



Cannock Chase AONB Partnership

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Planning Policy Manager
South Staffordshire Council,
Council Offices,
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Dear Sirs

South Staffordshire Local Plan Review: Publication Plan

Thank you for consulting Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership. The comments on behalf of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Joint Committee are set out below.

The Cannock Chase AONB Partnership has a duty to advise on planning matters, as set out in the AONB Planning Protocol. The Partnership's focus is on ensuring that the special qualities of the AONB are recognised, protected and enhanced in all development plans. The Cannock Chase [AONB Management Plan 2019 – 2024](#), and its supporting documents provide a strategic context for the AONB, and should be used to inform policy for the Development Plan to ensure that the law and policy in respect to AONBs is properly applied.

Policy MA1 Masterplanning Strategic Sites – the AONB would welcome the opportunity to be consulted on the emerging Master Plan for Strategic development location: Land North of Penkridge.

Policy SA4 Strategic development location: Land North of Penkridge.

The AONB has mentioned in the response to the Preferred Options consultations, potential for effects on the AONB. Part (g) of the policy regarding green infrastructure is noted which we suggest should be integrated across the site to help break up the mass of the development. We would welcome reference in the policy the need to consider and implement mitigation for impacts on views from the AONB, such as through enhancing woodland on the eastern parts of the site and strengthening the north - south green corridor with tree and woodland planting.

The AONB also requests a sensitive approach to lighting and control light spillage.

Policy NB4: Landscape Character is welcomed. Specific reference to conserving and enhancing the AONB is welcomed. Reference to the AONB Design Guide and Views and Setting Guide is also welcomed to support proposals and decision making.

Site Allocations

Site 036c Land at Weeping Cross

The reduction in site area when compared with the site put forward previously is noted. The southern site boundary is now approximately level with the limit of housing east of the A34. The site lies between 100m AOD and about 105m AOD. A belt of trees on / within the site's eastern boundary adjacent to the A34 screens large parts of the site to views from the east and southeast within the AONB and its setting. Other mature trees on the site have potential to filter views from the south.

The AONB Views and Setting Guide indicates in the Zone of Theoretical Visibility Study for Representative Viewpoint 19, that development between around 10m - 50m high on the site would be theoretically visible from the AONB. Field visits reveal that from Tar Hill and Broc Hill in the AONB, and from rights of way near Walton-on-the-Hill, there are views of the southern edge of the site and other vegetation on the site. Some views are partly filtered by intervening vegetation and development at Brocton Park Farm. Field visits were not exhaustive and there may be other locations where views are afforded of the site.

Development on the higher elevations of the site would be open to views, albeit seen in the context of existing development on the edge of Stafford. The proposed access to the site from the A34 is a concern as much of the site screening depends on retention of the tree belt and green infrastructure alongside the A34. Loss of this tree cover would significantly open up views of development on the site.

Whilst this is not a strategic development location, in view of the potential impacts on the AONB, the AONB requests a requirement for the preparation of a Development Brief / Master Plan for the site that sets out key requirements for design of any future development. I recommend this includes a requirement for:

- The wooded buffer alongside the A34 retained, protected and enhanced, along with retention and enhancement of other site vegetation.

- Dwellings with higher elevations located on the lower parts of the site and away from the south and southeast parts of the site

- A vegetated buffer including tree and hedge planting on the site's southern boundary to filter views of development.

- A sensitive approach to lighting to minimise light spillage to help conserve the darker skies of the AONB and reduce impacts on wildlife

Site 016 – Huntington Land at Pear Tree Farm

The Key Requirements for this site are noted and welcomed.

I trust you can take these comments into consideration

Yours sincerely

Julia Banbury

Julia Banbury MA CMLI

AONB Landscape Planning Officer