‘A narrow broadleaf wooded valley with standing and running water which supports a wet woodland flora and in drier parts ancient woodland indicator species.’ (PRoW Chapel and Hill Chorlton 9)

• Chorlton Moss: ‘Raised peat bog that is rapidly drying out, which now contains coniferous and broad-leaved woodland. There is also an area of acidic grassland in the north-west corner of the site surrounded by an area of birch and alder carr.’ Extensions
to this wildlife site were identified by the Grading Committee of Staffordshire Wildlife Trust at its meeting on 25 January 2018.

- Swinchurch Rough: ‘A narrow broadleaf wooded valley with standing and running water which supports a wet woodland flora and in drier parts ancient woodland indicator species.’ (PRoW Chapel and Hill Chorlton No. 16)

  **Figure 5.13** Bluebell Bank Local Wildlife Site (Photo: Val Follwell)

5.6.1.3.2  Maer parish

- The Bogs: ‘Three woodlands, one of which is wet woodland, and two grazed fields which are separated by a drainage ditch. The more westerly of the two fields supports semi-improved acidic grassland and where drainage is impeded; rushes dominate in the sward.’

5.6.1.3.3  Whitmore parish

- Bentilee Wood: ‘A broadleaved woodland of which parts are noted on Natural England's ancient woodland inventory. The ground flora support a variety of woodland hers typical of ancient woodlands. A stream runs through the wood.’

- Butterton Meadows: ‘Several un-improved and semi-improved lowland meadows with areas of marshy grassland managed as traditional hay meadows.’

- Church Wood: ‘A linear broadleaved woodland with some ancient woodland indicator species in the ground flora. A small pool lacking in marginal vegetation is also present.’
Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore Neighbourhood Development Plan

5 | Environment

- Cliff’s Rough (partly in Whitmore parish): ‘Ancient woodland site supporting a diverse woodland ground flora with many ancient woodland indicator species under a broad-leaved tree canopy.’
- Hey Sprink (wood south-west of): ‘A narrow ravine colonised by broadleaved woodland with a mixed range of ancient woodland indicator species.’
- Unnamed wood south of Hey Sprink: This site was designated by the Grading Committee of Staffordshire Wildlife Trust at its meeting on 25 January 2018 and is not shown on Map 17a.
- Holbrook’s Wood: ‘Mixed plantation with wet and dry woodland ground flora with species-rich pockets.’
- Knight’s Wood: ‘A broadleaved woodland dominated by Bluebell and Creeping Soft-grass in the ground flora with localised pockets of other woodland herbs as well a bramble patches.’
- Moat Wood and Brickyard Wood: ‘An open broadleaved woodland with a ground flora of mainly Bramble and Bluebell. The woodland has previously been managed for timber.’
- Pleck Farm (north of): ‘A shallow valley with a stream and broadleaved woodland. Ancient woodland indicator species are in localised patches and there are a few wet species adjacent to the stream.’
- Swynnerton Old Park (partly in Whitmore parish): ‘Ancient replanted woodland, now an extensive conifer plantation with an often heathy ground flora, especially adjacent to and along the rides.’
- Whitmore Wood: ‘Coniferous plantation and a stand of semi-natural broadleaved woodland with most of the diversity in the ground flora confined to rides and tracksides. A stream supports wet woodland vegetation.’

Two areas of woodland north-west of Whitmore Wood were graded as SBI by the Grading Committee of Staffordshire Wildlife Trust at its 25 January 2018 meeting. These are the same as the 2 additional areas of ancient woodland identified by HS2 Ltd (see section 5.6.2).

Gathering of habitat information in the NA is an on-going process; for example, survey and mapping work by HS2 Ltd has identified further areas of habitat, the data for which is not
yet available. New habitats data for the NA will be incorporated into the evidence base as it becomes available.

**Box 5.8 Heathland habitats on Maer Hills BAS**

Maer Hills is the largest BAS in Staffordshire. Historically, the area was lowland heathland. It is now largely under commercial conifer forestry, with some areas of broadleaf woodland. The lowland heathland habitat with bilberry and heather survives under the canopy.

**Opportunity**

The aims and objectives of the NDP provide an opportunity to work with landowners and the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust to restore heathland habitats in parts of Maer Hills and to combine habitat restoration with educational objectives. (See also below, section 5.4.)

### 5.6.2 Ancient woodland

The NA has 18 areas of ancient woodland, as listed in Table 5.2.

**Table 5.2 Ancient woodlands in the NA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Ancient and semi-natural woodland</th>
<th>Ancient replanted woodland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maer</td>
<td>The Ridding</td>
<td>The Ridding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Willoughbridge Bogs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitmore</td>
<td>Bentilee Wood (2 areas)</td>
<td>Hey Sprink (on border)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Church Wood</td>
<td>Swynnerton Old Park (on border)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grange Wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Holbrook Wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knights Wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moat Wood (2 areas)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pleck Wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Radwood Copse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whitmore Wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whitmore Wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On 20 February 2018 HS2 Ltd published its Ancient Woodland Strategy for HS2 Phase 2a, in which it identifies 2 further areas of ancient woodland within the NA: these are ‘Hey Sprink (wood south-west of)’ (it is in fact south-east of Hey Sprink) and ‘Unnamed woodsouth of Hey Sprink’. Natural England has confirmed that these 2 areas are to be added to the Ancient Woodland Inventory. Both areas are of ‘county value’.
Ancient woodland in Whitmore parish will be adversely affected by HS2 Phase 2a construction; see section 6.6.2.2 for further details.

### 5.6.3 Veteran trees

A number of veteran trees were identified during a Phase 1 Habitat Survey in the environs of Baldwins Gate (see section 5.18.2.3). Further veteran trees have been identified by HS2 Ltd during environmental surveying in connection with the planned HS2 Phase 2a railway (Table 5.3). A complete survey of veteran trees in the NA has not been carried out. Survey work has focused on areas at greatest risk.

**Table 5.3** Veteran trees in the NA (partial survey)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Impact of HS2 works</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chorlton</td>
<td>SJ 79614 39657</td>
<td>Oak</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chorlton</td>
<td>SJ 79563 39446</td>
<td>Oak</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chorlton</td>
<td>SJ 79535 39406</td>
<td>Oak</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chorlton</td>
<td>SJ 79521 39399</td>
<td>Oak</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chorlton</td>
<td>SJ 79407 39681</td>
<td>Oak</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maer</td>
<td>SJ 79364 39225</td>
<td>Oak</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maer</td>
<td>SJ 78624 39772</td>
<td>Oak</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitmore</td>
<td>SJ 78799 40020</td>
<td>Oak</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitmore</td>
<td>SJ 78781 40030</td>
<td>Oak</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitmore</td>
<td>SJ 78533 40602</td>
<td>Oak</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitmore</td>
<td>SJ 78567 40524</td>
<td>Oak</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitmore</td>
<td>SJ 812 400</td>
<td>Pedunculate oak</td>
<td>HS2</td>
<td>Permanently lost, Stableford North satellite compound; temporary works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitmore</td>
<td>SJ 807 408</td>
<td>Pedunculate oak</td>
<td>HS2</td>
<td>Permanently lost, A53 temporary roundabout; temporary works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitmore</td>
<td>SJ 804 407</td>
<td>Pedunculate oak</td>
<td>HS2</td>
<td>Permanently lost, A53 reinstatement; permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitmore</td>
<td>SJ 800 406</td>
<td>Pedunculate oak</td>
<td>HS2</td>
<td>Permanently lost, balancing pond north of A53; permanent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 5.6.5 Wildlife

#### 5.6.4.1 Species of principal importance in England

The Staffordshire Ecological Record (SER) holds records of sitings in the NA of 232 of the 943 Species of Principal Importance in England, and 49 protected species. SER depends on members of the public submitting reports of sitings.

#### 5.6.4 Habitats of Principal Importance in England

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 s.41 defines a list of 56 Habitats of Principal Importance in England. Of the 35 habitat types that are not either coastal or marine, 16 are identified in the NA (Table 5.4). These habitats have been identified from the Defra Magic mapping system. As Defra Magic is not up to date, other habitats may have been identified that are not recorded on the map (Map 18).

### 5.7 Biodiversity opportunity zones

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust has carried out biodiversity opportunity mapping of habitat zones in Newcastle-under-Lyme borough. The report, Newcastle under Lyme Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping (March 2014), is part of the evidence base for the emerging SoT and NuL JLP.

The biodiversity opportunity map for the Borough of Newcastle under Lyme will form an essential component of a planning officer’s checklist in establishing how a planning proposal can contribute appropriate maintenance, enhancement or restoration for local biodiversity. In addition, the map can inform the targeting of agri-environment schemes, the compilation of Neighbourhood Development Plans [and] development of landscape-scale initiatives.
Table 5.4 Habitats of Principal Importance in England in the NA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broad habitat type</th>
<th>Habitat type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arable and horticulture</td>
<td>Arable field margins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional orchards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boundary</td>
<td>Hedgerows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshwater</td>
<td>Ponds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grassland</td>
<td>Good quality semi-improved grassland (non priority)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lowland meadows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Purple moor-grass and rush pastures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heathland</td>
<td>Lowland heathland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetland</td>
<td>Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lowland fens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lowland raised bog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reedbeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodland</td>
<td>Lowland mixed deciduous woodland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wet woodland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wood-pasture and parkland</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from Defra Magic mapping

The report identifies 8 types of biodiversity opportunity zone in the borough, 5 of which are present in the NA. Each zone type contains a range of priority habitats in addition to the primary habitat.

Box 5.9 Biodiversity opportunities

- The Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping report signposts priorities for natural environment conservation projects and can help to guide the biodiversity and natural environment aims of the Plan.

- The report forms part of the NuL evidence base for the JLP. The parish councils need to refer to it when responding to planning applications that affect ecologically sensitive areas and use it to support the case for the protection of such areas.
5.7.1 **Meres and Mosses**

The Borough contains more Meres and Mosses sites than any other district/borough in the county and these are of significant importance at local, county, national and international scales. (BOM, p. 24)

Three such sites are located in the NA: Maer Pool SSSI, Chorlton Moss LWS and New Pool and Oak Wood LWS (Map 11).

By the nature of their formation, Meres and Mosses are isolated, unconnected sites, formed in glacial hollows during the retreat of the ice at the end of the last Ice Age. They are associated with wider wetland complexes and are an integral part of larger catchment areas. They provide a habitat for a range of rare and highly specialised plants and animals. Their isolation in the landscape, combined with land drainage and improvement and agricultural intensification, puts them at risk.

5.7.1.1 **Objectives and opportunities**

The primary objective for this habitat type within the borough is the maintenance, restoration and expansion of wetland complexes, with particular emphasis on the mosses resources. (BOM, p. 24)

Each site will have some specific management requirements to maintain or restore the priority habitat quality; there are some unifying core issues that can be addressed. Tackling these on a landscape scale is critical to the robustness and long term future of Meres & Mosses within Newcastle under Lyme Borough. (BOM, p. 25)

Targeted opportunities for sites within the NA include:

- Improve condition of Maer pool and improve water quality along the length of the River Tern and its catchment and control discharges into watercourses.
- Restoration and improvement of existing biodiversity interest at Chorlton Moss to ensure more favourable conditions and improve resilience to environmental change. (BOM, p. 25)

(See above, Box 5.3, regarding opportunities to implement landscape and habitat restoration work at Chorlton Moss.)

5.7.2 **Woodland**

The Woodland opportunity zone covers almost the whole of NuL borough, and the whole of the NA. The NA plays a significant role in this opportunity zone, which sits within a distinctive region of sandstone hills; at its core is an area of strongly rising landform, culminating in the Maer and Hanchurch hills, with their extensive conifer plantations and remnant heathland character. (BOM, p. 30)
A sub-zone of Sprinks, Drumbles and Wet Woodland is mainly concentrated in the NE part of Whitmore parish. Sprinks and Drumbles generally consist of a canopy of mixed deciduous trees with a single, or several streams flowing through the main body of the woodland and associated wet ancient woodland ground flora (BOM, pp. 31–32) (Figure 5.14).

5.7.2.1 Objectives and opportunities

The primary habitat objectives ... are the maintenance, restoration and expansion of Wood-Pasture, Parkland and Native Woodland. (BOM, p. 33)

Specific opportunities for sites within the NA include:

- Thinning of conifer plantations in areas such as Maer hills ... to increase the quantity and quality of semi-natural broadleaved woodlands.

**Figure 5.14** Watercourse in wet woodland in Moat Wood ancient woodland

5.7.3 Grassland

This opportunity zone includes the southern half of Chorlton parish and the southern tip of Maer parish. The southernmost areas of grassland within the Borough vary from large intensive mixed units, to collections of smallholdings. Small watercourses seem to be present in much of the landscape, with the catchment of the River Tern ... and the Meece
Brook along with numerous drainage ditches and small infield ponds and pools’ (BOM, pp. 39–40).

### 5.7.3.1 Objectives and opportunities

The primary habitat objectives are the maintenance, restoration and expansion of species-rich grasslands, particularly Lowland Meadows and also Lowland Heathland where applicable. (BOM, p. 41)

Targeted opportunities for sites within the NA include:

- Maintain appropriate management for small areas of wood pasture in the south of the borough.
- Restoration of grasslands in areas with intensive agricultural practices such as Chapel Chorlton, Maer ...
- Encourage sympathetic management and reduced use of inorganic fertilisers and pesticides, particularly in areas around the Tern [and] Meece ... catchments as well as areas surrounding Meres and Mosses to safeguard current biodiversity. (BOM, p. 43)

### 5.7.4 River Valley

The River Tern (tributary of the Severn) and the Meece Brook (tributary of the Sow) both rise in the NA.

Much of the initial section of the [Tern] sits on significant deposits of peat suggesting that bog and moss habitats were present prior to agricultural improvement; woodlands and agricultural land are the two predominant habitat types. (p. 51)

The Meece Brook forms the boundary between Newcastle and Stafford Boroughs near Chapel Chorlton, the land along its catchment within Newcastle under Lyme Borough is a mixture of improved farmland and areas of marshy grassland and marginal vegetation. There are several small scrapes which hold water and give rise to marshy grassland and ephemeral pools throughout its length. The land along the Meece appears relatively diverse and is part of an important habitat network linking the borough to a diverse network of Local Wildlife Sites. (BOM, pp. 51–52)

#### 5.7.4.1 Objectives

The primary objective for this opportunity area is to improve water quality to benefit aquatic diversity as well as ensuring that water quality remains at sustainable acceptable levels. (BOM, pp. 52–53)

Broad objectives include:

- Wetland features such as ponds and reedbeds conserved and where possible expanded ...
Natural features such as meanders, riffles and backwaters should be maintained and enhanced. (BOM, p. 54)

5.7.5  Urban

Baldwins Gate and Madeley Park Wood are identified in the mapping of the Urban opportunity zone.

5.7.5.1  Objectives and opportunities

Primary objectives … are the provision of as many semi-natural habitats as possible within the urban environment to strengthen habitat networks and connectivity as well as creating corridors for wildlife …

Secondary objectives include providing more direct links both for the public and wildlife from urban to rural locations via the use of existing infrastructure such as dis-used railway lines … (BOM, p. 59)

Broad objectives include:

• Relaxing of Mowing Regimes … in areas of amenity grassland …
• Securing appropriate management for conservation in publicly owned and managed sites … (BOM, p. 60)

Targeted opportunities for sites within the NA include:

• Utilisation of dis-used railways linking rural and urban areas … as a network for both public access and biodiversity connectivity.
• Implementation of SuDS in new developments to provide migratory habitat as well as contribute towards improving water quality. (BOM, p. 60)

Box 5.10 Residents’ Survey

The Residents’ Survey shows that residents put a very high value on the NA’s natural environment. The rural location is valued by over 97% (Question 1), and 90% value the lanes, PRoWs and bridleways (Question 6). Sixty-seven respondents answered Question 6a ‘Are there any other places/open spaces which are important to you?’ and mentioned a wide variety of specific routes, long views and intimate landscapes. Maer Hills, Whitmore Heath and Chorlton Moss are some of the spaces of importance to the greatest number of residents. Places in or near to people’s home settlements are also important.
5.8 Built environment

The NA’s built environment comprises a number of small settlements in which the structures date chiefly from the 19th and 20th centuries. In Baldwins Gate 21st-century development is taking shape on land at the end of Gateway Avenue, where a new estate of 109 dwellings is under construction, and on two smaller sites on land at the Sheet Anchor (7 dwellings) and land at Appleton Drive (4 dwellings).

5.8.1 Townscape Character Appraisal

AECOM has carried out a Townscape Character Appraisal (TCA) (2017) of the NA as a technical assistance package provided by Locality. The report analyses and documents the rural character of the NA’s settlements and their relationship to the landscape. As such, its findings and conclusions confirm and support the overarching aim of the Plan ‘to protect rural character while allowing for appropriate development’, as well as the aims of both the adopted CSS and the emerging JLP to respect townscapes and landscapes and the rural settings and settlement patterns of the Local Plan area.

Section 4 of the TCA report identifies and describes a hierarchy of settlement types across the NA (Table 5.5). The report provides a thorough review of the hierarchy of planning policy and statutory spatial studies in relation to the NA, starting with the NPPF and National Planning Practice Guidance, drilling down through the polices of the CSS and the Saved Policies of the NuL Local Plan and considering the emerging JLP and its supporting evidence, as well as county policy on landscape. It also reviews statutory designations in the NA. The hierarchy of governance structures and powers for maintenance of the public realm are also reviewed, from the level of county council to the parish councils and private landowners.

The report’s Section 5, Townscape Environmental Resource, constructs a picture of the NA’s settlement character by defining historic morphology, land use distribution, landscape type, urban structure, landform, building typologies and movement and legibility for each settlement type. The report also quotes at length from the AECOM Heritage and Character Assessment (HCA) (2016) of the NA.
In a SWOT analysis of the different settlement types (Table 5.6) the report identifies that development that is insensitive to the distinctive features of individual settlements and their relationship to the landscape and countryside would undermine their character. The report notes that:

Hedgerows and other vegetation help to screen the narrow lanes which connect the settlements, and mask the various PRoW which intersect the landscape. Also common in the parishes are both small and larger areas of mature woodland. In some places this has been used as a context for development. The structural landscape features of the woodland, hedgerows and vegetation mitigate development impact and help to give the impression of an uninterrupted countryside. (TCA, pp. 47–48)

There is a close relationship between the settlements, the local topography and vegetation. Many of the settlements are assimilated into the landscape by either the undulations of the land, or the presence of trees and hedgerows which help to screen the developments from views. (TCA, p. 48)

It also notes that there have been instances of inappropriate development across the NA:

Various buildings across the parishes have been subject to enlargement through restoration, redevelopment, and demolition, contributing to an inconsistent style. In some cases, these alterations have been insensitive to both the existing building style/character within the settlements and the surrounding natural landscape. (TCA, p. 52)

The report highlights that:

The emerging Local Plan discusses various Key Messages and Key Challenges regarding the historic characteristics and the natural environment. These include the need to recognise the contribution of historic assets, ensure development is of an appropriate scale and location, safeguarding characteristic landscapes ... (TCA, p. 42)

and that:

The Neighbourhood Planning process offers the Steering Group an opportunity to shape development in its area. The emerging Joint Local Plan’s statement that future development strategies should safeguard characteristic landscapes whilst taking opportunities to improve lower quality landscapes, offers the potential for the Neighbourhood Planning process to define distinctive aspects of the area's landscape character. (TCA, p. 42)
### Table 5.5 Settlement typology: proposed descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Suggested settlements within category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modern</td>
<td>Developed as a series of small estates and Developed in wooded areas, the woodland infrastructure is mature and of a scale and pattern which relates to similar wooded areas in the south of the borough. We can assume that this wooded location has been chosen in order to mitigate the impact of these settlements on the wider rural character. These areas feature a post-1920s and suburban housing typology, with a number of large family houses in sylvan garden settings. A number of these dwellings have views which overlook the surrounding landscape.</td>
<td>1. Whitmore Heath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Order Rural Village</td>
<td>These settlements have developed from a small centre, usually associated with transport catalysts such as a railway station or key vehicular routes. The most desirable and well considered of these have grown in correlation to the size of the historic village centre. The heart of these villages is usually centred on the railway station, with some local store functions and higher order community uses located as ribbon developments. Residential development is served via a number of perpendicular secondary routes and tends to be one to two blocks in depth, helping to retain a rural scale. These settlement are circa 150–200 dwellings. As their evolution doesn’t often relate to agricultural uses, higher order rural villages usually have a well-defined and tightly drawn envelope.</td>
<td>3. Baldwins Gate (315 dwellings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elevated Wooded Settlements</td>
<td>individual properties, these areas now have some scale and are among the larger settlements in the parishes. They are set outside the village typology, and defined as ‘modern’ given that they have evolved over a relatively short period in the mid</td>
<td>2. Madeley Park Wood and Manor Road (c.150 dwellings)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
to late twentieth century. These settlements are typically only residential in nature and their evolution is often driven by landownership rather than other catalysts.

The layout of these developments has evolved around individual, mid-sized development plots and low-order circulation routes. The settlements lack a cohesive street hierarchy and a defined centre. Though individual properties will have merit the character of this type of settlement is considered ordinary.

| **Lower Order Rural Village** | These are low density settlements which have circa 20-30 dwellings. They have often evolved in association with local Estates or farms for the provision of workers’ cottages. The form is usually ribbon development, with occasional agricultural uses behind which are often arranged in a stable yard form. Access is generally via private drives, and there is rarely a second tier of street hierarchy.

Typically these villages have a single community building (e.g. a parish hall, church or pub) which is loosely fitted into the granular form. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Acton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Whitmore village</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Maer village</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Aston (with Minn Bank)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Cluster Hamlet</strong></th>
<th>This designation includes a collection of hamlets which are physically separated by areas of undeveloped/agricultural land, but are linked by the nature of their connectivity and cultural association (such as the parish/community identity).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. Chapel Chorlton (comprising settlement around village green and church, Haddon Lane, Swinchurch, Mill Lane, Butt House Lane)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Hill Chorlton (comprising Hill Chorlton, Chorlton Moss, Kennels Lane, Mill Lane, Chorlton Mill, Coombesdale)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Blackbrook (comprising Blackbrook, Willoughbridge, Weymouth)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hamlet

These settlements typically consist of a collection of up to 10 residential dwellings, loosely spread out in ribbon development form. The layout is more difficult to predict as there is very little repetition of footprint, and there is often a mix of building typologies. Broadly, however, these are detached dwellings on larger plots which may have been established in relationship to a farmstead. The land use is residential, with occasional agricultural uses and farmsteads. As such, these settlements include large amounts of agricultural land within their settlement envelope. Civic and community facilities are not common.

**Table 5.6** SWOT analysis of individual settlements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modern settlements: Whitmore Heath and Madeley Park Wood (MPW)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strength</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Attractive setting and domestic landscaping which contributes to the quality of the settlements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Clearly defined and contained settlement boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The majority of the settlements are contained within wooded areas and screened from long views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Architectural diversity, but units consistently of a high quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Aspirational homes for families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- To further mitigate any breaches of woodland cover (MPW)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Improve strategic active travel links and public transport links to the settlements (MPW)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Baldwins Gate

**Strength**
- Unique purpose and typology within the Neighbourhood Area as the only higher order village
- Provision of a limited level of local services and facilities
- Direct links to Newcastle-under-Lyme and connections beyond the neighbourhood area
- Pockets of accessible public open space
- Sense of space/ openness afforded to the settlement by the surrounding landscape
- Mixture of housing typologies and architectural diversity
- Areas of high quality and unique housing units which are sympathetic and complementary to each other

**Weakness**
- There is no sense of arrival when entering the settlement
- Lack of townscape cues to indicate the significance of the village
- Community facilities are not obvious and there is no defined village centre which can confuse the legibility
- Bisection by the A53 and WCML rail line undermines the potential for a village ‘core’
- Evolution of the centre/ facilities hasn’t kept up with settlement growth.
- WCML prevents east/west movement across village, except via the A53
- Piecemeal housing development
- Poor interconnections between different parts of the village

**Opportunity**
- Historic units by the rail line have the potential for improvements and restoration
- Reintroduction of a rail link into the settlement (Whitmore station)
- There is an opportunity to create softer landscaped edges to the settlement to better integrate it into the landscape

**Threat**
- Risk of the size of the village growing beyond that of the higher order village typology.
- The lack of a clear settlement centre leaves the village vulnerable to piecemeal development of facilities which, as a result, could become inaccessible to each other
- Risk of becoming more unsustainable due [to] centre/ facilities failing to evolve to keep up with settlement growth
- Additional piecemeal development would further worsen the village’s incohesiveness and illegibility
- Housing extensions disproportionate to the existing housing profile and size risk undermining cohesiveness of the village’s character
- Risk that further development would result in visual coalescence with neighbouring settlements
- Unclear street hierarchy contributes to an illegible understanding of space which is difficult to navigate
- Impermeable culs-de-sac discourage active transport (ie walking and cycling)
- Lack of affordable, smaller housing units
- Uniform architecture along certain streets, creating a homogenous street scene
- Greater density of new developments on edge of village
- Speed and volume of traffic on A53
- Increasing volume of traffic due to development outside the Neighbourhood Area
- Difficult vehicle access onto A53 from residential streets and from dwellings on A53
- Speed and volume of traffic on A53 creates an unpleasant pedestrian experience
- Overdevelopment of plots on more modern estates, with larger buildings/ smaller frontages and a closer relationship to the road, creating a suburban rather than rural character
- Lack of public car parking

**Lower order villages: Acton / Whitmore / Maer / Aston**

**Strength**
- Maer and Whitmore villages are designated as Conservation Areas, and as such are served by a degree of protection
- Strong village architecture and character within each settlement
- Good relationship with the surrounding countryside through estate/farming units, reinforcing the rural narrative of these settlements
- Identifiable community assets located among the housing units
- Clear heritage permeates the settlements
- There is a sense of approaching and ‘dropping down’ into settlements, glimpsed

**Weakness**
- Lack of connectivity
- Low level of facilities, or of access to a variety of facilities
- Poor/hazardous pedestrian access due to fragmented footway and footpath network
- The presence of parked cars and traffic moving through the villages undermines character/ tranquillity
- Speed and volume of traffic increasingly creates an unpleasant pedestrian experience
views into the settlement, sense of arrival through change in landscape (pastoral to gardens), formalised boundaries, crumbling edge towards compact centre and narrowing /enclosing roads

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Threat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Integrate settlements more into local recreational/ strategic footpath networks, so they become places of exploration.</td>
<td>- Loss of small, incidental pieces of rural space which cumulatively contribute to the character of these villages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Improvements to walking and cycling connectivity and facilities for visitors</td>
<td>- Upgrading of unadopted roads using practical measures (such as tarmacing) could detract from local character, and could increase the amount of impermeable pavement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Designate ‘quiet lanes’ and cycle routes</td>
<td>- Modernisation of housing features, which could undermine the traditional architectural qualities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Highlight the historic recreational value that these destinations could offer to visitors (e.g. churches, estate buildings)</td>
<td>- Inappropriate property extensions unsympathetic to the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Continuing growth in traffic volumes and use of village roads as ‘rat runs’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cluster hamlets: Chapel Chorlton, Hill Chorlton, Blackbrook and Butterton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strength</th>
<th>Weakness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Topography of the landscape offers long views across the neighbourhood area</td>
<td>- Lack of facilities and public transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Good balance between residential and other building types.</td>
<td>- Dispersed nature of the settlements impedes formation of a sense of community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Preservation of small hamlet charm and identity, clearly defined use of buildings (e.g. houses and farmsteads)</td>
<td>- Clusters fragmented by A51 and A53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Strength in the collective identity of these ribbon settlements</td>
<td>- Intrusive presence of A51 in Hill Chorlton, Blackbrook and Weymouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Rhythm to the size scale of buildings. Relationship in scale and massing is fluid. There are no incongruous features which detract from this appearance.</td>
<td>- Clutter of road signs on A51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Development frontages are orientated to the road, and settlement character is dependent on this relationship</td>
<td>- Pedestrian access within clusters fragmented by A51 and A53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Heavy agricultural vehicles and machinery on roads and lanes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Excessive traffic speeds on lanes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Lack of traffic calming measures and passing places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Small front gardens in linear settlements lead to car-dominated frontages/ on-street parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Overhead ‘wirescape’ of electricity, telephone and fibre broadband cables suspended from poles. Introduction of new services results in more poles and wires</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Opportunity
- Retain traditional relationships between notable rural development within the countryside/ protect rural assets.
- The charm of the individual hamlets within the ribboned cluster should be retained
- Designate ‘quiet lanes’ and cycle routes

### Threat
- Development could lead to coalescence between pockets of settlement within the clusters
- The shallow depths of the linear settlements means the cluster hamlets are more susceptible to poor/ insensitive design or development
- Development which increases the depth of these settlements could undermine their character and their close relationship to the road
- Greater flow of traffic or numbers of parked cars could interrupt the experience of passing through the cluster hamlets
- Street lighting would detract from the remote atmosphere and impact negatively on the night-time landscape
- Development in exposed positions or along ridgelines could have a greater impact on long views across the neighbourhood area than development in other settlement types
- Upgrading of unadopted roads would detract from local character/ and increase the amount of impermeable pavement
- Replacement of domestic hedges with laurel, conifer, and non-native species.
- The lack of depth to these settlements means that non-traditional planting/ vegetation/ ornate landscaping may weaken the traditional rural character
- Land use which is not residential or agricultural may not be suited to these settlements.

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### Hamlets: Stableford and Springfield

#### Strength
- Provide pockets of architectural character and history within the rural landscape, and add to the tapestry of the rural narrative
- Well integrated into the rolling landform, and complementary to the local topography (Springfield)

#### Weakness
- The hamlets may not always be recognised as settlements in their own right, rather as individual units
- The small size leaves hamlets susceptible/ vulnerable to insensitive development, which could easily undermine their local character and charm
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Threat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- To preserve and recognise the rural value of these smaller settlements.</td>
<td>- Hamlets may not be recognised as settlements, which could leave them to be susceptible to development without due consideration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Development may capitalise on the open space of these locations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- HS2 proposals will undermine tranquillity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.8.1.1 Building typologies of the NA’s settlements

The following section is quoted verbatim from the AECOM TCA, section 5.8.2, pp. 52–54. It should be read with Tables 5.5 and 5.6 to guide design in the NA’s different settlements (for the Baldwins Gate design statement see section 2.8).

**Modern settlements: Whitmore Heath and Madeley Park Wood**

The buildings are spacious residential properties, mostly of 1 or 2 storeys.

Large detached housing units with an individual style and character. Almost all buildings serve residential purposes and many include outhouses or individual garage units. The buildings are exposed within the individual plot areas, and are of a large scale, creating an impression of grandeur.

Some units have undergone a process of modernisation in recent years which detracts from the rural architecture as exhibited in other settlements.

**High Order Village: Baldwins Gate**

Baldwins Gate expresses a suburban residential character, with a spacious layout of post-war estate development. The overall impression is one of a pleasant, albeit ubiquitous, residential area, with streets of differing architectural styles as a result of piecemeal development.

The following statement from the Heritage and Character Assessment (HCA), AECOM, 2016, discusses the wide variety building typologies in the village.

‘At the western end of the village is a later 19th century terrace comprising the Methodist chapel and three workmen’s cottages. The A53 is lined on both sides by ribbon developments of two-storey detached and semi-detached houses of the 1920s and 1930s. These are constructed in red and blue brick or are rendered and are in a variety of styles. At the north-western side of the village Sandyfields estate,
Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore
Neighbourhood Development Plan
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built from 1947 to the 1950s, is a development of individually designed, mostly
detached, houses and bungalows on large plots with mature gardens. In either side of
the A53.

Appleton Drive, Gateway estate and Meadowfields estate, built by volume house
builders from 1959 to 1968, consist of detached houses and bungalows of mellow
and red brick with a variety of render and horizontal boarding finishes. The buildings
and gardens have matured and alterations and extensions make for some variety. A
few more recent large houses have been built on garden land in Appleton Drive and
adjacent to Station Stores. The plots are smaller than on Sandyfields but front
gardens are generally generous. Meadowfields estate has an open plan layout,
although some plots are now edged with hedges and shrubs. In Appleton Drive and
Gateway estate there are low front garden walls. Appleton Drive is a tree-lined street
with grass verges. The dwellings in these developments all have individual garages or
carports and off-street parking in front of the houses. The most recent developments
(late 1990s) are Fair-Green Road on the site of the former railway reservoir and the
Lakeside estate at the western end of the village. Both developments consist of
large detached houses, set back from the road with small
front gardens, off-street parking in front of the houses and individual garages. They
express some features of the local vernacular, such as red or mellow brick, dark tiled
roofs and deep window cills. However, there is little variation from building to
building.’ (p. 24)

Lower Order Villages: Acton / Whitmore / Maer / Aston

Lower order village settlements tend to be of an older era, and exhibit slightly more
consistency in terms of physical features than the higher order village settlement,
potentially due to the smaller size of the settlement areas.

The following statement from the HCA discusses the building typologies in the villages.

**Acton:** ‘is a small hamlet which was formerly part of Whitmore Hall estate. There is a
mixture of housing styles: the larger 20th century houses generally have white or
cream painted brickwork; and the remainder are red or black brick, and some have
timber cladding. There is a large equestrian centre at the northern edge of
thesettlement. The former Wesleyan Methodist chapel has been converted into a
dwelling.’ (p. 25)

**Whitmore:** ‘comprises a small number of individual dwellings and two terraces of
workers’ cottages. The houses are predominantly two storeys, of cottage style with
pitched roofs, chimneys, inset windows, decorative fascia boards, and mostly of
white painted brickwork, although one terrace on Bent Lane is of red brick. The roofs
are of Staffordshire Blue tile, some with alternate rows of straight and scalloped tiles
and others completely of scalloped tiles. The Grade I listed Whitmore Hall and the
Parish Church of Saint Mary and All Saints (Grade II*) are at the centre of the village
...On Three Mile Lane white painted brick cottages with pitched roofs and chimneys
face the church. Lower down Three Mile Lane, near the brook, Ivy House has a large
walled garden. Further along Three Mile Lane, on the periphery of the village, there are farm buildings. The Mainwaring Arms public house faces the A53 at the corner of Three Mile Lane. On the other side of the A53 is a range of brick farm buildings.’ (p. 25)

Maer: ‘Many of the houses have red brick or white painted frontages, and create a strong sense of identity for the Conservation Area and the village’s historical connection with Maer Hall. Cottages have front gardens, with low walls of local red sandstone abutting the road or narrow pavement. The village hall at the southern end of the village is of rough dressed red sandstone … There is very little modern development. The mellow brick Maer Estate Cottages are contemporary with the Hall and have been renovated to a similar style to the period properties in the village. There is modern glazing in the square glass lanterns atop the towers at either end of the stable block, replacing the original leaded diamond panes. South of the estate buildings is the walled garden, which contains a modern bungalow. Adjacent to the former Home Farm on Haddon Lane a range of farm buildings have been converted into mews dwellings.’ (p. 23)

Aston: ‘The village and its environs have a number of Grade II listed buildings. Lea Head Manor, to the north west of the village, is Grade II* listed. There is a mixture of building styles and periods, with large barns and farm buildings sitting adjacent to modest cottages. Some of the barns have been converted into dwellings. Most houses are two-storey, with the exception of the three-storey Aston Manor House (Grade II listed), which is imposing in its largely open setting. There are two black and white houses, but red brick is the most common building material with roofs finished in Staffordshire Blue tiles, including scalloped tiles, or in slate. Occasional buildings have been rendered or pebbledashed which adds variety to the streetscape.’ (p. 24)

Cluster Hamlets: Chapel Chorlton, Hill Chorlton, Blackbrook and Butterton

Singular farmhouses, mixed with detached and semi-detached residential units. Places of worship are present.

Farmsteads take up a considerable portion of the built environment footprint. Otherwise residential, with some alternative uses present which capitalise upon the farmstead typology. Housing is detached, relatively large, and of no particular consistency. Typically, dwellings are of 1 or 2 storeys, with a few farmhouses of 3 storeys. The HCA refers to the settlements in the following way.

Chapel Chorlton: ‘most of the houses are detached and are set within relatively large plots with private driveways. A cluster of smaller dwellings close to the church have been converted from old farm buildings. To the west of the settlement is Haddon Lane, which is lined on the northern side by a mixture of large detached and smaller semi-detached houses and bungalows, ranging from 19th to late 20th century construction, including a row of former council houses.’ (p. 23)
Hill Chorlton: ‘There is a variety of architectural styles, depending on the period of construction. In the main settlement dwellings are mostly modernised 18th and 19th century cottage properties, many of which have been extended. A small group of 20th century houses located off the road at the eastern end is less prominent. There are a few replacement dwellings, some of which contrast starkly in style and materials. Notable at the eastern end of the village is the former Wesleyan Chapel, now converted into a dwelling. It has a slate roof. The inscribed plaque on its front gable has been painted over ... Most houses are two-storey and detached. Materials include red brick and white-painted brick or render. Older roofs are finished in Staffordshire Blue tile, some patterned with alternate rows of plain and scalloped tiles. Newer buildings and some reroofed buildings have dark brown or cement tiles or pan tiles. Most houses have chimneys. Other characteristic features include deep stone or brick window cills.’ (p.23)

Blackbrook: ‘Houses are generally rebuilt estate cottages, in a mixture of styles, and set back within private gardens accessed via private drives. A former chapel building, St Mary’s Mission, now derelict, occupies a key position at the node formed by the junction of the A51 and Maerway Lane. The Croft is a group of ten semi-detached former council houses built of buff-coloured brick in Hungersheath Lane, off the A51. The Swan with Two Necks gastro-pub restaurant with its large car park is prominent on the A51. Nearby, also on the A51, the red brick former Maer village school is now a clothing store.’ (p. 24)

Butterton: ‘Many of the old estate houses, including the old school, have been renovated and modernised. The houses are predominantly two-storey, of individual style and design, with pitched roofs and chimneys, inset windows and built in soft red brick with plain clay tiled roofs.’ (p. 25)

Hamlets: Stableford and Springfield

These buildings have an individualistic character. Stableford is described in the HCA in the following way.

Stableford: ‘is characterised by the former Cock Inn, a large building with a mock “black and white” exterior finish which abuts the A51 and which is a listed building, and an extensive static mobile home park. A modern development behind the Cock Inn and between Stableford Bank and the A51 comprises three blocks of two- and three-storey red-brick terraced housing. The blocks are arranged around a central courtyard in a layout similar to farmsteads in the area.’ (p. 23)

5.8.2 Heritage and Character Assessment

The AECOM Heritage and Character Assessment report (HCA) (2016) for the NA notes a range of issues to be addressed through new development or active management:
• Paving over of some front gardens in some settlements, and driveway parking in front of residences in newer estates in Baldwins Gate, contributing to car-dominated streetscapes.

• Lack of wooded margins to new developments, such as Fair-Green Road in Baldwins Gate and Walls Wood in Madeley Park Wood.

• High volumes of high speed traffic on the A51 and A53.

• The conversion of former estate buildings has introduced domestic and sometimes suburban architecture which at times jar with the historic landscape and parkland setting.

• Unsympathetic extensions, domestic porches to former agricultural buildings, the insertion or alteration of openings, the use of non-traditional materials in historic buildings, which cumulatively may undermine the historic character and appearance of the area.

• Newer development within the villages, particularly infill plots and the more recent estates in Baldwins Gate, have not respected the well-established post-war estate village style in terms of the established scale, height, massing, density alignment and materials.

• Inappropriate boundary treatments, such as manor gates and railings and red brick walls, that are not in keeping with the rural character of many of the settlements.

AECOM, HCA, p. 32

The HCA also notes elements that are particularly sensitive to change:

These relate to the value and setting of heritage assets and the rural characteristics of the surrounding landscape.

• Heritage buildings and their settings, in particular the clusters of listed buildings in the Whitmore, Butterton and Maer Conservation Areas

• Areas of ancient woodland and mature hedgerows and trees across the parishes

• The parkland landscapes of Maer and Whitmore, including the registered park and gardens of Maer Hall

• The wooded valley of the Meece Brook

• Wetland and peat bed areas around Baldwins Gate and in the Tern Valley

• The open farmland and woodland blocks which maintain separation between settlement areas

AECOM, HCA, p. 32

In terms of protecting the NA’s rural character, the aspects of character, issues to be addressed and elements of sensitivity identified in the AECOM reports provide a cumulative
assessment of issues that need to be taken into account in the design, character and siting of new developments.

**Figure 5.15** Traditional boundary treatments in Baldwins Gate: original hedgerow retained on edge of housing estate, and stone wall and hedges in Maer village

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### 5.9 Historic environment

#### 5.9.1 Conserving the historic environment

The NPPF recognises the importance of conserving the historic environment. Paragraph 185 states:

Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and

d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

The NPPF, para. 192 also states:
In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

5.9.2 Historic environment in the NA

The NA’s rich historic environment dates back to the Iron Age, when the Celtic tribe of the Cornovii (which was headquartered at the Wrekin in Shropshire) constructed and occupied a multivallate hillfort on Berth Hill in Maer parish. The remains of this structure are a scheduled monument. Other remains and traces of prehistoric and pre-medieval structures and habitation that have been found in the NA are recorded as find spots and monuments in the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER).

The historic environment in the NA is an important aspect of the area’s rural character and heritage. It is categorised, documented and protected in a variety of ways: through statutory designations; designation of conservation areas; designation of structures as monuments in the Staffordshire HER; the county survey and record of historic farmsteads; and local listing of buildings. However, many elements of the historic environment are uncategorised, undocumented and unprotected and exist in the form of a variety of structures ranging from 18th- and 19th-century workers’ cottages and other dwellings to structures such as former school and chapel buildings, the kennels of the North Staffordshire Hunt, and a former cheese factory now converted to a specialist car maintenance and restoration business.

A separate Historic Environment Report has been prepared for this Neighbourhood Plan. It comprises a compendium of historic environment, scheduled monument, listed building, historic park and garden, and farmstead records for the Neighbourhood Area of Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore and has been compiled from records supplied by Staffordshire County Council Historic Environment Record.
The following sections review the existing categorisations, designations, documentation and protections and identify further areas where identification and protection of heritage assets would be beneficial.

**Box 5.11 Residents’ Survey**

The Residents’ Survey (Question 9) identified that people value the NA’s built heritage, in particular the three conservation areas (94%). However, only 65% felt that it was important to identify further structures that should be protected. There was only 48% of support to promoting the local heritage to attract tourism. Responses to Question 10, ‘Are there any buildings, structures or areas that you would like to see protected or listed?’ drew few suggestions and generally revealed a lack of knowledge of the local heritage, as they mentioned a significant number of structures that are already protected. The high level of support for the conservation areas may be due to a conception that the status of conservation area provides immunity from new development.

**Opportunity**

There is an opportunity for the parish councils to work with the Conservation officer for NuL and the Staffordshire HER to develop information about the local built heritage for the use of both NA residents and visitors. Project groups could be formed to involve the local community in this work.

### 5.10 Designated heritage assets

#### 5.10.1 Scheduled monuments

The NA has two scheduled monuments, located in Maer parish (Table 5.7).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Grid reference</th>
<th>Date scheduled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1009771</td>
<td>Multivallate hillfort at Berth Hill</td>
<td>378772 339054</td>
<td>30/11/1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1011892</td>
<td>Lea Head moated site</td>
<td>375002 342111</td>
<td>20/12/1968</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.10.2 Listed buildings and structures

The NA has 63 listed buildings and structures, comprising 1 Grade I, 7 Grade II* and 56 Grade II (Table 5.8).

Table 5.8 Listed buildings and structures in the NA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>List entry</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grid reference</th>
<th>Date listed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapel and Hill Chorlton parish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1029829</td>
<td>Green Farmhouse</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>381165 337975</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1029826</td>
<td>Church of St Lawrence</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>381294 337760</td>
<td>17/11/1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1029828</td>
<td>Sundial approximately 15 metres north of east end of Church of St Lawrence</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>381305 337777</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1027837</td>
<td>Milepost at NGR SJ 8132 4112</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>381306 341119</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1029827</td>
<td>Delves memorial and railed enclosure about 2m north of the chancel of the Church of St Lawrence</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>381311 337766</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1377611</td>
<td>Church House Farmhouse</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>381335 337844</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1029824</td>
<td>Chorlton Mill</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>381442 339197</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1096033</td>
<td>Former Cock Inn</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>381486 338724</td>
<td>26/11/2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maer and Aston parish – Aston</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1027830</td>
<td>Gate piers about 150 metres south west of Lea Head Manor</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>374966 341959</td>
<td>17/11/1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1027829</td>
<td>Lea Head Manor</td>
<td>II*</td>
<td>375064 342023</td>
<td>02/12/1952</td>
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<tr>
<td>1028011</td>
<td>Milepost at NGR SJ 7527 3984</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>375270 339833</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1353778</td>
<td>Aston Manor Farmhouse</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>375327 341122</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1353779</td>
<td>201 Aston</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>375381 341241</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1027828</td>
<td>Yew Tree Farmhouse</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>375464 340930</td>
<td>17/11/1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1027826</td>
<td>181 Aston</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>375714 341095</td>
<td>17/11/1966</td>
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<tr>
<td>1027827</td>
<td>Cowhouse attached at right angles to east end of Number 181</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>375723 341094</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1353780</td>
<td>Aston Cliff Farmhouse</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>376068 342116</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maer and Aston parish – Maer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1206278</td>
<td>Milepost at NGR SJ 7665 3897</td>
<td>II</td>
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<tr>
<td>1027824</td>
<td>Milepost at NGR SJ 7724 3878</td>
<td>II</td>
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<td>14/05/1985</td>
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<tr>
<td>1028012</td>
<td>Milepost at NGR SJ 7823 3884</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>378249 338829</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
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<tr>
<td>1027825</td>
<td>Milepost at NGR SJ 7853 3968</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>378525 339678</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
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<tr>
<td>1353777</td>
<td>Maer Hall Lodge, walls, gate piers and gates</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>378929 338804</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>List entry</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Grid reference</td>
<td>Date listed</td>
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<td>--------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1206418</td>
<td>Boathouse and causeway approximately 100 metres north west of Maer Hall</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>379110 338340</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1027833</td>
<td>Stone balustrade approximately 70 metres west of Maer Hall</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>379173 338297</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1027835</td>
<td>Outbuildings to outer stable yard to south west of Maer Hall</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>379191 338231</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1027836</td>
<td>Park bridge, steps and revetment walls about 100 metres north of Maer Hall</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>379194 338420</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1206392</td>
<td>Maer Hall and attached garden wall to south</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>379207 338332</td>
<td>30/07/1964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1206432</td>
<td>Stable block at Maer Hall</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>379212 338279</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1027834</td>
<td>Gatehouse, flanking walls and bollards to Maer Hall</td>
<td>II*</td>
<td>379242 338292</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1206384</td>
<td>Harding Memorial approximately 4 metres south west of tower of Church of St Peter</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>379250 338319</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1280206</td>
<td>The Vicarage</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>379257 338253</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1027831</td>
<td>Aston memorial approximately 2 metres south of nave of Church of St Peter</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>379267 338318</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1206359</td>
<td>Church of St Peter</td>
<td>II*</td>
<td>379268 338329</td>
<td>17/11/1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1353781</td>
<td>Sundial approximately 6 metres south of chancel of Church of St Peter</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>379275 338314</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
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*Figure 5.16* Maer church and Maer Hall
<table>
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<th>Date listed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1027832</td>
<td>Harding memorial approximately 20 metres south east of Church of St Peter</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>379292 338322</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1206528</td>
<td>Snape Hall Farmhouse</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>379294 341233</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1280212</td>
<td>Station House</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>379569 340332</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1206444</td>
<td>Milepost at NGR SJ 7980 4054</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>379804 340536</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1206497</td>
<td>Lake House</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>379823 341612</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
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<tr>
<td>1025828</td>
<td>House approximately 130 metres west north west of the Church of St Mary and All Saints</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>380910 341070</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
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<tr>
<td>1354782</td>
<td>Cottages dated 1877</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>380947 341018</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1353786</td>
<td>Williams memorial approximately 25 metres south west of Church of St Mary and All Saints</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>381001 341024</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1029825</td>
<td>Milepost at NGR SJ 8101 3879</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>381010 348789</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1027844</td>
<td>Malkin memorial approximately 14 metres north west of Church of St Mary and All Saints</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>381018 341047</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1353785</td>
<td>Fitch Memorial</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>381023 341042</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1280154</td>
<td>Rhodes memorial approximately 13 meters south of the Church of St Mary and All Saints</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>381033 341020</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
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<tr>
<td>1280181</td>
<td>Church of St Mary and All Saints</td>
<td>II*</td>
<td>381034 341032</td>
<td>17/11/1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1027845</td>
<td>Old stable block</td>
<td>II*</td>
<td>381035 341258</td>
<td>17/11/1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1354781</td>
<td>Bridge approximately 15 metres south east of old stable block</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>381040 341240</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1025827</td>
<td>Gate Piers to Whitmore Hall, immediately to west of Whitmore Hall Lodge</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>381059 340982</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1025826</td>
<td>Whitmore Hall Lodge</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>381066 340989</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1206579</td>
<td>Whitmore Hall</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>381090 341266</td>
<td>02/12/1952</td>
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</table>

**Whitmore parish – Butterton**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grid reference</th>
<th>Date listed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1027841</td>
<td>Barn attached to west end of Shutlanehead Farmhouse</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>381976 342476</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1027838</td>
<td>Milepost at NGR SJ 8242 4217</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>382403 342179</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1206538</td>
<td>Milepost at NGR SJ 8257 4183</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>382552 341820</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1027839</td>
<td>Ivy Cottage</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>382649 343253</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1280200</td>
<td>Gate Piers immediately to south west of Park Lodge</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>383142 342793</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1027840</td>
<td>Park Lodge</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>383152 342802</td>
<td>17/11/1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>List entry</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Grid reference</td>
<td>Date listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1353782</td>
<td>Church of St Thomas</td>
<td>II*</td>
<td>383189 342242</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1353783</td>
<td>Park House</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>383410 342559</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1206523</td>
<td>Ruins of Old Butterton Hall</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>383494 342530</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1027843</td>
<td>Milepost at NGR SJ 8400 4186</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>384002 341857</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1027842</td>
<td>Butterton Grange Farmhouse</td>
<td>II*</td>
<td>384308 342111</td>
<td>14/05/1985</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 5.17** Whitmore church

### 5.10.3 Registered parks and gardens

The park, gardens and pleasure grounds of Maer Hall, designed and laid out by John Webb for Josiah Wedgwood II in the early 19th century, are a Grade II registered park and garden (ID 1001246, listed 23/10/1991).

### 5.10.4 Conservation areas

The NA has three conservation areas.

#### 5.10.4.1 Maer

Designated November 1970, SCC Conservation area no. 31. The conservation area covers Maer Hall and its park, garden and pleasure grounds, St Peter’s church and churchyard, the village of Maer and Berth Hill hillfort.
5.10.4.2 Whitmore

Designated November 1971, SCC Conservation area no. 37. The conservation area covers Whitmore Hall and its grounds, St Mary and All Saints church and churchyard and the village of Whitmore. The conservation area is under Article 4 direction.

5.10.4.3 Butterton

Designated 31 January 2006, NuL Borough Council, Plan BT1. The conservation area covers the parkland of former Butterton Hall and includes a group of buildings around the site of the old hall, St Thomas church and surrounding woodland, Butterton Dyke and Park Lodge. The conservation area is under Article 4 direction.

5.11 Non-designated heritage assets

5.11.1 Locally listed structures

Local listing provides a degree of protection to structures that contribute to the local character and distinctiveness, e.g. through their historic nature or associations or as local landmarks. It is a material consideration in planning applications affecting a structure or its setting. NuL Borough Council’s Register of Locally Important Buildings and Structures is used to raise awareness of local heritage and to protect structures from harmful change or demolition. Whitmore parish has 5 locally listed structures:

- Mainwaring Arms, Newcastle Road, Whitmore
- Former Post Office, Three Mile Lane, Whitmore
- Former Methodist Church, Acton
- Baldwins Gate Farmhouse, Baldwins Gate
- Former station Booking Office, Baldwins Gate.

Box 5.11 Opportunity: local listing

Local listing provides a means to take forward the Plan’s built heritage aim to protect, preserve and promote the area’s conservation areas and heritage. There is scope to nominate additional structures in the NA that would benefit from local listing. Parish councils need to consider this matter and seek input from residents.
Box 5.12 Issue: Whitmore station booking office

The booking office of former Whitmore station is a locally listed building occupying a prominent position at the western end of the WCML overbridge at Baldwins Gate. It is unused and derelict, with metal shutters on the doors and windows. Approaches from Whitmore Parish Council to Network Rail to discuss opportunities to renovate the building and bring it back into use, possibly for a community purpose, have been unsuccessful.

Opportunity

There is scope for Whitmore Parish Council to work with the NuL Conservation Officer and the Heritage Lottery Fund to devise a plan for the building that would further the built heritage and leisure and tourism aims of the Plan or meet an identified community need, and to negotiate with Network Rail for the building’s return to use.

Figure 5.18 Whitmore station booking office

5.11.2 Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER)

The Staffordshire HER, maintained by SCC, is a database of over 20,000 records of archaeological sites, monuments, historic buildings and historic landscapes in the county. Thus it supplements statutory designations and local listings by identifying and documenting other historic features in the county’s landscapes and townscapes. The Staffordshire HER contains 193 records for the NA, including the designated heritage assets reviewed in
section 5.10; i.e. it contains records of a further 127 non-designated sites of historic or archaeological interest. The records for the NA have been compiled into a compendium (see the Historic Environment Report in the Evidence Base).

5.11.3 Farmsteads

SCC has done extensive work on the county’s historic farmsteads and has recorded all farmsteads that are mapped on the Ordnance Survey 2nd edition 25 inch mapping of circa 1895. The Staffordshire Farmstead Assessment Framework ‘provides a step-by-step approach to considering the reuse of traditional farm buildings and the sustainable development of farmsteads, through identifying their historic character, significance and potential for change’.

Farmsteads are an integral part of rural settlement and the landscape. Many of Staffordshire’s farmsteads are associated with the 18th and 19th century reordering of its landscape, which worked upon pattern of fields, routeways and woodland inherited from the medieval period. Staffordshire is predominantly a county of dispersed settlement, often with high densities of farmsteads and historic houses, linked to an intricate network of winding lanes, in areas of woodland, common and heath.

SCC, Staffordshire Farmsteads Character Statement, p. 2

At a basic level, and whether designated as heritage assets or not, significant farmsteads and buildings contribute to local character and distinctiveness. They can do this if they have retained their traditional farm buildings and some or all of their historic form, where the historic farm buildings, any houses and spaces relate to each other. The greater the survival of the historic form and detail, the greater will be its significance as a traditional farmstead.

SCC, Staffordshire Farmsteads Character Statement, p. 3

The survey work shows that ‘82% of Staffordshire’s recorded farmsteads have heritage potential as traditional farmsteads because they have retained some or all of their historic form’ and ‘73% have high heritage potential because they have retained more than 50% of their historic form, this being much higher than the average across the West Midlands (66%)’ (SCC, Staffordshire Farmstead Character Statement, p. 3).

The North Staffordshire Plain area, where the NA is located, is described as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historic character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• High numbers of small-scale farmsteads intermingled with large-scale courtyard farmsteads reflect a diversity of enclosure scale and type in this landscape.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• The smaller steadings mostly comprise dispersed plan types, loose courtyard plans with buildings to one or two sides of the yard and regular courtyard L-plans: the latter consist of cowhouse/fodder ranges of a type characteristic of the Cheshire Plain. Larger scale regular courtyard plans include U- and E-plans and some regular courtyard multi-yard farmsteads.

• The eastern border is becoming increasingly urbanised with the expansion of the Potteries and Newcastle-under-Lyme. Woodlands (both ancient and plantation) are a feature of the southern part and some of the smaller farmsteads may have been established through the clearing of woodland before 1800.

Significance
• 65% of farmsteads have been identified as having high heritage potential and 14% have some heritage potential.

• 15% of the farmsteads with a high heritage potential have one or more listed buildings.

SCC, Staffordshire Farmsteads Character Statement, p. 41

Guidance has been provided for each of the county’s local authority areas. The guidance for NuL Borough includes the following:

Local plan policy generally supports the re-use of significant historic buildings, and includes specific requirements and planning considerations, particularly in relation to residential additions and alterations, neighbourhood issues and taking account of biodiversity.

SCC, Farmsteads in Newcastle-under-Lyme borough, p. 1

Historic farmstead character
• 8% of the county’s farmsteads lie within the Borough. The farmsteads tend to be associated with hamlets or form loose clusters, with only a small number forming isolated farmsteads ...

• Small-scale farmsteads (38%) including linear plans, dispersed cluster plans and loose courtyard plans with working buildings to only one or two sides of the yard slightly outnumber the large-scale courtyard farmsteads (35%). The farmsteads are associated with a mix of planned and irregular field patterns.

Significance
• 63% of recorded farmsteads (county average 59%) have high heritage potential as traditional farmsteads, because they have retained more than 50% of their historic form.

• 11% (county average 9.5%) have some heritage potential because they have retained less than 50% of their historic form. The remainder may have retained a house (which may be a listed building) or have lost all of their buildings. These may still retain archaeological deposits which can be revealed through development.

Present and future issues
Research led by English Heritage ... has shown that historic farm buildings have been more prone to both neglect and development than any other historic building type. They are also associated with high levels of home-based business use.

- 23% of listed working farm buildings [in NuL borough] have evidence for non-agricultural reuse (23% being residential and these being associated with a very high proportion of directorships).

SCC, Farmsteads in Newcastle-under-Lyme borough, p. 2

It is clear from the above that NuL borough scores higher than the county as a whole on the heritage potential of its traditional farmsteads. The 23% rate of conversion to residential use compares favourably to the national level of 30%, although applications for conversion of farmstead buildings in the NA are continuing.

Traditional farmsteads are an essential feature in the NA’s landscape and rural character. The historic farmsteads in the NA have been recorded and mapped by SCC (Maps 20a–c).

Table 5.9 is a summary listing of the farmstead types in each parish of the NA and Table 5.10 provides a full listing. Further detail is included in the Historic Environment Report for this Neighbourhood Plan. Across the NA, 35% of historic farmsteads are recorded as monuments in the Staffordshire HER and 14% are associated with a listed building.

In all three parishes larger historic farmstead buildings (typically barns) have been converted to residential use. Less frequently conversions have been to commercial use, as at Maerfield Gate Farm, where the courtyard farmstead buildings have been converted into a country pub, restaurant and hotel accommodation.

Figure 5.19 Nineteenth-century farmstead buildings in use in the NA
Table 5.9 Summary listing of historic farmstead types in the NA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Chorlton</th>
<th>Maer</th>
<th>Whitmore</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Regular courtyard plan (Medieval)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loose courtyard plan (C17th)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>L-plan (C17th)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular courtyard plan (C17th)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispersed plan (C18th)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear plan (C19th)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispersed plan (C19th)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L-plan (C19th)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loose courtyard plan (C19th)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular courtyard plan (C19th)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>42</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>With monument status in Staffordshire HER</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associated with statutory listed building</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
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Table 5.10 Historic farmsteads in the NA

<table>
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<th>Site name</th>
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<th>Survival</th>
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<tr>
<td>Moss Hall Farm</td>
<td>19th cent</td>
<td>Isolated</td>
<td>Significant loss</td>
<td>SJ 79750</td>
<td>ST5 5DS</td>
</tr>
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<td>Woodside Farm</td>
<td>19th cent</td>
<td>Isolated</td>
<td>Extant</td>
<td>SJ 79251</td>
<td>ST5 5EB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grooms House</td>
<td>19th cent</td>
<td>Hamlet</td>
<td>Partial loss</td>
<td>SJ 80763</td>
<td>ST5 5JG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill Chorlton Farm</td>
<td>19th cent</td>
<td>Hamlet</td>
<td>Partial loss</td>
<td>SJ 80667</td>
<td>ST5 5JG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennings Farm</td>
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<td>Hamlet</td>
<td>Extant</td>
<td>SJ 80559</td>
<td>ST5 5JG</td>
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<td>Chorlton Green Farm</td>
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<td>SJ 81033</td>
<td>ST5 5JH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Green Farm</td>
<td>Medieval</td>
<td>Hamlet</td>
<td>Extant</td>
<td>SJ 81156</td>
<td>ST5 5JH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yard attached to Cock Inn</td>
<td>17th cent</td>
<td>Hamlet</td>
<td>Significant loss</td>
<td>SJ 81468</td>
<td>ST5 5JH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yard NW of Greenbank/ Manor House</td>
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<td>Hamlet</td>
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<td>SJ 81255</td>
<td>ST5 5JL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church House Farm</td>
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<td>Hamlet</td>
<td>Significant loss</td>
<td>SJ 81299</td>
<td>ST5 5JN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swinchurch Farm</td>
<td>19th cent</td>
<td>Isolated</td>
<td>Partial loss</td>
<td>SJ 80972</td>
<td>ST5 5JP</td>
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</table>
## Site name | Date | Location | Survival | Grid reference | Postcode
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---
Farm SE of Chapel Chorlton | 19th cent | Isolated | Total change to plan | SJ 81514 37608 | ST5 5JW

**Figure 5.20** Residential barn conversion in the NA

| Site name | Date | Location | Survival | Grid reference | Postcode
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---
Maer and Aston parish | Redhills Farm | 19th cent | Isolated | Partial loss | SJ 78640 39737 | ST5 5EA
Maerfield Gate Farm | 19th cent | Isolated | Partial loss | SJ 79354 39140 | ST5 5ED
Home Farm | 19th cent | Hamlet | Partial loss | SJ 79241 38197 | ST5 5EE
Stone Cottage | 19th cent | Hamlet | Partial loss | SJ 79256 38007 | ST5 5EF
Maer Hills | 19th cent | Isolated | Farmhouse only survives | SJ 76844 39334 | ST5 5EJ
Sidway Mill Farm | 19th cent | Isolated | Extant | SJ 76132 39206 | ST5 5EL
Wayside Farm | 19th cent | Hamlet | Significant loss | SJ 76398 39053 | ST5 5EL
Hawthorne Cottage | 19th cent | Loose farmstead cluster | Extant | SJ 76467 39120 | ST5 5EL
Fields Farm | 19th cent | Loose farmstead cluster | Partial loss | SJ 76615 39108 | ST5 5EL
Bank House | 19th cent | Isolated | Extant | SJ 76449 39619 | ST5 5EL
<table>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Survival</th>
<th>Grid reference</th>
<th>Postcode</th>
</tr>
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<td>Maerway Lane Farm</td>
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<td>Isolated</td>
<td>Totally demolished</td>
<td>SJ 76199 40280</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farmstead on W side of Maer Hill</td>
<td>19th cent</td>
<td>Hamlet</td>
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<td>Extant</td>
<td>SJ 76273 40632</td>
<td>ST5 5EP</td>
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<td>Lunts Farm</td>
<td>19th cent</td>
<td>Isolated</td>
<td>Extant</td>
<td>SJ 76522 41210</td>
<td>ST5 5EP</td>
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<td>SJ 77705 38335</td>
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<td>19th cent</td>
<td>Isolated</td>
<td>Extant</td>
<td>SJ 77470 40732</td>
<td>ST5 5ER</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holloway Lane Farm</td>
<td>19th cent</td>
<td>Isolated</td>
<td>Partial loss</td>
<td>SJ 76661 40409</td>
<td>ST5 5EW</td>
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<td>Sidway Hall Farm</td>
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<td>Isolated</td>
<td>Partial loss</td>
<td>SJ 75749 39850</td>
<td>TF9 4ET</td>
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<td>Lea Head Manor (Lea Head)</td>
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<td>Isolated</td>
<td>Partial loss</td>
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<td>Village</td>
<td>Farmhouse only survives</td>
<td>SJ 75319 41217</td>
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<td>Significant loss</td>
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<td>Significant loss</td>
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<td>Hamlet</td>
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<td>Extant</td>
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<td>Hamlet</td>
<td>Significant loss</td>
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<td>Hamlet</td>
<td>Extant</td>
<td>SJ 82056 42529</td>
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<td>Extant</td>
<td>SJ 82235 41342</td>
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<td>Partial loss</td>
<td>SJ 82386 41307</td>
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<td>Extant</td>
<td>SJ 83052 41708</td>
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<td>Outfarm S of Butterton Hall</td>
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<td>SJ 83317 41957</td>
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<td>Significant loss</td>
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<td>Extant</td>
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<td>Village</td>
<td>Extant</td>
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<td>19th cent</td>
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<td>Totally changed</td>
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<td>Farmhouse only</td>
<td>SJ 77419 41128</td>
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<td>Outfarm NNW of Old Barn</td>
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<td>Totally demolished</td>
<td>SJ 78386 40946</td>
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<td>Old Barn</td>
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<td>Isolated</td>
<td>Significant loss</td>
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<td>Village</td>
<td>Farmhouse only</td>
<td>SJ 80889 40908</td>
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<td>Hamlet</td>
<td>Significant loss</td>
<td>SJ 79599 40512</td>
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<td>Hamlet</td>
<td>Extant</td>
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<td>Snapehall</td>
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<td>Isolated</td>
<td>Extant</td>
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<td>Bromley Green Farm</td>
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<td>Isolated</td>
<td>Extant</td>
<td>SJ 80206 43520</td>
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<td>Yew Tree Farm</td>
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<td>Isolated</td>
<td>Extant</td>
<td>SJ 80514 43293</td>
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<td>Dab Green Farm</td>
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<td>Extant</td>
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<td>Wilkins Pleck</td>
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<td>Extant</td>
<td>SJ 81359 42089</td>
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<td>SJ 80050 40409</td>
<td>ST5 SHU</td>
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<td>SJ 80990 41552</td>
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<td>Partial loss</td>
<td>SJ 79972 40118</td>
<td>ST5 SLS</td>
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**Box 5.13 Issue: farmstead buildings**

- While it is preferable for historic farmstead buildings to remain in agricultural use, maintenance and restoration of these buildings may not be a high priority for owners.
- Changes in agricultural practice, including the absorption of small and medium-sized farm holdings into larger units and the continual introduction of new regulations and standards risk creating obsolescence in historic farmstead buildings, resulting in either their neglect or replacement.
- Development pressures in rural locations create an ever-present risk that traditional farmstead buildings may be demolished to make way for housing development.
- Demolition of traditional farmsteads and their replacement with modern structures has occurred in the NA in the past, resulting in local change of character as well as loss of the buildings themselves.
- Residential conversions may be unsympathetic to the character of original buildings and their surroundings, or may involve extensions that are out of scale with the original buildings.
### Opportunities

- Parish councils can exercise their powers as statutory consultees in planning applications to protect traditional farmstead buildings against demolition or inappropriate alteration or extension. Where traditional farmsteads have been recorded as monuments by the Staffordshire HER this status should provide a safeguard against demolition or inappropriate conversion or extension works. Local listing would also provide a degree of protection for farmsteads. Parish councils need to be aware of the monument or local list status of farmsteads in their parishes and should consider nominating farmsteads for local listing.

- Where traditional buildings are no longer suitable or required for agricultural use, diversification into rural business uses in keeping with the character of the NA or rurally appropriate tourism and leisure activity can be encouraged as a means to restore and maintain historic farmstead buildings and keep them in active use.

#### 5.11.4 Workers' cottages and council houses

Across the NA are groups of workers' cottages associated with the historic local economy. These cottages, which are intrinsic to the local rural character, are the survivors of a larger number of such cottages that have been demolished and either have not been replaced (as the Roll Cottages and Roll of Tobacco public house by the Kennels Lane junction on the A51, demolished in 1966), or have been replaced with modern dwellings (as one pair and one end-of-terrace cottage in Hill Chorlton), or have been modernised beyond recognition of their origin.

The cottages are frequently of 19th century date, in semi-detached pairs or terraces of 3. Exceptions include the Malt Kiln cottages on Bent Lane, Whitmore village, a row of 5 estate cottages of late 18th-century origin with later additions, and the railway cottages in Baldwins Gate, originally a terrace of 6 dating from 1837, with the later addition of 4 further dwellings.

Workers' cottages in Baldwins Gate, Chorlton Moss and Hill Chorlton were often associated with the local economy of Baldwins Gate, where the railway, Whitmore Station and
Figure 5.21 (Left) Row of 3 19th-century workers’ cottages at Chapel Cottages, Baldwins Gate. A metal plaque on cottages is dated 1859. The adjoining Methodist chapel is contemporary with the cottages and originally had 2 storeys. (Right) Estate workers’ cottages in Whitmore village. Two plaques on the cottages are dated 1796 and 1903.

Figure 5.22 Estate cottages of different periods in Maer village

Figure 5.23 Former council houses at The Croft, Blackbrook (left) and Aston (right)
businesses that grew up around this nucleus created local employment and a concomitant housing need. The cottages in Figure 5.21 are typical of the local style.

Elsewhere, workers’ cottages were associated with landed and farming estates, as in Whitmore and Maer villages, where they housed estate workers and domestic servants of the Whitmore and Maer estates, respectively. A pair of cottages belonging to the Madeley estate is found on Manor Road. The each estate has its own style of cottage architecture. The cottages in Maer village are a fine example of an estate village built over an extended period. Changing details and finishes identify different building periods, although the basic design remains the same (Figure 5.22).

Semi-detached tied agricultural workers’ cottages of 20th-century date are found in all 3 parishes, as at Maerfield Gate cottages, but are not so numerous as the cottages of earlier date. Groups of 1950s council houses, built to house workers in the rural economy, are found at Chapel Chorlton, Blackbrook and Aston. Like the earlier cottages, these 20th-century workers’ dwellings are also intrinsic to the area’s rural character (Figure 5.23).

Cottages in Maer and Whitmore villages are protected by the conservation areas. In Maer village modernisations and extensions have been carried out discreetly at the rear of dwellings. Outside the conservation areas, these distinctive buildings that characterise the local rural landscape and narrate the history of its life and economy have no protections against the risks of demolition or alterations and modernisation that may significantly alter their character.

5.11.5 Schools

Across the NA are a number of former village primary schools that have been converted to other uses. The village schools of Aston, Butterton, Chapel Chorlton and Whitmore have been converted to residential use. Maer school has been converted to commercial use and has been substantially extended (Figure 5.24).

5.11.6 Chapels

There are a number of 19th-century Methodist chapels in the NA. While the majority of these distinctive buildings have been converted into dwellings, the Methodist chapel in Baldwins Gate remains in use. It was originally a 2-storey building. The upper storey was dismantled in the mid-1960s and a new entrance vestibule was built at the eastern end. The
original design of the chapel in Baldwins Gate was very similar to that of the Methodist chapel at Hill Chorlton, which was converted into a dwelling in the early 1970s.

St Margaret’s Mission (Figure 5.25) at the junction of Maerway Lane and the A51 at Blackbrook is disused and boarded up. In 2012 a planning application for change of use drew the following comments from the Conservation Officer of NuL Borough Council.

This modest chapel, is typical of a simple 19th century nonconformist chapel and has similar features and detailing of a recently converted Wesleyan Chapel in the vicinity. It has a certain presence from the main road and is neatly shielded from the road by the small brick wall with rounded copings. It has clearly been neglected for many years and its use as a chapel is expired. Nevertheless, it has an architectural and historical quality which should be retained and in order for that to happen it requires a new use.

The building is brick with symmetrical large metal windows, central timber boarded door with arched fanlight decorated with arched blue brick heads. Two windows of the same pattern are on the rear. The clay tile roof is generally in good shape with a king post roof truss in the centre. The roof timbers appear to be the only features of interest internally and therefore should be retained. The scheme proposes to use the timbers for a previous ceiling which will reveal the lower portion of the truss.

Planning application 12/00829/FUL
Box 5.14 Issue: disused chapels

- These buildings make a significant contribution to the built heritage of the NA and are an important part of the NA’s social history, but for the most part they are not protected.

Opportunities

- Seek heritage recognition and protection for all former and disused chapels in the NA by nominating them for inclusion in the Register of Locally Important Buildings and Structures, if they have not already been so listed. Local listing would qualify these buildings to be considered for grants for conservation and restoration work.

- Look for opportunities to preserve and maintain St Margaret’s Mission, Blackbrook, by converting it to an appropriate use, possibly in support of the leisure and tourism aims of the Plan.

5.11.7 Cheshire railings

The NA has a number of sets of Cheshire railings, known locally as ‘daylight fencing’ (Table 5.11, Figure 5.26 and Map 21). The distinctive wrought iron railings were first installed on Cheshire’s highways in 1929 as a safety feature to provide visibility at junctions and on
bends. They spilled over into NW Staffordshire in the 1950s and are a heritage feature on highways in the Three Counties border area of North Staffordshire. A few of these railings are regularly maintained and painted white, most notably in Chorlton parish, where they make an important contribution to the hamlet’s rural character. More recently three sets of railings in Whitmore parish have been cleaned up and painted white. In other locations the railings are neglected, rusty and in need of restoration and maintenance. In all locations hedges and other vegetation have been allowed to encroach over them over recent decades.

Table 5.11 Cheshire railings in the NA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>National grid reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapel and Hill</td>
<td>Hill Chorlton, junction A51 and Moss Lane</td>
<td>SJ 79866 39382, 79871 39374, 79855 39367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chorlton</td>
<td>Hill Chorlton, junction Sandy Lane and Chorlton Moss Lane</td>
<td>SJ 79494 39356, 79486 39347, 79481 39357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maer</td>
<td>Blackbrook, junction A51 and Hungersheath Lane</td>
<td>SJ 76495 39061, 76495 39071, 76477 39083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blackbrook, junction A51 and Wharmadine Lane</td>
<td>SJ 77497 38796, 77516 38798, 77520 38786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blackbrook, junction A51 and Wharmadine Lane</td>
<td>SJ 77527 38785, 77528 38801, 77544 38804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blackbrook, junction A53 and Wharmadine Lane</td>
<td>SJ 77517 38869, 77536 38880, 77536 38874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blackbrook, junction A53 and Wharmadine Lane</td>
<td>SJ 77542 38875, 77543 38883, 77561 38892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aston Lane, Aston</td>
<td>SJ 75221 41039 to SJ 75190 41020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitmore</td>
<td>Baldwins Gate, junction Madeley Road and Manor Road</td>
<td>SJ 78553 40177 to SJ 78528 40193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Baldwins Gate, junction Camphill and Manor Road</td>
<td>SJ 78518 40226, 78512 40207, 78495 40215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Baldwins Gate, Heath Road, Whitmore Heath</td>
<td>SJ 79769 40834 to SJ 79762 40796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Butterton cross-roads, junction A53 and Butterton Lane</td>
<td>SJ 82696 43225, 82682 43233, 82660 43205</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore
Neighbourhood Development Plan
5 | Environment

**Figure 5.26** Cheshire railings in Chorlton parish

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**Box 5.15 Opportunities: Cheshire railings**

- Seek protection for railings by nominating them for inclusion in the list of Locally listed buildings.
- With support from the Conservation officer for NuL and SCC parish councils can seek cooperation from landowners to clear vegetation and maintain the railings on a regular basis.
- Local listing would provide opportunities to secure funding towards restoration and maintenance of these heritage features.

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5.11.8 **Historic landscape**

The historic landscape is formed by land use over time. In a rural setting such as the NA the greatest influence on the historic landscape is the economic use of land for agriculture, forestry and mineral extraction. This is followed by social uses for settlement, transport and other social functions such as education, religion and leisure.

5.11.8.1 **Economic uses**

Historic Landscape Character maps supplied by SCC Historic Environment Record (Maps 22a, 22b, 22c) illustrate how the NA’s land has been enclosed for agriculture both during the
period of 18th- and 19th-century enclosures and in earlier times. SCC’s Planning for Landscape Change SPG, which defines areas of landscape maintenance, enhancement and restoration in the NA, is predicated on the shape and features of the rural landscape as it has been formed by land use across the centuries.

Traces of mineral extraction are a very minor feature in the NA’s historic landscape. The largest relics of this land use are the former sand quarry in Acton and abandoned sand and gravel pits now overgrown by woodland on Whitmore Heath. Other sand and stone quarries have been filled in. Traces of old marl pits appear as ponds or as pock-marks in the land.

5.11.8.2 Settlement

The settlements, structures and other heritage assets reviewed in sections 5.8 to 5.11 make a significant contribution to the NA’s historic landscape. Some of these settlements and structures are protected by statutory designations such as conservation area, scheduled monument and listed building.

The SCC Historic Environment Record and historic farmsteads survey record and identify other features and structures in the NA’s historic landscape. While this documentation does not afford statutory protection it is a source of important information that should be consulted and taken into account when making decisions on planning applications.

Significant buildings and other structures that give character to the NA and its landscapes and townscapes and that do not have statutory protection can be given recognition through local listing (see above, section 5.11.1 and Boxes 5.11, 5.13, 5.14, 5.15).

The contribution that the NA’s built environment makes to the historic landscape and townscape needs to be given due weight in decisions on planning applications, both for new development and for extensions and replacement buildings.

5.11.8.3 Parkland

Parkland is one of the social uses of land that accompanies settlement. The majority of the NA’s historic parklands are protected by containment within conservation areas at Maer, Butterton and Whitmore.

The historic deer park at Madeley Great Park currently has no protection. Since the Second World War it has been encroached on by residential development, most notably at the
southernmost end in Baldwins Gate. Training delivered by Historic England has alerted the Steering Group to the need for this area to be recognised as a significant and sensitive element in the NA’s historic landscape and to be protected by planning policy.

Research by L.M. Cantor and J.S. Moore shows that the earliest known record of Madeley Great Park is in 1272, although it may have originated earlier in the 13th century, after the disafforestation of north-west Staffordshire c. 1204. The park covered an area of approximately 830 acres in what is now the north-western part of Whitmore parish (land transferred from Madeley parish at local government reorganisation in 1974). Cantor and Moore have published a map of Madeley Great Park based on a study of written records, landscape features and a perambulation of the probable boundaries (Map 23). The land was disparked in the early 19th century, Cantor and Moore suggest by 1808. The SCC Historic Landscape Character map for Whitmore parish (Map 22c) marks the area as 18th/19th-century planned agricultural enclosure; the 1831 Ordnance Survey drawing by Henry Stevens shows the farmstead buildings of Baldwins Gate farm, Merry Tree farm and Madeley Park farm within the former park and Radwood farm and Radwood Hall farm on its western boundary (Map 24).

Residential development has taken place within the former deer park since 1947. Along Manor Road there is scattered development, both in open areas and on the edge of Whitehouse Wood, and the whole of Madeley Park Wood is developed at relatively low densities. In all there are 150 dwellings in this area. At the southernmost end of the deer park the Sandyfields and Gateway estates of Baldwins Gate, totalling 74 dwellings at densities of 8 and 17 per hectare, respectively, were built on 5ha of land between 1947 and 1962. In 2015 planning permission for a development of 109 dwellings at a density of 26 per hectare was granted on 5.6ha of land contiguous with and north-west of these two estates. This development is currently under construction.

The eastern boundary of the former park, demarcated by Snape Hall Road south and Whitmore PRoW No. 6, is to become a 5-metre wide construction and service vehicle road for the planned HS2 phase 2a railway (see section 6.3).

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6 The following is based on L.M. Cantor and J.S. Moore, The medieval parks of the earls of Stafford at Madeley, North Staffordshire Journal of Field Studies, 1963, vo. 3, pp. 37–58.
5.11.8.4 Highways

The transport network described in section 1.3 is another element of major significance in the NA’s historic landscape and rural character. It is the skeleton that gives shape to the NA, creating vital communication links between settlements, farmsteads and isolated dwellings.

With generally only minor changes, the ‘A’ roads follow the historic routes of centuries-old roads that were turnpiked in the late 18th century. The most important exception to this is the rerouting of the Newcastle–Market Drayton turnpike through Whitmore parish after the opening of Whitmore Station. The NA’s minor roads, single-track lanes and footpaths (now designated as PRoWs) connect inhabited areas to these major routes and likewise remain unaltered in routing and character.

The hierarchy of routes is an important element in the NA’s social, economic and geographical history and development and in the area’s rural character. The smaller routes also play a significant role in the natural environment of the NA (see below, section 5.14.2).

The character of several of these historic routes will be irreversibly changed by the proposed HS2 phase 2a: (1) by the planned rerouting of roads (e.g. Bent Lane); (2) by widening to accommodate construction traffic (e.g. Snape Hall Road south, to be widened to 5 metres); (3) by inevitable damage from construction traffic (e.g. Snape Hall Road north-east). The locally important north-eastern leg of Snape Hall Road is planned to be permanently closed to all users.

5.12 Quality of environment

Despite the presence of the WCML and strategic routes, the NA has many tranquil areas and there are places where a feeling of remoteness can be experienced (Figure 5.27). Even the PRoWs bordering the WCML are peaceful places where tranquillity is disturbed only briefly by the passing trains and skylarks are often heard and seen. The intrusion of sound from the railway and A51/A53 depends on the wind direction, but the topography and the presence of woodland mean that there are many areas where the sound does not reach.

The AECOM HCA report reviews the key characteristics of the NA, including:

Strong rural area dominated by pastoral farming with a quiet and remote character, which generally results in a high degree of tranquillity. (HCA, p. 18)
The TCA report notes that

The agricultural narrative is common across the Neighbourhood Area, with settlements often enclosed by open farmland. Despite the presence of the WCML and the A51/ A53, the overall impression across the neighbourhood area is one of tranquillity. (TCA, p. 43)

The report also notes that the absence of street lighting in the cluster hamlets contributes to their remote atmosphere (TCA, p. 62).

The increasing amount of traffic on both the primary routes and minor roads and lanes has a very negative effect on the quality of the environment both in the settlements and in the undeveloped areas. AECOM’s TCA report notes that the tranquillity of the NA’s lanes is being undermined by an increase in traffic (TCA, p. 49).

*Figure 5.27* The NA has many tranquil areas and there are places where a feeling of remoteness can be experienced. Cattle grazing near Moat Wood ancient woodland

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**5.13 Local Green Space and green infrastructure**

The NA is dominated by ‘green space’ in the form of privately owned agricultural land and commercial and private woodland. The government’s Generalised Land Use Database (January 2005) records 89% of land use in the NA as being for green space (see section 3.1). Very little of this green space is physically accessible to the public, as follows.

- There is limited public access onto agricultural land and woodland via the PRoW network.
- The local churchyards at Butterton, Chapel Chorlton, Maer and Whitmore are freely accessible.
- Chapel Chorlton has a village green, in the ownership of the parish council.
- Whitmore parish has a football/playing field with children’s playground, outdoor gym and picnic tables located next to the village hall on the outskirts of Baldwins Gate, maintained and managed by Whitmore Parish Council on behalf of the Whitmore Playing Field Trust.
- Baldwins Gate has two formal open spaces at Jubilee Gardens (owned by Whitmore Parish Council) and Chapel Green (leased from NuL Borough Council). There is seating in Jubilee Gardens and Chapel Green has a seat.
- Lakeside estate in Baldwins Gate has an area of private open space with a footpath that provides a link between the highway network in the settlement and a PRoW in the Open Countryside.
- The Dorothy Clive Garden at Willoughbridge is open to the public on payment of an entrance fee.

### 5.13.1 Local Green Space audit and designations

The Residents’ Survey revealed that the aspects of the NA that are most valued by residents are the area’s rural character, easy access to the countryside, the landscape and natural environment, and the local lanes, PRoWs and bridleways. In addition to the value assigned to these spaces by residents, the vision and aims of the Neighbourhood Plan and the value of the NA to a wider public were also taken into account. For this reason the Local Green Space audit focused on identifying:

- community spaces in settlements
- spaces that contribute to local rural character
- spaces connected to important local walking routes
- roadside verges that help to link up the NA’s fragmented network of lanes and PRoWs.

The Local Green Space designations proposed for the Plan as a result of the audit and subsequent public consultation are presented as a separate report.
Figure 5.28 Chapel Green, Baldwins Gate and Whitmore village hall playing field with children’s playground and picnic tables

Box 5.16 Residents’ survey

The rural location and lifestyle and easy access to the countryside are an important aspect of the NA for over 97% of residents (Question 1). The open space areas that are most valued are the local lanes, PRoWs and bridleways (90%) (Question 6). Sixty-one per cent of respondents rated the playing field at Whitmore village hall as important, and this was followed by Whitmore Heath (59%). These two very close results very likely reflect the views of residents living in the vicinity of the two areas, in Baldwins Gate. Access to Maer Hills for walking is important to 90% of residents, and provision for outdoor sport and leisure to 80% (Question 7). In terms of acceptable land uses (Question 11), 90% supported open space and 86% supported nature reserves and trails. Leisure and sport uses such as childrens’ play sites, picnic sites, team sport facilities received a medium level of support at 67% to 56%.

5.13.2 Green infrastructure and wildlife corridors

The NA’s green infrastructure is provided by its hedgerows, roadside verges, natural and manmade watercourses, ponds, trees and woodland, and domestic orchards, together with less intensively farmed areas of pasture and grassland. Farms that operate Environmental Stewardship schemes make an important contribution to the NA’s green infrastructure by maintaining wide field margins and habitats such as wetlands and wildflower meadows and by maintaining hedgerows on a three-yearly rather than annual cycle.
5.13.2.1 *Wildlife corridors*

The following characteristic features in the NA’s landscape and green infrastructure perform an important function as wildlife corridors:

- narrow, sunken lanes with steep, well-vegetated or wooded banks (Figure 5.29)
- stream corridors and manmade watercourses
- both high and regularly managed hedgerows on field margins and at the side of roads and footpaths
- wide roadside verges bounded by hedgerows and wooded areas.

These wildlife corridors create a network of routes for wildlife to move around the area and also create important links between the many wooded areas.

The WCML, A51 and A53, and the busy ‘C’ class roads that criss-cross the area fragment this network and create restraints on the movement of mammals and other terrestrial wildlife.

*Figure 5.29* Sunken lane in Coombesdale provides a corridor for wildlife

5.13.2.2 *Areas of habitat distinctiveness*

The Staffordshire Ecological Record has prepared a Habitat Distinctiveness map of the NA (Map 25). This is a choropleth map in which the shading denotes areas of different biodiversity value. Important areas of extensive habitat distinctiveness are as follows.
In Maer, Chorlton and Whitmore parishes an unbroken area of habitat of very high value to medium value distinctiveness that creates a broad wildlife corridor extending from Maer Hills, south of Baldwins Gate to land under HLS on the eastern side of the WCML.

In Whitmore parish, connected areas of very high value to medium value distinctiveness extending north, east and west of Cudmore fishery, southwards through the grounds of Whitmore Hall and Whitmore village and into a long corridor along the Meece Brook to Hatton Mill LWS in the south of Chorlton parish.

In Maer parish, a long corridor of very high value to medium value distinctiveness from Dorrington Bogs in the west to Maer Pool and the Thickets, Haddon Plantation and Well Dale in the east.

Note: unshaded areas on the Habit Distinctiveness map are areas that have not been covered by Phase 1 habitat surveys by either the Steering Group or Staffordshire Wildlife Trust.

**5.13.2.3 Phase 1 habitat survey**

A Phase 1 habitat survey of land in the environs of Baldwins Gate was carried out by members of the Steering Group. The Staffordshire Ecological Record prepared a habitat map centred on Baldwins Gate showing both this area and the wider area for which it holds records (Map 26). The map provides fuller detail on the habitat distinctiveness areas identified in Map 25, including watercourses, trees and hedgerows that provide wildlife corridors and species-rich hedgerows, woodland and semi-improved and specialised grasslands that contribute to the area’s overall high degree of biodiversity.

### 5.14 Key routes and spaces

#### 5.14.1 Key routes

The lane network and PRoWs are important routes for ‘active travel’ in the NA:

- connecting settlements
- providing access to services such as bus stops and letterboxes
- for residents who work in the NA or in neighbouring parishes, providing routes to workplaces
- providing well-used leisure routes for both the local and wider community.
Box 5.17 Issue: fragmentation of pedestrian network

In historical times the turnpike roads (now A51 and A53) that cut across the NA were integral to the network of key routes. The volume and speed of 21st-century traffic on these roads and on certain ‘C’ class roads has fragmented the local pedestrian network by making parts of certain routes unsafe and/or unpleasant to use.

Opportunities

- The designation of roadside verges as Local Green Space will safeguard these spaces which provide a refuge from passing traffic and a degree of safety for pedestrians. With the adjacent hedgerows they also serve as wildlife corridors.
- Designation of ‘quiet lanes’ with a 20mph speed limit would improve the safety and tranquillity of lanes that are important pedestrian routes.
- In places where hedgerows come up to the kerbside and there is no verge, parish councils could use their powers of designating PRoWs to establish routes along the inside of hedgerows. On the A51 from Maer War Memorial to Blackbrook, from Weymouth to Willoughbridge cross-roads, and from Willoughbridge cross-roads to the county boundary such PRoWs would be beneficial.

5.14.2 Key spaces

Key publicly accessible spaces include:

- open spaces in Baldwins Gate
  - playing field and children’s playground
  - private open space at Lakeside estate
  - Jubilee Gardens
  - Chapel Green
- Chapel Chorlton village green
- Maer Hills, accessible by two PRoWs
- green space at The Croft, Blackbrook
- local churchyards
- roadside verges and vegetation, and grass triangles at lane intersections.
5.14.3 Other key spaces

Other spaces that are not publicly accessible are nonetheless important to both the local and the wider community because of their visual amenity and proximity to key routes and spaces. These include:

- farmland and woodland adjacent to key routes
- open space (e.g. farmland, woodland) adjacent to settlements
- green gaps and separation spaces between developed areas.

5.15 Environmental issues

Natural England identifies the following issues in its profile of NCA 61.

The presence of large conurbations and the dense network of roads mean that development pressures are likely to continue. Road improvements risk the urbanisation of rural villages. ... [A]s the population increases, the demand for food will increase. Development will also increase water demand which, together with the effects of climate change, potentially threatens the internationally important peat wetland habitats of the NCA in terms of water availability and water quality, compounding the effects of climate change. These pressures have the potential to further fragment habitats and change settlement patterns and the vernacular ...

(Natural England, NCA profile 61, p. 4)

These issues are present now in the NA.

- NuL borough’s inability to demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing land has put pressure on the NA by the uncontrolled expansion of development into the Open Countryside.
- Residential development in rural areas and small towns beyond the NA is continually increasing the volumes of commuter traffic on roads through the NA.
- Expansion of business in the North Staffordshire conurbation and surrounding towns is increasing the volume of commercial and HGV traffic transiting through the NA.
- Road improvements in the NA have intensified the urban appearance of Baldwins Gate and will continue to do so. Road improvements outside settlements, such as the roundabout at the A53/A5182 junction, introduce incongruous elements, including street lighting, into the Open Countryside.
- During the second half of the 20th century development has encroached onto and destroyed important peatland areas of the NA and this is a continuing threat.
• The densities, building styles and layouts of new developments in Baldwins Gate are inappropriate to the rural character of the NA.

• Unsympathetic building extensions and redevelopment in all settlements are creating over-development and undermining rural character.
6 High Speed 2 (HS2)

Content of this chapter:

6.1 Introduction
6.2 Impacts
6.3 Transport network and accessibility
6.4 Community
6.5 Economy
6.6 Environment
6.7 The Whitmore to Madeley tunnel

6.1 Introduction

The planned HS2 railway is a national strategic infrastructure project. HS2 Phase 2a, West Midlands to Crewe, will cut through the NA from south-east to north-west. The railway will run on embankments and viaducts through the Meece valley in the south-east and the so-called Lea valley in the north-west. Between the two viaducts it will run in cuttings to the south and north of a tunnel under the settlement of Whitmore Heath. Tunnel portal buildings and associated infrastructure will be constructed at either end of the tunnel.

Hub stations are planned at Crewe and Stafford (19.3km and 25.8km distant, respectively).

The hybrid Bill for HS2 Phase 2a – the High Speed Rail (West Midlands to Crewe) Bill – was deposited in Parliament on 17 July 2017. Construction is scheduled to take place from 2020. The railway would be completed and operational by 2027.7

Residents of the NA have engaged in formal consultations on the planned project. In September–October 2016 they were invited to respond to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement consultation; in August–September 2017 they were invited to respond to the Environmental Statement consultation that is part of the hybrid Bill process. In connection with both consultations residents were invited to consultation events held by HS2 Ltd at Whitmore village hall, where they were able to inspect plans and meet HS2 representatives to discuss matters of concern. Detailed reports and map books assessing a wide range of impacts during and post construction were available at both events for residents to take away.

7 House of Commons, High Speed Rail (West Midlands–Crewe) Bill, Explanatory notes (17 July 2017), para. 6.
Community groups and NA residents are also engaged in petitioning Parliament regarding business and personal impacts arising from the construction and operational phases of the railway. Whitmore Parish Council is also engaged in petitioning on community and environmental impacts, as is NuLBC.

6.2 Impacts

The planned railway is the single greatest issue facing the NA during the Neighbourhood Plan period. Both the construction project and the operation of the railway will have profound and irreversible impacts on the NA, its population, economy and environment. The construction and pre-operational phases (2020–2027) and the associated major disruption to the community and the environment will last for one third of the Neighbourhood Plan period. During the final 6 years of the Plan period the NA, its community, economy and environment will be in recovery from the lengthy period of disruption and adjusting to the radically changed landscape and environment.

The exact impacts of the construction phase are impossible to forecast or quantify but certain factors are already known (Maps 27a–b). If the project goes ahead as planned this phase can be expected to impact negatively on the achievement of the vision and aims of the Plan. The end result of the construction phase will be to have changed certain aspects of lifestyles in the NA and to have permanently altered the environment and landscape of a broad swathe of land cutting south-east to north-west across the NA (Maps 28a–b). The implanting of major new infrastructure such as viaducts, embankments and tunnel portals, the raising of existing highways by as much as 7 metres, involving the loss of established roadside vegetation including mature trees, and the construction of overbridges will introduce major incongruous elements into the landscape and impact negatively on the NA’s rural character.

For a NA with an ageing population and a high proportion of long-term residents, the project will mean that major disruption and blight will affect a significant proportion of the population during the final or closing years of their lives. Younger age groups will also be affected. In particular, children and teenagers living in certain parts of the NA during the construction phase will grow up in an abnormal environment and will be unable to
experience and enjoy the rurality of their settlements in ways that have become habitual for several generations of local residents.

The following sections consider in more detail some of the expected impacts of the planned project on the local highway network, society, economy and environment.

### 6.3 Transport network and accessibility

The planned route of HS2 Phase 2a cuts south-east to north-west through Whitmore parish, running east of the WCML and crossing the WCML in the north-west shortly before leaving the NA and passing into Madeley parish.

#### 6.3.1 Accessibility to key services

Construction works will sever all east–west routes through the NA. There are no alternative routes to the A53, A51 and A525 for travel across and out of the NA and these roads will be seriously affected concurrently. Two important minor roads that feed into and link these routes will also be seriously affected at the same time. Residents thus face the prospect of near-entrapment within a web of major construction activity the NA.

In this respect the travel times to all key services reviewed in the SCC Rural Accessibility Appraisal for NuL (September 2015) cannot be relied on.

Commuting times for residents working in the NuL and SoT area or needing to access the M6 via J15 and J16, the eastbound A50 or the railway stations at Stoke-on-Trent, Crewe and Stafford, and for pupils and students attending local primary, secondary and further and higher education establishments, will be badly affected. Travel times to the main GP surgery in Madeley will also be affected, as will be travel times for social care providers. This could exacerbate the difficulties already experienced by some residents in obtaining social care services. There will be major safety implications in terms of emergency hospital admissions to the nearest A&E facility at the Royal Stoke University Hospital.

Travel times will also be affected by the presence of heavily laden construction lorries on the highway network. HS2 Ltd suggests that construction-related traffic will be using the NA’s highway network between 0700hrs and 2300hrs daily.\(^8\)

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\(^8\) HS2 Ltd, High Speed Rail (West Midlands–Crewe) Environmental Statement, Vol. 2: Community area report CA4, para. 13.4.22.
The impacts on public transport cannot be forecast although it is reasonable to assume that disruption on the NA’s highway network will affect the reliability of the one timetabled service that operates in the NA. The current service is subsidised by SCC and its continuing existence and future timetabling depend on the provider and SCC.

6.3.2 A53

The A53 transects the NA from east to west and is connected via the A5128 to the M6 motorway at J15 Hanchurch. It is a commuting route into the North Staffordshire conurbation from the rural south-west of NuL borough and settlements in the neighbouring county of Shropshire; and a transit route through the NA for commercial, HGV and other traffic. Average weekday traffic counts are 6,980 eastbound and 6,730 westbound; goods vehicles account for 7% of traffic.

The A53 is slated to be a major HS2 construction traffic route and will itself be subject to major construction works between Whitmore village and Baldwins Gate, including diversion over a temporary route, overbridge construction, raising of the carriageway by 7 metres and embankment works. A temporary roundabout will be constructed west of Whitmore village to facilitate vehicle access to the construction site.

HS2 Ltd has forecast ‘substantial increases in traffic flows (i.e. more than 30% for HGV or all vehicles in some locations’, including on the A53 between Blackbrook and the A5182 (Community area report CA4, para. 14.4.22). Additional daily vehicle movements are expected to be between 500 and 900, to include a high proportion of HGVs.

These works and traffic movements will have major implications for all users of the A53 over the period 2020–2027 and for residents living on or near the route.

**Box 6.1 Opportunity: highway safety in Baldwins Gate**

In view of the forecast significant impact of construction traffic on highway conditions in Baldwins Gate there is an opportunity for Whitmore Parish Council to approach SCC Highways and seek its support for the implementation of highway safety improvements on the A53 in Baldwins Gate, to be funded by HS2 Ltd.
6.3.3 A51

The A51 transects the NA from east to west. It is a commuting route from the NA and settlements beyond the NA to workplaces in Stone and Stafford, and a transit route for commercial, HGV and other traffic. It carries a significant level of farm traffic throughout the year and is a relief road for M6 traffic during carriageway closures. It carries a generally lower level of traffic than the A53.

HS2 Ltd forecasts a ‘major adverse effect as a result in increase of all traffic (more than 30% for HGV or all vehicles) (Community area report CA4, para. 14.4.22).

Construction-related traffic from the A53 will join/leave the A51 at the A51/A53 staggered crossroads at Blackbrook. Under normal circumstances conditions at this crossroads are a major source of concern both to NA residents and to residents of adjoining NAs in Staffordshire and Shropshire. In its response to the September 2017 consultation SCC noted:

- SCC have safety concerns in the following locations:
  - Staggered junction of A53/A51 at Blackbrook adjacent to Swan with two necks pub – 11 accidents in the last 5 years.
  - SCC expects HS2 Ltd to engage to develop appropriate mitigation.

Staffordshire County Council et al., HS2 Phase 2a (West Midlands – Crewe) Hybrid Bill Environmental Statement, Consultation Response, p. 123

Box 6.2: Opportunity: Blackbrook crossroads

There is an opportunity for the parish councils of this NA and adjoining NAs to approach SCC Highways and propose that junction upgrades at the A51/A53 staggered crossroads are funded by HS2 Ltd.

6.3.4 Bent Lane

Bent Lane links the settlements of Stableford and Whitmore village, provides a link between the A51 and A53 and is an important route for Chapel Chorlton and Stableford residents to access Newcastle via the A53. It is also a transit route to the A51 and Stone and Stafford for residents of neighbouring Keele parish. It will be subject to major construction works and
road realignment, with major implications for users of this route. Completed works will result in a less direct and longer the route between Stableford and Whitmore village.

6.3.5  Madeley Road/Manor Road

This route links the settlement of Madeley Park Wood/Manor Road to the A53 and Baldwins Gate and links the NA to Madeley village, which is a Key Rural Service Centre and the location of the local GP practice’s main surgery and the secondary school serving the NA. It is a commuting route for NA residents to Crewe, to M6 J16 Crewe for journeys north and to the WCML station at Crewe. It is also a transit route to the A51 and Stone and Stafford for residents of neighbouring Madeley parish. Manor Road will be subject to major construction works and overbridge building, with major implications for users of this route, including for access to the main GP surgery.

6.3.6  Single-track lanes

Figure 6.1 Snape Hall Road (north): an important local pedestrian route, permanent closure planned by HS2 Ltd

Common Lane and Snape Hall Road (south) link Whitmore Heath to the A53. Common Lane provides access to Heath Road. Snape Hall Road and Common Lane will be construction traffic routes. HS2 Ltd intends to widen these two lanes to 5 metres to accommodate its
vehicles. These two lanes are both residential roads and important local pedestrian routes used by residents of Whitmore Heath and Baldwins Gate. Their use by construction traffic will have major adverse effects on householder and on the wider community of the two settlements.

**Snape Hall Road (north)** connects to the northern end of Heath Road, forming a circular route around Whitmore Heath. The northern tunnel portal building of the Whitmore Heath tunnel will be located at the southern end of this lane. HS2 Ltd plan to permanently close the lane, effectively closing down the important Whitmore Heath pedestrian route. This will have a major adverse impact on the well-being of residents of the settlements of Whitmore Heath, Baldwins Gate and their environs.

### 6.3.7 PRoWs

**Figure 6.2** PRoW Whitmore No. 4: a well-used local footpath, and the A53 parallel to the path at the point where it will raised by 7 metres to cross over HS2

**Whitmore No. 4**, from Common Lane to Whitmore village, is a well-used link between Baldwins Gate/Whitmore Heath and Whitmore village. This route will be diverted during construction works on the A53 and for the Whitmore Heath south tunnel portal. SCC has commented that:
It is not clear how long the temporary diversion will be in place for and the proposed route is unnecessarily arduous. Walkers would have to double back before terminating at the A53.

The length of this proposed temporary closure requires clarification and HS2 Ltd. should seek to establish the shortest possible alternative route.

Staffordshire County Council et al., p. 76

The proximity of this route to major construction works and construction compounds will significantly reduce its attractiveness to walkers and effectively close it down as a pedestrian route of choice during the construction phase.

**Whitmore No. 5** from Madeley Park Wood links Madeley Park Wood to Baldwins Gate via Whitmore No. 6 and Snape Hall Road. The route will be temporarily rerouted onto a minor diversion for 12 months. A further closure of 6 months will require users to access Baldwins Gate via the existing Whitmore No. 18. This will impact on residents of Madeley Park Wood who use the path to access services in Baldwins Gate.

**Whitmore No. 6** is a route from Snape Hall Road to Madeley, connecting to Madeley No. 6 at the parish boundary. There will be temporary minor diversions of this route during construction, and permanent minor diversions after construction. The temporary route will cross a site haul route.

### 6.4 Community

Construction of HS2 Phase 2a will have a major impact on the NA’s population during the Plan period. Transport disruption due to major roadworks on the A53 connecting the NA to NuL and SoT and on important minor routes can be expected to cause the population to reorient itself away from NuL and SoT and towards Market Drayton and Nantwich.

The settlement of Whitmore Heath, under which the Whitmore Heath tunnel is planned to run, will become depopulated. HS2 Ltd has already purchased homes on the Heath under the terms of its compensation scheme; in May 2017 at least 17 properties were being marketed preparatory to qualifying for compensation. HS2 Ltd has served blight notices on residents of Snape Hall Road and Common Lane, due to planned use of those roads as a major construction traffic route.
The impact of construction works may cause residents to move away from other settlements in the NA, e.g. Baldwins Gate and Madeley Park Wood. The NA can be expected to be a much less attractive as a place to live during the construction phase; but some HS2 employees and contractors could move into the area for the duration of the project.

**Box 6.3 Residents’ Survey**

Residents expressed high levels of concern about the planned HS2 project in response to a question in the Residents’ Survey. Five statements received agreement ranging between 97% and 89%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agreement Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am very concerned about the environmental impact of construction work (noise, air quality)</td>
<td>Agree Strongly 97% Agree 86% Neutral 10% Disagree 0% Disagree Strongly 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There will be a severe negative impact on the property market in the Neighbourhood Area</td>
<td>Agree Strongly 97% Agree 89% Neutral 7% Disagree 0% Disagree Strongly 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking and other leisure activities will be seriously affected during construction</td>
<td>Agree Strongly 93% Agree 82% Neutral 12% Disagree 0% Disagree Strongly 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and accessibility to places/services within the Neighbourhood Area will be badly...</td>
<td>Agree Strongly 91% Agree 84% Neutral 12% Disagree 0% Disagree Strongly 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and accessibility to places/services beyond the Neighbourhood Area will be badly...</td>
<td>Agree Strongly 91% Agree 84% Neutral 12% Disagree 0% Disagree Strongly 0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Welfare facilities on HS2 construction compounds may include living accommodation for some workers. The degree and nature of the impact on the local community from any influx of temporary population cannot be predicted.

**6.5 Economy**

A negative impact on the local economy can be expected for the duration of the construction phase. The construction phase is unlikely to bring any economic benefits, and no long-term economic benefits to the NA are expected from the operation of the railway. The construction phase will have a major negative impact on some agricultural businesses in the NA. This impact will be permanent in terms of land losses. Where requisitioned land is
returned to landowners, medium- to long-term impacts can be expected in terms of recovery from damage to soils.

The construction phase is also likely to have a negative impact on the tourism and leisure sectors, with consequent negative impacts for a variety of businesses in the NA. It can also be expected to inhibit the development of this sector of the local economy.

6.6 Environment

The project will have a major and irreversible impact on the rural environment of the NA. Environmental impacts will be of two sorts: medium-term during the construction phase (Maps 27a-b) and permanent during the operational phase (Maps 28a-b). They will include major landscape change at a localised level and damage/loss to important habitats with consequent impacts on wildlife (Map 29).

**Box 6.4 Opportunity: community compensation**

In view of the major environmental impacts on the locality and local residents through the loss of important pedestrian routes, the major and permanent alteration of the landscape of the open countryside and the loss of tranquillity, there is an opportunity for the parish councils to press HS2 Ltd to compensate local communities by providing:

- a significant amount of publicly accessible landscaped areas so that what remains of the unaltered open countryside can be accessed, viewed and enjoyed
- new walking routes to compensate for permanently closed routes and to maintain continuing access to routes that would otherwise become inaccessible
- new community recreation and sports areas.

6.6.1 Construction phase

The construction phase will have a major impact on the quality of the environment in the NA’s settlements and undeveloped areas. These impacts will affect more than just tranquillity and remoteness and will also have a major visual effect (Maps 27a-b). They will extend well beyond the actual route, due to the presence of construction traffic both on the A53 and A51 and on minor routes during the hours 0700–2300. This traffic will bring a
significant increase in noise, vibration, dust and diesel pollution for residents on all affected routes. Road surfaces will be affected by the increased dust and other pollution levels and this will affect road safety, especially in wet weather.

The construction site and construction compounds will be sources of airborne noise and dust and night-time floodlighting. All of these nuisances will extend well beyond the actual site. The operational railway will also effect a major change in the quality of the environment along the route.

**Figure 6.3** Views into Chorlton and Maer parishes from Acton Lane with the WCML in the middle ground. HS2 will cut across the landscape on a viaduct in front of the WCML
6.6.2 Wildlife and habitats

Wildlife and habitats will be disturbed and wildlife corridors will be fragmented.

6.6.2.1 Peatland sites

In their joint response to the HS2 Phase 2A Hybrid Bill Environmental Statement, Staffordshire County Council and district councils note:

CT-06-229 The route crosses river valley peat associated with the Meres and Mosses NIA Chorlton Moss Site of Biological Importance (LWS) at E5-F5. As stated in the Working ES response, a slight northwards readjustment of the proposed viaduct, supported by soils mapping to identify the peat area, would maximise the peat area to be retained and allow for specialised wetland habitat creation to contribute to NIA objectives while avoiding the need to realign Meece Brook.

Staffordshire County Council et al., Consultation response, p. 75

6.6.2.2 Ancient woodland and veteran trees

HS2 Ltd has identified 3 areas of ancient woodland that will be adversely affected by construction of the planned HS2 railway (Map 29). These are:

- Whitmore Wood: 18.9ha, of which 6.4ha will be lost
- Hey Sprink (wood south-west of): 3.2ha, of which 0.2ha will be lost
- Unnamed wood south of Hey Sprink: 0.9ha, of which 0.2ha will be lost.

This means that 29.6% of the total ancient woodland area will be lost. The Woodland Trust reports that the losses at Whitmore Wood alone will be the single largest loss of ancient woodland along the entire HS2 route (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XyblMvKrkkw).

HS2 Ltd intends to ‘compensate’ for these losses by translocating ancient woodland soils and their associated seed banks to ‘receptor’ sites in the vicinity, where new woodland planting will take place (Maps 29 and 30).

For veteran trees that will be lost see section 5.6.3 and Table 5.3.

6.6.2.3 Medium-term landscape change

Medium-term landscape change will result from the requisition of agricultural for temporary road diversions; construction compounds; the pre-casting and launching yard for River Lea viaduct; material stockpiles and transfer nodes.

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9 HS2 Ltd, High Speed Two, Phase 2a: West Midlands–Crewe ancient woodland strategy (February 2018).
6.6.2.4 **Permanent landscape change**

Permanent landscape change and detrimental effects will result from the insertion of new infrastructure, the widening of local roads and a PRoW to form a construction traffic route and the creation of a mitigation works and habitat creation. The new landscape along the route of the railway will be sculpted and artificial (Maps 28a-b and Figures 6.4a-f).

- Viaduct 240m x 12m in Meece valley between Stableford and Whitmore village.
- Embankment 260m x 10m in Meece valley.
- A53 overbridge 100m x 7m between Whitmore village and Baldwins Gate.
- Cut and cover tunnel from A53 to Whitmore Heath.
- Widening of Common Lane and Snape Hall Road and PRoW Whitmore No. 6 to 5m.
- Tunnel portal buildings at south and north ends of Whitmore Heath tunnel.
- Cutting 600m x 13m x 45m through Whitmore Wood and destruction of 6.4ha of ancient replanted woodland (amounting to one third of the area).
- Retaining wall 577m x 20m surmounted by 3m fence at Whitmore Wood cutting.
- Viaduct 785m x 21m over River Lea and WCML.
- Embankments in Lea valley, 860m x 16m and 845m x 21m.
- Mitigation works and new habitat creation.

6.7 **The Whitmore to Madeley tunnel**

During the design development process since the announcement of the preferred route to Crewe in November 2015, further consideration has been given to the route of the Proposed Scheme between Whitmore Heath and Madeley. The sensitivity of this location, particularly the residential communities in and around Whitmore Heath, Baldwin’s Gate and Madeley, potential for traffic and transportation disruptions, landscape character, presence of ancient woodland, and impacts on agricultural land and farm holdings, have been key considerations in the development of these alternatives.

HS2 Ltd, Community area report CA4, para. 2.5.5

Alternatives to the proposed route alignment between Whitmore Heath and Madeley include Option D9-11.3, a long, deep tunnel from Whitmore to Madeley (Bar Hill), with the southern tunnel portal located approximately 265m south-east of the A53.

2.5.21 In comparison to Option D9-11.0a (the Proposed Scheme), Option D9-11.3 would avoid the need to demolish properties along this section, reduce loss of
agricultural land and reduce community isolation effects and transport impacts. There would be a reduction in noise, visual and amenity impacts to residents at Whitmore Heath and Bar Hill during construction. Visual impacts on the local landscape character during construction and operation between Whitmore Heath and Bar Hill would also be significantly reduced. Direct impacts on watercourses, including unnamed watercourses at Snape Hall Road and Whitmore Wood and a tributary of the River Lea, would be avoided.

2.5.22 Whitmore Wood and Barhill Wood would be avoided and therefore there would be no loss or fragmentation of ancient woodland and no operational disturbance upon these habitats. Similarly, effects on all cultural heritage assets within this area would be reduced, however, given the proximity of a tunnel vent shaft to Hey House it is likely that there would still be effects on the setting of this Grade II listed building.

2.5.23 With this option there would be an increase in excavated material associated with the longer tunnel which would correspond with an increase in construction traffic. The risk to groundwater resources and intrusion into the groundwater SPZ at Whitmore would be increased due to longer tunnelling works.

2.5.24 Construction of Option D9-11.3 would be significantly less complex than Option D9-11.0a. Highways works would be significantly reduced and operational disruption to the WCML would be avoided. However, due to the increase in length of the bored tunnel, this option would be significantly more expensive to construct and the costs of maintenance during operation would be higher.

HS2 Ltd, Community area report CA4, paras 2.5.21–24

HS2 Ltd was instructed by the Secretary of State to assess this option. Option D9-11.3 was supported by NA residents during the consultation on the Environmental Statement (ES). It was also supported by SCC and district councils in their joint response to the ES.

2.5.6 The options considered here are noted. It is the view of the authorities that, given the significant infrastructure requirements between the Whitmore and Bar Hill tunnels, and the impact on the Highways Network resulting from construction, consideration should be given to the possibility of joining and lowering the tunnels to pass beneath the West Coast Mainline.

The authorities understand that, following a proposal by Sir Bill Cash MP in November 2016, the Secretary of State instructed HS2 Ltd. in early summer to assess this option, and are therefore disappointed that several months later, this work has not yet been completed.

This option should be fully and properly assessed through an open and transparent process, including the completion of ground investigation works as a matter of urgency, with full details available to appropriate local stakeholders.

Staffordshire County Council et al., Consultation response, p. 42
HS2 Ltd published a report on the Whitmore Heath to Madeley tunnel on 15 March 2018. Whitmore Parish Council gave oral evidence to the House of Commons High Speed Rail (West Midlands–Crewe) Bill Select Committee on 24 April 2018. The Select Committee’s First Special Report of Session 2017–2019 was published on 24 May 2018. The Select Committee rejected the proposal for the Whitmore to Madeley tunnel and accepted ‘HS2’s proposed adaptation to the original scheme, lowering the viaduct [over the River Lea] and extending the southern tunnel’ to the south of the A53. Extending the southern (Whitmore Heath) tunnel would enable the tunnel portal and the tunnel to be constructed at a sufficiently lower level to eliminate the need for the A53 overbridge.

There will be a second phase of petitioning on the High Speed Rail (West Midlands–Crewe) Bill in the House of Lords. The final details of the route and design of the railway line will not be known until the Bill passes its third reading in both Houses of Parliament.
**Figures 6.4a-f** Stills from annotated fly-over of the HS2 Phase2a route, Crewe to West Midlands (direction north–south)


**Figure 6.4a** River Lea viaduct at NA northern border; Madeley Park Wood settlement on the right and WCML passing under HS2

**Figure 6.4b** Between River Lea viaduct and Whitmore Heath tunnel; HS2 on high embankment with WCML and Madeley Park Wood settlement on the right. Whitmore PRoW No. 6 widened to 5-metre metalled road.
**Figure 6.4c** Approaching Whitmore Heath tunnel north portal; HS2 in cutting through Whitmore Wood with high retaining wall on left. Whitmore PRoW No. 6 and Snape Hall Road south widened to 5-metre metalled road; public access to Snape Hall Road north-east cut off by tunnel portal structure. Settlement of Baldwins Gate/Whitmore on the right.

**Figure 6.4d** View over Whitmore Heath to tunnel south portal approach and A53 overbridge; Common Lane and Snape Hall Road south widened to 5 metres.
Figure 6.4e A53 overbridge, Whitmore south cutting and approach to Whitmore Heath tunnel south portal.

Figure 6.4f Approach to Whitmore Heath tunnel south portal: Meece Brook viaduct and embankment in Meece valley; Bent Lane on the left, WCML and isolated settlements of Hill Chorlton cluster hamlet on the right.
7 Non-policy matters

Content of this chapter:

7.1 Biodiversity and natural environment
7.2 Historic environment
7.3 Community facilities
7.4 Economy and business
7.5 Transport
7.6 Transport network and highways
7.7 Housing
7.8 Leisure and tourism

The Neighbourhood Development Plan has identified a range of issues that cannot be the subject of planning policy but that none the less are of importance to furthering the aims of the Plan. This chapter therefore covers those issues and opportunities that could beneficially be acted on by the parish councils during the period of the Plan. It is recommended that wherever possible and appropriate the 3 parish councils endeavour to act together on these issues, which are organised under the topic headings of the aims of the Neighbourhood Plan.

7.1 Biodiversity and natural environment

7.1.1 Providing the means for residents and visitors to learn about and enjoy the NA’s natural assets

It is recommended that the parish councils remain alert to possibilities for establishing a nature reserve and/or nature trails in the NA. This would include working with landowners and the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, including looking for opportunities to establish a small visitors’ centre.

7.1.2 Trees in the landscape (see Box 5.1)

It is recommended that parish councils work with landowners and the Landscape officer to ensure that succession planting and replacement planting of trees under tree preservation order takes place, as provided for under s.206 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

7.1.3 Habitat restoration and protection (see Boxes 5.6, 5.8 and 5.9)

The parish councils need to be alert to opportunities to promote the restoration and
protection of Habitats of Principal Importance in the NA. They need to be alert to the risks posed by planning proposals and to the opportunities to promote local projects sponsored by the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust.

7.1.4 Areas of landscape restoration (see Box 5.2)

The parish councils need to be aware of (1) the intentions and correct application of SCC’s policy for areas of landscape restoration in the countryside, and (2) the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan’s objective to carry out habitat restoration at landscape scale.

7.1.5 Impact of street lighting

Light pollution from all kinds of exterior lighting, including street lighting, is an issue in this rural area, where insensitive or inappropriate lighting can have a negative impact on rural character and the natural environment. Standard street lighting is incongruous and intrusive in edge-of-settlement developments and in small settlements and in the Open Countryside.

The AECOM TCA report notes that in the hamlet settlements:

- Street lighting would detract from the remote atmosphere and impact negatively on the night-time landscape (p. 62)

The Baldwins Gate Design Statement contains the following guidance:

Guidance 22 (Lighting): ... Street lighting should respect the rural nature of Baldwins Gate

Parish councils require the cooperation of SCC Highways and developers to design lighting schemes for developments that are appropriate to the local rural character and that will minimise the negative impacts of lighting on the rural environment.

7.2 Historic environment

7.2.1 Protection of local heritage structures (see Boxes 5.12 and 5.13)

The parish councils need to be alert to the risks to local heritage structures of all kinds, including when they are affected by planning applications. Where buildings are at risk they need to be ready to propose alternative uses that would support the local economy or leisure and tourism, and to turn to the Conservation Officer, officers of the SCC HER and the Heritage Lottery Fund for support.
7.2.2 Local listing of structures

It is recommended that the parish councils both identify and seek nominations from the community of heritage structures in their parishes that merit local listing, including but not limited to farmsteads, former schools and disused chapels. Local listing is not limited to ‘bricks and mortar’ structures but can include other structures and objects such as telephone kiosks, traditional cast iron fingerpost signposts and stone troughs. Local listing affords a measure of protect to structures, including whenever they are affected in any way by planning applications.

Advice on local heritage listing is available from NuL Borough Council’s Conservation Officers and from Historic England: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/local/local-designations/.

7.2.3 Cheshire railings (see section 5.11.7)

It is recommended that the following actions be taken to protect the Cheshire railings in the NA and to restore and maintain them as features of the local landscape:

- parish councils to nominate all known sets of Cheshire railings for local listing
- parish councils to work with landowners, SCC Highways and the Conservation Officer to clear railings of vegetation, restore those in need of repair and institute a regular programme of painting and maintenance.

7.3 Community facilities

7.3.1 Services for an ageing population (see Box 3.5)

It is recommended that the parish councils work together towards establishing sustainable provision of social care and other services for those older members of the NA’s population who would prefer to continue living in the NA. The medium-term goal would be to establish a non-profit social care agency in the NA along the lines of NED Care (North East Dartmoor Care, www.nedcare.org). A longer-term goal (but still within the period of the Plan) might be to establish non-profit sheltered housing or a care home to cater for the needs of NA residents needing a higher level of assistance or care.
7.3.2 Development of community facilities for day-time population (see Boxes 3.1 and 3.7)

It is recommended that the parish councils, especially Whitmore Parish Council, be alert to opportunities to expand community facilities for the day-time population and promote community engagement and activity among the active older population. Provision of a small community drop-in/café in Baldwins Gate could help to generate a more active and involved community.

7.3.3 Sport and exercise facilities (see Box 4.10)

The parish councils need to be alert to the opportunities for additional sport and exercise facilities in the NA, which could be provided either as community facilities or on a club/business basis. The latter would contribute to the local economy and could have the additional economic benefit of bringing people into the NA to use the facilities. There may be opportunities for the reuse of disused buildings to house indoor facilities.

7.3.4 Community compensation/pay-back by HS2 Ltd

In view of the major environmental impacts on the locality and local residents through the loss of important pedestrian routes, the major and permanent alteration of the landscape of the countryside and the loss of tranquillity, there is an opportunity for the parish councils to press HS2 Ltd to compensate local communities by providing:

- new walking routes to compensate for both temporarily and permanently closed routes and to maintain continuing access to routes that would otherwise become inaccessible
- a significant amount of publicly accessible landscaped areas so that what remains of the unaltered open countryside can be accessed, viewed and enjoyed
- new community recreation and sports grounds.

7.4 Economy and business

7.4.1 Diversification of the rural economy

It is recommended that the parish councils actively seek to promote the diversification of the rural economy in order to create employment opportunities in the NA and attract people who will live and work in the NA rather than commute to work.
Opportunities for diversification include expansion of the current small food processing base; further development of tourism and leisure, including education on rural matters and development of craft-based businesses and training; and development of club/business-based sport and exercise facilities (see section 7.3.3; see also below, section 7.8).

7.5 Transport

7.5.1 Public transport (see Boxes 3.12 and 3.13)
It is recommended that the parish councils work with SCC and the parish councils of neighbouring NAs (including Woore, Shropshire) to define new bus routes to serve the locally defined needs of the rural population.

7.5.2 Taxi service
The NA currently has no resident hackney carriage taxi driver. There is scope for such a service in the NA and the parish councils need to be alert to the possibilities for encouraging a suitable driver to become resident in the NA.

7.5.3 Voluntary driver scheme
Older and non-driving members of the community might benefit from the availability of a local voluntary driver scheme to provide transport to GP, dental and hospital appointments. Such a service could be established and coordinated under the auspices of the parish councils.

7.6 Transport network and highways

Highways issues emerged in discussion at the Roadshows in November and December 2015 as the biggest single set of issues facing residents. They were also the greatest single topic of comment in the Residents’ Survey in September 2016. A specific question on highways issues (28a ‘Do you have any other comments about traffic and transport in the Neighbourhood Area?’) drew 154 responses. Question 4a ‘Are there any other issues of concern to you that are not mentioned in Question 4?’ also drew 69 comments on highways issues (out of a total 99 comments). (For further information, see Introduction section 6.2, Community involvement; and report on Residents’ Survey.)
Our roads, lanes and footpaths are the same ones that were in use 200 years ago, but whereas once they were cart tracks, now they are transit corridors and commuter routes for heavy trucks and fast cars.

Our roads and lanes which even 40 years ago were safe walking routes are no longer safe. Many routes that we walked and cycled as children are no longer an option to use, and where the ‘A’ roads do have grass verges they are often no longer maintained in a walkable state.

Fast, powerful farm vehicles towing large machines or huge trailers travel big agricultural miles and pose a hazard to other road users. Cars go too fast. Horse riders are a hazard – and a nuisance because they don’t (or won’t) clean up. Even cyclists, who we thought were safe and clean and green, are a hazard – they’ve forgotten how to use their bells.

www.cmaw-neighbourhoodplan.org.uk/blog/, report on Roadshow at Maer 2 December 2015

The two greatest areas of concern across the NA are agricultural vehicles and the A51/A53 staggered cross-roads at Blackbrook, followed by traffic volumes and speeds (including goods/commercial traffic) on transit routes through the NA and road maintenance (lack thereof). Other issues are specific to defined parts of the NA, but of no less concern to the residents of those areas.

This section categorises the issues raised under a series of topical headings and proposes solutions that could be pursued by the parish councils in consultation with SCC Highways (and landowners where appropriate).

### 7.6.1 Agricultural vehicles

While agricultural vehicles are single greatest issue, the NA is first and foremost an agricultural area and the presence of these vehicles is unavoidable. Technological development and the changing agricultural economy mean: ever-larger vehicles, machinery and wagons; growth in the amount of agricultural traffic on the roads; increasing numbers of road-miles travelled by agricultural traffic on both primary routes and lanes.

- Particular concerns voiced by many residents are the damage caused to roadside verges and banks (Figure 7.1) and mud deposited on roads. Conflict between agricultural traffic and other road users of all categories is inevitable. (Although agricultural vehicles are not the only source of damage to banks and verges, which is also due to the difficulties...
for vehicles of all sizes in passing in narrow lanes, and to low standards of driving on minor routes.)

- Mud deposited on the highways is a problem especially at ploughing and harvest times. In the past it was the responsibility of farmers to clear mud. Now, with ploughing and harvesting work being carried out by contractors on many farms, it seems that farmers are no longer responsible for cleaning the road, and contractors are not taking on this responsibility.
Other traffic creates hazards for agricultural vehicles and their drivers. Drivers of tractors and other vehicles/machines face constant conflict with fast-moving traffic and impatient drivers on busy roads. Tractors are often towing laden waggons or carrying mounted machinery. All vehicles are large, heavy, have limited road speeds and lack the acceleration of other vehicles on the roads.

‘Running tractors on these roads isn’t much fun. You have to have your wits about you all the time.’

Local landowner in conversation with Steering Group

### 7.6.1.1 Opportunities to resolve problems

- Widening of field accesses and recessing of field gates to create driveways into fields would reduce damage by creating space for machines and vehicles with waggons/mounted equipment to make on/off-road turns without running over verges or taking up the full road width.
- Creating more passing places on minor routes and lanes would reduce the amount of damage caused by passing vehicles of all sizes.
- More and better signage would warn other drivers of the presence of agricultural vehicles; speed and overtaking restrictions on ‘A’ roads would help to create safer conditions for agricultural vehicles.

### 7.6.2 A51/A53 staggered cross-roads at Blackbrook (see sections 4.8.14 and 4.10)

The staggered A51/A53 cross-roads at Blackbrook is a major concern to a very high proportion of NA residents due to the high number of traffic incidents and congestion at peak times. In order to avoid congestion drivers on the A53 use Woodside and Hungersheath Lanes as ‘rat runs’ to access the A51, which has priority.

- In its response to the consultation on the HS2 Phase 2A (West Midlands–Crewe) Hybrid Bill Environmental Statement SCC Highways responded as follows to HS2 Ltd’s proposal to use this junction as a construction traffic route:
  - Staggered junction of A53/ A51 at Blackbrook adjacent to Swan with two necks pub – 11 accidents in the last 5 years.
  - SCC expects HS2 Ltd. to engage to develop appropriate mitigation.
(Note: traffic incidents at the Blackbrook staggered junction are more frequent than is suggested by the numbers provided by SCC. Incidents below a certain level of severity are not logged by either SCC Highways or the police.)

7.6.2.1 Opportunities to resolve problems

- Improvement of the junctions could be pursued by Maer and Aston Parish Council with support from other parish councils in the NA and the parish councils of adjacent NAs (Loggerheads and Woore).
- Re-engineering of the two junctions to ease traffic flows would reduce traffic congestion and the number and frequency of traffic incidents and would eliminate the use of Woodside and Hungersheath Lane as rat runs.
- There is an opportunity for the parish councils of this NA and adjoining NAs to approach SCC Highways and propose that junction upgrades at the A51/A53 staggered crossroads are required and should be funded by HS2 Ltd.

7.6.3 Issues on the A53 in Whitmore village

- In the centre of Whitmore village traffic on the A53 approaches the cross-roads at Bent Lane/Three Mile Lane down steep gradients from both directions. The approaches from both of the minor roads are on up steep uphill gradients and there is poor visibility for joining the main road. There have been a number of serious incidents at this cross-roads over the years. Due to the poor conditions in this location police have declined to authorise Whitmore village centre as a site for the Community Speedwatch team.
- Excessive speeds and dangerous overtaking by westbound vehicles are frequent on the steep hill between Whitmore village and Baldwins Gate. There have been serious incidents, including one fatality, on this stretch. The gradient of this stretch of the A53 will be even steeper in future, if HS2 Ltd’s intention to raise the level of highway by 7 metres is carried out.

7.6.3.1 Opportunities to resolve problems

- Re-engineering of the A53 approach to the cross-roads would help to calm traffic and alert drivers to the hazards.
- There are limited opportunities to resolve problems by re-engineering the cross-roads, due to the village being a Conservation Area.
7.6.4  **Issues on the A53 in Baldwins Gate**

- Re-engineering of the west-bound uphill route would help to calm traffic.

- Conditions for pedestrians are a concern on account of high traffic speeds, the heavy traffic flows, the amount of HGVs and other goods/commercial vehicles and agricultural traffic. For traffic volumes and speeds on the A53 in Baldwins Gate see Table 3.4.

- In places where there is no verge the footways are generally below standard width, making them risky and unpleasant places to walk: on the north side, from Fairview Villas to Sandyfields estate, Madeley Road and Holly Bush Lane; on the south side, from Tollgate House to Meadow Way (where the carriageway is also of substandard width) and from Lakeside estate to Woodside. In all these places there is little space between vehicles and pedestrians. Air turbulence from passing HGVs and the proximity of vehicles are unpleasant and intimidating.

- In the centre of the village, where the carriageway width is substandard, eastbound HGVs and other large vehicles are often observed swinging out over the centre line as they negotiate the bend between Gateway Avenue and Tollgate Avenue.

- Heavy traffic flows during peak times make it difficult for vehicles to join from side roads and from accesses on domestic frontages.

- In wet conditions water lies by the side of the road in many places. In places where there is no grass verge pedestrians have no protection from road spray.

- Crossing the road can be difficult. The single pedestrian crossing at the eastern end of the village is inadequate to residents’ needs and the number of other places where it is safe to cross the road is very limited. Additional pedestrian crossings are needed to provide safe access to the primary school, GP surgery and filling station halfway through the village; and to the butcher’s shop, Methodist chapel and walking route to the open countryside via Lakeside estate at the western end of the village.

- The sharp bend at the Woodside junction is a major hazard. Although the 30mph limit starts west of the Madeley Road junction, eastbound vehicles frequently fail to slow down before rounding the bend. This location has been the site of a number of serious incidents and fatalities over the years.
7.6.4.1 Opportunities to resolve problems

The following opportunities exist to improve road conditions for residents in Baldwins Gate. Active travel (walking) would be encouraged by improving perceived and actual conditions and safety for pedestrians.

- On the railway bridge the grass verge could be moved from the inside of the footway to the outside so as to afford protection to pedestrians on this especially busy section of footway, which is the route to community facilities at the eastern end of the village.
- Grass verges could be installed on the north side of the road where non-verged footways are sufficiently wide. From the Snape Hall Road junction to 14 Fairview Villas there is sufficient width to accommodate a verge.
- The pedestrian crossing conditioned for the Kier development currently under construction on land at Gateway Avenue will fulfil the need for a crossing in the centre of the village.
- Whitmore Parish Council is recommended to work with SCC Highways to identify a suitable site for a pedestrian crossing at the western end of the village.
- Whitmore Parish Council is recommended to work with SCC Highways to implement traffic calming measures on the A53 through the length of Baldwins Gate. Failing attempts to have speed cameras installed for the entire 30mph zone, and considering the fact that over 90% of speed cameras in Staffordshire are not turned on, a 20mph zone from Fair-Green Road to Lakeside Close would be beneficial.
- Re-engineering of the bend at Baldwins Gate Farm would improve forward visibility for eastbound traffic and help to calm traffic.
- In view of the forecast significant impact of HS2 construction traffic on highway conditions in Baldwins Gate there is an opportunity for Whitmore Parish Council to approach SCC Highways and seek its support for the implementation of highway safety improvements on the A53 in Baldwins Gate, to be funded by HS2 Ltd.

7.6.5 Issues on the A51

- Traffic speeds through Hill Chorlton hamlet are sometimes excessive, in spite of the 40mph speed limit.
‘The A51 is used as a motorbike race course - high noise, high speed and highly dangerous. I feel very strongly that more needs to be done.’

‘Speed limit has been reduced to 40mph but motor cyclists exceed this all the time mostly on Sunday mornings the noise and speed is very disturbing.’ [Hill Chorlton]

‘We need to put an end to speeding traffic through our villages and an end to the speeding motorcyclists on the surrounding roads.’

Responses to Residents Survey

- Overtaking by westbound traffic in Hill Chorlton hamlet, where both the footway and carriageway widths are substandard, creates a hazard for pedestrians.
- From Maer War Memorial westward to the county boundary there is significant surface water flooding in wet conditions.
- See section 7.6.2 above for the A51/A53 staggered cross-roads.
- Eastbound drivers at Blackbrook have very poor forward visibility of the cross-roads at Maerway Lane and the junction is poorly signposted.
- At Weymouth drivers joining the A51 at the Minn Bank junction have very poor visibility of fast-moving oncoming vehicles on the A51 in both directions.

7.6.5.1 Opportunities to resolve problems

- Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish Council is recommended to work with SCC Highways to install Vehicle Activated Signs in Hill Chorlton hamlet, which would help to discourage excessive speeds.
- Traffic calming measures in Hill Chorlton hamlet, including imposition of a 30mph speed limit and a prohibition on overtaking, would reduce the dangers for pedestrians on the footway from Moss Cottage to Arnside.
- Drainage measures from Maer War Memorial to the county boundary would reduce flooding.

7.6.6 Fragmented pedestrian network

In historical times the turnpike roads (now A51 and A53) that cut across the NA were walkable without continual risk from passing traffic. The volume and/or speed of 21st-century traffic on these roads and on certain ‘C’ and ‘D’ class roads has fragmented the local pedestrian network by making parts of certain routes unsafe and/or unpleasant to use.
The absence of footways along much of the A51 makes the road unsafe for pedestrians and severely fragments the network of PRoWs and lanes. Where flat grass verges exist they provide space for walking and a refuge from passing traffic. However, verge maintenance is insufficient in places and bracken, undergrowth and brash make the verge inaccessible to pedestrians. There are also stretches where hedgerows abut directly on the highway, affording no space to pedestrians.

The opportunities listed below, to better link up the network of PRoWs and lanes, could be seen as complementary to SCC’s Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP).

7.6.6.1 Opportunities to resolve problems

- Opportunities exist to improve pedestrian conditions on the A51 and join up the fragmented PRoW and lane network.
- The proposed designations of roadside verges on the A51 as Local Green Space will safeguard spaces that provide a refuge from passing traffic and a degree of safety for pedestrians. With the adjacent hedgerows, the verges also serve as wildlife corridors.
- Footways could be installed in places where the roadside verges are sufficiently wide:
  - from Stableford to Chapel House, Hill Chorlton
  - from Maerfield Gate to Maer War Memorial
  - from White Farm to Lilac Cottage, Blackbrook
  - from Willoughbridge cross-roads to the county boundary.
- In places where hedgerows come up to the kerbside and there is no verge parish councils could use their powers of designating PRoWs to establish routes along the inside of hedgerows. The following routes on the A51 would be beneficial:
  - from Maer War Memorial to Blackbrook
  - from Weymouth to Willoughbridge cross-roads
  - from Willoughbridge cross-roads to the county boundary.
- Designation of ‘quiet lanes’ with a 20mph speed limit would improve the safety and tranquillity of lanes that are important pedestrian routes. Parish councils could identify appropriate routes in their areas and work with SCC Highways to designate quiet lanes. (See CPRE guide, http://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/transport/roads/item/1867-cpres-guide-to-quiet-lanes)
• Developer contributions (section 106) could be requested to enhance the existing path network in line with SCC’s ROWIP. This could include:
  – the creation of public bridleways or the upgrading of public footpaths to bridleways to improve provision for horse riders and cyclists
  – the creation and promotion of short circular walks to promote the health benefits of walking
  – the replacement of stiles with gaps (where there are no stock) or gates (where there are) in line with SCC’s Least Restrictive Principle for path furniture.

7.6.7 Speed and standard of driving

Speed and the standard of driving is a concern and a danger on both the primary routes and unclassified roads. While there are speed limits on the primary routes where they pass through settlements, the unclassified roads are subject to the national speed limit of 60mph. There are particular complaints about speeds on Manor Road, where a 40mph limit pertains through the residential Madeley Park Wood area, and speeds and overtaking on the A51 in Hill Chorlton.

• On the unclassified roads there are no footways. Pedestrians have to be alert at all times to the presence of vehicles of all kinds and inappropriate speeds.

‘I really dislike being intimidated on Bent Lane.’

Comment from long-term resident on standard of driving

7.6.7.1 Opportunities to resolve problems

• There are opportunities for the Parish Councils to work with SCC Highways to identify routes where speed limit reductions or traffic calming measures can be implemented.
• The installation of Speed Indicator Devices (SiDs) on the A51 in Hill Chorlton would help significantly to calm traffic through the settlement.
• Minor roads that are well-used pedestrian routes could be designated as ‘quiet lanes’ with a 20mph speed limit.

7.6.8 Rat runs

• Westbound traffic on the A53 uses Woodside to access the A51 at peak times and avoid the junction at Blackbrook. A 7.5t weight limit has been imposed on this road but it is still used by heavy vehicles.
• Eastbound traffic on the A53 from Loggerheads uses Hungersheath Lane to access the A51 at peak times and avoid the junction at Blackbrook. There is no weight limit on this lane.

• Residents of Maer village note an increase of traffic volumes and speed through the village and identify that the road may be being used as a rat run to the A51.

7.6.8.1 Opportunities to resolve problems

• Re-engineering of the A51/A53 staggered cross-roads at Blackbrook would eliminate the use of Woodside and Hungersheath Lane as rat runs. See section 7.6.2.

7.6.9 Cyclists and cycle routes

There are no designated cycle lanes or off-road cycle routes in the NA. Cyclists are an issue for drivers on the NA’s primary routes, especially the A53. On both the A51 and A53 there are few places where it is safe to pass, and impatient drivers make unsafe manoeuvres to pass cyclists. Cyclists can also be a hazard for pedestrians in rural lanes.

‘Cyclists are a menace because you don’t hear them coming.’

www.cmaw-neighbourhoodplan.org.uk/blog/, report on Roadshow at Aston 26 November 2015

7.6.9.1 Off-road cycle route to Madeley

• An off-road cycle route between Baldwins Gate and Madeley, tracking the WCML, would be beneficial. Madeley is a rural service centre and is the site of the high school attended by many young residents of the NA.

7.6.10 Horses

Horse riding along the A51 in Hill Chorlton is a hazard to traffic and a nuisance to residents. Riders walk their horses on the footway and their horses defecate onto the footway. When riders keep to the carriageway their horses defecate onto the carriageway; vehicles then pass through the manure and spray it over the footway. Horse manure in the road is also raised as an issue in Acton.

7.6.10.1 Opportunities to resolve problems

There are opportunities to designate more public bridleways in the NA. It should be possible to gain the cooperation of equestrian establishments in the NA to designate public bridleways.
7.7  Housing

7.7.1  Low-cost housing
It is recommended that the parish councils be alert to opportunities to increase the amount of low-cost housing in the NA.

7.8  Leisure and tourism

7.8.1  Promotion of historic environment to support leisure and tourism in the NA
It is suggested that the parish councils initiate further work on the NA’s historic environment to help support the development of leisure and tourism in the NA. This could be done with assistance and advice from the Conservation Officer and officers at the SCC HER and with funding and support from the Heritage Lottery Fund. A community group could work under the direction of the parish councils on research, documentation, preparation of leaflets or other small publications and on projects to incorporate the local heritage into walking routes.

7.9.1  Walking the in NA

7.9.1.1  Promotion of walking in the NA
It is recommended that the parish councils work together to promote the NA to walkers. This could be done by establishing a group to work under the direction of the parish councils to develop leaflets about walking routes along the NA’s network of lanes and ProWs and to update and extend the map of Whitmore and district parish walks.

7.9.1.2  Kennels Lane lay-by
It is recommended that Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish Council work to promote the lay-by at Kennels Lane as a starting point for walks. This could include installation of an information board with map, signposting of routes, provision of waste bins, and possibly provision of a picnic table.

7.9.1.3  Chapel Chorlton village green (see Box 4.5)
It is recommended that Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish Council work to promote Chapel Chorlton as a starting point or way point for walks. This could include installation of an information board with map, signposting of routes, provision of a picnic table, and
refurbishment of the telephone kiosk as a booth with information on walks and the natural and/or local history of the area. The village green could also be used for events to promote leisure opportunities in the NA.
Appendix 1

Local Green Space designations

Contents

Introduction
  1 Why green space is important
  2 Green space and sustainable development
  3 Local Green Space in neighbourhood plans
  4 Green space audit
  5 Community and stakeholder engagement
  6 Designation of Local Green Space
Designations
  1 Chapel and Hill Chorlton parish
  2 Maer and Aston parish
  3 Whitmore parish

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Introduction

Green infrastructure contributes to the quality and distinctiveness of the local environment. It is important for local communities to have a diversity of green infrastructure in and around their neighbourhood as it affords opportunities for walking, play and other physical activity for all age groups and connects people to the living, natural environment.

Neighbourhood plans can include policies for green spaces and can designate ‘Local Green Spaces’ to protect them for current and future generations.

1 Why green space is important

Green spaces have a variety of roles and values in a neighbourhood and can bring social, economic and environmental benefits. Some community and environmental benefits of green spaces include the following:

- as part of the public realm, where they provide a place for informal social interaction
- as pitches and other facilities for sports and physical activity
- as elements in a network of paths and spaces that allow for movement through an area
- as habitats and corridors for wildlife in areas of development and areas linking development to the open countryside
- as flexible space for recreation and a variety of local cultural events
- contributing to an area’s local amenity and providing an attractive setting and outlook for surrounding residential and commercial properties
- as part of the character or setting of historic areas, buildings and townscape
- as an element of flood mitigation schemes, including SUDs
- as areas that provide opportunities to grow local food.

In conjunction with buildings, urban space and the wider public realm, green spaces contribute to quality of place – an important factor in community well-being and in making an area an attractive place in which to live, work and spend leisure time. Quality of place and safe, attractive green spaces are especially important in rural neighbourhoods, where leisure and tourism play an important role in the local economy, support local businesses and jobs and provide opportunities for diversification.
The NPPF para. 76 states that:

Local communities through local and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. ... Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or reviewed, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

2 Green space and sustainable development

Achieving sustainable development is one of the basic conditions that neighbourhood plans must demonstrate. The social, community, economic and environmental benefits of green spaces contribute to and support the sustainability of places and planning for green spaces is therefore an essential part of neighbourhood planning.

The impact of new development on green spaces and provision of new green spaces as part of new developments are significant factors to be taken into account in assessing the sustainability of new development.

3 Local Green Space in neighbourhood plans

Green infrastructure should be considered in terms of its values to the local community, local environment and local economy. This can be demonstrated by providing a clear rationale and evidence for Local Green Space designations and policies. The requirements include a robust and proportionate evidence base and engagement with the local community and stakeholders.

Green space policies can relate to green space and green infrastructure, or to development adjacent to such facilities. They should not be used to make designations that would stop development from taking place.

4 Green space audit

A green space audit of the Neighbourhood Area (NA) was carried out in June 2017. This involved touring the NA and assessing and critically evaluating green spaces in terms of: what there is, location, type of space, quality, movement, amenity value and other relevant considerations.
The Residents’ Survey and residents’ participation in Roadshow events revealed that the aspects of the NA that are most important to residents are the area’s rural character, easy access to the countryside, the landscape and natural environment, and the local lanes, PROWs and bridleways. In addition to the value assigned to these spaces by residents, the vision and aims of the Neighbourhood Plan and the value of the NA to a wider public were also taken into account. For this reason the Local Green Space audit focused on identifying:

- community spaces in settlements
- spaces that contribute to local rural character
- spaces connected to important local walking routes
- roadside verges that help to link up the NA’s fragmented network of lanes and PROWs.

4.1 **Checklist of green infrastructure**

The following checklist served as a guide to the audit, but not to the exclusion of also considering other spaces.

- Churchyards
- Footpaths
- Highway verges
- Informal spaces
- Parks and gardens
- Rural footpaths
- Sports pitches
- SUDs and other landscaped areas
- Trees and woodland
- Village greens

4.2 **Spaces excluded from audit**

During the course of the audit it was decided not to include the churchyards. As all of the 4 churchyards in the NA are associated with listed buildings and other listed structures it was felt that their function, status and historical significance gave them sufficient recognition and protection.
It was also decided not to include the Dorothy Clive Garden, owned and maintained by the Willoughbridge Garden Trust, in the audit because public access is on a fee-paying basis.

4.3 Sports grounds
The Newcastle-under-Lyme Playing Pitch Strategy (February 2015) assessed the playing/football field at Whitmore village hall, the cricket pitch at Whitmore Cricket Club and the privately owned bowling green at Slaters Country Inn. The report noted that the bowling green is the only green in the entire rural area of NuL. It also recorded very few publicly accessible tennis courts in the NuL rural area, the nearest to the NA being at Keele University and the Westlands sports ground.

5 Community and stakeholder engagement
Following the audit a 3-week public consultation on Local Green Space was held from 31 July 2017 to 21 August 2017. The parish councils wrote to all stakeholders, including the landowners of all spaces identified in the audit, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council and Staffordshire County Council. Drop-in consultation events were held at Whitmore and Maer village halls on 5 August 2017, where the audit record, accompanied by parish maps and photographs of the audited green spaces, was available for inspection and members of the Steering Group were available to answer questions. Comment forms were available.

The consultation was also accessible online on the Neighbourhood Plan website during the 3-week consultation period and comments could be submitted by email to the parish councils and the Steering Group. The public consultation, the drop-in events and the online accessibility were advertised by notices on parish council noticeboards in all three parishes and by email to all subscribers on the Neighbourhood Plan email list. An additional consultation for five further spaces in Whitmore parish was held in Whitmore parish from 9 September 2017 to 23 September 2017. Whitmore Parish Council wrote to the landowner and the consultation, accompanied by the audit list of the 5 spaces, was advertised by notices on all Whitmore Parish Council noticeboards. The additional consultation, accompanied by the audit list, parish maps and photographs of the audited green spaces, was also accessible online on the Neighbourhood Plan website for the duration of the consultation period.
6 Designation of Local Green Space

Following the consultations all comments received were collated and decisions were made on the spaces to be put forward for formal designation as Local Green Space.

Local Green Space designations must be made in accordance with the following criteria of the NPPF (2018), para. 100.

The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

The criterion of ‘close proximity’ would normally mean within easy walking distance.

Some examples of demonstrable specialness to a local community are provided in the NPPF (2012, para. 77; 2018, para. 100). The list is not exhaustive and the specialness of any
specific space will be demonstrated by the way the community uses and engages with it.

The criterion of being local in character and not an extensive tract of land suggests that, as with ‘close proximity’, a space should have some close connection to the local area/community.

The following sections present the record and descriptions of the Local Green Space designations for each parish.
Designations

1 Chapel and Hill Chorlton parish
Designated reference: LGSC1

Audit reference: GSAC1

Name: Chapel and Hill Chorlton Public Right of Way No. 1

Location

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Post code</th>
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<tr>
<td>ST5 5DS</td>
<td>SJ 79605 40031 to SJ 79648 39768</td>
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</table>

Type of protection: Local Green Space

NPPF para. 77 criteria

Site allocations: None

Planning permissions: None

Extensive tract of land: No

Local in character: Yes

Close to the community it serves: Yes

Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))

B, R, T, W, O

Well-being, an important local walking route. Contributes to green infrastructure.

Description

A well-maintained natural footpath bordered by mature vegetation and trees. The northern section of the path runs between the boundary of Lakeside estate and domestic gardens and is bounded by hedges and mature trees. The southern section is bounded by mature hedgerows, hedgerow trees and vegetation and a small watercourse runs parallel to it. Beyond the boundaries on either side are fields of pasture land. The watercourse, trees and hedgerows provide a corridor for wildlife and contribute to green infrastructure. This path is a significant local amenity. It is well used on a daily basis, being part of several popular walks used by Baldwins Gate residents and forming the main pedestrian route from Hill Chorlton and Chorlton Moss to Baldwins Gate. Maintained by volunteers.

Map

Photographs
Designated reference | LGSC2
---|---
Audit reference | GSAC2
Name: | Verge opposite dwellings at Chorlton Moss Lane
Location | Post code | ST5 5DS
| NGR | SJ 79643 39763 to SJ 79585 39717
Type of protection | Local Green Space
NPPF para. 77 criteria
Site allocations | None
Planning permissions | None
Extensive tract of land | No
Local in character | Yes
Close to the community it serves | Yes
Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))
B, R, T, O
Well-being, an important local walking route.

Map

Description
Wide grassed verge and dry ditch on the north side of single track lane, opposite dwellings in Chorlton Moss Lane. There is a mature hedgerow on the inside of the verge. The lane is a popular local walking route and on the main pedestrian route from Hill Chorlton to Baldwins Gate. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area.
<table>
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<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAC3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> Verges on Chorlton Moss Lane from dormer bungalow ‘Beechcroft’ to field accesses near dog bin</td>
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<td>Planning permissions</td>
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<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
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**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

B, R, T, W, O

Well-being, an important local walking route. Contribute to green infrastructure.

**Description**
Grassed verges and tall hedgerows with trees, including a veteran Oak tree, on single-track lane. The lane is a popular local walking route and on the main pedestrian route from Hill Chorlton to Baldwins Gate. The trees and hedgerows provide a corridor for wildlife and contribute to green infrastructure. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area.
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<td><strong>Name:</strong> Grassed area by Chorlton Moss dog bin</td>
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<td>Local in character</td>
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**Demonstrably special to local community:**
- beauty (B)
- historic significance (H)
- recreational value (R)
- tranquillity (T)
- wildlife (W)
- other (O)

- B, R, T, O

Well-being, situated on an important local walking route.

**Description**
A small area of grassed verge at a three-way junction of single-track lanes on a popular local walking route and on the main pedestrian route from Hill Chorlton to Baldwins Gate. Includes a dog waste bin. Maintained by volunteers.
**Designated reference**  
LGSC5

**Audit reference**  
GSAC5

**Name:** Chapel and Hill Chorlton Public Right of Way No. 5, section Moss Lane to Sewerage Works

**Location**

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**Type of protection**  
Local Green Space

**NPPF para. 77 criteria**

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**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

B, R, T, W, O

Well-being, an important local walking route. Contributes to green infrastructure.

**Description**

Narrow lane with metalled surface. A deep ditch runs by the S side along most of the length. Passes Chorlton Moss Local Wildlife Site on N side and farmland on S side. The boundaries of the path vary from tall hedgerow to woodland, ro mature trees, to wire fencing. The farmland is a known habitat for farmland birds, including skylarks. The lane is part of a popular local walking route and is also used by Severn Trent as an access to the sewerage works. A corridor for wildlife.

**Map**

**Photographs**
Established reed bed at Severn Trent Baldwins Gate site. An important wildlife location, contributes to green infrastructure. Adjacent to Chorlton Public Right of Way No. 5, which forms part of a popular circular walk. The reed bed is accessible via a pedestrian gate.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Grassed verge with paved footway on the inside and mature hedgerow with trees. The base of the hedgerow is planted with daffodils. There is a gap in the verge at a crossing to a field access. The verge widens into a visibility splay at the junction with Sandy Lane, providing visibility for road users. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area. Maintained by residents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name: A51 Verge, Sandy Lane to Arnside, Hill Chorlton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post code</td>
<td>ST5 5DR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGR</td>
<td>SJ 79554 39241 to SJ 79654 39280</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Local Green Space</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Map</td>
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<td></td>
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### Local Green Space designations: Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish

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<td>Audit reference</td>
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**Name:** Green gap, junction Moss Lane and A51, Hill Chorlton

**Location**

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**Type of protection**

Local Green Space

**NPPF para. 77 criteria**

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<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

B, O

An important feature of the rural character and setting of the settlement.

**Map**

![Map of LGSC8 in Hill Chorlton](image)

**Description**

An important area of pasture land at Moss Farm that provides definition and separation between the built form of dwellings on the A51 and the Open Countryside. The pasture meets a grass verge on the inside of the footway on the A51, creating a wide gap in the row of dwellings along the N side of the highway. Boundary is formed partly by mature hedgerow and partly by white-painted ‘Cheshire railings’, a local heritage feature. The green gap is an important element in rural the character and setting of this settlement.

**Photograph**

![Photograph of LGSC8](image)
## Local Green Space designations: Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish

### Designated reference
LGSC9

### Audit reference
GSAC9

### Name:
A51 Verges, Chapel Bend, Hill Chorlton

### Location
- **Post code**: ST5 5DR
- **NGR**: SJ 80026 39423 to SJ 80098 39401

### Type of protection
Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

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<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))

B, R, W, O

Well-being, an important pedestrian route giving access to lanes and PRoWs. Provide safety for pedestrians on busy A road. Contribute to green infrastructure.

### Map
![Map of A51 Verges, Chapel Bend, Hill Chorlton](image)

### Description
Wide grassed verges at a sharp bend in the A51. On the N side there is a paved footway through the middle of the verge and a line of mature Norway Maple and Oak trees on the inside of the verge screens the electricity substation. On the S side there is a steep bank on the inside of the verge, topped by a mature hedgerow. The base of the bank is planted with daffodils. Provide visibility for road users and a refuge for wildlife and contribute to green infrastructure. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area. Verges at either side of Chapel House mown and maintained by residents. Remainder of verges maintained by SCC Highways and volunteers.

### Photographs
![Photograph of A51 Verges, Chapel Bend, Hill Chorlton](image)
Designated reference | LGSC10
---|---
Audit reference | GSAC10
Name: A51 Verges, Chapel House, Hill Chorlton to Kennels Lane layby
Location | Post code | ST5 5DR
| NGR | SJ 80098 39401 to SJ 80234 39272
Type of protection | Local Green Space
NPPF para. 77 criteria
Site allocations | None
Planning permissions | None
Extensive tract of land | No
Local in character | Yes
Close to the community it serves | Yes
Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))
B, R, W, O
Well-being, an important pedestrian route giving access to lanes and PRoWs. Provide safety for pedestrians on busy A road. Contribute to green infrastructure.

Description
Wide grassed verges, steeply banked on the inside, with mature Norway Maple and Hawthorn trees along part of the length, gorse, bluebells and other vegetation and mature hedgerows. Provide informal footpaths connecting the rural community with wider pedestrian networks and with settlements, and a gateway to the settlement of Hill Chorlton. Trees, hedgerows and other vegetation provide corridors for wildlife and contribute to green infrastructure. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area. Maintained by SCC Highways and volunteers.

Map

Photographs
### Designated reference
LGSC11

### Audit reference
GSAC11

#### Name: Kennels Lane layby, A51, Hill Chorlton

#### Location
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post code</th>
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<tr>
<td>NGR</td>
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#### Type of protection
Local Green Space

#### NPPF para. 77 criteria
- Site allocations: None
- Planning permissions: None
- Extensive tract of land: No
- Local in character: Yes
- Close to the community it serves: Yes

#### Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))
B, R, T, W, O

Well-being, an important access point to local walking routes and known as a peaceful resting spot. Contributes to green infrastructure.

### Description
A short length of disused highway used as an informal parking place, separated from the highway by a banked, wooded area with mature Cherry and Norway Maple trees. Bounded on the W by vegetated bank and mature hedgerow with fields beyond. Chorlton Public Right of Way No. 18 leads off the site to the west. Kennels Lane, giving access to other pedestrian routes PRoWs, is accessed on the other side of the main highway. A popular site used for accessing the countryside and stopping during a journey. Also visited by some as a place to sit and enjoy the countryside. This is high value space in terms of its offer and location. It would benefit from an information board about local walking routes; also from refuse bins, as it is littered and is frequently used by fly tippers. Maintained by volunteers.

### Photographs
- ![Photograph 1](image1.png)
- ![Photograph 2](image2.png)
### Local Green Space designations: Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Audit reference</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> A51 Verges, Kennels Lane layby to Kennels Lane</td>
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<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Post code</strong></td>
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<td><strong>NGR</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Type of protection</strong></td>
<td>Local Green Space</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

A wide grassed verge/visibility splay on the E side of the highway, opposite the wooded area at Kennels Lane layby, and verge along edge of wooded area. Provide informal footpaths connecting the rural community with wider pedestrian networks and with settlements. Splay provides visibility for road users on a twisting road. On the opposite side of the road the narrower grassed verge along the edge of the wooded area at the layby is planted with daffodils. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area. Maintained by SCC Highways and volunteers.

| Site allocations | None |
| Planning permissions | None |
| Extensive tract of land | No |
| Local in character | Yes |
| Close to the community it serves | Yes |

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

B, R, W, O

Well-being, an important pedestrian route giving access to lanes and PRoWs. Contribute to green infrastructure.

| Map |
| Photographs |

| Photographs | Photographs |
**Designated reference** | LGSC13  
---|---  
**Audit reference** | GSAC13  
**Name:** Triangle at junction Kennels Lane and Mill Lane  
**Location** |  
- **Post code**: ST5 5JG  
- **NGR**: SJ 80628 39073  
**Type of protection** | Local Green Space  
**NPPF para. 77 criteria** |  
- **Site allocations**: None  
- **Planning permissions**: None  
- **Extensive tract of land**: No  
- **Local in character**: Yes  
- **Close to the community it serves**: Yes  
**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))** | B, O  
**Contributes to rural character.**

**Description**

An unkerbed grassed triangle at a road junction. There is some erosion/vehicle damage to the grass on one side of the triangle. There are a telegraph pole and direction signs to properties on Mill Lane in one corner. Contributes to the character of this rural location.

**Map**

![Map of Triangle at junction Kennels Lane and Mill Lane](image)

**Photograph**

![Photograph of Triangle at junction Kennels Lane and Mill Lane](image)
### Designated reference
LGSC14

### Audit reference
GSAC14

### Name:
A51 Verges, Kennels Lane to Coombesdale

### Location

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### Type of protection
Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

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### Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))

- B, R, W, O

Well-being, an important pedestrian route giving access to lanes and PRoWs. Contribute to green infrastructure. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area. Maintained by SCC Highways and volunteers.

### Map

![Map Image]

### Photographs

![Photograph 1]

![Photograph 2]
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<td>GSAC15</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> A51 Verges, Coombesdale to Weston Lodge</td>
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<td><strong>Post code</strong> ST5 5JF</td>
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<td><strong>NPPF para. 77 criteria</strong></td>
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**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

B, R, W, O

Well-being, an important pedestrian route giving access to lanes and PRoWs. Provide safety for pedestrians on busy A road. Contribute to green infrastructure.

**Description**

Grassed verges with mature, tall hedgerows. Verge on N side provides informal footpath connecting the rural community with wider pedestrian networks and with settlements. Provide visibility for road users on a twisting road. Hedgerows and vegetation provide corridors for wildlife and contribute to green infrastructure. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area. Maintained by SCC Highways and volunteers.

**Map**

![Map Image](image1)

**Photographs**

![Photograph 1](image2)

![Photograph 2](image3)
### Designated reference
LGSC16

### Audit reference
GSAC16

### Name:
A51 Verge, Weston Lodge to Stableford

### Location

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### Type of protection
Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

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<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
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### Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))
B, R, W, O

Well-being, an important pedestrian route giving access to lanes and P RWs. Provide safety for pedestrians on busy A road. A ‘gateway’ into the Neighbourhood Area.

### Map
![Map Image]

### Description
Mown grassed verge on N side of highway with mature trees along part of the length, and hedgerows. Provides informal footpath connecting the rural community with wider pedestrian networks and with settlements. Provides visibility for road users on a twisting road. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area. Maintained by residents.

### Photographs
![Photograph 1]

![Photograph 2]
### Designated reference

<table>
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### Audit reference

<table>
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### Name

**Chapel Chorlton Village Green**

### Location

<table>
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### Type of protection

Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

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#### Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))

B, H, R, T, W, O

An important community asset.

### Description

A large, triangular village green with a mature commemorative oak tree (silver jubilee of Queen Victoria), located centrally and wrapped by a bench. At the NW corner are a small parking area, a parish notice board, a letter box, seating, a litter bin and a disused K6 telephone box. The area is well used. The parking area, seating and bench under the oak tree are all used by walkers and other visitors. The green is used by the local community. Contributes to the character of this rural settlement. In ownership of Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish Council. Maintained by Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish Council.

### Map

![Map of Chapel Chorlton Village Green](image1)

LGSC17

### Photograph

![photograph of Chapel Chorlton Village Green](image2)
2 Maer and Aston parish
<table>
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<tr>
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<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAM1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> Triangle at School Lane, Aston</td>
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<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contributes to rural character.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

A kerbed triangle of mown grass at a road junction, with a small ornamental apple tree planted in the centre. Contributes to the character of this area in the centre of the village. Maintained by residents.
Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore
Neighbourhood Development Plan

Appendix 1 | Local Green Space designations: Maer and Aston Parish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAM2</td>
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**Name:** Triangle at junction Minn Bank and Holloway Lane, Aston

<table>
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**Type of protection:** Local Green Space

**NPPF para. 77 criteria**

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<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
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</table>

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

- B, H

Contributes to rural character.

A kerbed triangle of unmown grass with meadow flowers, with a village sign and an old village pump. There is some vehicle damage to the grass on one side of the triangle. Contributes to the character of this area on the periphery of the village.

**Map**

[Map Image]

**Photograph**

[Photograph Image]
### Designated reference

LGSM3

### Audit reference

GSAM3

### Name: Triangle at junction Minn Bank and Maerway Lane, Aston

### Location

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### Type of protection

Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

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</table>

### Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))

B

Contributes to rural character.

### Description

A kerbed triangle with planting of ornamental conifers and shrubs and a winter grit bin. Contributes to the character of the area. Currently appears not to be maintained.

### Map

![Map Image]

### Photograph

![Photograph Image]
### Designated reference
LGSM4

### Audit reference
GSAM4

**Name:** Triangle at junction Maerway Lane and Maer Hills Road

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>SJ 76417 39990</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Type of protection:** Local Green Space

**NPPF para. 77 criteria**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site allocations</th>
<th>Planning permissions</th>
<th>Extensive tract of land</th>
<th>Local in character</th>
<th>Close to the community it serves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

- B
  - Contributes to rural character.

**Map**

- Photograph

- Map showing the location of the triangle at the junction Maerway Lane and Maer Hills Road.

**Description**

A kerbed triangle of mown grass at a road junction. Contributes to the character of this rural lane. Maintained by residents.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSM5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAM5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Verge and stream on Holloway Lane, Aston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Post code: TF9 4JF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NGR: SJ 75476 41021 to SJ 75710 41074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of protection</td>
<td>Local Green Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPPF para. 77 criteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site allocations</td>
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<td>Planning permissions</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))</td>
<td>B, W, O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map</td>
<td>Photograph</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grass verge and stream on the south side of Holloway Lane, from junction with Minn Bank to No. 181 Holloway Lane. The verge is planted with snowdrops and daffodils. Provides a refuge from passing vehicles for pedestrians and horse-riders. Also a wildlife corridor. Maintained by volunteers.
**Designated reference** | LGSM6  
---|---  
**Audit reference** | GSAM6  
**Name:** Maer Public Right of Way No. 4  
**Location**  
| Post code | ST5 5EN  
| NGR | SJ 76439 39768 to SJ 77642 38958  
**Type of protection** | Local Green Space  
**NPPF para. 77 criteria**  
| Site allocations | None  
| Planning permissions | None  
| Extensive tract of land | No  
| Local in character | Yes  
| Close to the community it serves | Yes  
**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**  
| B, R, T, W  
| Contributes to well-being.  
**Map**  
---

**Description**  
A well-used natural footpath through the Maer Hills. Runs through commercial woodland from access opposite Cuckoo's Nest, Maerway Lane, in a SE direction to the A51 E of Swan Farm, Blackbrook. NW of Swan Farm the path emerges from the woodland and crosses a field. From the junction with Maer PRoW 5 at Wood Lane and continuing SE it forms part of the Newcastle Way Long Distance Path  

**Photographs**
**Designated reference** | LGSM7  
---|---  
**Audit reference** | GSAM7  
**Name:** Maer Public Right of Way No. 5  
**Location**  
- **Post code:** ST5 5ER  
- **NGR:** SJ 77576 40582 to SJ 77136 39265  
**Type of protection** | Local Green Space  
**NPPF para. 77 criteria**  
- **Site allocations:** None  
- **Planning permissions:** None  
- **Extensive tract of land:** No  
- **Local in character:** Yes  
- **Close to the community it serves:** Yes  
**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**  
- B, R, T, W  
**Contributes to well-being.**

**Description**  
A well-used natural footpath through the Maer Hills. Runs from access in Radwood Lane, through commercial woodland in a SW direction to a point E of Wood Lane, Blackbrook, where it joins onto Maer PRoW 4. The entire path forms part of the Newcastle Way Long Distance Path.

**Photographs**
### Designated reference
LGSM8

### Audit reference
GSAM8

### Name:
A51 Verges, county boundary to 172 London Road

### Location
- **Post code**: TF9 4HA
- **NGR**: SJ 74339 40407 to SJ 74598 40323

### Type of protection
Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site allocations</th>
<th>Planning permissions</th>
<th>Extensive tract of land</th>
<th>Local in character</th>
<th>Close to the community it serves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))

- B, W, O

A ‘gateway’ into the Neighbourhood Area. Provide protection to pedestrians on busy A road.

### Description
Wide grassed verges bounded by mature tall hedgerows with trees. Provide informal footpaths connecting the rural community with wider pedestrian networks and with settlements. Provide visibility for traffic on twisting road. Hedgerows and other vegetation provide corridor for wildlife and contribute to green infrastructure. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area. Maintained by SCC Highways.

### Map
![Map](image)

### Photograph
![Photograph](image)
### Designated reference
LGSM9

### Audit reference
GSAM9

### Name: A51 Verges, 172 London Road to Willoughbridge crossroads

### Location
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post code</th>
<th>TF9 4EX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NGR</td>
<td>SJ 74598 40323 to SJ 74655 40252</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Type of protection
Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site allocations</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning permissions</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extensive tract of land</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Description
Wide grassed verges bounded by mature tall hedgerows with trees. Provide informal footpaths connecting the rural community with wider pedestrian networks and with settlements. Verge is eroded in front of 172 London Road where it is used for informal parking. Provide visibility for road users on twisting road. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area. Maintained by residents.

### Map
![Map of A51 Verges, 172 London Road to Willoughbridge crossroads]

### Photograph
![Photograph of A51 Verges, 172 London Road to Willoughbridge crossroads]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSM10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAM10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> A51 Verges, Willoughbridge crossroads</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Location**         | Post code: TF9 4EX  
                       | NGR: SJ 74687 40228 |
| **Type of protection** | Local Green Space |
| **NPPF para. 77 criteria** |
| Site allocations     | None |
| Planning permissions | None |
| Extensive tract of land | No |
| Local in character   | Yes |
| Close to the community it serves | Yes |
| **Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))** |
| B, O | Contribute to rural character. Contribute to road safety. |

**Description**

Wide grassed verges and visibility splays at rural crossroads, providing visibility and safety for road users. There is a small informal parking area at the side of Aston Lane. At the side of Willoughbridge Lane the grass is eroded at a vehicle access to a domestic garden. Maintained by residents.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSM11</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAM11</td>
<td>Triangular mown grassed verge on the eastern side of the junction. Provides visibility for road users on a narrow primary route. Contributes to the character of this rural settlement. Maintained by residents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name: A51 Verge, Minn Bank junction, Weymouth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Post code</td>
<td>TF9 4JQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NGR</td>
<td>SJ 74947 40024</td>
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<tr>
<td>Type of protection</td>
<td>Local Green Space</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPPF para. 77 criteria</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site allocations</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning permissions</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive tract of land</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
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<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))</td>
<td>B, O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photograph</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Designated reference
LGSM12

### Audit reference
GSAM12

### Name:
A51 Verge, Dorothy Clive Garden

### Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Local Green Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Description

Mown grassed verge with informal tree and shrub plantings. Contributes to the character of the area and signals access to the Dorothy Clive Garden. Maintained by Willoughbridge Garden Trust.

### Site allocations
None

### Planning permissions
None

### Extensive tract of land
No

### Local in character
Yes

### Close to the community it serves
Yes

### Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))

- B, O

Signals access to Dorothy Clive Garden.

### Map

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photograph</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

[Map and Photograph]
### Designated reference
LGSM13

### Audit reference
GSAM13

### Name:
The Croft, Hungersheath Lane, Blackbrook

### Location
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post code</th>
<th>ST5 5EL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NGR</td>
<td>SJ 76465 38956</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Type of protection
Local Green Space

### Description
A mown grassed area in front of a ‘crescent’ of houses, providing a visual green space and informal play area adjacent to the residential properties. The main area immediately in front of the ‘crescent’ comprises an oval area with a roadway around it, inside of which is triangular area with a footway on the inside. The main area is in good condition. On the southern periphery where there is no kerbstone to the green space the grass is used as informal parking and its ‘natural’ value is significantly reduced, due to the damaged caused. Contributes to the character of the properties and wider rural area. In ownership of local authority Maintained by local authority

### Map

![Map of The Croft](image1.png)

### Photographs

![Photograph 1](image2.png)

![Photograph 2](image3.png)
### Designated reference
- LGSM14
- GSAM14

### Name:
Verge between The Croft and Wayside Farm, Hungersheath Lane, Blackbrook

### Location
- **Post code**: ST5 5EL
- **NGR**: SJ 76485 39007

### Type of protection
Local Green Space

### Description
Steep bank on the W side of the lane, with a roadside bus stop. Contributes to the rural character of the area.

### NPPF para. 77 criteria
- **Site allocations**: None
- **Planning permissions**: None
- **Extensive tract of land**: No
- **Local in character**: Yes
- **Close to the community it serves**: Yes

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**
- B, O

Contributes to rural character.

### Map
![Map](image1)

### Photograph
![Photograph](image2)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSM15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAM15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Name:** A51 Verges, Wayside Farm and St Margaret’s Chapel, Blackbrook

**Location**
- **Post code:** ST5 5EL
- **NGR:** SJ 76496 39080

**Type of protection:** Local Green Space

**NPPF para. 77 criteria**
- **Site allocations:** None
- **Planning permissions:** None
- **Extensive tract of land:** No
- **Local in character:** Yes
- **Close to the community it serves:** Yes

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**
- **B, O**
  - Contribute to rural character.

**Map**

**Photographs**

Narrow grassed verges provide visibility and safety for traffic at a poorly marked rural crossroads. The verge is mown in front of St Margaret’s Chapel. Contributes to the rural character of the area. Maintained by SCC Highways.
Designated reference | LGSM16
--- | ---
Audit reference | GSAM16
**Name:** A51 Verges, Maerway Lane to The Shippon, Blackbrook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Post code</th>
<th>ST5 5EL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NGR</strong></td>
<td>SJ 76504 39060 to SJ 76596 38996</td>
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</table>

**Type of protection** | Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site allocations</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning permissions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extensive tract of land</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

B, W, O

Contribute to rural character. Provide safety for pedestrians on busy A road.

**Description**

Wide grassed verges bounded by mature tall hedgerows. On the south side of the highway there is a paved footway from The Shippon to the junction with Hungersheath Lane, providing pedestrian access to a bus stop in Hungersheath Lane. Widening of the verges into splays at the crossroads creates visibility and safety for road users. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area. Maintained by SCC Highways.

**Map**

[Map of A51 Verges, Maerway Lane to The Shippon, Blackbrook]

**Photographs**

[Photograph of A51 Verges, Maerway Lane to The Shippon, Blackbrook]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSM17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAM17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong></td>
<td>A51 Verges, The Shippon to The Woodlands, Blackbrook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Post code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NGR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of protection</td>
<td>Local Green Space</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NPPF para. 77 criteria</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site allocations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

B, O

Contribute to rural character. Provide safety for pedestrians on busy A road. Provide safe access to community services.

**Description**

Wide mown grass verges bounded by dwellings and domestic gardens. On the south side of the highway a layby inside the verge gives access to several dwellings, a telephone kiosk, a letter box and a parish noticeboard. The mown grass signals an inhabited area on a rural highway. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area. Maintained by residents.

**Map**

![Map Image]

**Photographs**

![Photograph Image]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSM18</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAM18</td>
<td>Narrow grass verges bounded by mature hedgerows with trees, with a kerbside bus stop at White Farm. Provide informal footpaths connecting the rural community with wider pedestrian networks and with settlements. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area. Maintained by SCC Highways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> A51 Verges, The Woodlands to White Farm, Blackbrook</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td><strong>Post code</strong></td>
<td>ST5 5EL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>NGR</strong></td>
<td>SJ 76771 38892 to SJ 77026 38802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of protection</strong></td>
<td>Local Green Space</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NPPF para. 77 criteria</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))</strong></td>
<td>B, W, O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribute to rural character. Provide safety for pedestrians on busy A road.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Map

![Map of the designated green space](image)

### Photograph

![Photograph of the designated green space](image)
### Designated reference
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wide grass verge bounded by mature hedgerow on N side of the A51. On the S side of the highway there is a paved footway inside a narrow verge. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area. Maintained by SCC Highways.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Audit reference
| Name: A51 Verges, A53 junction to Wharmadine Lane |

#### Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post code</th>
<th>ST5 5EG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NGR</td>
<td>SJ 77406 38799 to SJ 77521 38817</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Type of protection

| Local Green Space |

#### NPPF para. 77 criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site allocations</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning permissions</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive tract of land</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))

| B, W, O |

Contribute to rural character. Provide safety for pedestrians on busy A road.

#### Map

![Map Image]

#### Photographs

![Photograph Image]

![Photograph Image]
### Designated reference
LGSM20

### Audit reference
GSAM20

### Name: A51 Verves, Wharmadine Lane to Brookfields Farm

### Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post code</th>
<th>NGR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ST5 5EG</td>
<td>SJ 77536 38818 to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SJ 77701 38840</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Description
Wide grassed verge bounded by mature hedgerow on N side of the A51, with a kerbside bus stop at Brookfields Farm. On the S side of the highway there is a paved footway inside a narrow verge from Brookfields to the Barbour clothing store. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area. Maintained by residents.

### Type of protection
Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

- Site allocations: None
- Planning permissions: None
- Extensive tract of land: No
- Local in character: Yes
- Close to the community it serves: Yes

Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))

B, W, O

Contribute to rural character. Provide safety for pedestrians on busy A road.

### Map

![Map](image)

### Photograph

![Photograph](image)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSM21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAM21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Name:** A51 Verges, from field access west of Maer Lodge to Maer Lodge/Maer War Memorial

**Description**
Wide grassed verges with trees and mature hedgerows. The verge is mown on the S side on the approach to Maer Lodge. On the N side there is a mown area to the immediate W of Maer War Memorial with several flowering trees. Provide informal footpaths connecting the rural community with wider pedestrian networks and with settlements. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area. Maintained by Maer Estate and Maer Parish Council.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Post code</th>
<th>NGR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ST5 5ED</td>
<td>SJ78603 38841 to SJ7861 38823</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Type of protection | Local Green Space |

**NPPF para. 77 criteria**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive tract of land</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))

B, W, O

Contribute to rural character. Provide safety for pedestrians on busy A road.

**Map**

**Photographs**

Page 359
### Designated reference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSM22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAM22</td>
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### Name: Maer War Memorial

### Location

<table>
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<th>Location</th>
<th>Post code</th>
<th>NGR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ST5 5ED</td>
<td>SJ 78961 38823</td>
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### Type of protection

Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

<table>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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</table>

### Demonstrably special to local community

- Beauty (B), Historic Significance (H), Recreational Value (R), Tranquillity (T), Wildlife (W), Other (O)

- **H**

  An important local historical record. A heritage structure. Contributes to the character of the local area. Important to local community and community life.

### Description

A roadside structure with stone benches at either side on an elevated platform on the N side of the A51, facing down Maer Lane. A broad flight of steps leads up to the memorial, with formal plantings on the slope either side of the steps. There is a brick-built bus shelter with tiled roof immediately to the east. An important heritage feature contributing to the character of this rural area. Maintained by Maer Parish Council.

### Map

![Map of Maer War Memorial]

### Photograph

![Photograph of Maer War Memorial]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAM23</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> Beech Tree Copse at Maerfield Gate Farm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post code</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGR</td>
<td>SJ 79334 38949</td>
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<td>Local in character</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))</strong></td>
<td>B, O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important feature in the local landscape.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

A small copse of mature Beech and Sycamore trees set within a fenced area of elevated land within a large area of grazing land. The trees are subject to a group Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and are prominently visible from the A51 and Maer Public Right of Way No. 1. They are a significant feature in the wider landscape of the Neighbourhood Area and provide a legible point for reference and navigation.
### A51 Verges, Maer Lodge/Maer War Memorial to Maerfield Gate/Woodside

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Wide grassed verges, with steep banks of a cutting with mature trees and other vegetation along part of the length. Immediately to the east of Maer Lodge and the War Memorial there are large daffodil plantings on both sides of the road. Provide informal footpaths connecting the rural community with wider pedestrian networks and with settlements. Provide a corridor for wildlife and contribute to green infrastructure. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area. Maintained by SCC Highways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>ST5 5ED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post code</td>
<td>SJ 78977 38843 to SJ 79321 39172</td>
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<td>B, W, O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribute to rural character. Provide safety for pedestrians on busy A road.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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#### Photographs

![Image 1](image1.jpg)
![Image 2](image2.jpg)
![Image 3](image3.jpg)
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<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
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<tr>
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</table>

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

- B, W, O

Important feature in the local landscape.

**Description**

A small mixed plantation of Pine and broadleaved trees within a fenced area of elevated ground in a large field adjacent to the A51 and Woodside. The trees are subject to a group Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and are prominently visible from the A51. They are a significant feature in the wider landscape of the Neighbourhood Area and provide a legible point for reference and navigation.

**Map**

![Map of Sandy Low Plantation](image)

**Photograph**

![Photograph of Sandy Low Plantation](image)
Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore
Neighbourhood Development Plan

Appendix 1 | Local Green Space designations: Maer and Aston Parish

<table>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>A51 Verge, Maerfield Gate/Woodside to Sandy Lane</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NGR: SJ 79321 39172 to SJ 79542 39239</td>
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<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
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</table>

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

B, O

Contributes to rural character. Provides safety for pedestrians on busy A road.

**Description**

Wide grassed verge on N side of the highway with mature hedgerow and trees. There are daffodils in the verge at Sandy Lane. There is a paved footway on the inside of the verge, providing pedestrian access from roadside bus stops in Woodside to the settlement of Hill Chorlton. The parish boundary between Maer and Chorlton parishes is halfway along this stretch, opposite the centreline of Maerfieldgate Cottages. An important feature contributing to the rural character of the area. Maintained by SCC Highways.

**Map**

![Map of A51 Verge](image1)

**Photographs**

![Photograph 1](image2)

![Photograph 2](image3)
3  Whitmore parish
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSW1</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAW1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> A53 Verge, M6 motorway to Butterton crossroads</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post code</td>
<td>STS 4ED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGR</td>
<td>SJ 82823 43457 to SJ 82677 43252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of protection</strong></td>
<td>Local Green Space</td>
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<td><strong>NPPF para. 77 criteria</strong></td>
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<td>Site allocations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
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<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))</strong></td>
<td>B, O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A ‘gateway’ into the Neighbourhood Area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td>Mown grassed verge on north side of the A53. There is a footway on the inside of the verge. The verge widens into a visibility splay at the junction with Lymes Road. There is a bus shelter on the inside of the verge. Provides protection to pedestrians and is an important feature contributing to the character of this rural area. Visibility splay and area around bus shelter maintained by local resident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Map</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Photograph</strong></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Photograph" /></td>
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### Local Green Space designations: Whitmore Parish

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LGSW2</td>
<td>Mown grassed verge and visibility splay on south side of the A53. There is a bus shelter on the inside of the verge. Maintained by local resident.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audit reference</th>
<th>GSAW2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>B, O</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A ‘gateway’ into the Neighbourhood Area</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

![Map of A53 Verge, M6 motorway to Butterton crossroads]

![Photograph of A53 Verge, M6 motorway to Butterton crossroads]
### Designated reference
LGSW3

### Audit reference
GSAW3

### Name:
Triangle at Shut Lane Head, Butterton

### Location
- **Post code:** ST5 4DU
- **NGR:** SJ 82531 41978

### Type of protection
Local Green Space

### Description
Un-kerbed grass triangle at the south end of Shut Lane Head, at junction with lane to Butterton village. There is a small oak tree in the centre. Contributes to the character of this rural area.

### Audit reference
GSAW3

### Name:
Triangle at Shut Lane Head, Butterton

### Location
- **Post code:** ST5 4DU
- **NGR:** SJ 82531 41978

### Type of protection
Local Green Space

### Description
Un-kerbed grass triangle at the south end of Shut Lane Head, at junction with lane to Butterton village. There is a small oak tree in the centre. Contributes to the character of this rural area.

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Site allocations</th>
<th>Planning permissions</th>
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<th>Local in character</th>
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<td>None</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

B, W

Contributes to the rural character of this area and to green infrastructure.

### Map

![Map of Triangle at Shut Lane Head, Butterton]

### Photograph

![Photograph of Triangle at Shut Lane Head, Butterton]
### Designated reference

LGSW4

### Audit reference

GSAW4

### Name:

A53 Wildflower Verge between Trentham Road roundabout and Whitmore village

### Location

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### Type of protection

Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

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**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

B, W

Contributes to green infrastructure.

### Description

Visibility splays on South side of the A53, sown annually with wildflowers. The field boundary has a mature hedgerow with Cherry trees (*Prunus avium*) planted at intervals. Provide visibility for road users on twisting road and have high visual amenity value. Verge and hedgerow serve as a wildlife corridor. In ownership of Whitmore Estate. Maintained by Whitmore Estate.

### Map

![Map of A53 Wildflower Verge between Trentham Road roundabout and Whitmore village](image)

### Photograph

![Photograph of A53 Wildflower Verge between Trentham Road roundabout and Whitmore village](image)
Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore  
Neighbourhood Development Plan  
Appendix 1 | Local Green Space designations: Whitmore Parish

**Designated reference** | LGSW5  
**Audit reference** | GSAW5  
**Name:** Triangle on Snape Hall Road  
**Location**  
| Post code | ST5 5HD  
| NGR | SJ 79678 40661  
**Type of protection** | Local Green Space  
**NPPF para. 77 criteria**  
| Site allocations | None  
| Planning permissions | None  
| Extensive tract of land | No  
| Local in character | Yes  
| Close to the community it serves | Yes  
| Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O)) | B  
| | Contributes to rural character.  

**Description**  
A kerbed, mown grassed triangle at the junction of Snape Hall Road and Common Lane. Contributes to the character of the area. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.

**Map**  

**Photograph**
Designated reference | LGSW6
---|---
Audit reference | GSAW6

**Name:** Verge on Snape Hall Road, Heath House to Snape Hall Farm

**Location**
- **Post code:** STS 5HS
- **NGR:** SJ 79823 40629 to SJ 79320 41293

**Type of protection:** Local Green Space

**NPPF para. 77 criteria**
- **Site allocations:** None
- **Planning permissions:** None
- **Extensive tract of land:** No
- **Local in character:** Yes
- **Close to the community it serves:** Yes

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**
- **B, R, T, W, O**

Well-being, an important local walking route. Contribute to green infrastructure.

**Description**
Unmown, wide grassed verge on west side of a single-track road. There is a mature hedgerow on the inside of the verge. Has high visual amenity value on a road that is an important local walking route. Verge and hedgerow serve as a wildlife corridor.

**Photographs**
- [Photo 1]
- [Photo 2]
### Designated reference
LGSW7

### Audit reference
GSAW7

**Name:** Verves on Snape Hall Road, Snape Hall Farm to Heath Road

<table>
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**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

B, R, T, W, O

Well-being, an important local walking route. Contribute to green infrastructure.

### Description
Unmown, grassed verges on both sides of a sunken single-track lane. On the approach to the junction with Heath Road the verges become high banks with wildflowers including bluebells and wood anemones and are shaded by mature trees, including a veteran oak. There are mature hedgerows on the inside of the verge. Have high visual amenity value on a road that is an important local walking route. Verves and hedgerow serve as wildlife corridors.

### Map
![Map of Snape Hall Road and Heath Road](image1)

### Photographs
![Photograph of Snape Hall Road verge](image2)

![Photograph of Snape Hall Road verge](image3)
### Designated reference
LGSW8

### Audit reference
GSAW8

### Name: Verges on Heath Road

#### Location

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NGR</td>
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#### Type of protection
Local Green Space

#### NPPF para. 77 criteria

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<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))

B, R, T, W, O

Well-being, an important local walking route. Contribute to green infrastructure.

#### Description

Unmown, wide grassed verge on a single-track road. On the inside of the verge there is either fencing or mature hedgerows. On the approach to the junction with Snape Hall Road the verges become high banks with wildflowers, including bluebells, and are shaded by mature trees. Has high visual amenity value on a road that is an important local walking route. Verge and hedgerows serve as a wildlife corridor. (Note: verges on domestic frontages are mown, and maintained by residents)

#### Photographs
### Designated reference
LGSW9

### Audit reference
GSAW9

#### Name: Woodland on Whitmore Heath

#### Location

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<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Type of protection
Local Green Space

#### NPPF para. 77 criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site allocations</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning permissions</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive tract of land</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))

B, R, T, W, O

Well-being, an important local walking route. Contribute to green infrastructure.

#### Description
An area of unmanaged scrub woodland in a former sand quarrying area, enclosed behind residential plots on Whitmore Heath and agricultural land. There are accesses on Snape Hall Road, Birch Tree Lane and Heath Rise, and informal paths for walking and cycling. An important recreation area for local residents. Believed to be in ownership of Whitmore Estate.

### Map

![Map of Woodland on Whitmore Heath](image)

### Photographs

![Photograph 1](image)

![Photograph 2](image)
### Designated reference
LGSW10

### Audit reference
GSAW10

### Name:
“Raddle Hill”

### Location
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post code</th>
<th>ST5 5HF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NGR</td>
<td>SJ 79848 40574</td>
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### Type of protection
Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>Extensive tract of land</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

B, R, T, W, O

An important visual amenity on the main route through the settlement. Well-being, a local area for recreation.

### Description
An area of managed, broadleaf (mainly Beech trees) woodland on elevated ground on the eastern approach to Baldwins Gate on the A53. Has informal access on Coneygreave Lane and informal paths used for walking and cycling. A rope swing is attached to a tree. Bounded by A53, Coneygreave Lane and farmland. Contributes to the character of Baldwins Gate village and has high visual amenity value due to its prominence in the main eastward view through settlement. Also prominent in the wider landscape of the NA. In ownership of Whitmore Estate. Maintained by Whitmore Estate.

### Map

![Map](image1)

### Photographs

![Photograph](image2)
### Whitmore Village Hall Playing Field

**Designated reference**: LGSW11  
**Audit reference**: GSAW11  
**Name**: Whitmore Village Hall Playing Field  
**Location**  
| Post code | ST5 5BU  
| NGR       | SJ 79846 40408  
|**Type of protection** | Local Green Space  

**NPFF para. 77 criteria**  
| Site allocations | None  
| Planning permissions | None  
| Extensive tract of land | No  
| Local in character | Yes  
| Close to the community it serves | Yes  

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**  
R, O  
Well-being. An important community asset.

**Description**  
Village playing field. The area has a mixture of hard and soft landscaping, with well-maintained and purpose-built facilities, including a 5-a-side football pitch with goals, outdoor gym, enclosed early years play area, young people’s play area and picnic tables with benches. The sloping nature of the site means that the football pitch is not so well used as it might be. Overlooked by dwellings on Appleton Drive. In ownership of Whitmore Parish Council. Managed and maintained by Whitmore Parish Council on behalf of The Recreation Ground, Whitmore, Charity no. 522783.

**Map**

![Map of Whitmore Village Hall Playing Field](image1)

**Photographs**

![Photo of Whitmore Village Hall Playing Field](image2)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAW12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> A53 Verge, Whitmore Village Hall to Appleton Drive, Whitmore</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Post code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NGR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of protection</td>
<td>Local Green Space</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NPPF para. 77 criteria</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site allocations</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
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<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B, O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides protection for pedestrians on busy A road.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributes to rural character.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

Mown grass verge with footway on the inside. The verge widens out into a visibility splay at the Appleton Drive junction and has several flower tubs and planting of daffodils. Provides protection for pedestrians from passing traffic on the A53 and visibility at junction for road users. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.
### Designated reference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSW13</th>
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</table>

### Audit reference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audit reference</th>
<th>GSAW13</th>
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</thead>
</table>

### Name: Verges, Appleton Drive, Whitmore

### Description

Mown grass verges on either side of the road, with flowering cherry trees planted on them at regular intervals. There are footways on the inside and gaps in the verges at crossings to domestic accesses. An important feature contributing to the character of this residential road in a rural settlement. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.

### Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Post code</th>
<th>NGR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ST5 5bt</td>
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### Type of protection

<table>
<thead>
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### NPPF para. 77 criteria

<table>
<thead>
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<td>Extensive tract of land</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

B, O

Contribute to rural character.

### Map

![Map](image1)

### Photograph

![Photograph](image2)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSW14</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAW14</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> A53 Verge at Sheet Anchor development site</td>
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<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NGR</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Type of protection</strong></td>
<td>Local Green Space</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NPPF para. 77 criteria</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site allocations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

B
Contributes to rural character.

**Description**
An unmown grassed area on the inside of the footway at the entrance to a development site. There is a community Christmas tree, provided by Whitmore Parish Council. In ownership of Mr Gavin Donlon. The area is currently not maintained.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSW15</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAW15</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> A53 Verge, Appleton Drive to bus shelter, Whitmore</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post code</td>
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<tr>
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<td>NPPF para. 77 criteria</td>
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<td>Site allocations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
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<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))</td>
<td>B, O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides protection for pedestrians on busy A road. Contributes to rural character.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**
Mown grass verge with footway on the inside. The verge widens out into a visibility splay at the Appleton Drive junction and has several flower tubs. Provides protection for pedestrians from passing traffic on the A53 and visibility at junction for road users. An important feature contributing to the character of this rural settlement. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.
### Designated reference
LGSW16

### Audit reference
GSAW16

### Name:
A53 Verge, railway bridge, Whitmore

### Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post code</th>
<th>ST5 5BU</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NGR</td>
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### Type of protection
Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site allocations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Extensive tract of land</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))
B
Contributes to rural character.

### Description
Mown grass verge on the inside of the footway. An important feature contributing to the character of this rural settlement. The community would benefit from the verge being moved to the outside of the footway to provide separation from the highway and protection to pedestrians. An important feature contributing to the character of this rural settlement. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.

### Map

![Map of the A53 Verge, railway bridge, Whitmore]

### Photograph

![Photograph of the A53 Verge, railway bridge, Whitmore]
### Designated reference
LGSW17

### Audit reference
GSAW17

### Name: Jubilee Gardens, Baldwins Gate

### Location
- **Post code**: ST5 5BY
- **NGR**: SJ 79646 40303

### Type of protection
Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria
- **Site allocations**: None
- **Planning permissions**: None
- **Extensive tract of land**: No
- **Local in character**: Yes
- **Close to the community it serves**: Yes
- **Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**: B, R, T, W, O

An important community asset. Incorporates PRoW Whitmore No, 7.

### Description
Informal landscaped and planted garden with a broad, accessible path (PRoW Whitmore No. 7) meandering through the site. Includes an area of mown grass, wooded area, rockery and seating. There is a board with a map 'Whitmore and District Parish Walks' at the entrance to the gardens. In ownership of Whitmore Parish Council. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.

### Map
![Jubilee Gardens, Baldwins Gate Map](image)

### Photographs
![Jubilee Gardens, Baldwins Gate Photograph 1](image)
![Jubilee Gardens, Baldwins Gate Photograph 2](image)
### Designated reference

LGSW18

### Audit reference

GSAW18

### Name:

Grassed area by BT telephone exchange, Fair-Green Road, Baldwins Gate

### Description

Site at the junction of Fair-Green Road and A53. A predominantly mown grassed area with a veteran Oak tree and large, mature Silver Birch. The site borders the Jubilee Gardens. An important feature contributing to the character of this rural settlement. In ownership of BT. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAW18</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> Grassed area by BT telephone exchange, Fair-Green Road, Baldwins Gate</td>
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<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
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<td>Post code</td>
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<td>Local in character</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B, O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An important visual amenity on the main route through the settlement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Map

[Map of the area](#)

### Photograph

[Photograph of the site](#)
### Designated reference
| LGSW19 |

### Audit reference
| GSAW19 |

### Name: Green Gap, Fair Green Road–Moss Cottages

### Location
| Post code | ST5 5DG |
| NGR       | SJ 79787 40034 |

### Type of protection
| Local Green Space |

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

| Site allocations | LW7 (part) |
| Planning permissions | Refused |
| Extensive tract of land | No |
| Local in character | Yes |
| Close to the community it serves | Yes |

### Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))

- B, T, O

Creates green gap between settlement and workers' cottages in Open Countryside. An important visual amenity.

### Description
A small, triangular field of pasture land that provides definition and visual separation between the Baldwins Gate village envelope and a small group of cottages in the Open Countryside. Site is bounded NE by school playing field and farmland, S by Open Countryside and dwellings, W by local right of way (see LGSW28). The site is visible from PRoW Whitmore No. 7, which forms part of an important local walking route.

### Map

### Photograph

---

Page 384
### Designated reference
LGSW20

### Audit reference
GSAW20

**Name:** A53 Verge, Fair-Green Road to Tollgate Avenue, Baldwins Gate

**Location**
- **Post code:** ST5 5DA
- **NGR:** SJ 79584 40311

**Type of protection**
- Local Green Space

**NPPF para. 77 criteria**
- Site allocations: None
- Planning permissions: None
- Extensive tract of land: No
- Local in character: Yes
- Close to the community it serves: Yes

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**
- B, O

**Description**
Mown grass verge with footway on the inside. There are gaps in the verge at crossings to domestic vehicle accesses. The verge widens out into a visibility splay at the Tollgate Avenue junction, where there are a mature cherry tree and a flower tub. Provides protection for pedestrians from passing traffic on the A53 and visibility at junction for road users. An important feature contributing to the character of this rural settlement. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.

**Photographs**
- Close to the community.
- Provides protection for pedestrians on busy A road.
- Contributes to rural character.
### Designated reference
LGSW21

### Audit reference
GSAW21

### Name:
A53 Verge, Tollgate Avenue, Baldwins Gate

### Location

<table>
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### Type of protection
Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

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<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))

- **B, O**

  Provides protection for pedestrians on busy A road. Contributes to rural character.

---

### Description

Mown grassed verge with footway on the inside on the west side of the Tollgate Avenue junction. The verge widens out into a visibility splay at the junction, where there are a mature cherry tree and a flower tub. Provides protection for pedestrians from passing traffic on the A53 and visibility at junction for road users. An important feature contributing to the character of this rural settlement. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.
<table>
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<th>Designated reference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAW22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> A53 Verge, The Poplars and Tollgate House</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td><strong>Post code</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>NGR</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Type of protection</strong></td>
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<td><strong>NPPF para. 77 criteria</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Close to the community it serves</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))</strong></td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contributes to rural character.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**
Mown grassed verge on the inside of the footway in front of The Poplars and Tollgate House. There is a flowering Cherry tree (Prunus nigra) growing in the verge. An important feature contributing to the character of this rural settlement. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.

**Photographs**

![Map of Whitmore Parish with the A53 Verge highlighted.]()
### Local Green Space designations: Whitmore Parish

#### Designated reference
LGSW23

#### Audit reference
GSAW23

**Name:** Roundabout at Primary School, Tollgate Avenue, Baldwins Gate

**Location**
- **Post code:** ST5 5DF
- **NGR:** SJ 79580 40223

**Type of protection**
Local Green Space

**NPPF para. 77 criteria**
- **Site allocations:** None
- **Planning permissions:** None
- **Extensive tract of land:** No
- **Local in character:** Yes
- **Close to the community it serves:** Yes

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

- **B, O**

An important visual amenity outside a significant location in the settlement.

**Description**
Kerbed mown grassed roundabout in front of the primary school. There are a mature Norway Maple tree in the centre, and a flower tub. Used as a play area by the children after school. An important feature contributing to the character of this part of the village. Part of the grounds of Baldwins Gate primary school. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.

**Map**

**Photograph**
### Designated reference
LGSW24

### Audit reference
GSAW24

### Name:
Verge opposite Primary School, Tollgate Avenue, Baldwins Gate

### Location
- **Post code**: ST5 5DF
- **NGR**: SJ 79571 40208

### Type of protection
Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria
- **Site allocations**: None
- **Planning permissions**: None
- **Extensive tract of land**: No
- **Local in character**: Yes
- **Close to the community it serves**: Yes

### Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))
- **B**: Contributes to rural character.

---

**Description**

Triangular mown grassed verge with white posts at a bend in Tollgate Avenue, opposite the primary school. An important feature contributing to the character of this part of the village. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.

---

**Map**

![Map of Verge opposite Primary School, Tollgate Avenue, Baldwins Gate]

---

**Photograph**

![Photograph of Verge opposite Primary School, Tollgate Avenue, Baldwins Gate]
## Designated reference

| Audit reference | LGSW25 |

## Description

Playing field to the rear (E side) of the school buildings. This is the only fit-for-purpose sports pitch in the village and the Neighbourhood Area, being level and well maintained. It has high amenity value to the school and the wider community, providing a sports facility and forming part of the ‘green’ separation between the village envelope and the Open Countryside.

## Name

Baldwins Gate Primary School, Playing Field

## Location

| Post code | ST5 5DG |
| NGR      | SJ 79741 40139 |

## Type of protection

Local Green Space

## NPFF para. 77 criteria

| Site allocations | None |
| Planning permissions | None |
| Extensive tract of land | No |
| Local in character | Yes |
| Close to the community it serves | Yes |

Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))

R, O

Contributes to green gap between settlement and workers’ cottages in Open Countryside.

## Map

![Map of Baldwins Gate Primary School, Playing Field](image)

## Photograph

![Photograph of Baldwins Gate Primary School, Playing Field](image)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSW26</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAW26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name</strong>: Green Space, Meadow Way and Moss Lane, Baldwins Gate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Post code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NGR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of protection</td>
<td>Local Green Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPPF para. 77 criteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site allocations</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning permissions</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive tract of land</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))</td>
<td>B, O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides screening between dwellings. An important visual amenity. Contributes to rural character.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

A elongated triangular area of mown grass at the junction of Meadow Way and Moss Lane and along back of dwellings on Field Close. Informal mown grassed area with irregularly planted mature trees, including large a weeping willow and cypress trees. Provides screening between dwellings on Field Close and Dale Close and has important visual amenity, contributing to the character of Meadowfields estate. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.

**Map**

![Map Image]

**Photograph**

![Photograph Image]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSW27</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAW27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> Green Space, Moss Lane and Field Close, Baldwins Gate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td>Post code: ST5 5DS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NGR: SJ 79460 40086</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Type of protection</strong></td>
<td>Local Green Space</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NPPF para. 77 criteria</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site allocations</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning permissions</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extensive tract of land</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B, W, O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provides screening between dwellings. An important visual amenity. Contributes to rural character. A local pedestrian route.

**Map**

![Map of Green Space](image)

**Photographs**

![Photograph of Green Space](image)

A small wooded area with mature trees and high hedgerow between Moss Lane and the cul-de-sac of Field Close. An informal path between the trees connects the two roads. The hedgerow is partly of beech trees and partly a former field boundary of hawthorn trees and is trimmed at the eastern end where it forms part of a domestic garden boundary. Provides a green barrier and visual separation and screening between dwellings on Moss Lane and Field Close, and enclosure at the end of Field Close.
### Local Green Space designations: Whitmore Parish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSW28</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAW28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Name:** Local Right of Way, Moss Lane to Meadow Way, Baldwins Gate

**Location**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post code</th>
<th>ST5 5DS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NGR</td>
<td>SJ 79624 40036 to SJ 79651 40083</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Type of protection**

- Local Green Space

**NPPF para. 77 criteria**

- Site allocations: None
- Planning permissions: None
- Extensive tract of land: No
- Local in character: Yes
- Close to the community it serves: Yes

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

- H, O

An important local pedestrian route. Contributes to rural character.

**Map**

![Map of Local Right of Way, Moss Lane to Meadow Way, Baldwins Gate](image1)

**Description**

A 2m wide strip of land at the back of Pasture Close, fenced off at the W end of a small field of pasture land with concrete posts and barbed wire (see GSAW19). A local path of at least 100 years’ standing, used daily by residents of Baldwins Gate and Chorlton parish. Maintained by volunteers.

**Photograph**

![Photograph of Local Right of Way, Moss Lane to Meadow Way, Baldwins Gate](image2)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSW29</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAW29</td>
<td>Triangular-shaped mown grass verges/visibility splays on either side of the junction, with footways on the outside and inside and flower tubs. Provide protection for pedestrians from passing traffic and visibility at junction for road users. An important feature contributing to the character of this rural settlement. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name: A53 Verges, Gateway Avenue junction, Baldwins Gate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post code</td>
<td>ST5 5DD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGR</td>
<td>SJ 79456 40240</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Type of protection</td>
<td>Local Green Space</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPPF para. 77 criteria</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site allocations</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning permissions</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive tract of land</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))</td>
<td>B, O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide protection for pedestrians on busy A road. Contribute to rural character.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Map

Photographs

![Map Image]

![Photograph Image]
### Local Green Space Designations: Whitmore Parish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LGSW30</td>
<td>Triangular-shaped mown grass verge/visibility splay on western side of the junction, with footway inside, small planting of daffodils and a flower tub. Provides protection for pedestrians from passing traffic and visibility at junction for road users. An important feature contributing to the character of this rural settlement. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audit reference</th>
<th>Name: A53 Verge, Meadow Way junction, Baldwins Gate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GSAW30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Post code</th>
<th>NGR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ST5 5DA</td>
<td>SJ 79407 40195</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of protection</th>
<th>Local Green Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NPPF para. 77 criteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site allocations</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning permissions</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive tract of land</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))

B, O

Provides protection for pedestrians on busy A road. Contributes to rural character.
Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore
Neighbourhood Development Plan

Appendix 1 | Local Green Space designations: Whitmore Parish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSW31</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAW31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> A53 Verge, Meadow Way to Lodore House, Baldwins Gate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post code</strong></td>
<td>STS 5DA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NGR</strong></td>
<td>SJ 79400 40198 to SJ 79308 40102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of protection</strong></td>
<td>Local Green Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NPPF para. 77 criteria</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Site allocations</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Planning permissions</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extensive tract of land</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local in character</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Close to the community it serves</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))</strong></td>
<td>B, O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Provides protection for pedestrians on busy A road. Contributes to rural character.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**
Mown grass verge with white posts on the outside and footway on the inside. There are gaps in the verge at crossings to domestic vehicle accesses. Provides protection for pedestrians from passing traffic on the A53 and visibility for road users on a bend in the road. An important feature contributing to the character of this rural settlement. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.

**Photographs**

![Image of A53 Verge, Meadow Way to Lodore House, Baldwins Gate]
### Verves, Sandyfields estate, Baldwins Gate

**Designated reference**: LGSW32  
**Audit reference**: GSAW32  
**Description**: Wide, unkerbed verges of mown grass on estate roads. Verges come up to domestic boundaries and there are no footways on the inside or outside. There are gaps in the verges at domestic accesses. An important feature contributing to the character of this estate with large gardens and mature plantings on frontages. Private estate with unadopted roads. Maintained by residents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSW32</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAW32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name</strong>: Verves, Sandyfields estate, Baldwins Gate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong>: Post code</td>
<td>ST5 5DW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NGR</strong>: SJ 79291 40119 to SJ 79302 40292</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of protection</strong>: Local Green Space</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NPPF para. 77 criteria</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Site allocations</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning permissions</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive tract of land</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**  
B  
Contribute to rural character.

**Map**  
![Map of Sandyfields estate and Baldwins Gate]

**Photographs**  
![Photograph of Sandyfields estate and Baldwins Gate verges]

![Photograph of Sandyfields estate and Baldwins Gate verges]
### Designated reference
- **LG SW33**

### Audit reference
- **GSAW33**

### Name: “Chapel Green”, Baldwins Gate

### Location
- **Post code**: ST5 5DN
- **NGR**: SJ 79298 40108

### Type of protection
- Local Green Space

### Description
A predominantly mown grassed area at the side of the A53, with formal planters, a community Christmas tree and a large silver birch tree. Includes paved paths and seating, a bus shelter and a dog waste bin belonging to Whitmore Parish Council. There is a gas station at the western end. There is a large planting of daffodils in front of the gas station, and another planting near the bus shelter. This is an important visual amenity, providing a ‘gateway’ area at the western end of the village, and contributing to the character of this rural settlement. In ownership of Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, leased for no rent to Whitmore Parish Council and developed and maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NPFF para. 77 criteria</th>
<th>Site allocations</th>
<th>Planning permissions</th>
<th>Extensive tract of land</th>
<th>Local in character</th>
<th>Close to the community it serves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))</strong></td>
<td><strong>B, O</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides ‘gateway’ feature at western end of village. Contributes to rural character.</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Map
![Map of Chapel Green](image)

### Photograph
![Photograph of Chapel Green](image)
### Designated reference
LGSW34

### Audit reference
GSAW38

### Name:
Verges at junction Lakeside Close and A53, Baldwins Gate

### Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of protection</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local Green Space</td>
<td>Two mown grass verges on either side of the junction, with footways on the outside and flower tubs. An important feature contributing to the character of this rural settlement. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site allocations</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning permissions</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive tract of land</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))

B
Contribute to rural character.
**Designated reference**: LGSW35

**Audit reference**: GSAW39

**Name**: Verge at Lakeside Close, Baldwins Gate

**Location**
- **Post code**: ST5 5lh
- **NGR**: SJ 79295 39992 to SJ 79307 39985

**Type of protection**: Local Green Space

**NPPF para. 77 criteria**
- **Site allocations**: None
- **Planning permissions**: None
- **Extensive tract of land**: No
- **Local in character**: Yes
- **Close to the community it serves**: Yes

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**: B

Contributes to rural character.

**Description**


**Map**

![Map of Whitmore Parish](image1)

**Photograph**

![Photograph of Verge at Lakeside Close](image2)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSW36</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAW40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> Verges at Lakeside Close, Baldwins Gate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Location**         | Post code: ST5 5LH  
NGR: SJ 79335 39963 to SJ 79362 39943 |
| **Type of protection** | Local Green Space |
| **NPPF para. 77 criteria** |  
Site allocations: None  
Planning permissions: None  
Extensive tract of land: No  
Local in character: Yes  
Close to the community it serves: Yes  
Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))  
B: Contribute to rural character. |
| **Description** | Two mown grass verges on the outside of the footway on either side of the road between the junction with Watering Close and the junction with Heronpool Drive. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council |

**Map**

![Map Image]

**Photograph**

![Photograph Image]
### Designated Reference

**Designated reference:** LGSW37

**Audit reference:** GSAW41

### Name

**Name:** Verge at Heronpool Drive, Baldwins Gate

### Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>Audit reference</th>
<th>Name: Verge at Heronpool Drive, Baldwins Gate</th>
<th>Location Post code</th>
<th>Location NGR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mown grass verge with flower beds on the outside of the footway outside Nos 11 and 15 Heronpool Drive. There are gaps in the verge at crossings to domestic accesses. Grass maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.</td>
<td>LGSW37</td>
<td>GSAW41</td>
<td>Verge at Heronpool Drive, Baldwins Gate</td>
<td>ST5 5LW</td>
<td>SJ 79461 40011 to SJ 79421 39980</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Type of protection

**Type of protection:** Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site allocations</th>
<th>Planning permissions</th>
<th>Extensive tract of land</th>
<th>Local in character</th>
<th>Close to the community it serves</th>
<th>Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>B: Contribute to rural character.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Map

![Map of Whitmore Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan](image1)

### Photographs

![Photograph of Whitmore Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan](image2)
### Designated reference
LGSW38

### Audit reference
GSAW42

### Name:
Verge at Heronpool Drive, Baldwins Gate

### Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post code</th>
<th>STS 5LW</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NGR</td>
<td>SJ 79474 40022 to SJ 79468 40017</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Type of protection
Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site allocations</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

B

**Contributes to rural character**

### Map

![Map of Verge at Heronpool Drive, Baldwins Gate](image)

### Description
Mown grass verge on the outside of the footway outside No. 2 Teal Close. Maintained by Whitmore Parish Council.

### Photograph

![Photograph of Verge at Heronpool Drive, Baldwins Gate](image)
## Designated reference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audit reference</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LGSW39</td>
<td>An open space set within a residential development at the western end of the village, for the immediate benefit of residents of the Lakeside Estate. Consists of well-maintained grassed areas with a few trees, a small lake, a watercourse and an informal wooded area. The lake and wooded area are maintained as a nature reserve. A gravel bound path meanders past the lake and provides access to a Public Right of Way (PRoW), Chapel and Hill Chorlton No. 1, in the Open Countryside. Has high amenity and visual value for the residents of the development and contributes to the green spaces in the village. While it is not a public open space, and the gravel path is not a PRoW and is closed on one day each year, both are an important green space element linking the settlement of Baldwins Gate to the Open Countryside, as the path provides a link from the adopted highway network to the PRoW and the Open Countryside. Both the open space and pathway are owned and maintained by the Baldwins Gate Management Company which is owned by the residents who control the maintenance and care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSAW34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Audit reference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name: Lakeside Estate, Baldwins Gate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPPF para. 77 criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site allocations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning permissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive tract of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributes to rural character. Provides an important access route between the settlement and the Open Countryside.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Map

![Map of the designated green space](image1)

### Photographs

![Photograph 1](image2)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSW40</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAW35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong></td>
<td>Poplar Trees at Swallow Hill, Camp Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td>Post code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NGR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of protection</strong></td>
<td>Local Green Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NPPF para. 77 criteria</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site allocations</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning permissions</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive tract of land</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

- B, O

An important feature in the local landscape.

**Description**

A row of mature Poplar trees on a high ridge to the NW of Baldwins Gate and overlooking the valley. The trees are prominently visible from many points to the S and SE, up to 7.5km distance. They contribute significantly to the wider landscape of the Neighbourhood Area and beyond, and provide a legible point for reference and navigation within landscape.

**Map**

![Map of Poplar Trees at Swallow Hill, Camp Hill](image1)

**Photograph**

![Photograph of Poplar Trees at Swallow Hill, Camp Hill](image2)
### Designated reference
LGSW41

### Audit reference
GSAW36

**Name:** Dismantled railway line, Manor Road, Baldwins Gate to Aston

**Location**
- **Post code:** CW3 9PT
- **NGR:** SJ 77613 42216 to SJ 76584 42195

**Type of protection:** Local Green Space

### NPPF para. 77 criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site allocations</th>
<th>Planning permissions</th>
<th>Extensive tract of land</th>
<th>Local in character</th>
<th>Close to the community it serves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))**

- W, T

Contributes to green infrastructure.

### Description
Described in the Newcastle-under-Lyme Green Infrastructure Strategy (2017) as a dismantled railway line which runs with gaps from the centre of Newcastle to the River Lea and beyond. It forms part of the wider Green Space linkages between the NA and other areas. Within the NA it is bounded on both sides by mature, tall hedgerows and runs westwards from Manor Road and merges into a track north of Aston village, from where it connects to the rural road network. If brought into formal use, e.g. by designation as a BOAT, it could be a significant asset within the NA and to wider communities.

### Map

![Map of Local Green Space]

### Photograph

![Photograph of Local Green Space]
### Local Green Space designations: Whitmore Parish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated reference</th>
<th>LGSW42</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit reference</td>
<td>GSAW37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> Whitmore Cricket Ground</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post code</td>
<td>ST5 5JE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGR</td>
<td>SJ 80851 40651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of protection</strong></td>
<td>Local Green Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NPPF para. 77 criteria</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site allocations</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning permissions</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive tract of land</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local in character</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to the community it serves</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrably special to local community (e.g. beauty (B), historic significance (H), recreational value (R), tranquillity (T), wildlife (W), other (O))</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>An important community asset.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

Village cricket ground on the SW side of Whitmore village, with paved driveway access from Bent Lane, paved parking area and pavilion. The boundary on the E side is a mature high hedgerow with trees. Other boundaries are post-and-rail fences with mature trees growing singly and in groups. An important community asset.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photographs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Appendix 2

Conclusions from AECOM Housing Needs Assessment
(June 2016)

The full Housing Needs Assessment report is accessible in the Evidence base.
4 Conclusions

Overview

1. This neighbourhood plan housing needs advice has interrogated a wide range of data sources, which, taken together, can inform key trends and messages relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan’s housing policies.

2. In this first section of our conclusions we make recommendations on the overall quantum of housing growth required.

3. In the second section, we assess, based on the data uncovered, indications of the components and characteristics of future housing based on the data analysed.

4. In line with recommended best practice, our preferred methodology is to present the projections our analysis has produced as a starting point, and then highlight the factors\(^{10}\) that the Parish Councils might wish to take into consideration as they determine the final housing policy text, bearing in mind the requirement to be in general conformity with the strategic housing policies of NuL.

Quantity of Housing Needed

5. To recap, we have identified five separate projections of dwelling numbers for the NP area between 2013 and 2033 based on:

   - A figure derived from the Adopted 2009 JCSS for NuL and Stoke-on-Trent (which gives a total of 0 dwellings, and 0 per year);

   - A ‘proportionate share’ derivation from the 2015 SHMA, OAN lower range figure of 1,177 dwellings per annum (367 per annum for NuL (the demographically adjusted need), which gives a total of 148 dwellings (rounded to the nearest whole number), or 7.4 dwellings per annum;

   - A ‘proportionate share’ derivation from the 2015 SHMA, OAN higher range figure of 1,505 dwellings per annum (the economic growth adjusted level of need), which would give a requirement of 197 dwellings (rounded to the nearest whole number) or 9.8 dwellings per annum

   - A projection forward of net dwelling completion rates 2001-2011, (which gives a projection of 80 dwellings, or 4 dwellings per annum); and

   - A projection forward of net dwelling completion rates 2011-2015 (which gives a projection of 31 dwellings, or 1.56 dwellings per annum).

6. These dwelling number projections are illustrated in Figure 11 below.

\(^{10}\) These factors are also referred to as ‘indicators’ in the PPG.
Figure 11: Dwelling projections for the Chapel Hill and Chorlton, Maer and Aston and Whitmore Parishes NP Area 2013-2033

Source: NuLBC and Stoke City Council Adopted Joint Core Strategy (2009), SHMA for NuLBC and Stoke City Council (2015), information from NuLBC, AECOM calculations

7. We have summarised the findings of the data gathered in Chapter 3 above in Table 20 below. The source for each factor with particular relevance to the neighbourhood is shown, together with AECOM’s assessment of whether that factor is more likely to increase (↑), decrease (↓) or have no impact on (→) the NP area’s future housing need. Following PPG guidance, the factors relate both to housing price and housing quantity.

8. We have applied our professional judgement on the scales of increase and decrease associated with each factor on a scale from one to three, where one arrow indicates ‘some impact’, two arrows ‘stronger impact’ and three arrows indicates an even stronger impact. Factors are in alphabetical but no other order.

9. Note that factors have the potential to contradict one another, due to data being gathered at different times and across differing geographies. The Parish Councils are invited to use their judgement in resolving any conflicts, but we would advise that the more local and more recent data should generally have priority over data gathered at a larger spatial scale or older data.

10. However, our general approach reflects PPG advice to adjust the housing quantity suggested by household projections to reflect appropriate market signals, as well as other market indicators of the balance between the demand for and supply of dwellings, such as house prices and past build-out rate.

11. The PPG also advises that market signals are affected by a number of factors, and plan makers should not attempt to estimate the precise impact of an increase in housing supply. Rather they should increase planned supply by an amount that, on reasonable assumptions
and consistent with principles of sustainable development, could be expected to improve affordability, and monitor the response of the market over the plan period.

12. As such, Table 20 should be used as a basis for qualitative judgement rather than quantitative calculation. It is designed to form the starting point for steering group decisions on housing policy rather than to provide definitive answers. Again, this reflects the PPG approach—i.e., it states that when considering future need for different types of housing, planners have the option to consider whether they plan to attract an age profile that differs from the present situation. They should look at the household types, tenure and size in the current stock and in recent supply, and assess whether continuation of these trends would meet future needs.

13. The PPG also states that appropriate comparisons of indicators (i.e., factors) should be made and that trends uncovered may necessitate adjustment to planned housing numbers compared to ones based solely on household projections. Where upward adjustment is considered necessary, it should be at a reasonable level and not negatively affect strategic conformity with the emerging Local Plan.

Table 20: Summary of factors specific to Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, Whitmore NP with a potential impact on neighbourhood plan housing quantity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Source(s) (detailed in Chapter 3)</th>
<th>Possible impact on future housing need</th>
<th>Rationale for judgement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age structure of population</td>
<td>SHMA, Census, Follwells</td>
<td></td>
<td>SHMA notes the significant growth in the older population in NuL between the two censuses, which is projected to continue into the future, and a growing need for specialist older persons accommodation (which is likely to be provided in more urban locations). Census 2011 and SHMA also shows the relatively older population in the Rural South sub-area and NP area, and trends toward this increasing, with growth of 27.8% in those aged 65-85 in the NP area between 2001-2011, a figure which far exceeds growth at the borough level over the same period (6.3%). Conversely, there has been a significant loss of 25-44 year olds between the censuses (although not quite as pronounced as the increase in the 65-85 age group), suggesting that this age group either cannot afford to live in the area, or want to be closer to amenities and facilities within town and city centres. There has also been a very minor drop in the number of children in the NP area, this is less than</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Page 412
### Economic Performance and Potential

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Source(s)</th>
<th>Possible impact on future housing need</th>
<th>Rationale for judgement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SHMA, Census, Rural Community Profiles, Follwells</td>
<td></td>
<td>The NP area appears attractive to commuters (Census) who travel relatively long distances to employment (an average of 20.9km) and is well positioned for access to the motorways and international destinations (via four international airports), despite Follwell’s assessment that demand is dropping and likely to continue to drop due to the cost of fuel. There are very low levels of unemployment in the NP area, and very few people claiming employment related benefits. Entrepreneurial activity is high, shown by the relatively high proportion of self-employed. Economic projections suggest a more positive economic outlook for the economic market area, which has the potential to drive demand in future. NuL has experienced positive annual job growth in recent years, driven by growth in service sectors, transport and storage, which has mitigated job losses in the manufacturing sector. NuL relies on people moving into the area to maintain its workforce. The SHMA indicates the need to attract higher-skilled employees by providing high value housing for higher income earners. The NP area is one of the few areas (alongside the popular aspirational area of Westlands, which has a more urban location) that provides such housing and is already home to proportionately larger numbers of people in managerial roles. For these reasons, we have given one up arrow, as there still appears to be demand for executive style housing, although this may not be as strong as in neighbouring areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor</td>
<td>Source(s) (detailed in Chapter 3)</td>
<td>Possible impact on future housing need</td>
<td>Rationale for judgement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House prices relative to surroundings</td>
<td>SHMA, Rightmove, Follwells,</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>The SHMA, Rightmove data and observations from Follwells highlight the relatively higher house prices in the NP area, although there are other desirable and more accessible areas of high value housing in the nearby Westlands area. Although there remains relatively high demand for housing in this area, Follwells suggests that this demand might be tailing off due to living costs and may drop in the future, including as a result of actual or perceived blight related to the construction of High Speed 2 (HS2). For this reason, we have given this factor one up arrow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International and UK in-migration rate</td>
<td>SHMA, Census</td>
<td>↔</td>
<td>In-migration from other parts of the UK is a key driver of population growth in NuL, rather than the balance between births and deaths. There are proportionately less children and young people in the NP area than in the borough or nationally, and there has been a loss of children between the censuses, suggesting in-migration is likely to be the biggest contributor to population growth in the NP area. Although population has increased at a faster rate than at the local authority level, the rate of household growth is slower than at the local authority level. The rate of international in-migration into the NP area is very low, and the majority of immigrants have lived in the NP area longer than ten years. Overall, there appears to be no impact from this factor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of new supply in local housing market</td>
<td>Dwellings completion data from NuL, Census, Follwells, JCSS</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>Census showed stronger delivery relative to the rest of the borough (2001-2011) and the Housing Market Area (HMA), although completions data from 2001-2015 shows there has been little growth since then. There are currently no new-build properties on the market in the NP area, with limited supply in the pipeline at Baldwins Gate. Follwells was of the opinion that demand is tailing off in the NP area, and would continue to do so over the next 15 year period. Construction of HS2 is also likely to constrain demand. Supply is constrained by the policy of restraint in the JCSS due to the open countryside and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor</strong></td>
<td><strong>Source(s) (detailed in Chapter 3)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Possible impact on future housing need</strong></td>
<td><strong>Rationale for judgement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local housing waiting list/need for affordable housing</strong></td>
<td>SHMA, NuL housing waiting list, JCSS, dwellings completion data, Census, Rural Community Profiles</td>
<td>![down arrows]</td>
<td>There are only four households currently on the local affordable housing waiting list, suggesting demand for affordable housing is relatively low in the NP area. This is reflected in the low numbers of people claiming income benefits, although there are pockets of multiple deprivation in Chapel Hill and Chorlton where there is also a high percentage of pension credit claimants. The SHMA and NuL officers indicated that affordable housing needs in rural areas may be undercounted as lack of availability of stock discourages people from registering, more amenities and facilities are available in urban areas, and subsequently nearby urban areas accommodate these needs. The JCSS indicates need for affordable housing in rural areas is high, but does not seek to provide this in very rural areas where amenities are limited, such as in the majority of the NP area. Census data shows a much lower than average rate of shared occupation or social housing in the NP area. Very little if no social housing has been delivered locally in recent times but delivery of market homes has also been very low. It is thought that even a future increase in need should be met by the JCSS existing target of 25% affordable housing on schemes delivering 5 or more units.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14. Table 20 contains in total 4 up arrows and 6 down arrows, indicating that the local market factors acting to increase demand for new housing over the local authority average are outweighed by those acting to reduce demand for housing.

15. It is notable from Figure 11 that the Chapel Hill and Chorlton, Maer and Aston and Whitmore Parishes future dwelling projections for the plan period of 2013-2033 comprise a relatively wide range, with a minimum of zero and maximum of 197. Despite a policy of zero-growth in the JCSS, the reality of housing delivery in the NP area has been very different, with the projection derived from a continuation of the dwelling completion rate between 2001-2011 providing a projection of 80 for the plan period, and that for the more recent 2011-2015 dwelling completion rate, a projection of 31. As such, it is difficult to attach significant weight to the JCSS intention of zero dwellings growth as a demand-side target (more suitable though it may be once supply-side factors are taken into account) - but clearly, demand in the area is significantly higher than zero.

16. Likely need looking forward may be even higher, if the projections derived from the OAN in the SHMA are taken into account. The latest SHMA suggests that the objectively assessed need for housing in the HMA is significantly higher than what is currently planned for in the JCSS, and delivery of housing at the lowest figure in the OAN range would require a 27% uplift in delivery across the HMA as a whole. However, this figure represents unconstrained need/demand and does not take into account supply side constraints such as availability of land, viability (a key issue in many parts of the HMA, although not in the NP area), environmental constraints; or policy constraints such as green belt and the presumption against development in the open countryside (which do apply in the NP area).

17. Given that all of the projections other than that derived from the adopted JCSS suggest a higher target than zero, it would seem prudent for the NP group to share these findings with NuLBC; to seek their guidance on what would be an appropriate figure or range to take forward into the NP once supply-side as well as demand-side factors are taken into account.

18. Whilst the NP is required to be in strategic conformity with the adopted development plan, the evidence we have gathered suggests that the need for housing in the NP area over the plan period is likely to be more than zero. This possibility is acknowledged in the Housing Technical paper, prepared to support the strategic issues consultation on the emerging JLP

---

Factor | Source(s) (detailed in Chapter 3) | Possible impact on future housing need | Rationale for judgement
--- | --- | --- | ---
Overcrowding, including concealed families | Census, Waiting List data | ↓↓↓ | Household size is similar to the local authority, but under-crowding rather than over-crowding is increasing as a result of the ageing population. There were only eight concealed families at the time of the 2011 census, and housing waiting list data suggests there is just one concealed household currently. 

---

11 A concealed household is one that wants to form its own household, but is unable to afford to do so, and is thus likely to be living with friends or family. A concealed household could be any size, including just one person. A concealed family is a concealed household of two or more people living together who would like to form their own household.
earlier this year. Therefore it is our strong recommendation that the group seek guidance and agreement with the Local Planning Authority on the appropriate way forward.

19. It is our evidenced conclusion that, taking into account that the factors acting constraining demand and the factors increasing demand (as set out in Table 20 above) tip in favour of lowering demand in Chapel Hill and Chorlton, Maer and Aston and Whitmore Parishes that the level of unconstrained need will lie somewhere below the midpoint of the projections, with an appropriate range considered to be between 50 and 100 dwellings for the period 2013-2033.

20. Whilst this range appears significantly higher than zero, the approach of providing a target of zero is reflective of the supply-side constraints. As this analysis illustrates, for settlements within the Green Belt, the result is a significant disparity between supply and demand. Therefore, we strongly recommend that the NP Group undertake further work to identify supply side constraints, including availability of suitable sites, to inform further development of housing policy in the NP.

21. It should also be noted that any net new dwellings completed or with outstanding permission in the NP area since the start of the plan period (taken as 1st January 2013) would count towards any future identified target, meaning the outstanding number of dwellings required decreases accordingly.
Characteristics of Housing Needed

22. Table 21 summarises the data we have gathered with a potential impact on the characteristics of the housing needed in the neighbourhood. Factors are in alphabetical but no other order.

Table 21: Summary of local factors specific to Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, Whitmore Parishes with a potential impact on housing characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Source(s) (see Chapter 3)</th>
<th>Data uncovered</th>
<th>Conclusion for neighbourhood plan housing policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tenure of Housing</td>
<td>SHMA, JCSS, Census, Zoopla, NuL Housing Waiting List data</td>
<td>There are very low levels of affordable housing in the NP area at present. Local (market) housing is relatively expensive compared to the rest of the borough, and the SHMA data indicates that only 45.3% of households in the wider Rural South sub-area could afford to purchase an entry level 2-bedroom home, but 65.6% could afford to privately rent a 2-bedroom dwelling; meaning the (limited but growing) private rental market in the sub-area plays a role for those not needing to be in social housing. This reflects trends in growth in private renting in the NP area (although this has not been as high as growth rates experienced at the borough or national level, nevertheless, there is a slightly higher percentage of people privately renting in the NP area than in the borough) (although overall numbers are low).</td>
<td>Despite the low level of affordable housing need, we recommend the Parishes work closely with NuLBC to ensure local affordable need is met. The majority of homes in the affordable tenure should be, on the basis of the current waiting list, smaller units (mainly 1-2 bedrooms). Otherwise, it can be assumed that most new homes provided will be for owner-occupation or for private rental. Evidence does not support an affordable housing target over and above the existing JCSS target.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor</td>
<td>Source(s) (see Chapter 3)</td>
<td>Data uncovered</td>
<td>Conclusion for neighbourhood plan housing policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Demand/need for smaller dwellings | SHMA; Follwells, Census, Zoopla, Rural Community Profiles | The strongest growth in dwelling provision has been in larger properties (6-8 rooms), with a significant drop in smaller dwellings. Demand for smaller dwellings/starter homes is limited by 15-29 year olds moving away, a trend in the census data which Follwells sees continuing, due to the limited amenities available in the area. He also notes that smaller dwellings such as bungalows are in lesser demand in the NP area, again due to the limited amenities available, and the need to drive to access such facilities. However the relatively high levels of fuel poverty in some parts of the NP area suggest some of the older, larger housing may not be fit for purpose for older occupants, and thus there may be some demand in the future from older people looking to downsize, alongside high house prices, potential buy-to-let investors and so on; stimulating future demand for smaller detached properties, whether these be lifetime homes or bungalows. Census data shows that single person households | Support, encourage and/or require the development of a limited proportion of smaller (1-2 bedroom) dwellings to meet the needs of older (but still independent) people looking to downsize but remain in a rural location; younger families (if the aspirations of the NP are to attract and retain young families); and those in local agricultural/forestry jobs.  
Policy could, in combination with evidence from the supply side, indicate locations where smaller housing would be suitable.  
Smaller dwellings most likely to be in demand would be houses rather than flats, and could be detached or semi-detached, depending on the local context.  
Lifetime homes should be encouraged. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Source(s) (see Chapter 3)</th>
<th>Data uncovered</th>
<th>Conclusion for neighbourhood plan housing policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>make up a much smaller percentage of all households in the NP area than nationally or in the borough, and that there has been just a very small increase in single person households between the censuses, again, much lower than the rates of growth at the borough or national level. The decrease in families with small children (who are likely to require smaller housing) between the censuses has been significant. Both these factors suggest there is less demand for smaller dwellings, or, alternatively, that such households are being priced out of the NP area.</td>
<td>Source(s) (see Chapter 3)</td>
<td>Conclusion for neighbourhood plan housing policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor</td>
<td>Source(s) (see Chapter 3)</td>
<td>Data uncovered</td>
<td>Conclusion for neighbourhood plan housing policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic change</td>
<td>SHMA; Census</td>
<td>The population in the NP area is ageing considerably, and there are high levels of retirees, or people likely to reach retirement within the NP plan period. There are low numbers of students and data from the SHMA suggests the needs of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME), student or gypsy/traveller households are less relevant for the NP area. The number of young children in the NP area has dropped slightly and the number of people of an age likely to be wanting to form their own household (25-44) has dropped significantly, far more than at the borough or national level.</td>
<td>The Neighbourhood plan does not require specific policy covering the needs of BME, student or gypsy/traveller households. However, the plan should reference evidence of the rapidly ageing population and include appropriate policy responses, including support for/encouragement of downsizing through the provision of a proportion of smaller dwellings and lifetime homes. The NP area is unlikely to be an appropriate location for more specialist types of older persons housing, due to the limited accessibility to amenities and facilities in most parts of the NP area. As such, need for specialist housing for older people, such as care homes, that arises from the NP area would be better met in more urban, accessible locations (see also recommendation below) If the NP aspiration is to increase the number of young people and young families, then provision of some smaller homes (which could be Starter Homes but not necessarily), such as for those who work in the NP area, would be appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwelling type</td>
<td>SHMA, Followells, Zoopla, Census</td>
<td>In the NP area, detached and semi-detached homes predominate, with limited numbers of terraces and very low numbers of flats. Detached and semi-detached properties are in most demand, but all housing types command a premium in this area. Bungalows are in lesser demand in the NP area due to the limited local amenities.</td>
<td>The vast majority of new homes to be provided, including the smaller as well as the larger units, should be detached or semi-detached. However, for affordable units, there is a current demand for 1-2 bedroom units, which could be provided through, for example, a small flatted development/conversion. There is little demand for terraced housing or flats within the NP area and the provision of more detached and semi-detached houses is more in line with the local context. A policy supporting downsizing would help free up existing (under-occupied) detached or semi-detached family-sized dwellings for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor</td>
<td>Source(s)</td>
<td>Data uncovered</td>
<td>Conclusion for neighbourhood plan housing policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Family sized</td>
<td>SHMA, Census, Follwells</td>
<td>The current housing stock is larger than average; however, there has been an overall loss of families with young children in the NP area, suggesting that families whose children have grown up and left home have continued to live in larger family homes. Follwells suggested that demand for large detached homes remains strong, although not as strong as in the past. The NP area is home to large numbers of people in managerial roles and higher than average numbers of self-employed, or people working from home. It is also home to a larger than average proportion of people of working age who are at the later stage of working life and nearing or entering retirement during the plan period (and thus likely to be on higher incomes). As such, these people value homes with one or more extra rooms/bedrooms to use as an office, and this ensures demand for larger homes remains strong. The SHMA also documents the need for higher value housing to encourage higher income and highly skilled workers – the NP area appears to be one of the few places in the HMA that is meeting this need.</td>
<td>Despite a clear need to support the provision of smaller dwellings, there remains a clear demand for family-sized dwellings, and these should also be encouraged. However, encouraging downsizing through the provision of smaller units for older people may free up some existing stock, so monitoring is extremely important to avoid an over-supply of this type of housing. Alongside smaller homes for retired, older and single person households, a proportion of larger homes is still likely required to meet the needs of families moving into the area and those who work from home. These homes should be at least three bedrooms in size, with the majority providing four bedrooms or more. Given their size and the local development context, it is likely that these homes would be detached or semi-detached rather than terraced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing for</td>
<td>SHMA, Follwells</td>
<td>It is likely that (given the demographics of the population in the NP area) there will be future</td>
<td>The relatively isolated and rural nature of the NP area suggests that specialist housing for the most elderly population should be</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**References and evidence**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Source(s) (see Chapter 3)</th>
<th>Data uncovered</th>
<th>Conclusion for neighbourhood plan housing policy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>older people</td>
<td>Census</td>
<td>demand for smaller detached homes across the NP area as older people who remain fit and independent choose to stay in their own homes and neighbourhoods for longer. Follwells notes that the demand for bungalows is lower than in more urban locations, as older people wanting to live in such housing prefer to live in less isolated locations.</td>
<td>provided elsewhere, in more accessible locations, within walking distance of services and facilities. However, there still appears to be evidence for providing a proportion of smaller homes for the recently retired and/or over-55s to downsize into locally, specifically for independent living. These could include smaller detached homes and bungalows.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommendations for next steps

23. This neighbourhood plan housing needs advice has aimed to provide Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston and Whitmore Parishes with evidence on housing trends from a range of sources. We recommend that the Parish Councils should, as a next step, discuss the contents and conclusions with NuLBC with a view to agreeing and formulating draft housing policies, in particular the appropriate approach to take to identifying the level of need for new housing in the NP area, taking the following into account during the process:

- the contents of this report, including but not limited to Table 20 and 21;
- Neighbourhood Planning Basic Condition E, which is the need for the neighbourhood plan to be in general conformity with the adopted strategic development plan (the Adopted 2009 JCSS for Stoke-on-Trent and NuL);
- the types (detached, semi-detached, terraced etc.) and sizes (1 bedroom, 2 bedroom etc.) of recent and existing dwelling commitments (i.e. post 1st January 2013), and cross-referencing the findings of this assessment with Table 21, as what has already been provided will have an impact on the types and sizes of the remaining homes to be provided over the rest of the plan period;
- the views of NuLBC – in particular in relation to the housing need figure that should be adopted;
- the views of local residents;
- the views of other relevant local stakeholders, including housing developers; and
- the numerous supply-side considerations, including local environmental constraints, the location and characteristics of suitable land, and any capacity work carried out by the NuLBC, including but not limited to the SHLAA.

24. Recent changes to the planning system, forthcoming changes to the NPPF, as well as the implementation of the Housing and Planning Act, will continue to affect housing policies at a local authority and, by extension, a neighbourhood level.

25. This advice note has been provided in good faith by AECOM consultants on the basis of housing data and national guidance current at the time of writing (alongside other relevant and available information).

26. Bearing this in mind, we recommend that the steering group should monitor carefully strategies and documents with an impact on housing policy produced by the Borough Council or any other relevant body and review the neighbourhood plan accordingly to ensure that general conformity is maintained.

27. Most obviously, this includes monitoring the status of the emerging JLP for Stoke-on-Trent and NuL.

28. At the same time, monitoring ongoing demographic or other trends in the factors summarised in Tables 20 and 21 would be particularly valuable.
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