



Tamworth Borough Council

Local Plan 2006-2028

June 2012



Contents

Page

CHAPTER 1: Introduction	5
CHAPTER 2: Background: Spatial Portrait, Vision & Priorities	13
CHAPTER 3: A Spatial Strategy for Tamworth	21
CHAPTER 4: A Prosperous Town	27
CHAPTER 5: Strong and Vibrant Neighbourhoods	43
CHAPTER 6: A High Quality Environment	57
CHAPTER 7: A Sustainable Town	71
CHAPTER 8: Monitoring and Implementation	83
APPENDICES	87

LIST OF FIGURES AND APPENDICES

FIGURE 1: Structure of Document	12
FIGURE 2: Tamworth Typical Urban Areas	16
FIGURE 3: Spatial Diagram	23
FIGURE 4: Town Centre Spatial Diagram	24
FIGURE 5: Allocations Map (contained in Appendix 9)	insert
FIGURE 6: Town Centre Inset Map (contained in Appendix 10)	insert
FIGURE 7: Tamworth Biodiversity Opportunity Map	68
FIGURE 8: Housing Trajectory	98
Appendix 1: Key sites and desired outcomes	88
Appendix 2: Indicative Housing Trajectory (Figure 8)	98
Appendix 3: Car Parking Standards	99
Appendix 4: Monitoring and Implementation Framework Table	103
Appendix 5: Travel Plans	110
Appendix 6: Infrastructure Delivery Plan	113
Appendix 7: Glossary	125
Appendix 8: Saved Local Plan Policies to be Replaced by Local Plan	131

Endorsement



I am very pleased to introduce the pre-submission version of Tamworth's Local Plan which was agreed by the Council on 9th February with cross party support.

This is a major step in the journey to produce an overarching spatial plan for Tamworth. This is the version of the Local Plan that the Council considers to be sound – justified, effective and able to be delivered. We believe it is now ready to be offered for representations and to be subject to examination by an independent inspector later this year.

The Local Plan is a very important document for the borough. It will be a key driver of sustainable development and will be used as a basis to assess planning applications and appeals whilst helping to deliver key corporate and community aspirations.

Ambitious objectives are set for how Tamworth should be in 2028 and the strategy sets out a clear and achievable vision for future development to support One Tamworth, perfectly placed based on a prosperous town with strong and vibrant neighbourhoods, a high quality environment underpinned by measures to enhance the borough's overall sustainability.

Delivering the right amount and type of both housing and employment, whilst enhancing the natural and built environment will increase the attractiveness of the borough to both families and businesses. Regeneration initiatives will transform the borough's most deprived areas whilst helping to improve the image of Tamworth. The town centre will become the focus for investment in new shopping, leisure and cultural activities to create an attractive and vibrant focus for the borough. The network of centres across the borough will be strengthened and revitalised so that they remain at the heart of their communities. Causes and effects of climate change will be tackled through high standards of design and improvements to public transport, walking and cycling, and through a positive commitment to renewables.

Engagement and involvement with a wide range of people and organisations with a stake in the borough's future has been essential in producing this strategy; not least the Council's cross party working group which has overseen the Local Plan's production. I am very grateful to all who have been involved, and especially to those who have given up free time to articulate their views and those of the organisations they represent. I look forward to your continuing involvement in this and future documents.

Councillor Steven Claymore

Tamworth A5

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Chapter 1 Introduction

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Context to the Tamworth Local Plan

- 1.1 Since 2006, Tamworth Borough Council has been working with a wide range of stakeholders (local communities, local strategic partnership and developers etc) to produce a development plan for the borough. This was being produced in the context of previous national and regional planning guidance and was called a Core Strategy. It has now been renamed the Tamworth Local Plan, as part of the Government's on going reform of the planning system.
- 1.2 Tamworth Local Plan sets out the spatial planning strategy for the borough over the period 2006-2028. It sets out the spatial planning strategy for the area, in terms of what type of development is required to meet local community and business needs, its scale and location as well as the policies that will apply to ensure that development is sustainable. It also includes policies to ensure that appropriate supporting infrastructure is delivered and the area's built and natural environment is protected and enhanced. The Plan aims to be sufficiently flexible to adapt to the changing circumstances during the life of the plan.
- 1.3 The government has recently published the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012), which sets out planning policies for achieving sustainable development. Emphasis has been placed on the importance of ensuring that Local Plan policies contribute to achieving sustainable development, in terms of promoting sustainable economic growth. The Tamworth Local Plan has been prepared in compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 1.4 It should be noted that, as part of the Government's ongoing reform of the planning system, the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) is scheduled to be revoked under the Localism Act 2011 . The Local Plan is in general conformity with the general thrust of the WMRSS, however it also reflects the NPPF requirement for a locally derived evidence base; particularly in relation to future housing need. Where considered relevant, working in partnership with neighbouring authorities to discharge the duty to cooperate has resulted in cross-boundary issues being addressed.
- 1.5 The Tamworth Local Plan is expected to be adopted by April 2013 and will replace the existing Local Plan (Adopted in 2006). Further detailed guidance will be included in a limited number of SPD's which will support the implementation of the plan. Once it is adopted, planning applications will be determined in accordance with the Local Plan unless other material considerations (including the NPPF) indicate otherwise.
- 1.6 Any proposals for development that demonstrate that they are in accordance with policies in this plan and are sustainable will be granted planning permission without any delay.
- 1.7 When determining applications the Council will take the following approach to reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.
- 1.8 Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 1.9 Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise - taking into account whether:

- a) any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
- b) Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

Delivering Sustainable Development

- 1.10 The recently published NPPF places great emphasis on the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This is reflected through the policies within this Local Plan and its future implementation. The World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) defined sustainable development as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”
- 1.11 The Tamworth Local Plan policies and proposals will impact on the three facets of Sustainable Development (i.e. economic, social and environmental) and measures have been taken to integrate them and minimise any potential conflicts and adverse impacts, in order to achieve the most sustainable outcome for the borough.
- 1.12 For example; to promote the borough’s economic well being, the policies include measures to build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type and location is available to encourage growth and innovation, including delivering the supporting infrastructure. This is balanced by policies to promote the social wellbeing of the borough, including measures to promote strong, vibrant and healthy communities through promoting an increased supply of the right type of housing, a good quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs, whilst simultaneously considering the environmental wellbeing of the borough. The SA/SEA and other assessments have underpinned this approach.

SA/Combined Assessments

- 1.13 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA), which includes a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been undertaken during the production of the Local Plan. This considers the social, economic and environmental effects (including impact on natural resources) of the strategy and ensures it accords with the principles of sustainable development. Each of the draft policies was developed, refined and assessed against sustainability criteria throughout the preparation of the Local Plan. The Sustainability Appraisal Report is published alongside this document.
- 1.14 Under the Habitats Regulations, the council has undertaken, with Lichfield District Council and in consultation with Natural England, a Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA) to ensure that the policies in the Local Plan do not harm sites designated as being of European importance for biodiversity.
- 1.15 In addition to the assessments described above, the policies contained within this version of the Local Plan have been subjected to both a Health Impact Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessment.
- 1.16 It is closely related to the Tamworth Sustainable Community Strategy and associated strategic objectives which were produced by the Tamworth Strategic Partnership, a multi-agency partnership committed to improving the quality of life of local people. 12 strategic objectives have been defined, which concentrate the Vision into key specific issues that need to be addressed. A key element of the Local Plan is how it will be delivered.
- 1.17 The Tamworth Sustainable Community Strategy is focussed on delivering specific strategic priorities. One of its key challenges is to deliver sustainable growth in Tamworth’s local economy and promote Tamworth as a Place.

Its vision is of: **“One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed”** (The people) (The place)

Below this sit 2 strategic priorities:

Strategic Priority 1: To Aspire and Prosper in Tamworth

Primary Outcome: To create and sustain a thriving local economy and make Tamworth a more inspirational and competitive place to do business through:

- Raising the aspiration and attainment levels of young people
- Creating opportunities for business growth through developing and using skills and talent
- Promoting private sector growth and create quality employment locally
- Branding and marketing “Tamworth” as a great place to “live life to the full”
- Creating the physical and technological infrastructure necessary to support the achievement of this primary outcome.

Strategic Priority 2: To be healthier and safer in Tamworth

Primary Outcome: To create a safe environment in which local people can reach their full potential and live longer, healthier lives through;

- Addressing the causes of poor health in children and young people;
- Improving the health and well being of older people by supporting them to live active, independent lives;
- Reducing the harm and wider consequences of alcohol abuse on individuals, families and society;
- Implementing ‘Total Place’ solutions to tackling crime and ASB in designated localities;
- Developing innovative early interventions to tackle youth crime and ASB; and
- Creating an integrated approach to protecting those most vulnerable in our local communities.

Tamworth Strategic partnership has identified a number of causal factors, which may require targeting to achieve these strategic priorities;

- Reduce the levels of unemployment by reducing the number of jobseeker allowance claimants and in particular youth unemployment;
- Reduce alcohol misuse by tackling both the inappropriate availability and consumption of alcohol;
- Improve the location, quality, quantity, and types of Housing;
- Reduce the numbers of residents who live significantly more time in ill or poor health to the national average;
- Improve the quality, quantity and stock of suitable land and premises for economic development (enable expansion, start-ups and inward investment);
- Develop a modern, future proofed infrastructure for residents and visitors;
- Improve the capacity and generic skills and awareness of parents;
- Reduce harm and inequalities caused by tobacco consumption;
- Increase aspiration levels;
- Increase the levels of physical activity;
- Provide flexible, integrated and effective public services that meets the needs of Tamworth’s Communities;
- Improve positive nutrition choices and promote healthy eating;
- Increase self esteem levels particularly in vulnerable groups.

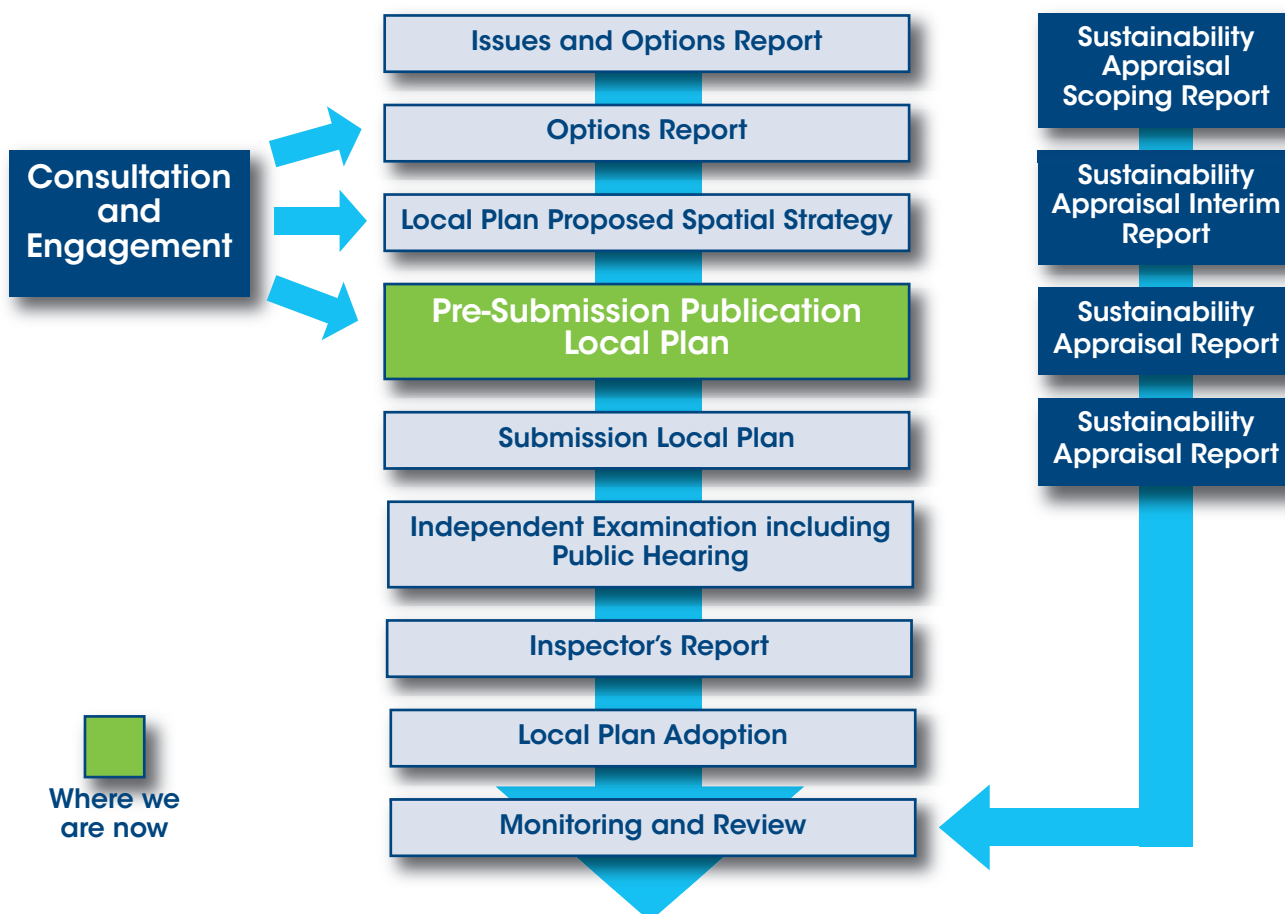
1.18 The Local Plan’s spatial vision is closely aligned to Tamworth’s Sustainable Community Strategy’s vision/priorities. The Local Plan policies/proposals will help deliver the spatial elements of the above strategic priorities. For example, the Local Plan will aim to identify adequate levels of suitable employment sites which will attract economic investment and increase employment opportunities in the area. While the built environment design policies will help reduce crime and encourage more active, healthy life styles. Furthermore, housing policies will help increase the delivery of, and the right types of housing, to ensure local communities are able to meet their aspirations.

The Local Plan production process to date

- 1.19 Work commenced on the Local Plan in 2006. Since then the council has undertaken a number of consultation exercises with the communities of Tamworth, along with other stakeholders during 2007-08, to identify and agree a series of issues and options for delivering future development within the borough. This influenced the production, in 2009, of a preferred spatial strategy for the borough and a subsequent housing policies consultation in 2011. The consultation responses to these two documents, has, in turn influenced the current version; the pre-submission publication Local Plan.
- 1.20 In addition to the consultation responses, the Local Plan is based on robust evidence. Specialist studies and existing and developing strategies have together built a comprehensive evidence base. Throughout the production process, the Council has created an updated evidence base covering a range of topics including employment land availability, strategic housing land availability and needs, linkages between the town centre and Ventura/Jolly Sailor Retail Parks, open space, water infrastructure, flooding, retail, renewables and affordable housing viability to name but a few. These have been used to justify the approach taken by the Local Plan.
- 1.21 An essential part of the process is community engagement and we have set out our approach to involving the community in the LDF through the Statement of Community Involvement which was adopted in June 2006. It is important that at all stages the process is transparent and accessible to all and is continuous. This is crucial to ensuring that the outcome leads to a sense of community ownership of local policy decisions.

The Publication Pre-submission Local Plan (this document)

- 1.18 The Local Plan is considered to be 'sound' and complies with the Pre-Submission Publication stage in the regulatory production process. The process is outlined below:



- 1.22 The Local Plan has been published for a six week consultation between 8/06/2012 and 20/07/2012 and is the version that the Council intends to formally submit to the Government for examination.
- 1.23 The six week Pre-Submission Publication period is an opportunity to comment only on the soundness of the Local Plan. Soundness is the basis of the Local Development Framework (LDF) system and is defined as meaning that a plan must be justified, effective and consistent with national policy. It must also satisfy the legal procedural requirements for its production and, looking to the future, conform to the government's proposed 'Duty to co-operate' requirements. Meeting these requirements will be the Planning Inspector's main consideration when examining the Local Plan.

- 1.24 Copies have been made available to download from the Council's website and physical copies have been distributed to the council office and libraries.

- Tamworth Borough Council, Marmion House,
Lichfield Street, Tamworth B79 7BZ
(Monday to Thursday, 0845-1710, Friday 0845-1705)
- Tamworth Library, Corporation Street,
Tamworth, B79 7DN
(Monday to Tuesday, 0830-1900, Wednesday and
Friday 0830-1800, Thursday 1000-1800,
Saturday 0900-1600)
- Wilnecote Library, Wilnecote High School,
Tinkers Green Road, Wilnecote, Tamworth, B77 5LF
(Monday 0900-1200 and 1415-1700,
Wednesday 0900-1200 and 1415-1900,
Friday 1415-1900, Saturday 0930-1600)
- Glascote Library Caledonian, Glascote, Tamworth, B77 2ED (Monday, Thursday, Friday 0900-1700, Tuesday 1400-1700, Saturday 0930-1300)



- 1.25 Copies have also been sent to specified statutory bodies and consultees and a press notice has been published in the Tamworth Herald. In addition, anyone who has previously submitted comments on the Local Plan have been informed about the availability of the documents.
- 1.26 Further details on the tests of soundness and guidance on how to comment on the Local Plan, including a representation form, can be downloaded from, www.tamworth.gov.uk/planning/local_development_framework.aspx
- 1.27 Your views are important so please do not hesitate to contact the Development Plan Team if you have difficulty in understanding any part of the document or submitting your comments. Please contact:

Jon Lord	01827 709279
Tom James	01827 709384
Mohammed Azram	01827 709278

Next Steps

- 1.28 Once the six week Pre-Submission Publication period is completed then the comments need to be summarised as part of the submission arrangements. If any fundamental issue of soundness is identified then further consideration to the progress of the Local Plan will be made with the advice of the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). Providing no fundamental soundness concerns are raised then the Local Plan documentation will be formally submitted to Government during late 2012.
- 1.29 Following formal submission a public examination into the soundness of the Local Plan will take place. It is expected that the examination will take place during early 2013. Subject to the Inspector finding the Local Plan sound then it is programmed to be adopted in Spring 2013 and will then be used to determine all planning applications in the borough.

How to read this Document

- 1.30 The Local Plan is divided into a number of chapters. The first of which includes a spatial portrait and vision for the borough. It sets out the key characteristics of Tamworth and identifies the strategic issues and challenges facing the borough that the Local Plan seeks to address. The vision sets out the type of place Tamworth should become by 2028. It takes into account existing plans and strategies produced by both the council and its partners. The vision results in a set of 12 strategic objectives which are set out in relation to the key themes to which they relate.
- 1.31 The policy chapters summarised in 4 over-arching themes: a prosperous borough, strong and vibrant neighbourhoods, a high quality environment and sustainable town, include policies to guide how the spatial vision and strategic spatial priorities; will be achieved in practical terms. The spatial policies set out how much development there will be, broadly where it will go, when it will take place and where possible who will deliver it. The Core Policies contained within each theme seek to deliver the spatial policies.
- 1.32 The Monitoring and Delivery chapter sets out how the policies will be monitored and delivered. It contains a Monitoring and Implementation Framework which includes setting out a series of monitoring indicators and targets against each policy to measure their delivery. The indicators will be monitored regularly and if it is shown that targets are not being achieved then contingency measures, also set out in the framework, will be implemented.
- 1.33 The Local Plan's success will depend on effective implementation of the policies. Whilst the council will play a main role in implementing the policies, through its statutory planning functions, implementation will also rely on a range of partner organisations including the Tamworth Strategic Partnership, Staffordshire County Council, statutory service providers, developers, Registered Social Landlords and infrastructure providers amongst others. As such, an Infrastructure Delivery Plan is included setting out what infrastructure is required, when, how it is going to be delivered and by whom.
- 1.34 The following chart outlines the overall structure of the document and shows how each core policy fits within the spatial policy which in turn delivers the overall spatial strategy.



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Chapter 2

Background: Spatial Portrait, Vision & Strategic Spatial Priorities

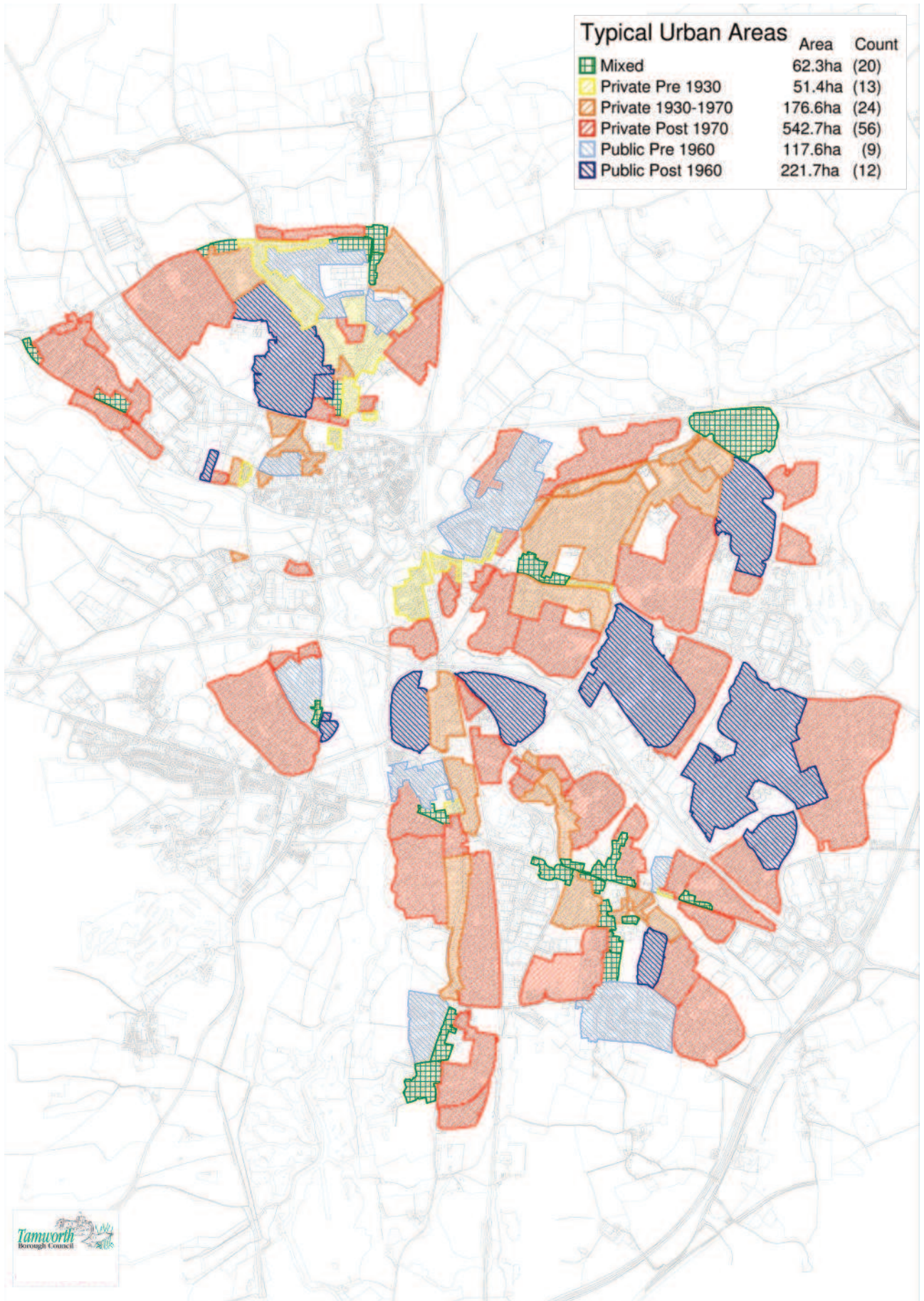
CHAPTER 2 - BACKGROUND: SPATIAL PORTRAIT, VISION & OBJECTIVES

Spatial Portrait

- 2.1 Tamworth is an ancient borough; established as the Saxon Mercian Capital. It is located in the south-eastern corner of Staffordshire bordered by Warwickshire to the South and East. Situated 18 miles from the Birmingham conurbation and on the edge of the West Midlands Greenbelt, Tamworth Borough is only 12 square miles in extent making it one of the smallest in England. Geographically the Borough is related to the neighbouring districts of North Warwickshire and Lichfield. Socially, Tamworth has many links with Birmingham having received overspill in the 1960s and 1970s which resulted in the development of a series of planned housing estates with associated centres, green spaces and community facilities.
- 2.2 Consequently, the population of Tamworth has tripled since the post-war years due to the relocation of inner-city Birmingham residents. The overspill development raises challenges for the Borough, in particular the preservation of Tamworth's history, historic core and identity, which has become overpowered by the 1960s and 1970s planned housing estates. Many areas, in particular the social housing areas, contain housing stock which is showing signs of stress, whilst being dated in design and uniform in appearance. The planned nature of these areas makes it difficult to develop further with any new housing. As Tamworth has grown from its original historic core, surrounding rural hamlets and villages such as Wilnecote and Amington have been enveloped into the urban structure of Tamworth. This means that the town, which was largely confined to the historic core and river system, now spreads out into what was the rural hinterland. Absorbing various hamlets and villages has created small pockets of historical interest amongst the newer housing and industrial development, the most important of which have been recognised by various Conservation Area designations. Tamworth's urban area is continuous with Fazeley and Mile Oak, both of which are situated outside the Borough in Lichfield District. Fig 2 illustrates this pattern of development in Tamworth.
- 2.3 Tamworth Borough is almost exclusively urban with only a tight circle of countryside around its edges. The close proximity of Tamworth to the countryside provides residents and visitors with recreational opportunities, and employers and inward investors with a quality environment. The post war development of the borough, combined with natural features (including rivers, flood plains, biodiversity sites) has resulted in a borough that appears 'urban-green' in character with the urban area softened by a network of green linkages and spaces. However, the circle of countryside is under pressure due to the lack of development opportunities within the urban area.
- 2.4 The population of Tamworth in 2010¹ was 75,700 and projected figure suggest Tamworth will experience a population growth of 5.4% by 2026, a total of 80,100 people. However, numbers are set to reduce in the number of young adults and growth will be concentrated in the older age groups. Retired people will increase by 61% (8,600) by 2026. An ageing population requiring increasing care and support will need to be accommodated. Additionally house price inflation has led to a housing market that first time buyers find difficult to access. Affordable housing is also an issue that needs to be addressed to ensure that the young are retained within the Town. Tamworth's housing stock is skewed towards semi-detached and detached housing, which does not necessarily reflect the needs of both younger and older groups.
- 2.5 Tamworth's housing market is relatively self contained, however, there are strong ties with settlements surrounding Tamworth but within other Local Authority areas. Tamworth loses population to Lichfield District and North Warwickshire but gains considerable population from Birmingham, demonstrating the historical links with the city. To a lesser extent there are also links beyond the West Midlands to South Derbyshire and North West Leicestershire.

- 2.6 Part of a network of strategic centres encircling Birmingham, Tamworth is the focus of development that meets the needs of the town and provides for the immediate rural catchment. This extends into Lichfield District, North Warwickshire and up to South Derbyshire and includes a network of villages which rely on the borough for their services and facilities. It is traditionally a working class town with its roots in manufacturing until the late 1990s when the town experienced decline in what was a vibrant and buoyant employment sector. Employment restructuring is underway to diversify the employment offer and move away from the dependency on manufacturing. Whilst manufacturing is still important, the majority of jobs are now in the service industry.
- 2.7 The Council is a key partner in emerging sub-regional enterprise partnerships, and works closely with businesses and neighbouring authorities to capitalise on Tamworth's strengths to promote and deliver local economic development.
- 2.8 Within the town there are both significant pockets of affluence and deprivation combined with low aspiration levels especially in Glascote, Amington, Belgrave and Stonydelph. There are concentrations of unemployment, poor health, poor literacy and numeracy, anti-social behaviour and poverty. According to the "Indices of Multiple Deprivation"², 18.1% of the population live in areas that are amongst the most deprived in England. The Glascote ward of Tamworth has the highest level of income deprivation in Staffordshire, where 45% of the adult population is living in an income deprived family.
- 2.9 The Council is working to foster strong relationships with the community, and develop a long term programme of community engagement and participation, offering support and advice on education, training and funding for community projects. The health of people in Tamworth is varied compared to the England average. Whilst life expectancy for both men and women is similar to the England average, it is 8 years lower for men and 7 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Tamworth than in the least deprived areas. Estimated adult healthy eating and obesity levels are worse than the England average. Levels of teenage pregnancy and GCSE attainment are also worse than the England average.
- 2.10 Tamworth's compact urban form provides good opportunities for transport accessibility, particularly to and from the town centre where the town's retail and leisure services are predominantly located. Tamworth's close proximity to the national motorway network and to Birmingham makes it an accessible place to live and work. However, it is estimated that around 50% of the adult population out-commute each day to work which does not contribute to a sustainable lifestyle where services, facilities, jobs and housing are all accessible without having to use the car for long journeys. Despite this, evidence suggests that Tamworth's transport related carbon emissions are one of the lowest per population in England which may be a result of its compact form and sustainable development pattern focused around connected neighbourhoods and centres. This poses a challenge for future development to ensure this trend continues.
- 2.11 The location of the Norman Castle at the point where the Rivers Tame and Anker meet in the centre of Tamworth is a focal point for the town. The Castle Grounds are a well-used and highly valued area of recreation, open space and sports facilities for residents and visitors that compliment other important facilities in the town. The historic core of Tamworth surrounds the Castle, set out along a Medieval street pattern. Much of the town centre is covered by conservation area designations.
- 2.12 The town centre performs relatively well but could improve with better representation from multiple retailers and leisure operators and a more attractive environment to enhance its role as a service hub and a focus for independent, specialist retailers. An improved town centre offer, particularly focussing on specialist retail and restaurants, combined with its status as a tourism and cultural hub is required to counter-balance the attractions of the out of town shopping parks. These retail areas are predominantly travelled to by car causing congestion and an unpleasant pedestrian environment. As such, the Council is working to bring forward key development opportunities within the town centre together with proposals to improve the linkages between the town centre and the out of town retail areas to attract more people to visit the town centres.

Figure 2: Map showing Tamworth Typical Urban Areas



Issues & Challenges

- 2.13 Tamworth is expected to experience a high level of housing and economic growth in order to meet its needs and aspirations of the town and create sustainable communities. However, opportunities for expansion of the town are constrained by a tight administrative boundary and environmental constraints (i.e. the flood plain, the Greenbelt). With the exception of the Anker Valley Sustainable Urban Neighbourhood, a significant proportion of Tamworth's housing and employment opportunities will come forward within the existing urban area and some needs being met elsewhere.
- 2.14 Based upon the evidence base that has been collected and the characteristics of the area, the key issues/challenges that need to be addressed through the implementation of the Local Plan are outlined below:

Housing

- 2.15 Tamworth is projected to experience a significant level of population growth and this is likely to result in a higher proportion of an elderly population residing in the town.
- 2.16 Further, the supply of new housing has failed to keep up with rising demand which has created an imbalance in the market. This has resulted in creating affordability problems for first time buyers who have been priced out of the housing market, as well as helping increase the demographic imbalance in the area.
- 2.17 The Local Plan has set out an overall housing need for 5500 homes. The key challenge for the strategy will be to increase the delivery of and the right type of housing, in order to create sustainable and mixed communities in the area.
- 2.18 Key evidence:
- Southern Staffordshire Districts Housing Needs Study and SHMA Update (2012)
 - Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2011)

Economic

- 2.19 The local economy of Tamworth is relatively stable and is expected to experience growth during the life of the plan. It is currently diversifying from its traditional reliance on manufacturing to other employment sectors including business and financial services. It is relatively affluent with a low unemployment rate.
- 2.20 However, this masks the fact that employment is largely low-paid, unskilled and requiring few qualifications. To some extent these factors also explain the housing affordability problems in the area (Annual Monitoring Report 2010/11). There are also pockets of deprivation that exist (i.e. low income & poor qualification levels and poor health) within the borough—mostly within the post war planned estates, some of which are among the most deprived in England.
- 2.21 To address these issues, the Local Plan has set a target of providing a minimum of 36 hectares of additional employment land from 2006 to 2028, and providing 20,000 sqm of new office floorspace. The key challenge will be to ensure that the right types, quantity and locations of employment land are allocated in order to attract employers and investment and help the town to fulfil its true economic potential.
- 2.22 There is also a need to regenerate the town centre and ensure it retains its role as the borough's retail and leisure centre whilst capitalising on its historic and cultural offer to meet the day to day needs of Tamworth's residents. To overcome this challenge, the Local Plan is seeking to

increase the delivery of convenience retail floor space (1,100 sqm post 2016) and comparison retail goods floor space (38,400 sqm up to 2028) new homes, jobs and leisure development, together with supporting infrastructure. This will help to create a sustainable and prosperous future for Tamworth. An additional challenge is to ensure that a successful mix of uses can be achieved which is fit for the future in terms of its quality and sustainable use of resources.

2.23 Another key challenge is to ensure development delivers benefits to all of Tamworth's communities to deliver strong and vibrant communities. Therefore tackling deprivation and social exclusion through improving health and educational attainment and access to employment is a key objective.

2.24 Key evidence:

- Tamworth Town Centre and Retail Study (2011) and Addendum (2012)
- Employment Land Review (2012)

Environmental

2.25 Tamworth is expected to experience high levels of growth. This is constrained by the scarcity of development land due to policy restrictions such as the Green Belt and administrative constraints arising from Tamworth's tightly drawn boundaries and planned neighbourhoods as a consequence of its status as an expanded town. There are also extensive areas of flood plain, particularly around the town centre and centre of the borough, areas of nature conservation importance along with the historic nature of most of the town centre.

2.26 The key challenge will be the need to balance growth with the protection of natural and built assets to ensure it will not have detrimental impact on the quality of life for Tamworth's communities. Further, it will be important to ensure that the policies within the strategy do not contribute to, or increase the effects of climate change (e.g. Flood Risk, Global Warming, loss of biodiversity, etc).

2.27 Key evidence:

- PPG17 Open Space Review (2012)
- Joint Indoor and Outdoor Sports Strategy (2009)

Infrastructure

2.28 The expected growth of the town is likely to increase pressure on, and increase the demand for investment in additional infrastructure (e.g. physical-transport, open spaces, and social-community facilities). This could potentially have a detrimental impact on the well being of existing future communities living within the borough. For instance, this is an issue for the transport infrastructure which is unable to cope with the high levels of car usage during certain times of the day and experiences congestion hot spots across the borough, particularly within the town centre, the out of town shopping parks and at junctions along the A5.

2.29 Therefore, the key challenge for the Local Plan is to ensure that the existing infrastructure is utilised efficiently and it is delivered in locations where there is demand, in order to support the creation of sustainable communities and the growth of the town.

2.30 This could be achieved through incorporating measures in Local Plan Policies, such as ensuring traffic generating uses are placed in accessible locations to reduce the need to travel and carbon emissions. Also delivering growth and future development will require the delivery of adequate transport links within and out of the borough; between homes to employment activity, town and local centres, community facilities and to centres and facilities in neighbouring towns, villages and beyond. Linked to this is the need to exploit the underused green and blue corridors (open spaces, canals and rivers) that connect different

neighbourhoods to each other and the town centre. These both add to Tamworth's identity as 'urban green' whilst offering environmental and health benefits to communities and fostering local identity and inclusiveness as a connected town.

2.31 Key evidence:

- Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2011)

In the context of delivering the council's overall corporate vision for the borough, as 'One Tamworth Perfectly Placed', the following Local Plan vision adds the spatial dimension and seeks to set the future spatial direction for Tamworth to address the issues and challenges identified.

Vision - One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed

2.32 By 2028 sustainable Tamworth will have a dynamic economy comprising of a vibrant town centre consisting of a thriving retail and leisure offer supported by a local town centre community which complements its role as a sub regional tourism hub. It will have a strong, distinctive identity equally known for its historic assets and history as the Mercian Capital as for its safe and thriving neighbourhoods. The green and blue linkages which connect the town centre with its neighbourhoods and employment areas will assist to project an image of the borough as 'urban green'.



2.33 Its economy will be thriving as a result of improved communication links with the Greater Birmingham area. Investment in accessible employment areas will have provided an environment that encourages new and existing businesses to remain and locate in Tamworth. Job opportunities and employment growth in business and professional services as well as environmental and building technologies and general manufacturing will have helped to build on the town's employment strengths and minimised outward commuting. The tourism and leisure sectors will have continued to prosper.

2.34 Investment in health and education facilities and improvements to open spaces and leisure/sports facilities, combined with greater outdoor opportunities and ensuring development is located in sustainable locations, will have helped make the town healthier and safer whilst improving qualification and aspiration levels.

2.35 A total place approach to regeneration in those areas of most need will have tackled pockets of deprivation by improving access to both employment and housing whilst improving the general environment. Other vulnerable neighbourhoods will have received housing led regeneration to improve the quality of the stock and support the vitality of existing local/neighbourhood centres.

2.36 New house building will have responded to local need by increasing the supply of affordable housing, widening housing choice and preventing homelessness. Appropriate housing will have been built to meet the needs of an ageing population requiring specialist needs and support or care. Adaptations, renovations and general repairs to the housing stock will have created safer, greener and accessible living conditions in both the public and private sector.

2.37 The Anker Valley Sustainable Urban Neighbourhood will have created a sustainable extension to the town with a mix of housing and community facilities with excellent connectivity to the town centre and beyond.

2.38 Together, this will have created Tamworth as a place which projects a positive image as a borough where people want to live, work and invest.

2.39 The vision will be delivered by the following strategic spatial priorities;

Strategic Spatial Priorities

Reference	Strategic Spatial Priorities
SO1	Making the most efficient and sustainable use of the Borough’s limited supply of land and recognising that an element of future development will be provided by neighbouring authorities.
SO2	To make Tamworth Town Centre a priority for regeneration to create a safe and attractive place for residents, businesses and visitors by strengthening and diversifying the town centre offer, optimising retail, leisure and housing development opportunities and increasing its liveability and by making the most of the town’s tourism and cultural offer, thus creating a positive image for the borough.
SO3	Working in partnership with economic stakeholders to create a diverse local economy, including regeneration of employment areas and provide appropriate education and training that will provide local job opportunities that will reduce the need for residents to travel outside of the Borough.
SO4	To facilitate the provision of convenient and accessible services and community infrastructure across the Borough, particularly in the most deprived neighbourhoods where initiatives that provide additional support, information and services to residents will be encouraged and supported.
SO5	To provide a range of affordable, adaptable and high quality housing that meets the needs of Tamworth residents.
SO6	To ensure that appropriate infrastructure, including ICT, is in place to support the delivery of development across the borough.
SO7	To encourage active and healthier lifestyles by providing a network of high quality, accessible green and blue linkages and open spaces and formal indoor and outdoor recreation facilities that meet identified need and link neighbourhoods to each other and the wider countryside.
SO8	To protect and enhance statutory and non-statutory areas of nature conservation, ecological networks and landscape value on the doorstep of Tamworth residents, for their biodiversity, geological, historical and visual value and for the opportunities they provide for education and leisure.
SO9	To protect and enhance historic assets by ensuring that proposals for change respect the historic character of the borough including street layout, surviving historic buildings, street furniture, archaeology and open spaces.
SO10	To create safe, high quality places that deliver sustainable neighbourhoods and reflect Tamworth’s small-scale and domestic character using a blend of traditional and innovative design techniques.
SO11	To minimise the causes and adapt to the effects of climate change by encouraging high standards of energy efficiency, sustainable use of resources and use of low carbon/renewable energy technologies.
SO12	To promote sustainable transport modes for all journeys by improving walking, cycling and public transport facilities throughout the Borough and to neighbouring areas and beyond.