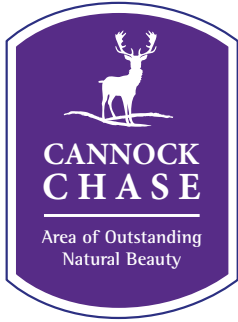


The West Midlands Rail Freight Interchange Order 201X  
Technical Appendix 12.4 - Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan  
Regulation 5(2)(a)  
DEFRA



# CANNOCK CHASE

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

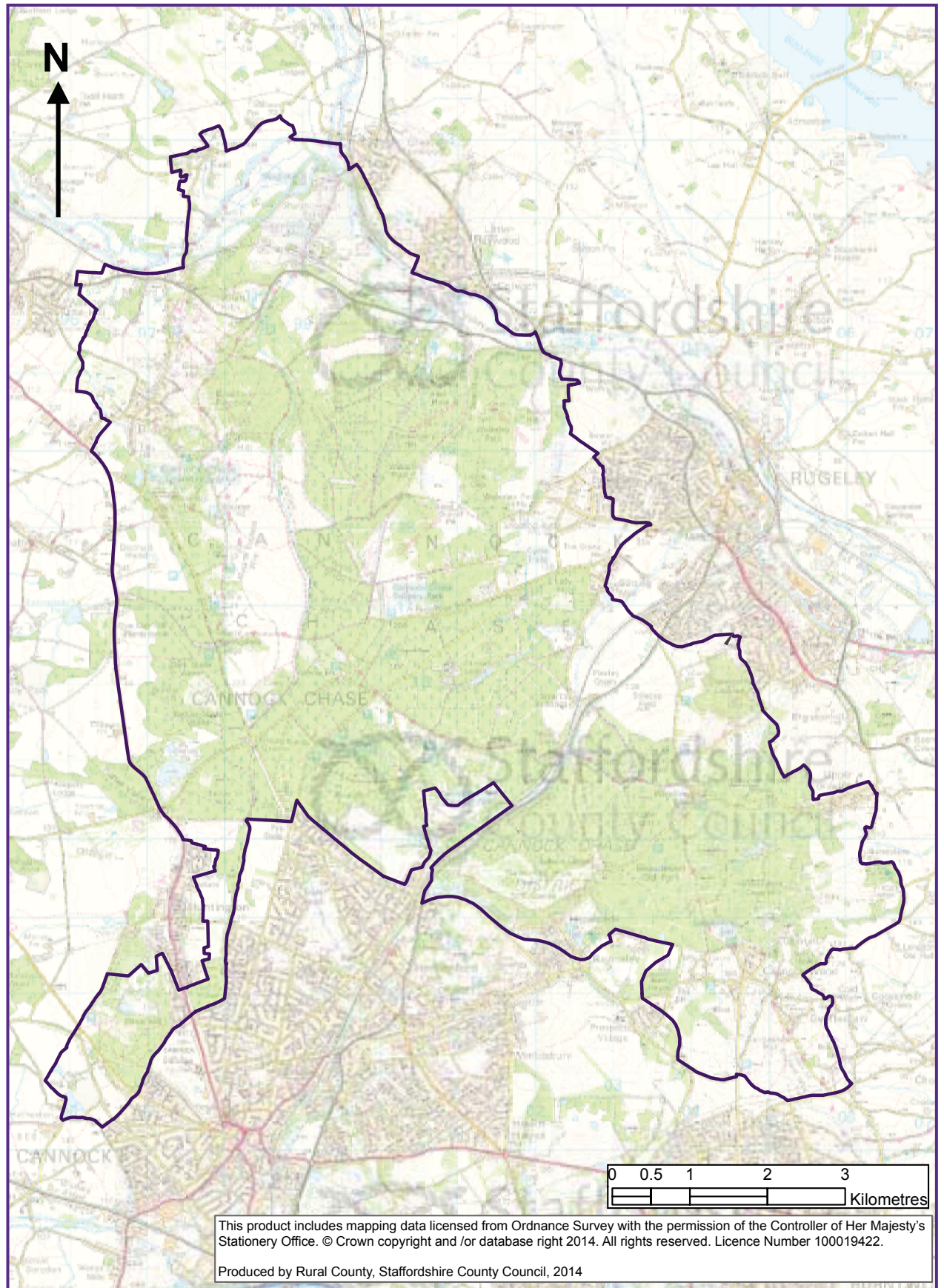


Management Plan 2014–2019





Figure 1 Cannock Chase AONB



## Landscape Character and People in the AONB

This section sets out the landscape character areas within the AONB and factors affecting them. These factors are identified as Key Issues. The Key Issues fall into two categories and show “there is a problem with.....” and “there is an opportunity to....”.

The basis of AONB designation is the special nature of the landscape and a description of this is provided by Landscape Character Assessment. This identifies the features giving a locality its sense of place and provides a framework for describing an area. It involves a desk study and field survey and then a description and mapping of the landscape to divide it into areas of common character. It enables different interest groups to make better judgements by knowing what is present and what is distinctive, so any change can respect local character. A number of specifically local landscape character assessments cover Cannock Chase AONB. These have formed the baseline of the last two Management Plans.

At the time of preparing this Management Plan, landscape character assessments are being up-dated for Staffordshire. During the delivery of this Plan the baseline landscape character assessments will therefore be reviewed against the new information.

During the 2009–14 Management Plan period National Character Area profiles were developed by Natural England. National Character Areas (NCAs) divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and cultural and economic activity. Their boundaries follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision making framework for the natural environment. 67 – Cannock Chase and Cank Wood applies to this AONB.

The NCA identifies three principal environmental opportunities, all of which are relevant to this Management Plan but particularly SEO 3:

SEO 1: Expand lowland heathland to increase habitat connectivity, improve resilience to climate change and improve water quality.

SEO 2: Manage, enhance and expand the network of green infrastructure, such as woodlands, restored mining sites, parklands and canal routes, to increase biodiversity, access and recreational use and increase understanding of the area’s rich industrial heritage, particularly geodiversity.

SEO 3: Conserve and enhance the essential character of this varied landscape, which includes the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Forest of Mercia and the urban conurbation of the Black Country, to maintain food and timber production where possible; enhance landscape, sense of place and tranquillity; and increase resilience to climate change.

Also developed during the last Management Plan period are historic environment character assessments.

Whilst the landscape character assessments that form the baseline for previous Management Plans remain valid, it will be necessary to ensure that all the assessments are brought together and the most up to date information used. This exercise is therefore identified as a key action for delivery in this Management Plan.

For ease of delivery, the Partnership has split its work into five themes. Each of the five themes relates back to the High Level Objectives in Section 1 and an aspect of the AONB’s ecosystems. Much of the content could be classified in a number of the themes but each only appears once within the Management Plan.

The themes are:

LANDSCAPE	Everything relating to the visual and physical aspects of the area and its biodiversity, geodiversity and historic character.
PEOPLE	Everything relating to people’s understanding and awareness of the area, including how their behaviour can impact the AONB.
ECONOMY	All financial factors and links affecting the work of this Management Plan.
RECREATION	Everything relating to those who come to enjoy activities within the area and those who provide services to support those activities.
SUPPORT	Infrastructure and external factors that we must respond to for Management Plan delivery.

It should be noted that all references to objectives, policies and actions relate to the Cannock Chase AONB area. This wording has therefore not been repeated throughout the Management Plan but is assumed.



## Overview of Cannock Chase AONB

In England and Wales, those landscapes considered most valuable are protected as National Parks or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These landscapes are protected and managed by law to maintain their special character for now and the future. AONBs are designated by Natural England. The purpose of designation as an AONB is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty (which includes wildlife and cultural heritage, as well as scenery) of the area. AONBs are human-influenced, cultural, living and working landscapes. Their special characteristics often depend on enlightened and sensitive human management and policy making, as do their habitats, with the associated flora and fauna, which characterise and give local distinctiveness to the AONB.

### Designation

Cannock Chase AONB was designated for its high landscape quality, scientific interest and recreational value as one of 47 areas listed in the Report of the National Parks Committee in 1947. It consisted mainly of extensive heathland and coniferous plantation on an elevated plateau of Triassic sandstones and pebble beds, surrounded by large villages, collieries and historic parkland. Much of the heathland area presents an unspoilt almost semi-wilderness character, standing in contrast to the surrounding developments. The Minister confirmed the Designation Order on 16 September 1958.

### Locally

Cannock Chase AONB was designated in 1958 under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. It is the smallest mainland AONB at 68 km<sup>2</sup> (26 square miles). Its 13 parish and town councils fall into four districts and one county local authority. The area includes three Local Nature Reserves, as well as two working quarries and a wide range of historical features.

Malvern Hills, Shropshire Hills, the Cotswolds and Wye Valley AONBs and the Peak District National Park are the nearest neighbouring protected landscapes. Cannock Chase is relatively geographically isolated as an accessible area of high environmental quality and surrounded by many urban areas.

### Nationally

Cannock Chase AONB is part of a family of 46 AONBs in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The National Association for AONBs (NAAONB) is an independent organisation which acts on behalf of AONBs. The area includes five Sites of Special Scientific Interest and six Scheduled Monuments.

### Internationally

Cannock Chase AONB also has an international dimension and importance. The World Conservation Union (the IUCN) confirmed Cannock Chase AONB as meeting its Category V Protected Landscapes status in July 2013. These are areas that have "a clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values". A commitment to maintain an appropriate Management Plan and the protection of biodiversity has been made by the AONB Partnership to retain this status.

Cannock Chase AONB's heathland resource is internationally important, reflected in 1237 ha of the SSSI being designated a Special Area for Conservation, under the European Habitats Directive. For this reason, activity affecting that area must undergo Appropriate Assessment as part of the implementation of the Directive to ensure no negative impact to it.

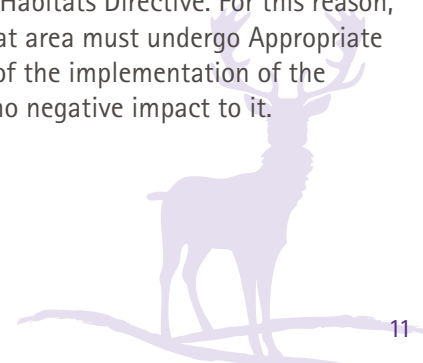




Figure 2 – Local authorities, parishes and town council boundaries

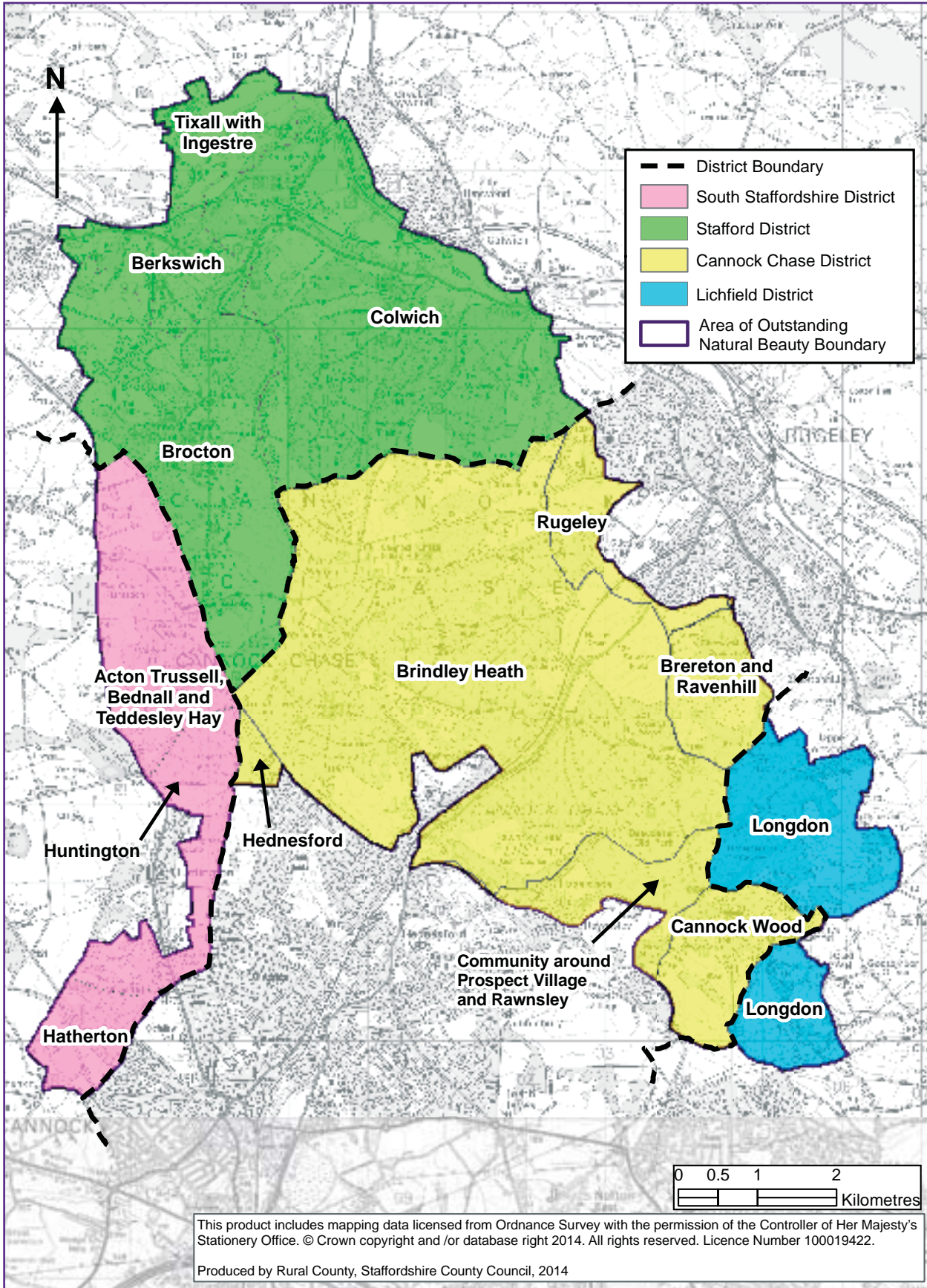
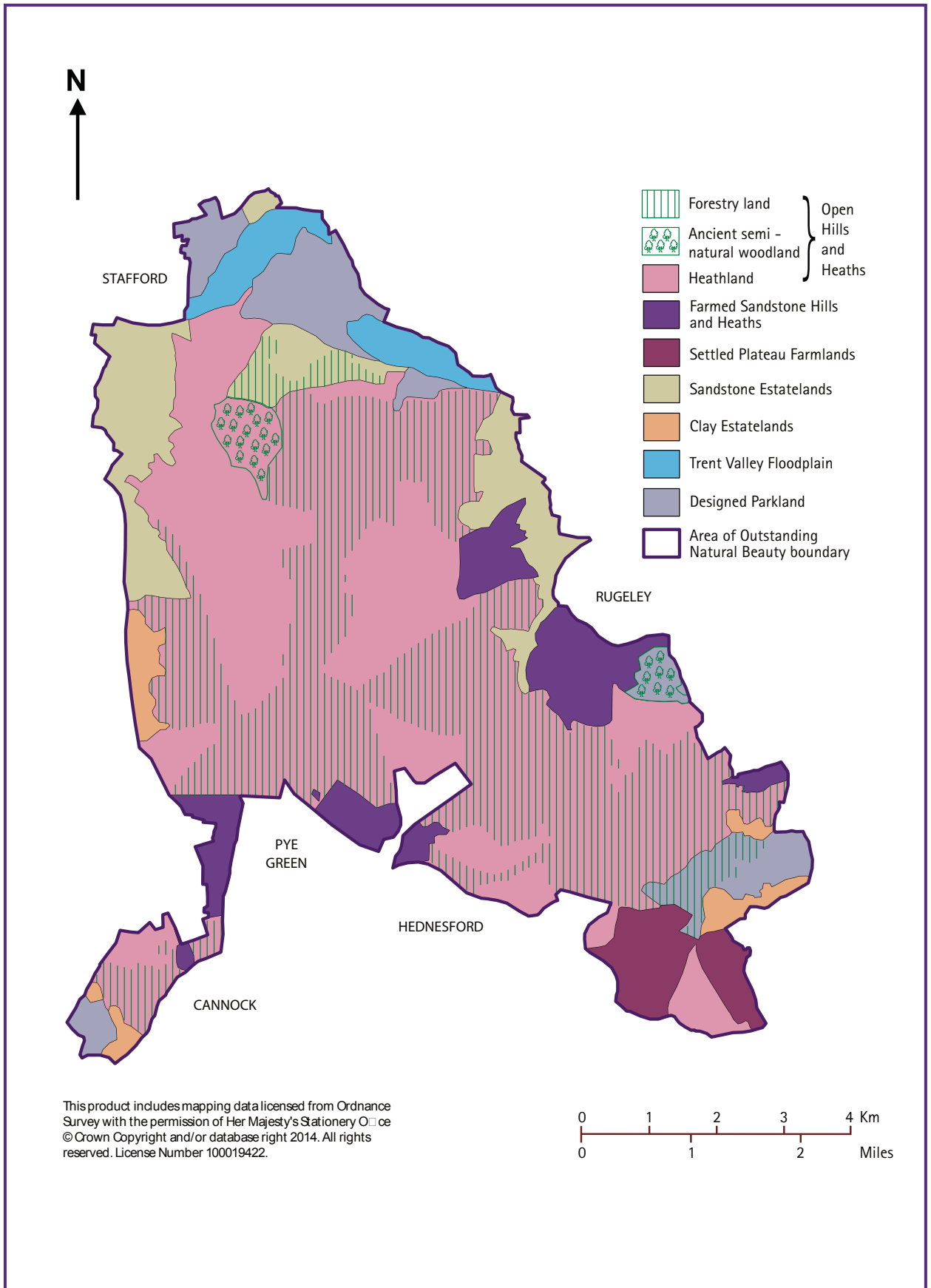


Figure 3 – Landscape Character Areas





## Overview of Landscape Character

### Open Hills and Heaths – Heathland

#### Special Qualities

*Large tract of open heathland with sweeping views – wide expanse of heather and scattered birch*

*Many fine views to surrounding countryside*

*Seasonal colour*

*Enclosure of dark green edges to adjacent conifer plantations*

*Tranquillity/remoteness*

#### Landscape Character Description

This is a remote unenclosed landscape of large tracts of open heathland on a dissected sandstone plateau, now associated in many areas with developing tree cover and the spread of bracken. The appearance of these areas changes dramatically with the seasons, from the purple of the heather in the summer and early autumn, to the golds and oranges of the dying bracken.



The large expanses of open land create an impression of spaciousness and give wide sweeping views over the heathland and beyond. Groups of regenerating birch and pine trees provide visual diversity, helping to create a more intimate feel to parts of this landscape, and conifer edges often visually enclose the area so that all horizons appear wooded. Native oak woodlands and wood pasture are a restricted but very important feature as a surviving remnant of the once widespread forests of this area.

High public pressure is evident in deeply eroded paths and tracks which are highly visible because of the contrast between very light sandy soils and darker ground vegetation.

### Open Hills and Heaths – Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland

#### Special Qualities

*Ancient oak trees*

*Contrast to the adjacent heathland*

*Historical links*

#### Landscape Character Description

The native oak woodland and wood pasture are a restricted but very important feature as a surviving remnant of the once widespread forest of the area and an important feature of Cannock Chase AONB.

Of particular importance are the several hundred ancient pollarded oaks, some of which are 600 years old, found in Brocton Coppice. Clearings and glades within the Coppice give a sense of openness, although these are short views and restricted predominantly by a strongly undulating landform and extensive birch woodland, and are in great contrast to the adjacent heathlands and more recent woodlands. New planting has been carried out in many areas of the Coppice, in the form of plantations and singly planted oaks of local origin to ensure survival of the native oaks into the future.







## Open Hills and Heaths – Forest

### Special Qualities

*Changing character of the ordered pattern of different aged conifer forestry*

*Lines of beech along rides*

*Dark green coniferous edges to views from adjacent landscape*

### Landscape Character Description

These are wooded landscapes occupying the visually important higher ground and steeply sloping edges of flat to gently rolling dissected sandstone plateaux. Variations in woodland type alter the visual character of the landscape, from the mid greens of the deciduous oak and birch woodlands to the dark evergreen hues of the monoculture Scots and Corsican pine plantations. The openness and seasonal changes of the deciduous woodland contrast strongly with the conifer plantations where they are managed on a clear fell system. Here the ordered pattern of the internal landscape varies, from the open spaces of the newly planted areas, through the darkness of the mid-rotation, to the high canopy and more open stands of trees in the older plantations. The extent of planting in many places creates a strong impression of visual enclosure, where virtually all horizons appear wooded.

Remnant heathland vegetation survives along rides, roadsides and in clearings, and more strongly within the broadleaved woodlands. Roads tend to skirt these forested areas - where present they are often straight, and lined with beech trees. Remnant military installations are still evident in places.

## Farmed Sandstone Hills and Heaths

### Special Qualities

*Remnant heathy character with bracken and birch*

*Undulating landform cut deeply by stream valleys*

*Dominated by elevated woodland edges*

### Landscape Character Description

This landscape type varies from pastoral farmland characterised by an irregular, largely intact pattern of small-scale fields, to areas where intensive arable farming is associated with gappy hedges with declining hedgerow trees. Well-tended estates feature in some areas and strongly influence the landscape character.

The undulating landform is deeply cut by stream valleys and this results in both short to medium length, as well as long views across to neighbouring landscapes. Hedgerow tree cover in the pastoral areas is of over mature stunted oaks and is rarely so dense as to cause heavily filtered views across the area. Hedgerows are still largely intact although lack of maintenance is still a threat, leading to hedges becoming gappy or grown up.

The continual removal of trees and hedgerows in the areas of intensive arable farming is emphasising the strongly rounded landform, whilst the proximity of the urban and forest edges often give the landscape the character of being hemmed in.

The urban influence is very great, with built up areas visible and farm cottages improved. The small roads are all very well used, giving the impression of an area that is travelled through by large numbers of people. The variable condition tends to emphasise the vulnerability to change of this landscape.



## Settled Plateau Farmlands

### Special Qualities

*Undulating landform dissected by small wooded stream valleys*

*Clustered farmsteads and roadside cottages*

*Winding lanes with high hedgebanks*

*Small irregular hedged fields*

### Landscape Character Description

This is a landscape of gently rolling landform with more pronounced slopes and undulations in places, allowing medium and long distance views across to urban edges or surrounding landscapes. The land cover pattern is no longer sufficiently strong to control views, for the most part consisting of a deteriorating irregular pattern of hedged fields with sparse, regularly spaced stag-headed hedgerow oaks and occasional ash. Hedgerows have generally deteriorated to become very gappy, or collections of individual overgrown thorns, or are missing altogether with large amounts of fencing. There are, however, still areas where the field pattern is more intact and the landscape remains at a smaller scale, with hedgerow trees coalescing in the valleys to give a more wooded feel. The isolated presence of woodlands within the landscape has a strong localised effect on the visual quality of the area, with narrow broadleaved belts, ancient woodlands and estate plantations limiting views.

The proximity of the urban edge strongly influences the general character of the landscape. Some areas retain a peaceful, strongly rural character of clustered farmsteads and roadside cottages despite that proximity, whilst others are busy, noisy areas, dissected by major transport corridors, railways, quarries and power lines which, associated with a rapid decline in the maintenance of the landscape, are resulting in a disjointed, neglected character.

A network of winding ancient lanes makes the area readily accessible and subjected to commuter pressures. This combined with encroachment of housing and industry urbanises the general character with deterioration of landscape quality most noticeable at the immediate urban fringe.

## Sandstone Estatelands

### Special Qualities

*Straight hawthorn hedges*

*Cannock Chase woodland edge*

*Remnant heathland character*

*Developing suburban character*

### Landscape Character Description

These farmed landscapes are characterised by a regular field pattern with straight hawthorn hedges on a gently undulating landform. The scale of the landscape varies considerably from open farmlands of a medium to large scale where hedgerows are in decline and arable land-uses predominate, to other areas of small scale pastoral fields. The increasing introduction of fencing and conversion to horse pasture characterise most areas.

The elevated wooded edge of Cannock Chase dominates these landscapes and there is pressure from expanding settlements and property improvements, increasing the suburban influence on existing character.







## Clay Estatelands

### Special Qualities

*Large scale regular field pattern*  
*Foreground vista up to Cannock Chase edge*  
*Horse pasture*

### Landscape Character Description

This landscape type varies from small areas of pastoral farmland characterised by a regular, largely intact field pattern from small-scale fields now largely given over to horse grazing, to open larger scale areas where intensive arable and pastoral farming is associated with straight hedges and the introduction of fencing. This larger scale provides opportunities for extensive views across the landscape, as well as long views across to neighbouring landscapes and up to the Cannock Chase woodland edge. Hedgerows are still largely intact although lack of maintenance is still a threat, leading to hedges becoming gappy or grown up.

Farm diversification is having a localised effect in some areas and adjacent to designed parklands the extensive woodland cover and parkland edges dominate and guide views through the landscape.

## Trent Valley Floodplain

### Special Qualities

*River and stream courses*  
*Flat pastoral landscape*  
*Riverside tree species*  
*Contrast with Cannock Chase wooded slopes*

### Landscape Character Description

These riverine landscapes are characterised by their flat alluvial floodplain and visual links with the landform and land uses of surrounding areas. The predominantly pastoral farming on the floodplain gives way to areas of arable cropping where this becomes possible due to the slight in land levels.

The landscape is characterised by trees associated with waterside planting, with willow, alder and poplar predominating along the river, stream and ditch courses. Hedgerow condition varies, with some areas intact and well looked after, mainly in the pastoral areas, whilst deterioration in other places is resulting in remnant hawthorn hedgerows, extensive wire fences and occasional hedgerow oaks. The river channels of the Rivers Trent and Sow form a special feature of this landscape.

The visual links with the surrounding landscapes is important in these landscapes. There is always a sharp contrast of character between the steeply rising conifer or broadleaved slopes of Cannock Chase and the flat open pastoral landscapes of the river valley.

Habitation tends to occur adjacent to the floodplain, as at Tixall, Great Haywood and Colwich. Where roads cross these landscapes they are generally small winding lanes, with fast through routes running along the edges. Canals feature strongly and contribute to local character where they are present. The electrified West Coast main line railway route becomes a dominant feature and adjacent built up areas change the character of the landscape in some areas by influencing its rural appearance.



## Designed Parklands

### Special Qualities

*Unique design and history*

*Landscape quality*

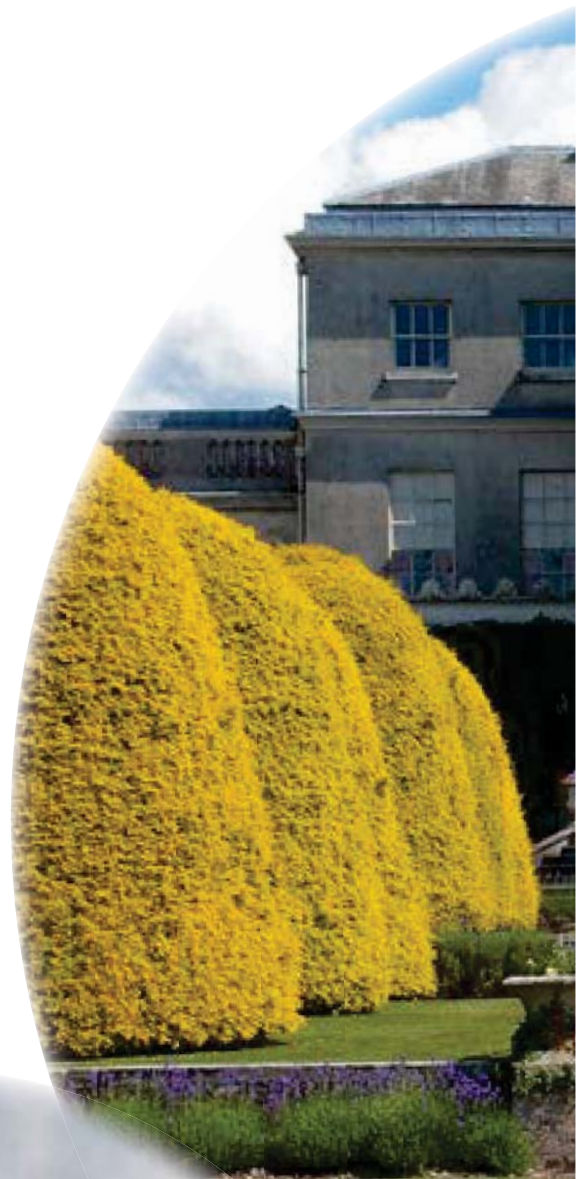
*Landmark historic buildings*

### Landscape Character Description

The parklands of Shugborough, Beaudesert, Tixall, Wolseley and Hatherton all fall within Cannock Chase AONB. Each parkland is a unique product of its original design and its evolution over time and these landscapes are locally and individually sensitive to the impacts of development and land use change.

The important hall, gardens and parkland of Shugborough have remained largely intact and it is included on the Register of Parks and Gardens maintained by English Heritage as a grade 1 site. Hatherton Park is the only other historic park that has retained the hall as a central feature, although the parkland has deteriorated in quality and the most notable features are now the central lake and boundary wall. The other parklands remain recognisable to varying degrees and their original designed layout can be traced on the ground, with Wolseley Park having remnants of parkland and designed woodland around Wolseley Park House at Etchinghill. Tixall Gatehouse forms an important architectural feature and the designed influence on the village of Tixall is strong.

Beaudesert is well visited as a Scout and Guide Campsite and the extent of the original parkland can be appreciated by views of the Grand Lodge at Longdon and other boundary properties west of Gentleshaw. The walled garden is important and still complete within the Campsite itself.





## Landscape

### Landscape Key Issues

KI1 Heathland habitats form the core of the AONB designation and need to be maintained in favourable condition over the long term.

KI2 Woodland habitats are an important large scale integral landscape element within the AONB, linking to the heathland areas and need to be managed to support nature conservation.

KI3 The publicly managed forest areas need to provide multi-purpose public benefits for the long term.

KI4 Some inappropriate landscape elements and structures are being introduced as a result of land use change to horticulture and resulting in some poor quality.

KI5 Diversification in the management of farms and other sites can impact and change the landscape character.

KI6 Pressure for development, its quality and impacts may change the character of the AONB landscapes and its setting.

KI7 Encroachment of urban elements into landscapes.

KI8 The need to accommodate infrastructure for renewable energy.

KI9 The development of major new housing provision immediately surrounding the AONB may significantly increase the impact of regular visitors to localised areas.

KI10 Climate change, invasive species and plant diseases will continue to impact land management and other activities in the AONB.

KI11 Loss of key parkland features such as ancient trees and boundary walls.

KI12 Field patterns and habitats continue to deteriorate due to lack of hedgerow maintenance.

KI13 Maintaining historical features within the landscape.

KI14 Maintaining the links to the heritage of military history within the current AONB landscape, particularly from WW1.

KI15 Protection and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity is essential to the landscape. Connections need to be made between the biodiversity and geodiversity within the AONB and the landscapes surrounding it.

KI16 Fragmentation of habitats is a risk.

KI17 The area is used for all types of recreation, all year round, by a large number of visitors whose pursuit of enjoyment must be balanced against the need to conserve and enhance the AONB.

KI18 The increasing impact of visitors on designated sites, such as the SAC, means greater pressure on other areas and implies greater needs to manage their visits.

KI19 Other formal designations exist within the AONB that must be addressed for long term management.

KI20 Deer population impacts on traffic, landscape, farming, recreation and local residents needs a consistent and agreed approach.

KI21 Maintaining views from and into the AONB.

KI22 Ancient woodland needs to be protected and restored to secure its long term future.

KI23 Mineral extraction, waste disposal and landfill and restoration of these sites.

KI24 Water quality and flows need to be maintained.





## People

### Factors

Cannock Chase is very accessible to people via highways, car parking, public rights of way and open access.

High numbers of people interact with the AONB. Visitors' awareness of the AONB designation can be low or lacking. There are some pockets of crime and anti-social behaviour that affect other visitors.

The AONB is rich in historical, cultural and geological links to the landscape.

There is a strong "sense of place" and ownership of the AONB within its surrounding communities. Public

sector ownership of land can mean prevailing attitudes that rights of access are assumed and contributions of resource to sustain the area have already been made.

The majority of visitors arrive in a car and commuter traffic is high. Traffic and transport used by both local people and visitors have an impact on the AONB and its wildlife.

The design/location of the range of 'furniture' (signs etc) needed for the management of traffic has an impact on the visual quality of the area, peace and tranquillity, wilderness and open country.

### People Key Issues

KI25 Increase awareness of the AONB.

KI26 Increase awareness of the geology and soils of the AONB.

KI27 Raise awareness of the historical features and cultural aspects relating to the landscape.

KI28 Increase involvement and engagement of people in supporting the AONB.

KI29 The volume and speed of cars and HGVs in and around the area has potential to damage environmental quality.

KI30 An AONB-wide approach to highways design and management is required.

KI31 A consistent approach to traffic management needs to be linked to the promotion and management of visitor venues in the AONB.

KI32 Crime against people, property and wildlife.

KI33 Criminal and anti-social activity within AONB car parks e.g. fly tipping, dogging.

KI34 Lack of resource for car parking.





## Economy

### Factors

There are no towns in the AONB, with communities residing in the fringe area around Cannock Chase. Employment within the AONB is largely confined to the core area in forestry, managing recreation and the fabric of the Country and Forest Parks and in the provision of services to visitors. Some of this employment is on the fringe or outside the AONB. Agriculture is confined to the fringe area. In addition, quarrying activity takes place at two sites within the area.

Visitor numbers are increasing each year. Infrastructure to support visitors is struggling to meet the practical needs of increased volumes. Visitors' spend needs to be used to maintain the AONB.

Around the fringes of the area, light industry and small/medium scale businesses exist.

Business activity, such as farming, forestry and provision of visitor facilities, relates directly to the landscape.

Some business activity can have a positive and some a negative impact on the area.

### Economy Key Issues

KI35 Mechanisms to encourage economic returns from visitors need to be developed.

KI36 Visitor numbers are increasing incrementally each year and most spend little money in the area during those visits.

KI37 There is a desire to ensure some benefits from economic gains are directed back into the management of the AONB.

KI38 Businesses that directly benefit from the AONB do not currently invest in its conservation and enhancement, as appropriate mechanisms are yet to be developed.

KI39 A link can be made between business activity and the AONB environment, creating opportunities for economic benefits that should be used to support sustainably the AONB's management and its communities.

KI40 The health of agriculture and forestry activity needs to be supported within the AONB.





# Recreation

## Factors

Recreation is one of the main activities/pressures on the AONB, with a focus on the heathland and woodlands. People's enjoyment of these areas and the high percentage of open access are central to its special qualities.

The area offers opportunities for healthy activity.

The main interaction with the AONB revolves around the sheer (and increasing) number of visitors. The majority of these are regular visitors from the many nearby urban areas. Local areas are increasing housing stock that implies an increase of 15% visitors.

The visitors require infrastructure e.g. centres, car parks, places to stay, signs, information and refreshments. The management must achieve a balance between the conservation of the AONB and its visitors.

Income from visitors should provide resources to pay for the cost of managing the AONB.

Cannock Chase is served by five visitor centres. There are further opportunities for visitors to go to areas offering similar activities outside the AONB but nearby.

A national tourism accord has been agreed between AONBs, Defra and Visit England to address the right way forward for tourism in AONBs.

The quiet enjoyment appropriate to the AONB's character and sought by the majority of visitors can be disturbed by other recreational activity. The range of differing activities undertaken can cause conflicts of interest.

Visitors can have a particular impact on the following special qualities, affecting the balance of ecosystems:

- peace, tranquillity and open country
- heathland
- flora & fauna.

## Recreation Key Issues

KI41 The area is used for all types of recreation, all year round, by a large number of visitors whose pursuit of enjoyment must be balanced against the need to conserve and enhance the AONB.

KI42 National policy directs that people are increasingly encouraged to access the countryside and that may conflict with the need to conserve and enhance the AONB.

KI43 There is an inconsistent approach to the management of car parking. Approaches can also be divorced from the needs for visitor and access management.

KI44 The AONB is a place that offers opportunities for quiet healthy activity for all people that will have minimal impact on its conservation.

KI45 The retention of the AONB as a place of peace and tranquillity is of high importance to the majority of residents and visitors. A lack of peace and tranquillity and impacts on habitats have been linked to the increasing volumes of visitors coming to the AONB.





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KI46 The development of major new housing provision immediately surrounding the AONB may significantly increase the impact of regular visitors to localised areas.

KI47 There is a lack of directional and interpretation signage. Existing signage is not always well maintained and there can be a proliferation of advertising signage. Access and information via newer technologies are yet to be widely available.

KI48 Conflicts can occur between different types of users of the area.

KI49 A consistent strategy is needed for visitor management across the whole AONB.



## Support

### Factors

The CROW Act requires that the AONB is managed in partnership. Many stakeholders need to be involved and their activity co-ordinated.

There are legislative requirements for specified organisations and how they should manage the AONB.

A range of organisations and individuals have responsibilities for the AONB landscape.

There are 46 other AONBs across the UK, as well as National Parks. This offers opportunities to draw upon others good practice and work jointly with other teams.

Information on progress in delivery is essential. The approach to data collection needs to be pragmatic.

Management needs and legislative requirements need to be supported by appropriate systems, people and finance to ensure progressive improvement in delivery.

Reducing financial resources require innovation and flexibility in accessing funding for the Partnership's work.



### Support Key Issues

KI50 A wide range of organisations and individuals need to work together in active partnership to achieve delivery of the Management Plan.

KI51 Existing and future legislation directs activity within the AONB.

KI52 Some organisations have statutory duties towards the AONB.

KI53 The policy approach to protecting the AONB needs to be consistent.

KI54 Data on the condition of the AONB and factors affecting it need to be maintained.

KI55 Lack of resources can impact on the delivery of the Management Plan.

KI56 The governance of the Partnership needs to look to the future to enable the maximum resources to be achieved for the delivery of the Management Plan.

## Landscape Policies

LP1 The Partnership will ensure consistency in management and operational plans relating to the AONB's diverse landscapes and the biodiversity and geodiversity within them.

LP2 The practical management, restoration and protection of heathlands will be a priority within the Partnership's delivery of the Management Plan.

LP3 Sustainable woodland and tree management, restoration and creation will be a priority within the delivery of the Management Plan.

LP4 The Partnership will address the impact of horiculture with land and horse owners.

LP5 Mechanisms will be sought to identify and encourage sustainable agricultural land management practices.

LP6 The Partnership will seek to influence planning policies, Local Plans and planning decisions to ensure they incorporate measures for the conservation and enhancement of the AONB landscape and scenic beauty.

LP7 Development that acknowledges and respects the special qualities of the AONB and meets other Management Plan policies will be supported.

LP8 Inappropriate development by extractive, waste and landfill industries will be resisted.

LP9 Management strategies for the area will be adapted to protect against changes in climate, plant and animal health.

LP10 Parklands will be conserved and enhanced.

LP11 Work will be undertaken to ensure protection of all landscape, heritage, geological and ecological designated assets.

LP12 Significant archaeological, geological and historical landscapes and their settings will be identified, conserved and enhanced.

LP13 Species within the AONB will be managed to maintain a viable, sustainable and balanced ecosystem.

LP14 The landscape's wilderness and open qualities will be protected for people to enjoy.

LP15 The distinctive landscape character of the AONB will be conserved and enhanced, including views into and out of the area.

LP16 Nature will be conserved to ensure the sustainability of the area's ecosystems, ensuring that links to habitats and landscapes to surrounding areas are also maintained.

LP17 Other areas of conservation designated within the AONB boundary will have specific measures for management supported.

LP18 Water environments will be conserved in accordance with the Water Framework Directive and the Humber River Basin Management Plan through liaison and action with the steering group for the River Trent area.







## People Policies

PP1 The importance of the AONB will be communicated clearly and consistently to foster a greater appreciation and respect for the designation.

PP2 Co-ordinated, high quality information, interpretation and educational material will be provided and available to everyone about Cannock Chase AONB to support sustainable visitor management.

PP3 Centres of excellence will be created at the network of local AONB visitor centres to explain the importance of Cannock Chase AONB.

PP4 Communities, visitors and businesses will be engaged actively.

PP5 The Partnership will seek to influence those who control highways and traffic issues to ensure solutions appropriate to the AONB.

PP6 The Partnership will seek management measures that minimise the potential for crime and anti-social behaviour and maximise public safety.

PP7 A strategy integrating visitor access and management (including car parking, public transport, walking and cycling) will be developed and implemented.

## Economy Policies

EP1 Only sustainable, quality tourism will be promoted.

EP2 New and existing business within the AONB will be encouraged to contribute financially to the management of the AONB and enhance existing practices that already contribute, via mechanisms identified by the Partnership.

EP3 Sustainable economic proposals will be considered positively when they contribute to conserving and enhancing the AONB, in accordance with the statutory duty of the Partnership.

## Recreation Policies

RP1 Recreation activities will be supported through positive, consistent and area-wide management in areas that are the least vulnerable and most capable of absorbing impacts, including other areas nearby.

RP2 Integrated strategies will be developed in Partnership to manage visitors, enabling their enjoyment of the area appropriate to its sustainability and linking with other visitor destinations nearby.

RP3 Peace and tranquillity will be protected.

RP4 A welcoming, informative culture will be developed to support a balance between the sustainability of the area and visitors' enjoyment and use of it.



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RP5 The Partnership will work closely with those engaged in the preparation and implementation of sustainable tourism strategies and in accordance with the national accord between Defra, National Association for AONBs and Visit England.

RP6 Improvement of the access networks will minimise degradation of sensitive areas.

RP7 Visitors of all abilities will be encouraged to take healthy activity.

RP8 Respect for all those using the area will be improved through provision of information and education.

RP9 Clear signage and a range of physical and virtual interpretation appropriate to the character of the AONB will be developed and implemented to support sustainable visitor management whilst protecting the scenic beauty and quiet enjoyment of the area.

RP10 Partners will create and implement a consistent visitor management strategy for the area, linked to other nearby areas. In particular, consistency will be sought across the publicly owned areas of land that form the majority of the AONB.



## Support Policies

SP1 The formal Partnership will be maintained and work with others to deliver the Management Plan.

SP2 Activity will be co-ordinated across the AONB Partnership.

SP3 The Partnership will seek to ensure organisations fulfil their statutory duties towards the AONB.

SP4 The Partnership will work to influence others to adopt policy and strategy to ensure the AONB is placed at the heart of decision-making.

SP5 Work will be undertaken with national and international protected landscape communities to ensure best practice.

SP6 The condition of the AONB will be monitored and progress reported, using integrated data where possible.

SP7 Sustainable practices will be encouraged in the operational work of the AONB Partnership.

SP8 Sustainable levels of human and financial resource will be generated and maintained to deliver the Management Plan efficiently.





## Landscape

### Group 1 – Strategic management

LA1	Ensure there is integration between all management plans for heathland.
LA2	Ensure all AONB land management plans link to one another.
LA3	Ensure land management plans incorporate an approach that allows for habitats and species to thrive in areas adjacent to each ownership boundary.
LA4	Ensure there is a long term approach to land management planning.
LA5	Ensure land management plans incorporate a range of techniques to develop mixed habitats and respond to threats from invasive species and plant diseases.
LA6	Incorporate new landscape character assessments with the existing local character descriptions, landscape and heritage character assessments and National Character Assessments to support the development of information upon which future AONB Management Plans are based and measured, ensuring no previous baseline data are lost. (Undertake additional assessments, as necessary).
LA7	Ensure the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) strategy incorporates a landscape scale approach to nature conservation within and around the AONB.
LA8	Incorporate management strategies within the visitor management plan that enable the protection of peace and tranquillity and open and wilderness qualities within the AONB.

### Group 2 – Implementing management

LA9	Implement the Higher Level Scheme (HLS) for the Country Park.
LA10	Implement the Higher Level Scheme (HLS) for Gentleshaw Common.
LA11	Implement the Higher Level Scheme (HLS) for Shoal Hill Common.
LA12	Maintain current knowledge of adaptation measures for climate change and incorporate it into land management plans.

### Group 3 – Woodland management

LA13	Carry out woodland management to the UK Forestry Standard.
LA14	Support private woodland owners to carry out woodland management to the UK Forestry Standard.
LA15	Participate in reviews and re-drafting of the woodland management plans for Cannock Chase.

### Group 4 – Parkland management

LA16	Encourage the preparation and implementation of management plans for parkland, through demonstrating the impact of planning and delivery in the Shugborough plans.
LA17	Support the management of parklands appropriate to their character and siting.
LA18	Resist the loss of parkland area.



### Group 5 – Heritage management

LA19	Undertake data collection (to include LiDAR if possible) to inform and produce a Historic Environment Assessment of the AONB landscape.
LA20	Prepare a Historic Environment Management Plan (HEMP) to include research, management and education/interpretation objectives for the next five and ten year cycles.
LA21	Deliver research and investigation priorities identified in the HEMP.
LA22	Develop and deliver project ideas to support the commemoration of the Great War in the context of the AONB's role in preserving and protecting its history.
LA23	Identify, develop and deliver targeted projects to conserve heritage assets at Beaudesert.
LA24	Identify, develop and deliver conservation projects at Castle Ring.

### Group 6 – Geology management

LA25	Identify, protect and manage sites of importance for geology, soils or landform to ensure their continuing role in defining the character of the AONB.
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### Group 7 – Aquatic management

LA26	Assess the impacts of rising mine waters to identify whether they will affect the area.
LA27	Manage wetland areas, streams and watercourses to maintain and improve water quality and species.
LA28	Assess the impact of historical land management on water courses and create land management plans as appropriate.
LA29	Work directly with the River Basin Management Plan partnership to identify land management issues within the AONB to support delivery of the Water Framework Directive.
LA30	Deliver identified projects from the Trent area of the Humber catchment plan.

### Group 8 – Supporting land owners and managers

- LA31 Target information to those involved in equestrian activity in the area to ensure understanding of the AONB's importance is maintained.
- LA32 Support the promotion and implementation of environmentally sensitive use of agricultural land within the landscape.
- LA33 Encourage the uptake of agri-environment schemes.
- LA34 Provide advice to land owners on species and habitat management appropriate to the AONB.
- LA35 Encourage land owners to restore missing and poorly maintained hedgerows, through incentives and advice.
- LA36 Work with farmers, residents and the Highways Authority to gather data to inform the management of deer across the AONB.
- LA37 Develop a strategy and practical mechanisms to deliver management of deer, enabling the protection of this and other species, habitats and people within the AONB.
- LA38 Support land managers to develop and promote regimes that address removal and reduction of litter and fouling.



### Group 9 – Planning and development

- LA39 Seek protection of the AONB and its setting in accordance with the agreed Planning Protocol.
- LA40 Review (and revise as necessary) the Planning Protocol with planning authorities to enable active interventions in planning matters that support the conservation of the AONB's special character.
- LA41 Seek to prevent inappropriate extensions of existing quarries and obtain the highest standards of restoration.
- LA42 Work with local authorities responsible for the mitigation of impact on the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) to deliver projects appropriate to the health of both the SAC and the AONB's conservation.
- LA43 Seek mitigation from development that impacts the AONB via developer contributions including Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and s106 mechanisms.

### Group 10 – Connectivity

- LA44 Encourage land managers within and adjacent to the AONB to enhance the value and extent of heathland and other Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats and species.
- LA45 Identify and deliver "cross boundary" projects in support of connectivity e.g. Connecting Cannock Chase.





## People

### Group 1 – Develop understanding

- PA1 Review, consult upon and update the Interpretation Strategy.
- PA2 Implement the AONB Interpretation Strategy and its Action Plan.

### Group 2 – Creating tools for understanding

- PA3 Provide information and interpretation to champion the AONB, using a wide range of media and targeting understanding and enjoyment across all audiences.
- PA4 Ensure suite of leaflets is up to date and available in appropriate media.
- PA5 Establish clear usage for each of the AONB web based information sites.
- PA6 Work with other partnerships e.g. Destination Management Partnership (DMP ) to ensure the AONB information is widely understood.

### Group 3 – Visitor information

- PA7 Develop the role of the visitor centres located within the AONB as providers of co-ordinated information.





- PA8 Develop projects for future provision of visitor facilities that address increasing visitor needs and balance these with the protection of the AONB.
- PA9 Seek resource to deliver appropriate changes to visitor facilities.
- PA10 Establish the most appropriate base for the work of the AONB Partnership within the network of visitor and other accessible facilities within the AONB boundary and secure resources for its delivery.

**Group 4 – Involving communities**

- PA11 Raise awareness of the importance and relevance of the AONB to its local communities and strive to increase the involvement of those communities in decisions, projects and management.
- PA12 Provide support to local communities for activities that will assist in achieving the aims of the Management Plan.
- PA13 Develop and implement innovative ways to increase all community action, volunteering and cultural activity in the AONB.
- PA14 Involve local and interest communities in reviews of the Management Plan and its delivery.

**Group 5 – Transport links**

- PA15 Develop and publish a strategy for transport, working with the Highways Authority, that respects the local distinctiveness of the AONB and reconciles its needs with businesses, residents and visitors.
- PA16 Implement traffic management schemes from the AONB transport strategy.
- PA17 Support initiatives to increase the use of public and non-motorised transport.
- PA18 Identify and seek appropriate speed limits and traffic calming measures to reflect the special nature of the AONB.
- PA19 Develop a car parking strategy which will consider an AONB-wide approach to issues including location, capacity, crime, charging and provision of alternative means of access to the AONB.
- PA20 Develop an area wide strategy for dealing with each key issue of crime and anti-social behaviour affecting the AONB.
- PA21 Incorporate land management measures that “design out” the impact of crime and anti-social behaviour and “design in” positive public safety.
- PA22 Conduct targeted campaigns of action to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in the AONB.





## Economy

### Group 1 – Tourism

- EA1 Ensure there are specific measures for tourism in the AONB within the visitor management strategy.
- EA2 Identify infrastructure needs to deliver sustainable tourism in the AONB.
- EA3 Develop and deliver infrastructure projects in partnership with land owners.
- EA4 Work with other tourism providers to develop a sub regional strategy for attracting visitors that enables the protection of the AONB and offers wider opportunities for visitors in places surrounding and linked to the AONB.
- EA5 Identify and implement means for economic returns from tourism to benefit the AONB.
- EA6 Develop and implement tourism projects that showcase and protect the AONB.

### Group 2 – Engaging with business

- EA7 Maintain and strengthen links with the Local Enterprise Partnerships that work with the AONB.
- EA8 Develop working relationships, particularly with local businesses, that are long-term and benefit both business and the AONB's sustainability and management through specifically identified delivery mechanisms.
- EA9 Develop "ready to go" Management Plan projects attractive for businesses to become involved in.
- EA10 Develop a stronger "brand" for the AONB and ensure it is used to support programmes that sustain the area.
- EA11 Work with tourism and business professionals to create an environment where they wish to continue delivering their work.
- EA12 Identify finance generation mechanisms to help sustain AONB management e.g. payback schemes.
- EA13 Deliver the finance generation mechanisms.
- EA14 Review and revise the impact of the finance generation mechanisms.

### Group 3 – Linking economic health directly to the AONB

- EA15 Work with planning and business professionals to create only infrastructure development that conserves and enhances the character of the AONB.
- EA16 Support initiatives to develop the markets for products that originate from the AONB, particularly forestry, agriculture and heathland produce.
- EA17 Develop protocols and practices to identify products suitable for AONB endorsement.





## Recreation

### Group 1 – Balancing visitor activity with AONB protection

- RA1 Develop, agree and implement an integrated AONB-wide visitor and recreation management strategy, working with tourism providers, land owners, recreational users and local communities to ensure that conflicts between multiple users, as well as the environment, are minimised.
- RA2 Ensure the visitor management strategy links to other activity within the surrounding region, working with venues, the Destination Management Partnership, the Local Nature Partnership and Local Enterprise Partnerships.
- RA3 Encourage joint working with other visitor destinations and create links between them and the AONB.
- RA4 Identify complementary visitor destinations to the AONB to accommodate more widely activities that are creating particular pressure on the AONB's character and conservation.
- RA5 Agree a prioritised action plan for the AONB visitor management strategy.
- RA6 Deliver the visitor management strategy action plan.

### Group 2 – Providing access

- RA7 Encourage the use of designated access networks.
- RA8 Liaise with those responsible for formal access networks to ensure their maintenance and use.
- RA9 Ensure that formal access networks are well maintained and waymarked.
- RA10 Develop a cycling strategy related to the current and planned infrastructure within the AONB.
- RA11 Deliver the actions identified within the cycling strategy.
- RA12 Repeat the peace and tranquillity monitoring to assess whether it is being maintained.
- RA13 Develop and implement management practices that maintain peace and tranquillity.
- RA14 Develop and implement programmes for healthy activity.





## Group 3 – Sustainable recreation

RA15	Review recreational activities to monitor their effects.
RA16	Work with recreational groups to engage and involve organised recreation bodies and individuals in the development, organisation and monitoring of responsible recreational activity.
RA17	Continue the annual programme of awareness raising with targeted recreational groups.
RA18	Continue to develop "AONB ambassadors" within each recreational user group to ensure ownership and sustainability of projects implemented.
RA19	Deliver projects identified via the awareness raising and monitoring in partnership with the specific user groups as part of an annual rolling programme.
RA20	Review and up-date the AONB local code of conduct.
RA21	Promote the revised local code of conduct.

## Group 4 – Directing and informing visitors

RA22	Work with the relevant authorities to establish the nature, location and provision of signing outside the AONB, where it relates to facilities within the area.
RA23	Complete the audit of existing signage within the AONB boundary and identify areas of need, including sense of identity for the AONB, direction and interpretation.
RA24	Agree with authorities and land owners the provision of new signage, both physical and virtual.
RA25	Implement the installation of the identified suite of direction and interpretation signage.
RA26	Develop and implement a co-ordinated approach to educational visits.
RA27	Develop and implement projects to interpret and convey the importance of conserving and enhancing all aspects (cultural, historical, geological and environmental) of the landscape.
RA28	Review, update and adhere to the Partnership logo design rules.
RA29	Develop branding principles and confirm a formal copyright for the Partnership logo.

## Support

### Group 1 – Making the Partnership effective

SA1	Ensure that the AONB's management meets legislative requirements.
SA2	Maintain and develop effective partnerships to co-ordinate management.
SA3	Each Partner must deliver all constitutional and statutory requirements.
SA4	Review the Partnership's administrative arrangements to ensure effective and consistent delivery.
SA5	Up-date the Partnership Agreement as identified in the review and agree with Defra.
SA6	Ensure co-ordinated delivery of actions across all those who have agreed them.
SA7	Review regularly topic and project action groups to ensure appropriate delivery throughout the period of the Plan.
SA8	Ensure regular discussion about the AONB and its Management Plan within individual partners' organisations and that this is communicated to the Partnership.

### Group 2 – Working in partnership with others

SA9	Ensure the AONB is appropriately represented in local, regional and national policies, plans and strategies.
SA10	Actively seek to champion the AONB with influencers, policy and decision makers at a local, regional, national and international level.
SA11	Share best practice and information with other protected landscapes, working on joint initiatives as appropriate.

### Group 3 – Monitoring AONB condition and delivery success

SA12	Research and monitor habitats and key species identified as an indicator of AONB condition within the State of the AONB reporting.
SA13	Identify readily available monitoring data to minimise research effort.
SA14	Liaise with Natural England and Defra on national key indicators for AONB condition.
SA15	Monitor, assess and maintain records on landscape condition within and adjacent to the AONB.

### Group 4 – Maintaining and securing resources for delivery

SA16	Investigate, pursue and access all available funding sources to support delivery of the Management Plan.
SA17	Assess whether current Partnership arrangements allow the best access to available funding to sustain work in the AONB.
SA18	Create grant funds to deliver individual projects, as appropriate.
SA19	Sustain existing funding into the Partnership and support for the AONB Unit.
SA20	Deliver projects in the most sustainable way possible in the operational work of the Partnership.