



# Lichfield City Neighbourhood Plan 2016 - 2029

**Pre-Submission Consultation (Regulation 14) Version July 2016**

**navigus**  
planning





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# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document represents the Neighbourhood Plan for Lichfield City. It represents one part of the development plan for the neighbourhood area over the period 2016 to 2029, the other part being the 2015 Lichfield District Local Plan. It is a plan that covers economic and employment matters only.
- 1.2 Lichfield District Council, as the local planning authority, designated the Lichfield City Neighbourhood Area in December 2013 to enable Lichfield City Council to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan has been prepared by the community through the Lichfield City Neighbourhood Plan (LCNP) Group.
- 1.3 The LCNP is being prepared in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012. The LCNP Group has prepared the plan to establish a vision for the future of the neighbourhood area and to set out how that vision will be realised through planning and controlling land use and development change over the plan period 2016 to 2029.
- 1.4 The map below shows the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area, which is contiguous with the civil parish of Lichfield.



- 1.5 The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to guide development and provide guidance to any interested parties wishing to submit planning applications for development within the

designated Neighbourhood Area. The process of producing a plan has sought to involve the community as widely as possible and the different topic areas are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance to Lichfield City, its businesses, residents and community groups. It has therefore given the community the opportunity to guide development within their neighbourhood.

- 1.6 Each section of the plan covers a different topic. Under each heading there is the justification for the policies presented which provides the necessary understanding of the policy and what it is seeking to achieve. The policies themselves are presented in the blue boxes. It is these policies against which planning applications will be assessed. It is advisable that, in order to understand the full context for any individual policy, it is read in conjunction with the supporting text.

### **National and local policy**

- 1.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states:

*"Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need. Parishes ... can use neighbourhood planning to set planning policies through neighbourhood plans to determine decisions on planning applications (para.183).*

*Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.*

*Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. To facilitate this, local planning authorities should set out clearly their strategic policies for the area and ensure that an up-to-date Local Plan is in place as quickly as possible. Neighbourhood plans should reflect these policies and neighbourhoods should plan positively to support them. Neighbourhood plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies (para.184).*

*Outside these strategic elements, neighbourhood plans will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area. Once a neighbourhood plan has demonstrated its general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict. Local planning authorities should avoid duplicating planning processes for non-strategic policies where a neighbourhood plan is in preparation (para.185)".*

- 1.8 The relevant Lichfield District Local Plan was adopted in February 2015 and covers the period to 2029. It has provided the strategic context for the neighbourhood plan. The Vision for the District seeks to make improvements in skills, training, health and incomes. It also seeks to reduce the need to travel by car through improvements to walkways and cycle routes. The Neighbourhood Plan vision and policies seek to build on this and help deliver this vision.

## Consultation

1.9 The development of the LCNP has been led by a Steering Group consisting of Lichfield City councillors. The technical inputs on planning and economic matters have been provided by Navigus Planning and Peter Brett Associates.

1.10 Consultation in developing the LCNP has consisted primarily of the following:

- Direct interviews with a range of key stakeholders, including Lichfield District Council officers
- Meetings and engagement with the Tourism Company, authors of the Tourism Study
- A workshop with the Lichfield Forum, February 2015
- Workshops on the emerging LCNP policies, November 2015



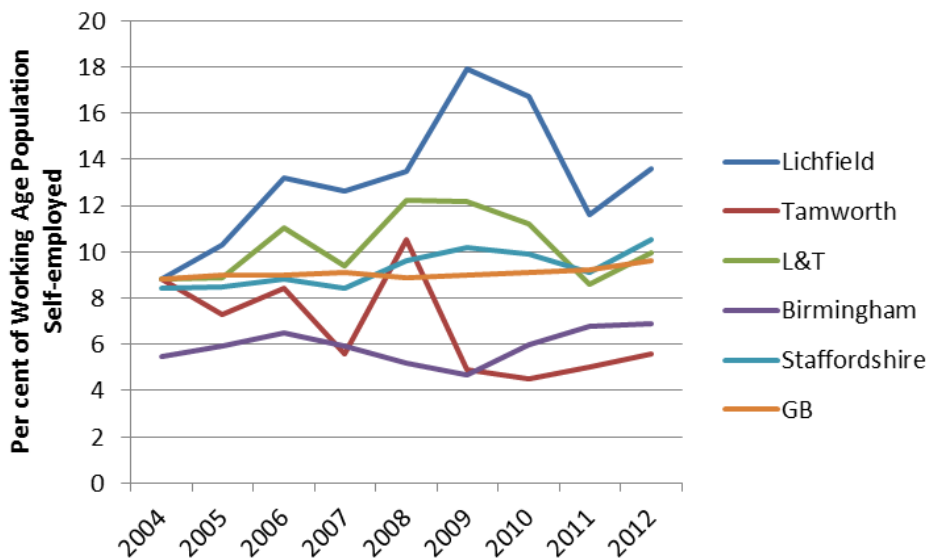


## 2 LOCAL CONTEXT

### Economic profile of Lichfield City

- 2.1 A summary of the profile of Lichfield City's resident workforce is shown on pages 6 and 7<sup>1</sup>.
- 2.2 What is noticeable about Lichfield City's population of working age (16 to 74) is that it has a comparatively high proportion of people in full-time employment.
- 2.3 Where Lichfield City has potential to improve is in the representation of self-employed people, both with and without employees. By contrast, self-employment in the district as a whole is well above the average for the West Midlands (Figure 2.1).

**Figure 2.1: Self-employment levels by district, 2004-2012**



Source: WECD (2013) Business Place Strategy for Tamworth and Lichfield Districts (Figure 2.16)

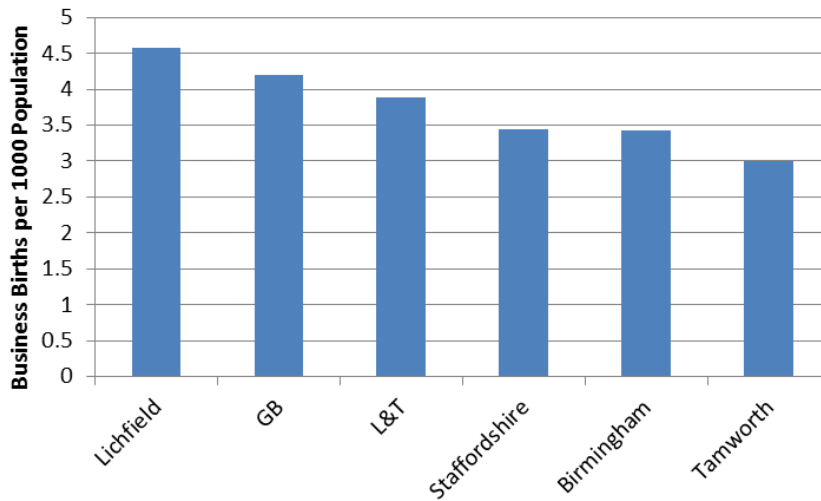
- 2.4 This is part of a wider trend of increasing levels of self-employment within the region. West Midlands experienced an increase in the proportion of people in self-employment from 288,000 in 2008 to 337,000 in 2013. Outside of London and the South East, it has the joint highest growth in the proportion of self-employment of any region.
- 2.5 With economic inactivity comparatively low, Lichfield City has a strong economic base from which to increase self-employment.
- 2.6 Lichfield City's workforce is comparatively strongly represented in two very different types of sectors. The first is public administration, education and health which is unsurprising given it is the main administrative centre in the district. The other set of sectors comprise high value activities, including the professional, scientific and technical sector and IT services. It is also well represented in the arts sector.
- 2.7 This is shown in the profile of work in Lichfield district itself. Over the period 2008 to 2011, Lichfield District has continually seen a higher relative number of businesses<sup>2</sup> compared to other districts in the sub-region. Moreover, the district has seen a higher

<sup>1</sup> Unless stated otherwise, the profile of the community has come from the 2011 Census

<sup>2</sup> Number of businesses per 1,000 population

relative number of new business 'births' than other districts nearby (Figure 2.2). Survival rates are also the highest for the period one to three years.

**Figure 2.2: Business births, 2011**



Source: WECD (2013) Business Place Strategy for Tamworth and Lichfield Districts (Figure 2.20)

2.8 The main sectors that provide employment in the district are manufacturing, retail, administration, education and health (Table 2.1).

**Table 2.1: Employment by sector in Lichfield District, 2011**

Sector	Lichfield
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	0.1%
Mining & quarrying	0.2%
Manufacturing	<b>11.7%</b>
Electricity, gas, etc.	0.2%
Water supply	1.0%
Construction	6.7%
Wholesale & retail; incl. motor repair	<b>16.0%</b>
Transportation & storage	4.7%
Accommodation & food service	6.1%
Information & communication	3.0%
Financial & insurance	1.5%
Real estate activities	1.5%
Professional, scientific & technical	7.4%
Administrative & support	<b>9.4%</b>
Public administration & defence	4.3%
Education	<b>8.1%</b>
Human health & social work	<b>11.6%</b>
Arts, entertainment & recreation	3.2%
Other service activities	3.4%

Source: WECD (2013) Business Place Strategy for Tamworth and Lichfield Districts (Figure 13)



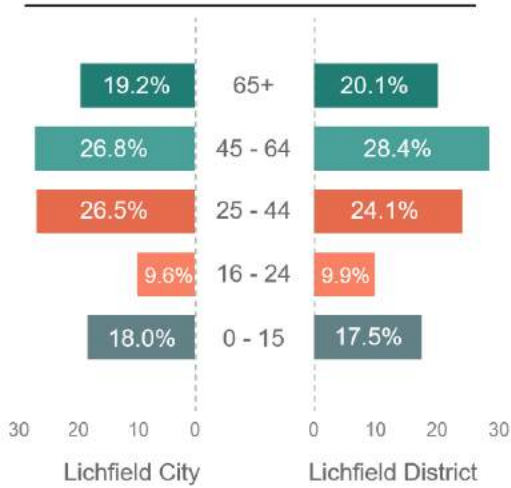
All data is derived from 2011 Census unless otherwise stated

## Socio-economic Profile: Lichfield City

Total Population

# 32,219

### Age Profile

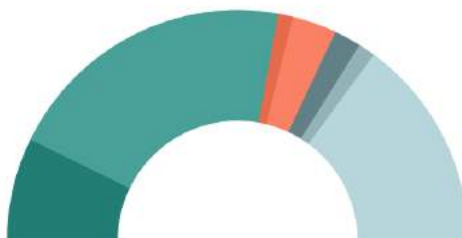


### Occupation



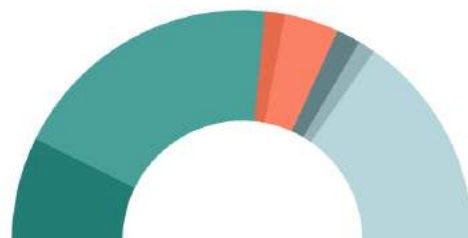
### Economic Activity

Lichfield City



- Part-Time Employee (15%)
- Full-Time Employee (41%)
- Self-Employed with Employees (2%)
- Self-Employed w/o Employees (6%)
- Unemployed (4%)
- Full-Time Student (2%)
- Economically Inactive (30%)

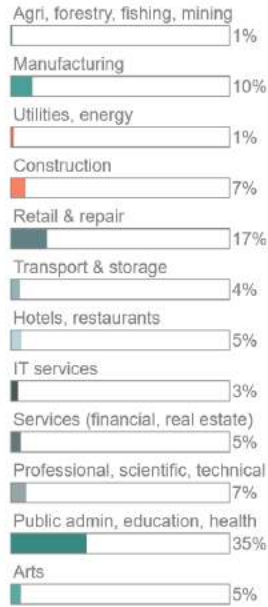
Lichfield District



- Part-Time Employee (15%)
- Full-Time Employee (39%)
- Self-Employed with Employees (3%)
- Self-Employed w/o Employees (8%)
- Unemployed (3%)
- Full-Time Student (2%)
- Economically Inactive (31%)

## Employment Sector

### Lichfield City

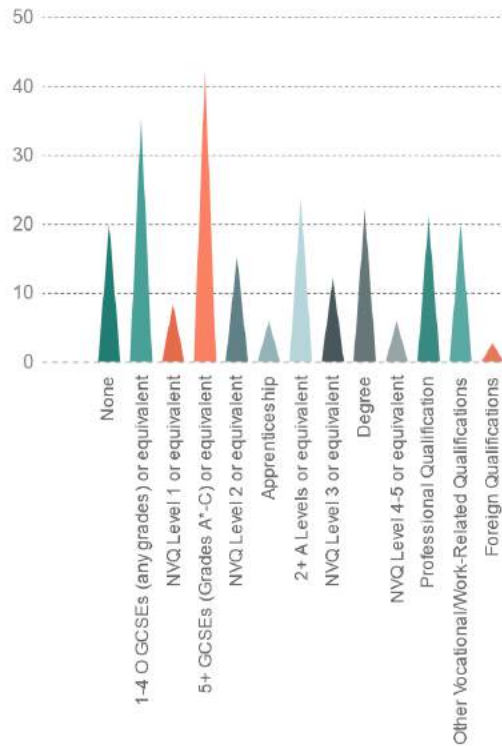


### Lichfield District

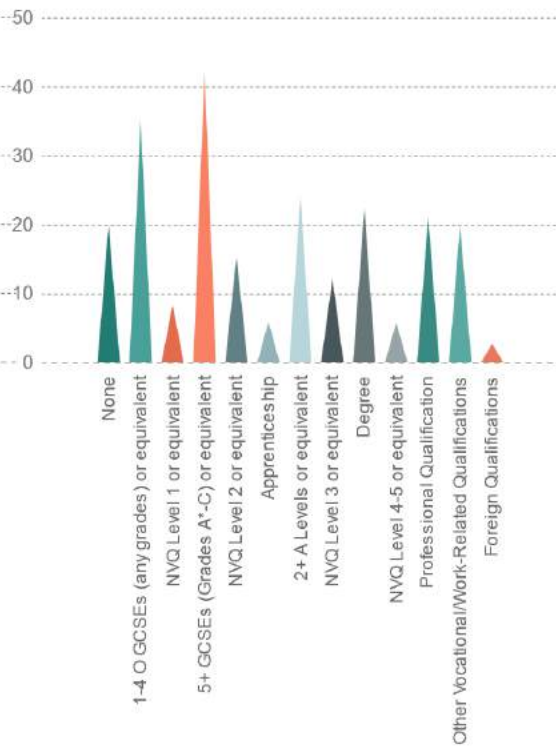


## Qualifications

### Lichfield City



### Lichfield District



## Tourism

- 2.9 Lichfield City has a significant heritage and is a tourist destination. The district supports over 2.5 million visitors per year and over 2,300 jobs, with the vast majority of these being in Lichfield City. However, as identified by the Lichfield City Centre Development Strategy 2015-2020<sup>3</sup>:

*"An analysis of Lichfield's assets, facilities and tourism statistics supports a general impression that the visitor economy in Lichfield is underperforming against its potential, given the city's impressive history and cultural associations, iconic cathedral, beautiful open spaces and wealth of historic buildings, coupled with its central location."*

- 2.10 In short, Lichfield is less well known than other cathedral cities and could improve the value of its tourist economy.

## Local Plan policy

- 2.11 The 2015 Lichfield District Local Plan covers the period to 2029. The key policies of relevance to this economic neighbourhood plan are:

- Policy Lichfield 1: Lichfield Environment
  - "The outstanding, and nationally significant qualities of the built historic environment, including the Cathedral, Dr. Johnson's Birthplace and Erasmus Darwin House in addition to a wealth of listed buildings, designated Conservation Areas, medieval street patterns and other key heritage assets including Beacon Park and the Heritage Centre, civic spaces and places to hold events celebrating the City's heritage and culture will be protected and enhanced, including the wider setting in which they are located."
  - "The significant green infrastructure links through the City such as the linear park which connects Beacon Park, Minster and Stowe Pools and beyond to Eastern Avenue, will be protected and enhanced and links to physically connect the network of green and open spaces throughout the City will be supported, including links into the countryside beyond."
  - "People will be encouraged to enjoy the unique character of Lichfield City and its surroundings by walking or cycling, and improvements to cycle routes and pedestrian links to increase connectivity, accessibility and enjoyment will be supported. This includes the safeguarding and future delivery of the route for a restored Lichfield Canal from Huddlesford junction through Lichfield City."
- Policy Lichfield 2: Lichfield Services and Facilities
  - "Where possible the range of services and facilities in Lichfield City will be protected and enhanced so that they best meet the needs of residents, businesses and visitors. Access to services and facilities will be enhanced and improved to encourage increased levels of walking, cycling and travel by sustainable transport, whilst still allowing for sufficient and conveniently located parking to serve the City."

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<sup>3</sup> The Tourism Company (2015) *Lichfield City Centre Development Strategy 2015-2020*, for Lichfield City Centre Partnership



- Policy Lichfield 3: Lichfield Economy
  - “Lichfield City Centre will be promoted as a strategic centre by improving its range of shopping, leisure, business, cultural, education and tourist facilities whilst sustaining and enhancing the significance of its historic environment and heritage assets and their setting. This will be achieved by exploiting redevelopment opportunities identified in the City Centre whilst retaining the special architectural and historical character of the City.”
  - “Lichfield City will be the focus for new employment, office, leisure and shopping development. New employment uses will be focused on the Burton Old Road / Streethay area, close to existing employment sites, around Trent Valley Station, within smaller estates in the south of the city and within the South of Lichfield (Cricket Lane) Strategic Development Allocation. Office development within the city centre is encouraged, but due to the historic core there is limited capacity.”
  - “In Lichfield City Centre...up to 36,000m<sup>2</sup> (gross) retail development will be supported up to 2029 of which 31,000m<sup>2</sup> (gross) will be for comparison goods. A further 5,000m<sup>2</sup> will be allowable outside the town centre boundary, for comparison bulky goods provided that this does not conflict with other policies in the Local Plan.”
  - “Up to 30,000m<sup>2</sup> gross of office provision will be supported in Lichfield City, focused on the City Centre. All proposals should have regard to the need to protect and enhance the City's historic character. A sequential approach to the location of offices will be applied and where there is clear evidence that there are no suitable office sites within the city centre, locations on the edge of the city centre will be considered before locations elsewhere within and accessible to Lichfield City. All sites should benefit from excellent public transport links to Lichfield City and should not prejudice further office development within other town centres, including those outside the district.”
- Policy 6: South of Lichfield
  - “Within the allocations identified south of Lichfield City, sustainable, safe, well designed mixed use development to provide approximately 1,350 dwellings will be delivered by 2029 in line with the concept statements at Appendices C, H and I and including:
    - Provision of approximately 12 hectares of employment development within the Cricket Lane Strategic Development Allocation;
    - The provision of pedestrian and cycling routes throughout the site, linking to the green infrastructure network and to the settlements, services and facilities beyond the site boundaries including linkages to the existing Public Rights of Way network.”

### 3 VISION

#### Challenges for Lichfield City

3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address, as far as is possible, the challenges that face the Lichfield City neighbourhood area. In summary these challenges are:

- Increasing the range of employment opportunities in Lichfield City, particularly in higher value activities that fit the profile of the resident workforce.
- Maintaining Lichfield City's vibrancy as a City Centre providing a range of activities.
- Increasing the role and value of tourism and related activities, particularly by improving the linkages between Lichfield Cathedral – the major tourism asset – and the City Centre.

#### Vision for Lichfield City

3.2 The vision for Lichfield City at the end of the plan period (in 2029) is as follows:

***'By the end of the plan period in 2029, Lichfield City will be an important economic centre in the West Midlands. It will have achieved this in two main ways – firstly by increasing high value economic activities within the city that have harnessed the potential of the highly qualified resident workforce and secondly by making more of the cultural and retail assets of the City to make it a bona fide 'destination'.***

***Lichfield City has developed high value sectoral specialisms, including the medical sector through the expansion of economic activities connected with Defence Medical Services Whittington (DMSW). New, high quality employment floorspace at the Cricket Lane Strategic Development Area has enabled companies developing these high value activities to locate in Lichfield City. Some of these companies started life as small start-ups at the Staffordshire University Business Village which has continued to thrive and has expanded on site. Further start-up space has been provided in the City, encouraging more entrepreneurial activity not just from graduates fresh out of university but also from other highly skilled employees looking to 'go it alone', become self-employed and set up a small business.***

***But Lichfield City is not only a place for small start-ups, it has also been able to attract a small number of medium-sized company headquarters which are located on the Cricket Lane Strategic Development Allocation. Traditional commercial activity continues to thrive in its traditional heartland in the east of the City.***

***What has been an important factor in these business decisions has been the growing attractiveness of Lichfield as a City to be in. The cultural offer, typified by the arts scene, has blossomed and the provision of new artistic/events space has helped Lichfield to become known as the City of Festivals. A flexible approach to the use of space in the City Centre has enabled a variety of cultural activities to spring up and flourish. This has been supported by the provision of dedicated space for the arts as part of the various new developments, including the redevelopments at the former Bird Street Car Park, Friarsgate and Quonians sites.***

***The City Centre has reinvented itself into a popular leisure and retail destination which residents use as their first choice destination and has brought in higher value tourism spend. One of the ways this has been achieved is by improving the linkages between the Cathedral – the jewel in its crown – and the City Centre itself. The retail offer has been improved and better linkages made between it and the range of creative events in the City. Lichfield is no longer just a Cathedral to see whilst***

***passing through but a weekend destination. The increase in overnight stays has been assisted by new hotel space being provided in the City.***

***The City Centre has also become a more attractive place to navigate around. On arriving by train, it is easy to navigate and walk in to and around the City Centre. There is strong pedestrian connectivity between the various part of the City channelling pedestrians from Friarsgate through to the rest of the City Centre. The development of a mix of uses on the former Bird Street Car Park being the key to opening up the City. Further development of the former Quonians site along with the Friarsgate retail and leisure development has meant that Lichfield has reinvigorated itself and is now a place people want to come to in its own right and local residents choose as their main shopping and leisure destination.'***

## Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

3.3 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan as identified through engagement with business, tourism and cultural stakeholders in the community are as follows:

- Increase higher value employment activities in the City to provide more local job opportunities.
- Increase the number of start-up businesses in the City.
- Increase the proportion of retail spend captured from local residents in Lichfield.
- Increase high spend tourism and length of stay through the improvement of Lichfield City as a destination.
- Increase levels of employment and commercial activity in cultural, creative, medical and educational sectors.
- Improve pedestrian access into and around the City Centre and between Lichfield City Railway Station, Trent Valley Railway Station and Cricket Lane.





## 4 EMPLOYMENT

4.1 As the analysis in Section 2 shows, Lichfield City is well positioned to increase the value of its economic base. It has a highly skilled workforce and, with its road and multiple rail links, is well located as a business centre. Whilst it is not envisaged that Lichfield City would necessarily compete with larger centres in the West Midlands, it is considered that there is scope to increase the number of companies working in higher value sectors and thereby increase the value of jobs in the City. This would be likely to enable a greater proportion of local residents to work in Lichfield City, rather than commuting further afield.

### Lichfield City Economic Action Plan

4.2 The LCNP provides a suite of planning policies that will help to direct the economic growth of the City over the plan period. However, for this to be successful and to secure the vision articulated in Section 3, it is important that this is accompanied by a detailed economic action plan which is agreed by all stakeholders. Much of the future success of Lichfield City will be secured by on-the-ground actions by a range of different interests which will be facilitated by the planning policy framework.

4.3 The LCNP is supported by a high-level Economic Action Plan. It will be important that this is scoped out in more detail by Lichfield City Council, in partnership with other stakeholders such as Lichfield District Council, the Chamber of Trade, the Lichfield BID team, the City Centre Development Partnership, the City Forum, the Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), the Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP and the Black Country LEP.

4.4 The Economic Action Plan identified that the focus for job creation in Lichfield City should be in the following sectors:

Sector	Locations
Retail, food and drink	Mainly City Centre
Computer, IT, financial, scientific, technical and other professional services	City Centre and Cricket Lane Strategic Development Allocation (SDA)
Education – secondary, sixth form and university	Around the whole LCNP area, with university located in City Centre
Creative, leisure and media	Mainly in the City Centre, linked to the Staffordshire University campus

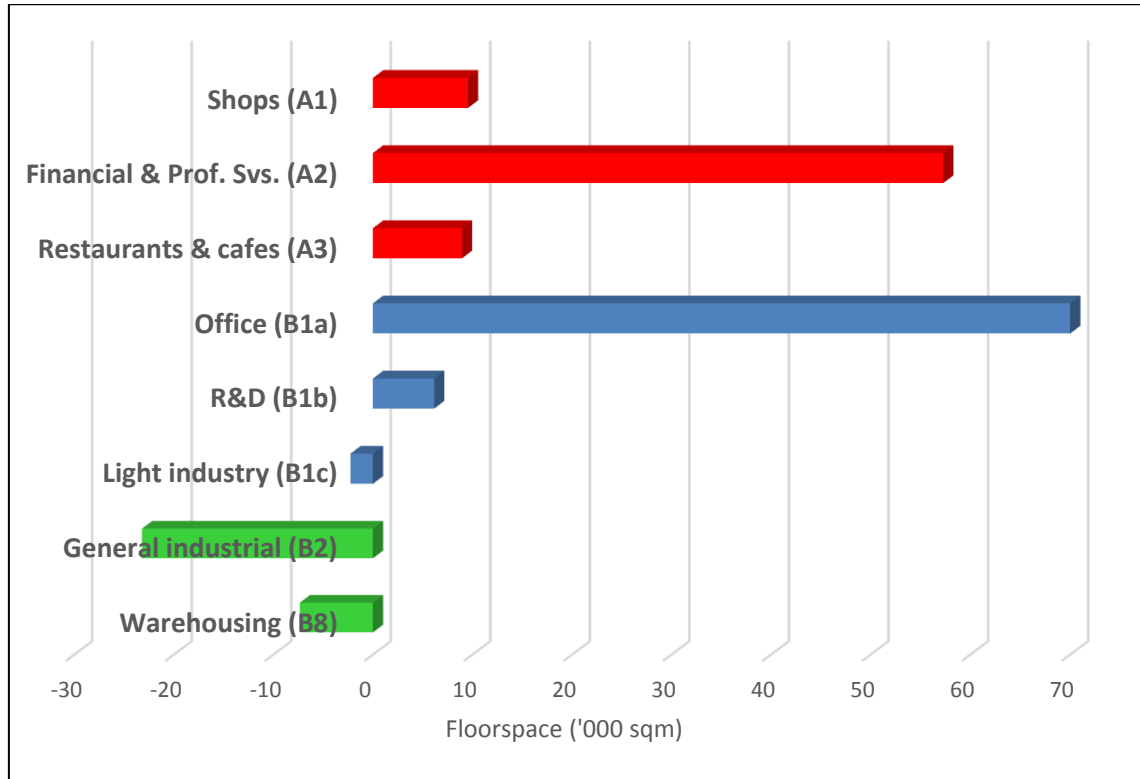
4.5 Particular emphasis and proactive action should be given to developing sector specialisms in the medical and creative sectors, building on opportunities already identified in the City. This will help in attracting and growing businesses in these sectors at the Cricket Lane Strategic Development Area and in the City Centre.

4.6 The Lichfield District Employment Land Review Update<sup>4</sup> makes clear that the majority of employment growth across the district is expected to be in office-type uses (Figure 4.1). Of the total growth over the plan period, 64% of the needs are expected to be for office

<sup>4</sup> GVA (2014) *Lichfield Employment Land Review: 2014 Update*, for Lichfield District Council

and research & development floorspace. By contrast, the net requirement for industrial (Use Classes B1c and B2) and warehousing (Use Class B8) uses is expected to reduce by 27%.

**Figure 4.1: Lichfield District floorspace requirements, 2009-2029**



Source: Lichfield Employment Land Review Update 2014, from Table 2.8

- 4.7 The Lichfield District Local Plan (Policy Lichfield 3) has a target of delivering 30,000m<sup>2</sup> of gross office space within the City area to 2029. The focus is expected to be City Centre but this area has limited sites that are likely to be attractive to the needs of modern office market in attracting SME-type enterprises. This is both in terms of physical space and in terms of sites that can be developed into commercially attractive office buildings, particularly given the restrictions required to ensure the protection of the City's historic core. Therefore it is imperative that strategic sites such as Cricket Lane are taken advantage of to help achieve this target.
- 4.8 Achieving the growth in higher value employment requires expansion of the potential for all but the very largest businesses to locate and grow in Lichfield City. This starts with start-up businesses needing incubator space, then offering those start-ups which have thrived the opportunity to move into 'grow-on' space. This growth, accompanied by relocations of other companies from outside Lichfield, will start to develop the 'small and medium sized enterprise' (SME<sup>5</sup>) sector, with many locating their main office in Lichfield City.
- 4.9 This section of the LCNP provides the conditions for the delivery of this strategy of focusing on the SME sector.

<sup>5</sup> SMEs are classed as companies that employ less than 250 people across the whole business

- 4.10 Delivering growth across Lichfield City is a key aim of this Neighbourhood Plan. The Employment Land Review Updated 2014 noted that, "...increasing demand for office (B1a) and financial and professional services (A2) will continue to drive the growth in floorspace requirements in Lichfield to 2029" (paragraph 2.49). The Cricket lane Strategic Development Area (SDA) represents a vital part of the strategy to deliver growth for Lichfield District as well as for the City itself, though other emerging sites may be of great significance over the period of this Plan, notably those in the Eastern Avenue and Trent Valley area including the former GKN site.

### **Cricket Lane Strategic Development Area**

- 4.11 For many businesses, either those that were originally local start-ups or for larger businesses looking to relocate from elsewhere, the availability of 'grow-on' space is a key issue. Such grow-on space can vary in size from something only slightly larger than a small start-up space to large offices capable of running an SME headquarters from, with potentially as many as 250 employees. Local commercial agents advise that such SMEs are typically looking for sites that are easy to get to (i.e. congestion free), with plenty of car parking and surrounding facilities and services.
- 4.12 The success of the Lichfield South office development at Wall Island has demonstrated the demand for these types of office floorplate. Lichfield South is attractive largely because of its location on the strategic road network but also because of the high quality floorspace that is available of the right size and with a combination of supporting uses such as hotels and health facilities. Further floorspace has been granted planning permission at Wall Island which will inevitably address some of the office needs identified by the Lichfield District Local Plan. However, this will not address all needs and its location in the Green Belt means that further growth in this location would only be justified in very special circumstances.
- 4.13 The Cricket Lane SDA represents an opportunity to replicate the success of Lichfield South. It is also well located to access the strategic road network but also has the advantage of being close to the City Centre, the local workforce and Lichfield City Railway Station.
- 4.14 Policy Lichfield 6 of the Lichfield District Local Plan allocates 12 hectares of employment land at the Cricket Lane SDA. Whilst it is envisaged that the majority of this may be given over to more traditional employment uses, including light industry and warehousing, it is important that a proportion of this allocation is reserved for office/research and development-type space. It will be important that any mixed use development brought forward at Cricket Lane looks at the best way to maximise such an offer and 'create a market demand' for the majority of the site for this type of use.
- 4.15 This may however require economic intervention in the market to help create an office market in this location. This might be through economic interventions such as the use of incentives to attract the initial high profile 'anchor tenant' to the site by means of possible subsidised rent or reduced business rates. This flagship tenant could help to act as catalyst for creating an office market at Cricket Lane where no such market is currently present. The location and workforce is suitable, but the market is unaware of the site's potential. A focused marketing and promotion of the site, particularly to medical and scientific sectors should be developed jointly with the site promoter.



- 4.16 The proposed location of employment uses is on the south part of the site, with residential uses on the northern part. Office uses could therefore potentially include a 'flagship' location which is visible from the A38 road. Also, office uses have the potential, through good design, to form a soft 'break' between the residential uses on the north of the site and any heavier employment uses on the south. This will make them more attractive to potential occupiers and also help to preserve the amenity of those occupying the new dwellings.
- 4.17 As noted in the Cricket Lane Concept Statement, part of the Lichfield District Local Plan, a sustainable development must be "based around high quality local facilities and excellent public transport, cycle and pedestrian connections" (paragraph I.4). Well planned pedestrian corridors, both between the employment and residential areas within the site and out of the site, will enable good accessibility to and from the City Centre and also to Lichfield City Railway Station. This will help to make such uses more attractive to potential new companies. The LCNP seeks to address this through the development of the Primary Movement Routes (Policy 4) so it is important that proposals for the development of Cricket Lane feed effectively into the proposed Movement Route into the City Centre and the railway station.
- 4.18 The site may also be suitable as a hotel location that serves a joint business/tourist market, potentially part of the restored canal/waterfront location and along with other complementary uses such as leisure and fitness facilities for use by local residents, schools and businesses. Local commercial agents noted that the success of Lichfield South has been boosted by the presence of the Holiday Inn Express and private gymnasium hotel on the site. This helps to provide a complementary offer and make Lichfield South a 'destination'. Whilst it is important that Cricket Lane does not detract from the attractiveness of Lichfield City Centre, it should equally be anchored by complementary uses and the lack of potential for significant hotel provision in the city centre suggests that a hotel on the site would be appropriate.
- 4.19 Policy 1 of the LCNP proposes that, as a minimum, two hectares of employment land is used to provide for B1a and B1b employment uses (office and research and development). Whilst the market will ultimately dictate the appropriate mix of uses, the nature of the SDA is that it is expected to provide for the needs of Lichfield City and District over the whole plan period so it is important that a long term view of the deliverability of employment uses is taken into consideration when establishing the mix of commercial uses.
- 4.20 Ideally through the proactive economic interventions, it would be desirable to see much more than two hectares (possibly all of the site) to be developed for attractive, modern, medical, IT and scientific-based research and development type businesses. However, this will need considerable proactive intervention to 'create' a market demand.
- 4.21 It is important to note that the NPPF requires any planning application for a town centre use (such as B1a offices) would need to satisfy the sequential test and impact assessments<sup>6</sup>. Also, Local Plan Policy Lichfield 3 focuses offices provision on the city centre, expecting up to 30,000m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace to be provided there. However, LDC's Employment Land Review 1998 established that the City Centre could only accommodate 14,000-20,000m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace and that included some sites that have been built out or

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<sup>6</sup> NPPF paragraphs 24-27

lost to other uses. Since that time there have been no further sites that have come forward which would add to the overall supply of office floorspace in the City Centre.

- 4.22 It is therefore important that any planning application includes an assessment of the potential of sequentially preferable sites.

#### **POLICY 1: CRICKET LANE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT AREA**

Employment development of the Cricket Lane Strategic Development Area, as required by Policy Lichfield 6 of the Lichfield District Local Plan, must incorporate at least two hectares of office (Use Class B1a) and research and development (Use Class B1b) space.

Other commercial uses such as hotels and health and fitness centres are supported as complementary uses that will assist in creating an attractive office market location.

Development proposals should seek to ensure that such space is well connected to the residential uses on the site and also to the Primary Movement Route into Lichfield City Centre (Policy 4).

### **Managed workspace**

- 4.23 The growth of high value sectors often starts with the very smallest businesses. In the modern economy, global businesses can be started from a person's home. Several of the identified growth sectors in Lichfield are traditionally represented by such businesses that start this small. This includes computing, IT, financial, scientific, technical and other professional services and creative/media.
- 4.24 However, for such businesses and sectors to thrive, they soon require dedicated business space to assist them to grow. For many of these fledgling businesses, cashflow is a significant issue so the additional cost of securing business space is only realistic if it is provided on flexible terms and at viable rents. 'Incubator centres' or simple managed workspace which provides for such businesses can be part of larger employment centres but do often require an element of cross-subsidy.
- 4.25 The provision of such managed workspace which provides space that is attractive to start-up businesses, particularly in the sector specialisms identified, is strongly supported to help develop home grown businesses and reduce out-commuting. However, commercially, such units are not as viable as other uses and need intervention. Policy 2 therefore seeks managed workspace units as part of a mix of residential development which helps to provide the necessary cross-subsidy. It is considered acceptable for such uses to be included as part of residential-led development schemes in the city. The nature of office-based start-ups is that they are uses which do not necessarily impact on the amenity of surrounding residential properties
- 4.26 Ideally a Section 106 agreement should be used to ensure that such space is generally considered to be attractive to the start-up market, both in terms of rental costs and leasehold arrangements.

## **POLICY 2: MANAGED WORKSPACE**

The provision of managed employment space that is generally viable for occupation by business start-ups, with the principle of flexible leasehold terms secured by legal agreement, will be strongly supported. This can be provided either as a stand-alone development or as part of a mixed use development, including on residential-led schemes.

- 4.27 One particularly successful incubator centre is the Lichfield Business Village at the University of Staffordshire. This is located on the University Campus and provides space for both start-ups coming out of the University and independent businesses. The opportunity to expand the Business Village on the Campus is supported.



## **POLICY 3: LICHFIELD BUSINESS VILLAGE, UNIVERSITY OF STAFFORDSHIRE CAMPUS**

The expansion of managed workspace at Lichfield Business Village on the University of Staffordshire Campus or elsewhere in the City will be strongly supported.

## 5 MOVEMENT

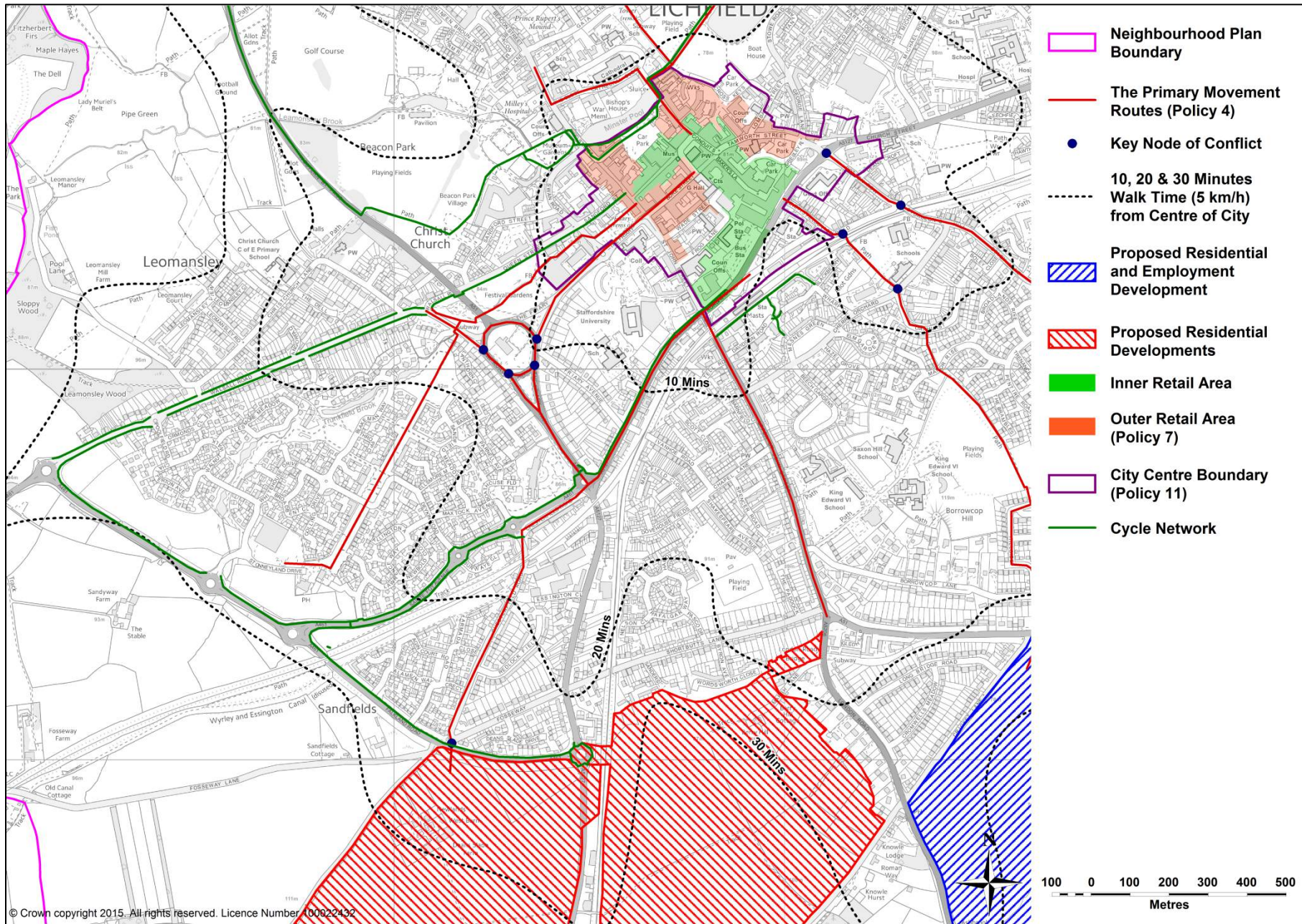
- 5.1 For Lichfield City to become a more attractive destination, for local residents to shop locally and use local facilities, for tourists and as a place to run a business or work, the City Centre needs to become a more attractive and easy place to get into and to move about in. This is about physical movement and also 'orientation'. In particular, Lichfield City Centre can be a difficult place for a visitor to understand and feel able to move around. Partly this is due to its historic nature but there are some improvements that can be made. One facility currently lacking in the City is coach parking. The provision of such facilities in appropriate areas, such as adjacent to the University, would be supported.

### Non-car movement

- 5.2 Lichfield is a popular city to drive to. Despite the presence of two railway stations, with one serving the City Centre, and the relatively compact nature of the City, there are significant levels of vehicle movement. With this comes congestion, particularly at peak periods. The City Centre itself is served by a number of car parks and these are generally well used.
- 5.3 With the growth in resident population proposed by the Local Plan over the period to 2029, there will be increasing numbers of movements across the City and into the City Centre. It is important that the opportunity is taken for as many of these to be made by non-vehicular means as possible. In short, Lichfield City needs to become an easier place to navigate particularly on foot but also by bicycle. The major issue identified by local resident groups in the City Centre as part of the engagement on the LCNP is the difficulty in getting across some major roads and into the City Centre. The City Centre must ensure that the resident spend is captured in Lichfield City Centre and not leaked to neighbouring cities and part of this is to strengthen the ease of access to the City Centre.
- 5.4 Figure 5.1 shows the primary movement routes across the City and into the City Centre for pedestrians and cyclists. This reflects the potential to link up with the strategic development areas (SDAs) across the south of Lichfield. It also shows the key points of conflict where pedestrian and cycle movement is difficult because of the presence of large or busy roads which are difficult to negotiate. If movement by non-vehicular means is to be increased as a share of overall movement, then it is vital that these routes are made more pedestrian and bicycle friendly.
- 5.5 Figure 5.1 shows that all of the existing and proposed neighbourhoods along the Primary Movements Routes are within a 25-minute walk of the City Centre. It also increases the potential to link up the East of Lichfield SDA at Streethay.

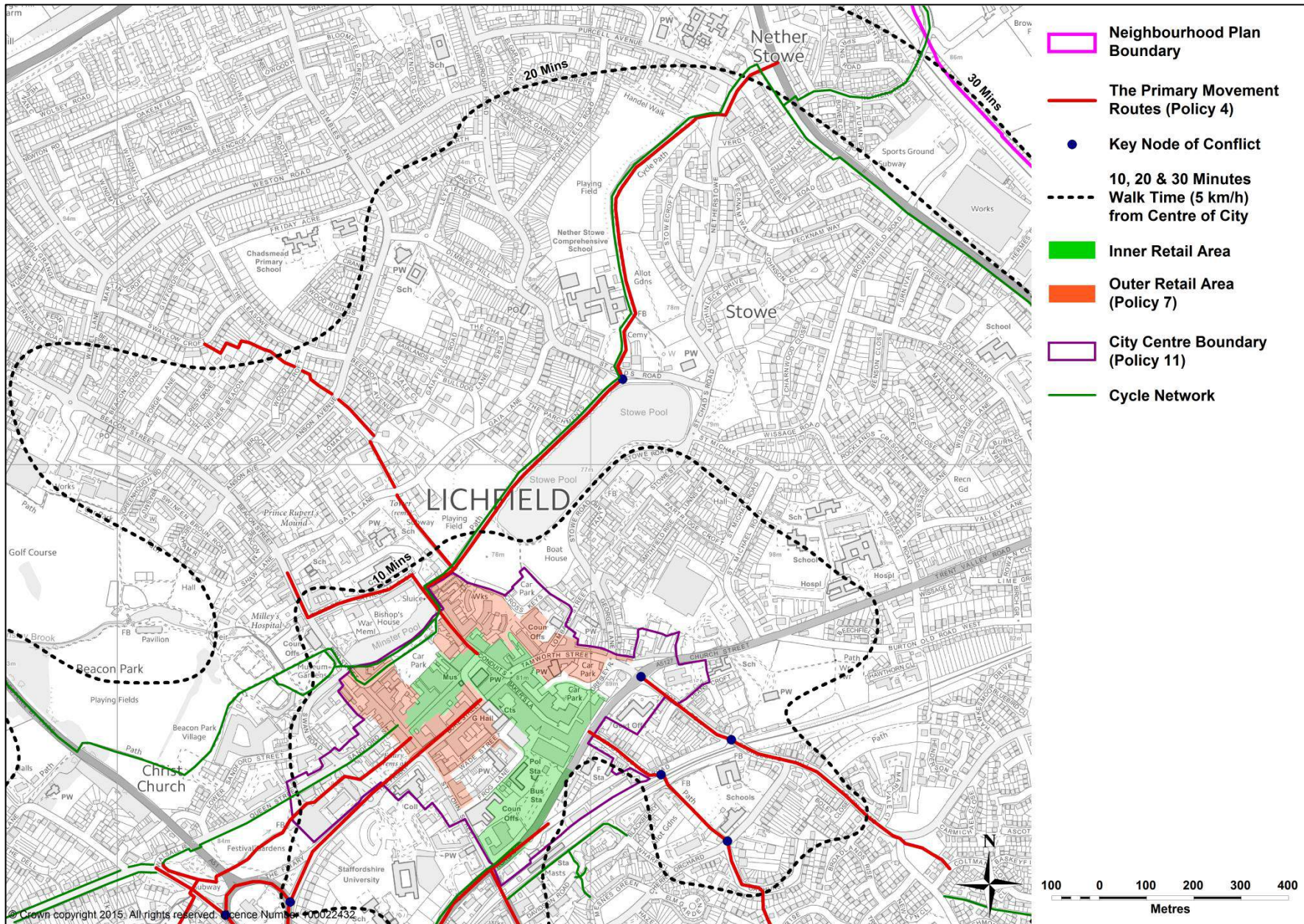


**Figure 5.1: Primary Movement Routes**





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- 5.6 Policy 4 seeks to ensure that these Primary Movement Routes are protected and enhanced. Many of these routes are along dedicated footpaths, with some operating as dual foot- and cyclepaths. Such paths could be made more user-friendly by lighting them at night (subject to the protection of the amenity of neighbours) or by widening them to allow separation of pedestrians from cyclists.
- 5.7 In particular it is important that pedestrian and bicycle movement is made safer at the key points of conflict. A non-policy action to support the policy will be for Lichfield City Council to work with Staffordshire County Council (the highway authority) and Lichfield District Council to identify solutions that address these issues and allow pedestrians and cyclists to navigate across these points of conflict safely. Ultimately it is barriers such as these which discourage many people from walking or cycling. Such actions could include modification of existing traffic order and reduction in off-street parking in the pedestrianised area of the City Centre.
- 5.8 Proposals to extend existing Primary Movement Routes into and around the City will be considered favourably, as will the creation of additional routes, particularly along Upper St John Street from Cricket Lane, incorporating Tamworth Road and London Road.
- 5.9 The development of the SDAs offers a vital opportunity to integrate the two major growth areas into Lichfield and maximise the connectivity on foot and by bicycle. This is particularly important if the Cricket Lane SDA is going to successfully integrate a high quality employment offer into its mix of uses, as required by Policy 1.
- 5.10 Lichfield City Council will use funding raised through its meaningful proportion of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to help deliver improvements and also to lever in funding from other sources such as the Local Sustainable Transport Fund.

#### **POLICY 4: PRIMARY MOVEMENT ROUTES**

To ensure that pedestrians and, where practical, cyclists, can move easily and safely around Lichfield City and into the City Centre, the Primary Movements Routes shown on the Proposals Map will be protected.

Proposals to enhance the identified Primary Movement Routes will be strongly supported.

Development adjacent to Primary Movement Routes will be expected to:

- make developer contributions toward the enhancement of these Primary Movement Routes, particularly at key points of conflict between pedestrians/cyclists and vehicular traffic; and
- not have an unacceptable impact on the Primary Movement Routes, in particular through the creation of significant additional traffic movements which would have a detrimental impact on the safety or flow of pedestrian access.

#### **NON-POLICY ACTION A: ADDRESSING POINTS OF PEDESTRIAN/VEHICULAR CONFLICT**

Lichfield City Council will work with Staffordshire County Council and Lichfield District Council to identify solutions to safe pedestrian and cycle movement across the identified key points of conflict.



## Signage

- 5.11 Another factor in improving the accessibility of Lichfield City Centre is improved signage directing people to key locations. The opening up of the City Centre through the development of the Bird Street Car Park (Policy 12) will assist in improving the natural 'feel' of where different parts of the City Centre are, but improved signage to key destinations is also needed. One example is on exiting Lichfield City Railway Station where it is difficult for the visitor to be clear on the best way to get to the City Centre.
- 5.12 Funding from the City Centre Business Improvement District (BID) will be sought to fund the provision of signage that is in keeping with the historic core of the City Centre and from Friarsgate to Dam Street and other parts of the City Centre.

### **POLICY 5: SIGNAGE**

The provision of improved signage in Lichfield City, and Lichfield City Centre in particular, will be supported. Contributions from development through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) mechanism will be used to fund such provision.





## 6 RETAIL

- 6.1 Lichfield City Centre, with its historic core, provides an attractive shopping location. There is a mix of national chain retailers and local independent shops, with the latter being an attractive draw for tourists. The City Centre is also well represented with cafes, pubs and restaurants, which help to create a thriving atmosphere not just during the day but into the evening as well.
- 6.2 Inevitably Lichfield has to compete with other retail centres, including Tamworth and Birmingham. This coupled with the changing nature of modern retailing means that its potential for growth is limited. However, it is important that the shopping offer continues to be given every opportunity to thrive and to make the most of its assets. This is not only for tourists but also for local residents; 50% of the total available expenditure on comparison goods in 2011 in Lichfield City was from residents<sup>7</sup> and it is important that this proportion is retained and ideally increased.



- 6.3 Policy Lichfield 3 of the Lichfield District Local Plan supports up to 36,000m<sup>2</sup> of gross retail development to 2029 in Lichfield City Centre. The major development that will deliver the bulk of this is the Friarsgate scheme. This is expected to provide the core of 'traditional' retail in terms of the stores that it supports.
- 6.4 One of the potential issues with the Friarsgate development is what impact the mix of uses will have on the wider retail offer of Lichfield City Centre. As well as new retail uses, the scheme will start to introduce further leisure facilities such as a cinema and

<sup>7</sup> Source: England & Lyle (2012) *Update of Retail Evidence Base, 2011*, for Lichfield District Council (Appendix 4B)

restaurants. The potential threat is that it will draw shoppers and other City Centre visitors away from the existing shops, cafes and restaurants, particularly the further away from the retail core these existing businesses are located. The ambition should be to attract a wider catchment population into Lichfield rather than displace the existing market and also to ensure there is a strong link between Friarsgate and the rest of the primary retail offer otherwise the economic geography of the City Centre will shift, resulting in vacant and unattractive areas in the existing inner shopping area. Strong footfall between the two is a priority.



#### **POLICY 6: PEDESTRIAN LINKAGE OF FRIARSGATE WITH THE REST OF LICHFIELD CITY CENTRE**

In order to ensure that the economic geography of Lichfield City Centre is enhanced through strong connectivity, proposals to improve pedestrian linkages between any new retail and cultural uses at Friarsgate and the rest of the City Centre will be strongly supported.

- 6.5 A significant asset of Lichfield City is its independent shops, markets, bars and restaurants that greatly add to the 'everyday' shopping and tourism experience. In order that Lichfield City attracts more visitors, it is important that such independent retailers are given the opportunity to locate in places where there is good footfall. This has been successful in places such as Dam Street and this will be enhanced if linkages are improved to the Cathedral through the potential development of the Bird Street Car Park (Policy 12).



- 6.6 The Inner Retail Area, as defined on the Proposals Map, is the main focus for retail and should not be restricted. However, outside of this in the Outer Retail Area, the independent retailers need to be given the chance to flourish. These retailers are generally aiming at the tourist market, whilst the Inner Area is aiming at the local resident market and this distinction is important. Both need to flourish and are attracting a different customer base. What the independent retailers in the Outer Retail Area require is increased footfall to their stores through a series of 'pop up' cultural and entertainment events and ensure their shops are kept viable through mechanisms that do not lead to higher rentals and business rents. They need to clearly work towards attracting the higher spend longer stay tourist by working together to create a 'cultural and leisure offer' that makes it worthwhile to stay longer in the City Centre.
- 6.7 Therefore, in the Outer Retail Area in Lichfield City Centre, the use of 'pop up' shops and cultural, creative, and leisure-orientated activities to help Lichfield City Centre become a niche leisure and cultural destination, building on the creative industries and festivals programme, is supported.







- 6.8 Most Use Class A1 units (i.e. shops) now have extensive Permitted Development (PD) rights under the General Permitted Development Order, with a change of use allowed for up to two years. However these PD rights do not apply to listed properties so therefore the provision of 'pop-up' shops in such properties will require the necessary applications. In addition, these PD rights do not extend to changes from retail to Use Class D which includes art galleries, exhibition halls, cinemas and concert halls.

**POLICY 7: NON-RETAIL USES IN THE OUTER RETAIL AREA, LICHFIELD CITY CENTRE**

In the Outer Retail Area of Lichfield City Centre (as defined on the Proposals Map), the introduction of non-A-class uses will be supported, provided it does not result in the loss of existing retail premises.

Such uses include 'pop up' shops and cultural, creative and leisure uses introduced on a temporary basis or for specific events.



## 7 TOURISM AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

### Tourism activity

- 7.1 Tourism is an important part of Lichfield City's economy. This is not only directly in terms of the money spent by visitors but also in terms of the way that Lichfield City is marketed to inward investors and new residents alike, as an attractive cathedral city. General support is therefore given for activities that increase tourism and City Centre spend and it is important that this is balanced with the importance of protecting and growing local resident spend in the City Centre.



- 7.2 In particular, developments that will create jobs in the tourism or cultural industries are strongly supported. This could include the use of existing City Centre A-class (retail/services) and B-class (employment) units which are vacant. This complements the objectives of Policy 7.



**POLICY 8: TOURISM AND CULTURAL INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT**

Development proposals that will create additional local jobs or protect existing jobs in the tourism or cultural industries will be strongly supported. This includes the use of vacant retail/service (Use Class A) or employment (Use Class B) employment units within the Inner and Outer Retail Areas.

- 7.3 The water history of Lichfield is an important part of the City's heritage, with its focus on the Sandfields grade II\* listed building and Cornish beam engine, which was completed in 1873 to pump clean water to the Black Country. Its refurbishment and reopening to the public will be supported. More generally, opportunities for appropriate economic development linked to all heritage assets in the City will also be supported.





## Lichfield Cathedral

- 7.4 Lichfield Cathedral is the jewel in the crown of Lichfield City. It is the major tourist attraction and is a major part of the reason why visitors remember Lichfield City when they visit. Yet its linkages with the City Centre are not as good as they could be; in many respects the two areas are very separate from one another.



- 7.5 The potential development of the Bird Street Car Park (Policy 12) will help to address this but there are other improvements that could be made that link the Cathedral to the City Centre and vice versa. This relates to the enhancement of the Primary Movement Route (Policy 4) from the north of the City and into the City Centre via Dam Street, which is pedestrianised. This is important because the adjacent Bird Street, whilst being a more direct route into the City Centre, is a busy vehicular route which creates a less safe environment for pedestrians. The need is to encourage pedestrians to use Dam Street.

### **POLICY 9: LINKAGES WITH LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL**

Proposals to improve linkages between Lichfield Cathedral and Lichfield City Centre will be strongly supported.



- 7.6 Also, views of the Cathedral could be improved from all parts of the City. Again, potential development of the Bird Street Car Park must try to help this but the principle of maintaining key sightlines of the Cathedral should be integral to any development in the City Centre.



**POLICY 10: VIEWS OF LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL**

Views of Lichfield Cathedral from Lichfield City Centre should be retained and incorporated into any development which could otherwise impact on these views.

- 7.7 Lichfield Speakers Corner is located at the corner of Minster Walk and Dam Street, with a podium for the speaker. It was opened in May 2009 with support from the national Speakers Corner Trust. Whilst it is a relatively new attraction to the City, it has already heard a wide variety of speakers and seen the staging of musical events which all take place on Saturdays. Its continued presence and use will be supported.

## Hotel provision

- 7.8 The provision in 2013 of new hotel space in Lichfield City was welcomed and has been successful. This is both for tourist visitors and also business visitors. Prior to this, there was a shortage of hotel accommodation serving Lichfield City. Now occupancy rates are reported to be high but are capable of being serviced.
- 7.9 If the aspiration is to increase the number of businesses in Lichfield and also to increase the number of tourists staying overnight, then it is vital that a range of hotel and other accommodation is provided. The 2015 Tourism Study<sup>8</sup> recommended that new land be allocated for hotel provision. The two possible opportunities were considered to be as part of the Friarsgate scheme or as part of any redevelopment of the Bird Street Car Par site (Policy 12). Whilst no sites are available for solely this type of use, the LCNP still has the scope to generally support such provision.
- 7.10 It is considered important that further hotel space is provided to serve the City Centre. Ideally this would be of a high quality but ultimately the market will determine the best mix of provision.



### **POLICY 11: HOTEL PROVISION**

The provision of new hotel and other accommodation space in Lichfield City, and particularly in Lichfield City Centre, will be strongly supported.

<sup>8</sup> The Tourism Company (2015) *Lichfield City Centre Development Strategy 2015-2020*, for Lichfield City Council

## 8 CITY CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT SITES

- 8.1 The growth in retail and employment uses required by the Lichfield District Local Plan means it is vital that opportunity sites within the City Centre are maximised in terms of the mix of uses that are delivered on them.
- 8.2 During the development of the LCNP, two sites have come forward as potential redevelopment sites, namely the Bird Street Car Park (including the former Woolworths building) and the former Quonians site. The LCNP does not allocate these sites for specific uses because it has not been possible to do this as part of the development of the plan. However, it is considered important that, should these sites come forward for development, the opportunities they create are taken to address the needs of Lichfield City and the City Centre in particular.

### Bird Street Car Park

- 8.3 This is the largest site located within the City Centre which has potential for redevelopment. The site includes the former Woolworths building, the redevelopment of which would help to open the site up in terms of its accessibility and prominence from the City Centre.



- 8.4 Any development will need to ensure that it addresses certain key issues. These are:
- 8.5 Protection of the sight lines of Lichfield Cathedral (Policy 10).
- Ensuring that the heritage of the City Centre is respected through the design and layout.
  - Related to this, ensuring that the bulk and massing of any scheme does not dominate the City Centre or its relationship with the setting of Lichfield Cathedral.



- Opening up pedestrian access to Cathedral from the City Centre.
  - Ensuring car parking and access to this part of the City Centre is maintained.
- 8.6 Potentially the site has the ability to accommodate a wide range of uses including employment (in the form of small-scale managed workspace and/or office space), retail (including cafes, bars and restaurants), hotel, residential, cultural and leisure uses. Clearly it is unlikely that any scheme will be able to accommodate all of these uses but it is important, as a City Centre site, that it seeks to provide uses that are appropriate and important to be located in the City Centre. This may need to be complemented by some higher value uses such as residential to ensure the viability of the development.
- 8.7 Development of the site may result in the loss of car parking in its current form. However, it is recognised that the current car park provides an important service. Any redevelopment will need to consider these issues and assess the relative merits of continuing car parking provision on the site.

### **Former Quonians site**

- 8.8 This site is adjacent to the main frontages of the City Centre. It has the potential to provide for a mix of uses, in particular for small-scale employment as well as residential uses.

### **POLICY 12: CITY CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT SITES**

Redevelopment sites within Lichfield City Centre, including the Bird Street Car Park, former Woolworths building and the Quonians site, will be expected to deliver a mix of uses that include the following:

- Managed B1-class workspace
- B1-class office
- A-class retail that complements the existing offer in the City Centre

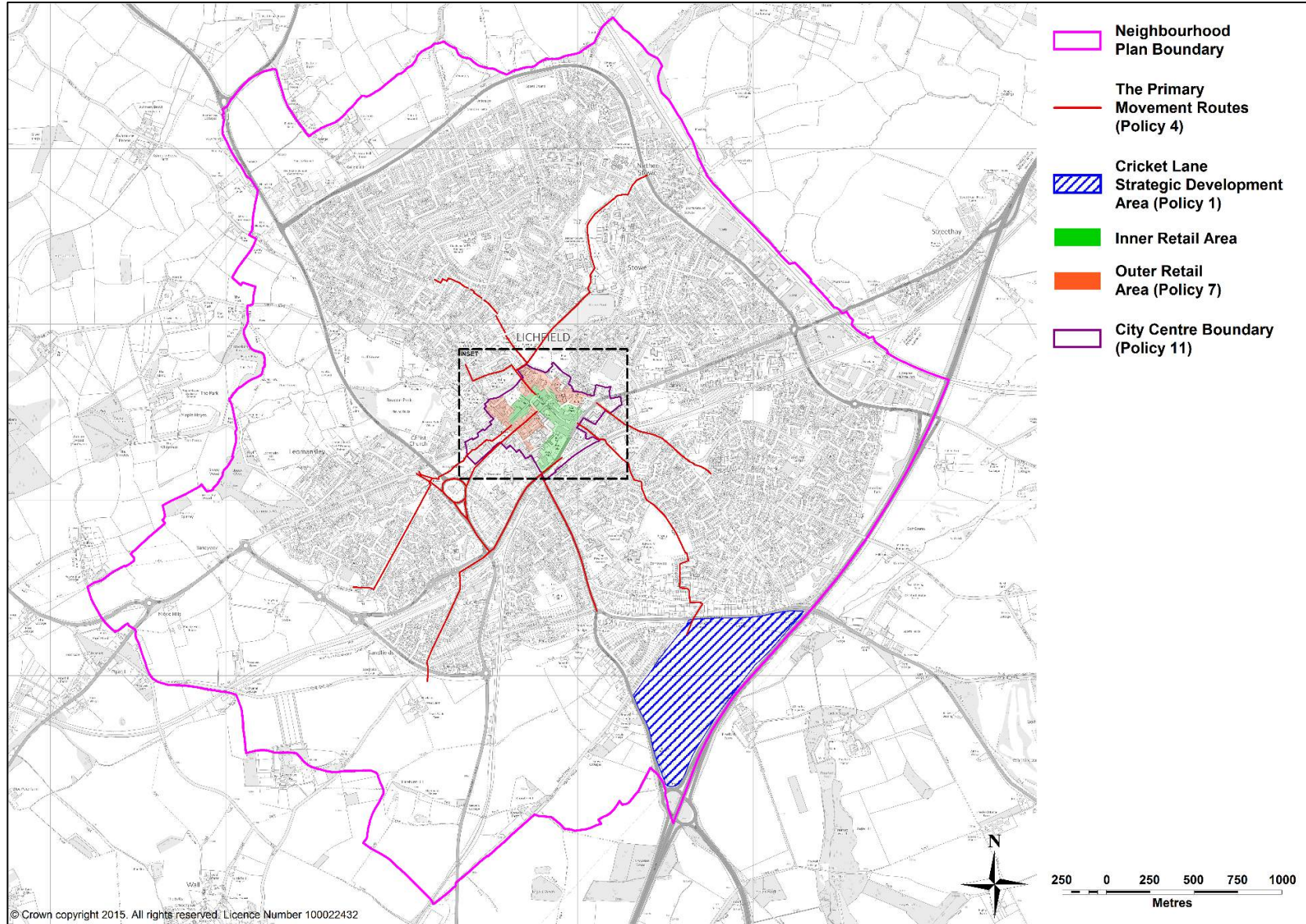
Any development that does not provide for these uses as part of a mixed use development will be required to demonstrate, through a viability assessment, that inclusion of such uses would render a scheme unviable.

Development proposals will be expected to ensure that they respect the historic environment of the City Centre and preserve the key views of Lichfield Cathedral (Policy 10).

## **PROPOSALS MAPS**

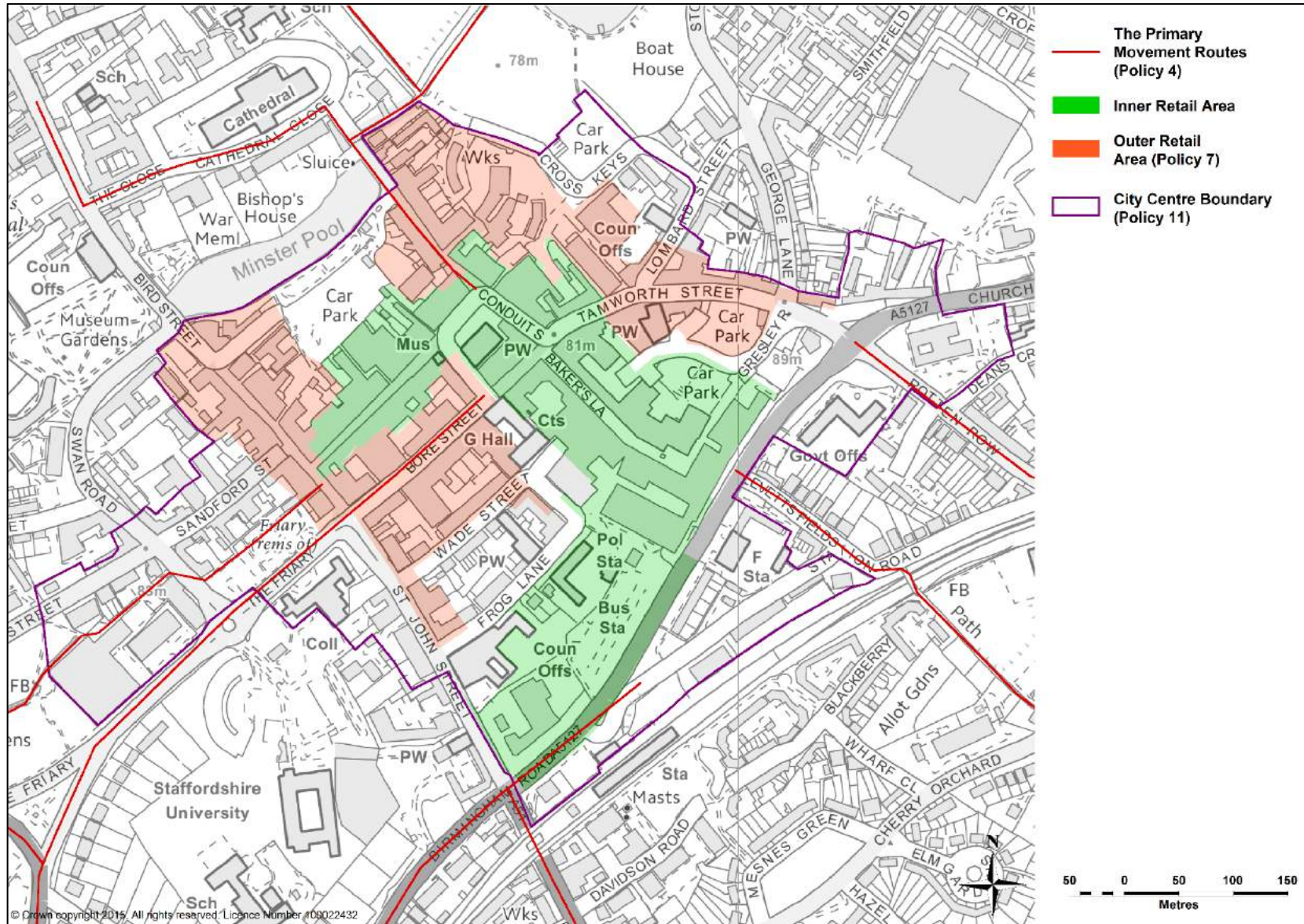


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## GLOSSARY

- **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** – a fixed, non-negotiable contribution that must be made by new development. It is chargeable on each net additional square metre of development built and is set by the Lichfield District Council. Lichfield City Council will receive 25% of all CIL contributions raised within the Neighbourhood Plan area, this being its 'meaningful proportion'.
- **Local Plan** – the planning policy document adopted by Lichfield District Council in 2015. This addresses strategic planning matters and the Lichfield City Neighbourhood Plan, as required by the National Planning Policy Framework, must be in general conformity with the adopted Local Plan.
- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** – the national planning policy document which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

