

# Tamworth

## A Town for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

This newsletter provides an update on progress on the Local Development Framework (LDF) and news about recently completed and ongoing studies which might interest you.

### The revised planning system: Impact on Tamworth

The Government is proposing a major reform of the planning system to make it less complex and more responsive to development needs. Sustainable growth will be encouraged and planning will be used to meet the need for new homes and jobs and assist economic recovery. Key to this is the rapid production of a robust Local Plan to guide development. The Local Plan will pick up where the core strategy left off, but without the strategic framework of a regional plan. In future, local and if appropriate, neighbourhood plans, will be used to make local planning decisions.

Tamworth's core strategy will be re-branded the Tamworth Local Plan and will be expected to be consistent with the principles and policies of the emerging National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF provides substantially less guidance than the previous system of planning policy guidance and policy statements and places more emphasis on growth. Development that is deemed sustainable should be allowed, although still in the context of protecting the natural and built environments.

In line with the NPPF's requirement that authorities engage in cross boundary working where planning issues cross administrative boundaries, Tamworth is continuing to work with its neighbours in Lichfield and North Warwickshire to address sub-regional development issues.

The draft NPPF is out for consultation until the 17 October and can be viewed via the following link:  
[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/draftframeworkconsultation](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/draftframeworkconsultation)



# Core Strategy Update

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*Tamworth*  
Borough Council

[www.tamworth.gov.uk](http://www.tamworth.gov.uk)

## Housing Policy Update

In 2009 the Council produced its Proposed Spatial Strategy containing a full range of draft policies. Following additional work on affordable housing viability, the housing policies were redrafted and published in February 2011 for consultation. They included revised policies on housing delivery, affordable housing and Gypsy and Travelling Showpeople accommodation and new policies with targets for housing need and density. The Anker Valley policy remained unchanged from the Proposed Spatial Strategy.

The consultation generated 134 individual representations from 34 respondents, including statutory bodies, the public and adjoining local authorities. There was broad support for the strategic approach to housing and the proposed targets for affordable housing and housing density. Some people considered the targets for dwelling size, numbers and flexi care to be too prescriptive and requested flexibility in their application.

In order to justify targets for tenure type, mix and location the Council has commissioned an additional study jointly with Lichfield and Cannock Chase District Councils. The study is due to be completed at the beginning of November.

The representations were reported to the Council's Cabinet in August 2011 where they were endorsed and approval given for the additional work. The housing policy document, accompanying sustainability appraisal and cabinet report are all on the Council's website.

## New evidence

It is still important for the Local Plan policies to be based on up to date evidence. Work has continued on reviewing data and undertaking new studies where evidence has been considered necessary to justify the strategy.

A major piece of work relating to Tamworth town centre and retailing has recently been completed. The aim of the study was to provide the evidence to develop policies for the local plan by reviewing the following:

- Existing retail and leisure provision within the town centre, out of centre and local/neighbourhood centres
- Existing shopping patterns
- Forecasts of population and turnover
- Needs assessment of retail and leisure
- Qualitative assessment and health check of the town centre
- Qualitative health check of local and neighbourhood centres



The study makes policy recommendations for:

- A retail hierarchy comprising the town centre, 8 local centres and 17 neighbourhood centres
- Town centre first approach for retail
- Restriction on retail and leisure development outside the town centre and local centres unless the sequential test is met
- Amendment of the town centre boundary
- Definition of primary and secondary frontages
- Boundaries for local and neighbourhood centres
- Floorspace thresholds for retail impact assessments
- Requirement for impact on the Gungate scheme to be included in retail assessments
- Identification of opportunity sites for retail, leisure and offices
- A local and neighbourhood centres policy to ensure local needs are met

Other recently completed studies include:

- Strategic Housing Land Availability Study update
- Surface Water Management Plan Phases 1 and 2
- Outline Water Cycle Study
- Town Centre Links Project
- Staffordshire Joint Renewables/Low Energy Study
- Affordable Housing Viability Study
- Green Infrastructure Background Paper

All of these studies can be downloaded from the Council's website:

[www.tamworth.gov.uk/planning/local\\_development\\_framework/evidence\\_base.aspx](http://www.tamworth.gov.uk/planning/local_development_framework/evidence_base.aspx)

## Local Plan production timetable

The intention is to publish the Local Plan in early 2012 with a view to submitting it to the Secretary of State in spring. The examination will follow in the summer and the Local Plan will be adopted by the end of 2012.



## Other LDF Documents

Tamworth's Local Development Scheme (LDS) is the project plan for producing the LDF and is currently being reviewed. It is proposed that a limited number of SPDs will also be produced to support and provide more detail on Local Plan policies. The current proposal is to produce SPDs for the Town Centre along with Place Making and Planning Obligations. Work is due to start on the Town Centre SPD in the coming weeks. It will be subject to public consultation in early 2012.

## Keep in touch with us

If you want to keep in touch with progress on the LDF and are not yet on our mailing list, please get in touch with the Development Plan Team and we will add your details:

Phone us on: 01827 709279, 709278 or 709384  
email us at [developmentplan@tamworth.gov.uk](mailto:developmentplan@tamworth.gov.uk)  
or fill in and return the form below.



Name:.....

Organisation (if relevant).....

Address:.....

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Telephone number:.....

E-mail address:.....

Please return this form to:

Development Plan Team, Strategic Planning and Development Service,  
Tamworth Borough Council, Marmion House, Lichfield Street, Tamworth, B79 7BZ

## Accessibility

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