# Leek Neighbourhood Plan
# Consultation Statement V1.7
# September 2026

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# 1. Introduction

This Consultation Statement accompanies the submission of the Leek Neighbourhood Development Plan (V3.2 September 2026). It summarises the earlier community engagement and includes a detailed analysis of representations received through the Regulation 14 consultation. It shows how the requirements of Regulations 14 and 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) have been satisfied.

# 2. Community Engagement

## 2.1 Community and Stakeholder Engagement (Pre-Regulation 14)

Community and stakeholder engagement has been undertaken throughout the plan-making process and has informed the aims and policies of the neighbourhood plan, together with evidence and data on various issues.

Engagement activities included:

- **Community meetings** - various community meetings in different locations between June 2018 and November 2019;
- **Questionnaire -** a questionnaire, issued in 2018;
- **Totally Locally Market** – two stalls were held at different months in 2018, involving handing out questionnaires;
- **Leek Sainsburys** – evening session to hand out and receive questionnaires (July 2018)**;**
- **Love Leek Website launched** (April 2019).
- **Presentation to SMDC Councillors, SMDC (October 2019)** - a presentation to councillors and the community, to establish findings and to circulate the initial questionnaires to establish their suitability. They were filled in and it was agreed that they would work with the rest of the community.
- **Testing aims and themes** - Further engagement was undertaken in Autumn 2024 to test the aims and main themes of the Plan. This included a market stall in the Totally Locally outdoor market.
- **Later engagement** - In April 2025, further engagement was undertaken over two days. This tested various statements regarding Leek Town Centre, cultural heritage, services, transport, vacant buildings, and other matters. This included a market stall in the reopened indoor Butter Market.

# 3. Pre-Submission Consultation (Regulation 14)

## 3.1 How the Consultation Was Undertaken

**Publicity**

- The Regulation 14 consultation was publicised widely throughout the Leek area and sent to all the Statutory consultees
- A poster of the Notice was produced and spread widely around as many venues, supermarkets, pubs, cafes, market halls and the towns Notice boards
- A full page advert was commissioned in Your Leek – a local glossy colour magazine which is delivered to all homes in the area free of charge. This was published just before the consultation began and had all the details of the consultation links and venues to access the information.
- Social media (Facebook) was set up with a post on the Leek Town Council page and shared across many community social groups
- The consultation was also announced on local radio (Moorlands Radio) before it launched and then reminders announced throughout the 6-week period

**Accessibility**

Copies of the Neighbourhood Plan were placed in the following venues …

- Leek Town Council office – during weekday opening hours
- Foxlowe Arts Centre – volunteer run café space
- Leek Butter and Trestle Markets – with a stand with consultation forms and the plan to view
- Trinity Church – The church is central in the main shopping area and is open for coffee mornings at least three times weekly
- Haregate Community Centre – Open daily with many different groups meeting at the venue.
- Leek Library – a table and consultation station was set up to gather passing public comments visiting the Library and SMDC Council office services

The Plan was made available on the Leek Town Council website on the home page together with links to key supporting documents.

People were invited to respond on-line or in written form.

## Legal Compliance

The consultation has undertaken against the context of Regulation 14 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and also consultation case law, including compliance with Gunning Principles. The Plan was at a 'formative stage', so capable of amendment. The Plan was made available, with supporting information, to allow 'intelligent consideration'. The consultation as open for six weeks, so allowed 'adequate time for consideration and response'. Representations made have been given 'conscientious consideration', as set out in the fourth section of this statement.

## 3.2 Statutory Consultees

The following table lists the statutory consultees, contacted at the beginning of the consultation period.

| **Organisation** |
|---|
| Active Travel England |
| Alstonefield Parish Council |
| Alton Parish Council |
| Alton Towers Resort Operations Ltd |
| Aspire Housing Association |
| Associate Director nineteen47 |
| Aviva Investors |
| Bagnall Parish Council |
| Barratt Homes |
| Barton Consortium |
| Bellway Homes Ltd |
| Biddulph CAB |
| Biddulph East Community Association |
| Biddulph High School |
| Biddulph Methodist Church |
| Biddulph Town Council |
| Bloor Homes |
| Blore With Swinscoe Parish Meeting |
| BNP Paribas Real Estate |
| Bosley Parish Council |
| Bradnop Parish Council |
| British Telecommunications PLC |
| Brown Edge Parish Council |
| Building Research Establishment |
| Butterton Parish Council |
| Buxton and Leek College |

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| Cadent |
| Caldon & Uttoxeter Canals Trust |
| Canal & River Trust |
| Cannock Chase District Council |
| Capita Finance Leek |
| Caverswall Parish Council |
| Cheadle Town Council |
| Cheadle Unite |
| Checkley Parish Council |
| Cheddleton Parish Council |
| Cheshire East Council |
| Cheshire East Council |
| Churnet Valley Railway |
| City Of Stoke On Trent Council |
| Civil Aviation Authority |
| Community Health Partnerships |
| Congleton Town Council |
| Consall Parish Council |
| Cotton Parish Council |
| Council For British Archaeology |
| CPRE Staffordshire |
| Croxden Parish Council |
| CT Planning |
| D And G Coaches |
| Davera Properties |
| Dean Lewis Estates Limited |
| Defence Infrastructure Organisation |
| Define Planning and Design Ltd |
| Denstone Parish Council |
| Derbyshire County Council |
| Derbyshire Dales District Council |
| Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group |

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| Dilhorne Parish Council |
| Director Define |
| Draycott Parish Council |
| East Staffordshire Borough Council |
| EE |
| Endon with Stanley Parish Council |
| Energy Networks Association |
| Entec UK Ltd |
| Environment Agency |
| Farley Parish Council |
| Fawfieldhead Parish Council |
| Forsbrook Parish Council |
| Foxfield Railway |
| Friends Families & Travellers |
| Fulford Parish Council |
| Gladman |
| Grindon Parish Council |
| Growth Hub (Staffs LEP) |
| Hawksmoor Property Services Limited. |
| HBF |
| Heathylee Parish Council |
| Heaton Parish Council |
| Heine Planning |
| Highways England |
| Hilderstone Parish Council |
| Historic England |
| Homes England |
| Horton Parish Council |
| Ilam Parish Council |
| Inland Waterways Association |
| Ipstones Parish Council |
| J C Bamford Excavators Ltd |

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| KDR Developments |
| Ken Wainman Associates Ltd |
| Kidsgrove Town Council |
| Kingsley Parish Council |
| Knights 1759 |
| Leek And District Civic Society |
| Leek Chamber Of Trade And Commerce |
| Leek Cricket Club |
| Leek Sports Council |
| Leek Town Council |
| Leekfrith Parish Council |
| Leigh Parish Council |
| Longnor Parish Council |
| Longsdon Parish Council |
| M J Barrett Developments |
| Mancunian Mercantile Investments Limited |
| Marine Management Organisation |
| Mayfield Parish Council |
| Michael Green Planning Services |
| Mono Consultants |
| Moorland and City Railways Ltd |
| National Federation of Gypsy Liason Groups |
| National Gas Transmission |
| National Grid |
| National Highways |
| National Trust |
| National Trust |
| Natural England |
| Network Rail, Town Planning Team LNVW |
| Newbold Astbury-cum-Moreton Parish Council |
| Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council |
| NFU |

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| NHS Property Services |
| North Staffordshire Divisional Police |
| North Staffordshire railway company (1978) Limited |
| North Staffs and Stoke on Trent CCG |
| North Staffs CCG |
| Oakamoor Parish Council |
| Odd Rode Parish Council |
| Office of Rail and Road |
| Okeover Parish Meeting |
| Onecote Parish Council |
| Peak District Local Nature Partnership |
| Peak District National Park Authority |
| Peak District Rural Housing Association |
| Peaks and Plains Housing Trust |
| Pegasus Group |
| Persimmon Homes |
| Persimmon Homes (North West) |
| Plants Haulage |
| Plus Dane Housing Group |
| Quarnford Parish Council |
| Regeneration Service |
| Renew Land Limited |
| Richborough Estates |
| Road Haulage Association |
| Rob Duncan Planning Consultancy Ltd. |
| RSPB |
| Rushton Parish Council |
| Sammons Architectural Ltd |
| School Business Manager |
| School Organisation Team, Staffordshire County Council |
| Seabridge Developments |
| Severn Trent |

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| Severn Trent Water |
| Sheen Parish Council |
| Snugg Homes |
| South Staffordshire Council |
| Sport England |
| Stafford Borough Council |
| Staffordshire and Stoke CCG |
| Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent ICB |
| Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce |
| Staffordshire County Council |
| Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service |
| Staffordshire Moorlands Bridleways Group |
| Staffordshire Police |
| Staffordshire Police Estates |
| Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner |
| Staffordshire Wildlife Trust |
| Stanton Parish Council |
| Stoke Staffordshire LEP |
| Support Staffordshire |
| Support Staffordshire (Staffordshire Moorlands) |
| The British Horse Society |
| The Coal Authority |
| The Crown Office |
| The Forestry Commission |
| The Planning Inspectorate |
| The Showmen's Guild Of Great Britain Midlands Branch |
| The Theatres Trust |
| The Traveller Movement |
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| Tittesworth Parish Council |
| Trent Rivers Trust |
| United Utilities Water Limited |

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| Vodafone and O2 |
| Warslow & Elkstones Parish Council |
| Waterhouses Parish Council |
| Werrington Parish Council |
| West Midlands Housing Association Planning Consortium |
| Western Power Distribution |
| Wetton Parish Council |
| Willardwillard Ltd |
| Wincle Parish Council |
| Woodland Trust |
| Wootton Parish Council |
| Wrekin Housing Trust |

# 4. Representations and Response

This part of the statement summarises the representations made in response to the Regulation 14 consultations, together with the Town Council's response.

| Policy/Page number | Representation | Response |
|---|---|---|
| | **HAREGATE – PAPER SUBMISSIONS (5)** | |
| TCE1 | They should help the people who live in the town to get them on their feet and support them. | Comment noted. |
| TCE2 | They should leave the listed building up as they should be turned into flats with gardens. | The sites in question do not contain listed buildings. Protection for historic buildings and areas is address in policies TCE3, DCE3 and DCE4. |
| TCE1 | Bigger fines for dog fouling and litter. | This falls outside of the scope of planning policy. |
| RES1 | No housing on The Mount. | This comment appears to relate to a site allocation in the SMDC Local Plan, rather than Policy RES1 in the Neighbourhood Plan (which does not allocate the site). |
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| | **THE FOXLOWE – PAPER SUBMISSIONS (4)** | |
| TCE2 | Please ban all traffic on Derby Street after 9am and before 4pm. | Traffic and highway management falls outside of the scope of the Plan. Comment passed to the local highways authority (Staffordshire County Council). |
| TCE3 | Develop the Marina at the end of Leek canal. | A marina is shown in an emerging masterplan, being prepared by SMDC. This could create |

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| | Does Leek really need so many faith buildings – churches – congregations so small. Could they be better utilised. | economic benefit. Planning permission has previously been approved, also with housing (SMD/2021/0536). This proposal could also be addressed through the SMDC Local Plan, given the green belt status of the land.<br><br>The community need and viability of churches would be a matter for the faith organisations that control them. If they did become available, the Neighbourhood Plan would generally support reuse. |
| DCE1 | Make <u>all</u> public transport free. | This is beyond the control of developers and the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan. Comment passed to the local highways authority. |
| DCE2 | Pedestrian crossing for St Edward Street. Sparrow Park area and traffic lights near Park Medical don't feel safe. | Traffic and highway management falls outside of the scope of the Plan. Comment passed to the local highway authority. |
| DCE3 | Would be great to return to 70s – end the 'plastic' look of shop fronts. | Comment noted - the policy seeks to protect historic shopfronts and to encourage reinstatement. |
| DCE4 | Attract buskers to them – develop narrow boat marina (as per Roger Warrilow suggestions) | Busking is outside of the scope of planning policy, but can help to make town centres more vibrant.<br><br>A marina is proposed in an emerging masterplan, being prepared by SMDC. This could create economic benefit. Planning permission has previously been approved, also with housing (SMD/2021/0536). This proposal could also be |

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| | | addressed through the SMDC Local Plan, given the green belt status of the land. |
| TRM1 | *illegible comment* and public transport make it free (as in Shetland Isle) | This is beyond the control of developers and the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan. Comment passed to the local highway authority. |
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| DCE1 | MAP6: please include the essential canal feeder (in dark blue = man-made) coming from Rudyard Lake reservoir to Caldon Canal. P33 Add to 'Trails' and map a list: Rudyard to Leek Canal feeder, Caldon Canal corridor NB line is identified on Map 13 as a Public Rights of Way. | Map 6 amended to show the canal feeder (within the Neighbourhood Area). |
| DCE4 | Thank you for including this comprehensive policy. Please could the list include reference to the 'Rudyard to Leek Canal feeder' in order to identify it as a specific entity and to encourage promotion of it as an opportunity to enhance active travel on the parallel public row.<br>7.1 Welcome and support these bullet points. | A small section of canal feeder is in the Conservation Area. Canal feeder added into wording.<br><br>Support noted. |
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| TCE1 | The Notice Boards on Derby Street and Sparrow Park are often outdated and look tatty. Not a good way to encourage people to engage in the community. | Signage and interpretation added to 7.1. TC is responsible for the signage and will discuss the issue with the tourism committee. |
| TCE2 | Please do something about the Bus Station it is an embarrassment to Leek. | Comment noted - the policy enables the redevelopment of the Smithfield Centre and bus station. |
| TCE3 | I personally feel that in some cases it would be better for the mills to be demolished and affordable housing built on the land. | Some of the mills are listed buildings. Generally, Retention and refurbishment retains the embodied energy of masonry buildings, and also the important contribution that they make to Leek's historic industrial character. No change made. |
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| TCE1 | The Theatre plans for the Foxlowe are very exciting and should be supported by LTC, District and County. Also linking the Nicholson and the Foxlowe as a cultural and creative hub would be beneficial to tourism in the area. | LTC agrees – culture is very important to the vitality of the town. |
| TCE2 | One of the worst buildings in its attractiveness in the centre is Yorkshire Trading. It would look far better bringing back its asymmetry with the left-hand side set back including its sign. | Policy TCE3 would support the improvement of buildings like this, whilst Policy DCE3 would support he reinstatement of historic shopfronts. |
| TCE3 | National funding should be found to restore Big Mill into a mixture of affordable and luxury flats. York Mill has started to deteriorate and it's a shame that London Street Mill (off Brook Street) has had permission to be knocked down instead of the Brook Street side restored. | The neighbourhood plan supports refurbishment in principle. It is noted that funding may be necessary to help address viability gaps. |
| RES1 | New homes/houses in the centre could be a little more exciting for example capita and centric development regarding the past but with a contemporary design. | Comment noted. Policy DCE2 supports creative or innovative design solutions with superior environmental performance, designed for the specific site and context. |
| RES2 | There needs to be more attractive affordable rental homes as well as private sales. | Comment noted - Policy RES1 supports a mix of residential accommodation based on the latest evidence of local need whilst RES2 requires affordable provision to be of similar design and specification to market housing. |
| DCE1 | We have some wonderful outdoor spaces that could be linked. | Policy DCE1 amended to make reference to connectivity between green spaces, paths and landscapes. |
| DCE2 | How is this measured. | The policy is based on clauses, which would form the basis for assessment of development proposals, together with the National Design Guide. |

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| TRM1 | Better cycle ways would be good and better public transport in North Staffordshire and to Manchester with Hanley not being the hub for everything. | The Policy supports sustainable transport and active travel within the Neighbourhood Area. LTC agrees with the comments on wider linkages and will raise this as opportunities arise. |
| | **Public Representations (2) (visitors to Butter/Tressel Market)** | |
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| TCE3 | Do something about 'Big Mill' as it is now in a disgusting state. | The policy would have supported refurbishment, but the main building of the Big Mill was recently demolished following a fire. Text added to interpretation, for clarity. |
| RES1 | Has the local population increased enough? | Changes to central government policy have increased housing targets. This may reduce housing delivery, by exacerbating viability challenges. The Neighbourhood Plan supports housing in sustainable locations, but does not make housing site allocations, other than reuse of historic mills and redevelopment opportunities. |
| RES2 | It might 'seek' to do it but is it actually doing anything. | Developers would be expected to meet the requirements of the policy, unless there were planning reasons not to. |
| TCE1 | Support the Town of Culture bid and the role of the Foxlowe | Comment noted - the policy supports diversification of uses to enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre. The importance of culture is recognised in the policy interpretation. |
| TCE3 | Make better use of mills. | The policy supports reuse of the mills. |

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| RES1 | More affordable housing | The TC supports specialist and affordable housing. The policy seeks to shape affordable housing, but does not amend proportions or thresholds, which could raise issues around national policy and also viability. |
| RES2 | Affordable housing on sites of least environmental value, build on one of the golf courses. | Policy RES1 supports development of brownfield and urban sites. The suggestion to allocate a golf course for housing is noted, but the Neighbourhood Plan would not support this (both golf courses are in the Green Belt). |
| DCE1 | Protect green belt. | There are already green belt policies in national policy and the local plan. |
| DCE4 | Whatever happened to marina | A marina is proposed in an emerging masterplan, being prepared by SMDC. This could create economic benefit. Planning permission has previously been approved, also with housing (SMD/2021/0536). This proposal could also be addressed through the SMDC Local Plan, given the green belt status of the land. |
| TRM1 | Open up old railway tunnel in North Street | The Neighbourhood Plan supports active travel, including pedestrian permeability and connectivity. |
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| | **SMDC (4)** | |
| TCE1 | Plans sound interesting. | Comment noted. |

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| TCE2 | I agree that the areas around the Smithfield Centre, bus station and Pickwood Road need improvement. Also, brownfield areas in Brook Street currently look awful.<br><br>Possible compulsory purchase for social housing. | Comment noted.<br><br>Comment on compulsory purchase passed to SMDC. |
| TCE3 | Be realistic about the viability of the Big Mill. Maybe it should be demolished. | The policy would have supported refurbishment, but the main building of the Big Mill was recently demolished following a fire. Text added to interpretation, for clarity. |
| RES1 | More social housing is required – I couldn't see any statistics about the current housing lists in the report, even if it is the responsibility of SMDC, it should be stated. Improvement of current housing stock re insulation. | Policy RES1 requires a housing mix based on evidence of need. Comment on housing lists and improvement of current stock passed to SMDC. |
| DCE1 | Information/maps of green areas.<br><br>Improving facilities at Brough Park. | Green areas are already mapped in the document.<br><br>Brough Park is currently being improved, including new leisure centre and toilets and other works. |
| DCE3 | Some shop fronts in the town centre need replacing as their designs devalue the heritage of the buildings ie Derby Street. | Policy DCE3 supports reinstatement of historic shop fronts. |
| DCE4 | Well intentioned, but the area adjoining the start of the canal is blighted by factories, a necessary evil. Access is also restricted by the extension of the heritage railway line. | The neighbourhood plan supports employment. |
| | This should include accessibility where possible for wheelchair users. | Interpretation to TRM1 amended to refer to wheeling. |
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| TCE1 | The price of the buildings and the rent in the local area is a large reason for the lack of small businesses on the high street. | Comment noted. |
| TCE2 | Changing the more historic sites in town would ruin the appeal. Restoration must only be used to recreate the original aesthetic of the buildings. | The policy relates to specific opportunity sites. Other policies deal with design and the Leek Conservation Area. |
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| TCE1 | Agree with the above. | Comment noted. |
| TCE2 | Again agree with the above. | Comment noted. |
| TCE3 | Empty mill buildings – Mill Street W&D, Ashbourne Road BN&H, Silk Street (very old mill falling down) | Comment noted. |
| RES1 | Car parking and electric charge points. | Unclear what is being suggested. Issues around public car parking and public charging points would be the responsibility of the local highways authority. Car parking in development is addressed in Policy TRM1. |
| RES2 | Correct. | Comment noted. |
| DCE1 | Correct. | Comment noted. |
| DCE2 | Correct. | Comment noted. |
| DCE3 | Reduce rates to attract more good shops = better income for town hall council! Surface of market stones and pavements – tarmac! Trinity Church is used for a number of music events and Wednesday/Saturday coffee. | Comments noted, but outside of the scope of planning policy. |
| DCE4 | Correct. | Comment noted. |

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| TRM1 | And more bus transport. Elderly need public transport. | LTC would support improved public transport services, and the policy supports sustainable transport provision for new development. New housing may improve the viability of public transport. |
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| | **TOWN COUNCIL OFFICE (3)** | |
| TCE1 | Good policy | Comment noted. |
| TCE2 | Good policy | Comment noted. |
| TCE3 | Excellent policy | Comment noted. |
| RES1 | Good policy. | Comment noted. |
| RES2 | Good policy. | Comment noted. |
| DCE1 | Good policy. | Comment noted. |
| DCE2 | Excellent policy. | Comment noted. |
| DCE3 | Good policies – shop fronts should be more in keeping with old style. | Comment noted. The policy would support reinstatement of historic shop fronts, but would also allow high quality contemporary design. |
| DCE4 | Good policy. | Comment noted. |
| TRM1 | Good policy. | Comment noted. |
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| TCE1 | I wholeheartedly support this policy. | Comment noted. |

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| TCE2 | Very much in favour of this policy. | Comment noted. |
| TCE3 | Very necessary policy and I fully support. | Comment noted. |
| RES1 | I am in agreement when sensitively approached and all impacts of developments. Consider especially in areas of green open spaces. | Comment noted. Policy DCE1 protects different kinds of green infrastructure. |
| RES2 | I am not clear about what this means but I am in favour of affordable housing developments appropriately sited within the town curtilage. | The policy promotes affordable housing provision as an integral part of the development. |
| DCE1 | An essential policy. | Comment noted. |
| DCE2 | Yes I am in favour of design. | Comment noted. |
| DCE3 | I am fully in favour of policy. | Comment noted. |
| DCE4 | In favour | Comment noted. |
| TRM1 | In favour | Comment noted. |
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| TCE1 | Policy TCE1 is a very good policy. The town does need extra input to preserve what there is but paving is loose and uneven. Leek needs further repair to *illegible word* it's attractiveness. One problem is likely to be the take-over by Stoke-on-Trent in the expected amalgamation. | Comment on TCE1 noted. Paving comment passed to SMDC. Public realm is one of the priorities for use of planning infrastructure monies in 7.1. Local Government reorganisation falls outside of the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan. |
| TCE2 | Again policy TCE2 is to be welcomed. Anything to preserve and enhance the character of Leek has to be a good thing – for instance improve paving. But will the prospective take over by Stoke-on-Trent restrict these activities. | Comment on TCE2 noted. |

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| TCE3 | If you have funds to make policy TCE3 work then by all means policy TCE3 must be a good thing. These are expensive projects if they are done properly and the fear would be that they are not properly carried out. No doubt Stoke-on-Trent takeover will be scuppering any proper expenditure. | Refurbishment would be undertaken by building owners and developers, not LTC. There are viability challenges, which could require public funding or involvement by third sector bodies. |
| RES1 | Residential development is never in sustainable locations. The only development should be social housing. Leek residents are priced out by Manchester immigrants. Home working is not so important anymore. However residential developers pull the wool over the eyes of Councils, and this happens again and again. Developers are interested only in profit, and social housing does not equal profit. The Council should permit only social housing or nothing at all. | Limiting residential development to social housing is contrary to national policy, so the Plan would not meet the Basic Conditions. Suggested change not made. |
| RES2 | What is social housing? No-one knows. Does a person on £25000 per annum buy an affordable house. Developers are not interested in affordable homes they are only interested in profit and there is none in affordable homes (whatever they are). The Council should only permit affordable housing. | The policy applies to affordable housing, as defined in national planning policy and guidance. |
| DCE1 | Agreed – but what exactly are you saying. Improvements to river, canal and other watercourses are to be welcomed. All the usual sites do not need protection. Development is never protection. Councils have insufficient power to protect. | The policy sets requirements for development, against which development proposals will be considered. |
| DCE2 | Without proper approach to design of buildings, spaces and landscapes we all end up with a mess. Look at English towns and compare them with other European towns. Architectural diversity just gives a visual mess. The character of town must be preserved to give it its own unique character. Diversification just leads to the same old mess as in other towns. Local character cannot be based on national and international influences. | A key element of Leek's character is architectural diversity, with buildings from different centuries, including formal architecture and vernacular buildings. Leek's classical buildings are based on European influences, but are an important part of the local character. Interpretation amended for clarity. |
| DCE3 | The stone seats are terrible. They are loose and uneven. They are dangerous. Did cowboys put the seat down. Green design is expensive so if it is going to be done the appropriate funds need to be available. | Comment on stone setts passed to SMDC, which is responsible for maintenance. Green design is not necessarily more expensive. Development |

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| | | would be funded mainly by developers, not public funds. |
| DCE4 | Creativity usually means extra expense for nothing very much. It is usually short term. All that is required is good simple design and development. The canals have been around for 200 years and have stood the test of time. Creative and green developments will be expensive and will not last 200 years. | The Plan avoids imposing subjective stylistic requirements, but would support innovative design (the canals were very innovative in their day). Text has been added to DCE2 interpretation to make clear that good design need not be elaborate or costly and simple design using good materials can often achieve better results within a given budget. |
| TRM1 | Travel has suffered terribly in the Leek area. The pressure of road traffic is terrible. Motor cars should be excluded from Leek. | Traffic management is outside of the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan. Comment passed to the local highways authority. |
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| | **TRINITY CHURCH (0)** | |
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| | **DIGITAL FORMS (26)** | |
| TCE2 | Old buildings and abandoned land should be made tidy, maybe make into car parking if only to keep the sites used and looked after. | Comment passed to SMDC, which is responsible for enforcement involving untidy land. |
| TCE3 | Yes, old buildings need to be used instead of letting get into states of disrepair. | Comment noted. |
| RES1 | Housing for disabled and old persons bungalows are needed. | Reference to people with disabilities added into the fourth clause. |
| DCE1 | I agree | Comment noted. |
| DCE3 | Agree | Comment noted. |

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| TRM1 | I agree | Comment noted. |
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| TCE1 | Tourist information venue that's easy to find and open from Wednesday to Sunday or better still 7 days. | Provision of a tourist information office would be the responsibility of SMDC. Comment passed to SMDC tourism team. |
| TCE2 | Just pull the eyesore Big Mill down and tidy up Mill Street. | The comment appears to relate to TCE3. The big mill was subject to demolition, following a fire. This has harmed Leek's historic character. |
| TCE3 | Only if heritage buildings are maintained to a high standard by the owners. | The Policy would apply to all of the mill buildings shown on Map 5. Where owners do not maintain heritage buildings, enforcement would be the responsibility of SMDC. Comment passed to SMDC. |
| RES1 | Seeing is believing. | Comment noted. |
| RES2 | All new housing to off road parking. | The neighbourhood plan does not seek to amend Local Plan parking standards, but Policy DCE2 does require car parking to be integrated into the design and layout of development, so that streets and spaces are not car-dominated. |
| DCE1 | Get the rivers and canals dredged.<br><br>No new buildings on flood planes. | Dredging of the rivers and canals would be the responsibility of the Canals and Rivers Trust – comment passed to them.<br><br>LTC shares concerns over building on flood planes. National policy deals with flood risk. Text on flood risk added to interpretation of RES1. |

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| | | Reference to sustainable drainage systems added to Policy DCE2. |
| DCE2 | Building with vision. | Comment noted. |
| DCE3 | Nobody's walked round the poor maintained church yards recently then. | Maintenance of the church yards would be the responsibility of the church in question. |
| DCE4 | Better signage for visitors. | Comment noted and also passed to tourism team in SMDC. |
| TRM1 | Accessible stiles on footpaths to help disabled and older people. | Comment noted and also passed to tourism team in SMDC. |
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| TCE1 | I support the preservation of listed buildings and conservation areas, too many were demolished previously. | Comment noted. Conservation areas are also dealt with in Policies DCE3 and DCE4. |
| TCE2 | Sites which currently detract from the attractiveness of the town should be redeveloped or remodelled. The Smithfield Centre is ugly, and the walking route from the termination of the Caldon Canal is industrial, not well signed, and unattractive. | Comments noted and also passed to tourism team in SMDC. |
| TCE3 | It is shameful that buildings such as the Big Mill are allowed to fall into disrepair and be unused. | The policy would have supported refurbishment, but the main building of the Big Mill was recently demolished following a fire. Text added to interpretation, for clarity. |
| RES1 | I fully support infilling/re-use and sustainable residential development on brownfield sites. | Comment noted. |
| RES2 | I agree that the policy should seek to shape affordable housing to best meet the needs of Leek's communities. | Comment noted. |
| DCE1 | I consider it vitally important to improve the character, setting, accessibility, amenity, tranquillity and water quality on the river, canal | Policy amended to refer to water quality, woodlands and the Local Nature Recovery |

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| | and other water courses. We desperately need to protect and/or enhance Nature Conservation Areas, Ancient Woodlands, Tree Preservation Orders and ground source water protection. | Strategy. Interpretation amended to refer to Ancient Woodlands and Tree Preservation Orders. |
| DCE2 | As there is still much architectural diversity in Leek, high quality innovative design should be encouraged. | Comment noted. |
| DCE3 | I agree that planning applications for shopfronts should show the profiles and details of the design. | Comment noted. |
| DCE4 | The key characteristics of the Caldon Canal Conservation Area should be preserved or improved to inform the design of new development. | Comment noted. |
| TRM1 | The lack of connectivity I consider a major drawback to sustainable living in Leek, without car ownership. The pedestrian road crossings should be sager and there should be more of them, bus stops and timetables should be prominently visible, and the rail connection between Leek and Stoke should be actively promoted. Meanwhile, there should be a bus connection directly to Stoke Railway Station, incorporating the route past Carmountside Crematorium. | Comments noted and also passed to the local highways authority. |
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| TCE1 | Agree broadly, but some of our listed buildings are eyesores and seem beyond saving for any type of purpose (housing or retail or business) such as several of the old mills. Also, I'm not convinced that enough is done to enforce upkeep and maintenance of listed buildings.<br><br>And then there's the issue of eyesore patches of land – the corner of Cross Street, the 2 sites on Broad Street, the rough patches on Belle Vue. These genuinely detract from the look and feel of the town and are in opposition to your vision for Leek. | LTC recognises the viability challenges, but refurbishment of listed buildings can deliver very effective regeneration. Loss of listed buildings is not just a cultural loss and harm to character, but an economic loss. The policy has regard to national policy on listed buildings. No change made.<br><br>Comments on untidy land passed to SMDC, which has enforcement powers. |
| TCE2 | I think I answered this question in some of my response to Q1. | Comment noted. |

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| TCE3 | The Mill problem isn't going away, and nothing appears to be happening with Mill Plan (which I believe I heard Bill Lomas refer to?). Would this policy support the Mill Plan? A significant rethink is needed here and at the very least could you not take some enforcement action against the owners for lack of upkeep. | Enforcement powers relating to maintenance of listed buildings lies with SMDC, not LTC, so comment passed to SMDC. |
| RES1 | Wholeheartedly agree. Consideration for family space should also include sufficient outside space (gardens) for children to be able to play or provision for communal areas. | Comment noted and already addressed in the policy. |
| DCE2 | There should be a requirement for any developer to ensure all homes have green technology – solar panels and heat pumps. | The Building Regulations now set requirements for green technology in new homes. |
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| TCE1 | This is good, but you are emphasising too much on culture and the arts, you don't mention anything hardly about retail. | Retail is clearly important and is addressed in the policy itself and is the first use mentioned in the interpretation. Retail is now included in Use Class E. Town centre vitality relies on a good retail offer and also food and drink, entertainment, cultural uses, community facilities and other town centre uses. No change made. |
| TCE2 | This sounds good but what does it actually mean, there is no meat on the bones here, I could agree to this and then you do what you want, there is nothing to be accountable for example, the Gables behind Sandon Street, this could be utilised by a shop like John Lewis, which would bring a lot of people to the area. | The policy supports the redevelopment or remodelling of two key sites. Reuse of other buildings and development of other sites would be addressed by Policies TCE1 and TCE3. |
| TCE3 | Like all other policies, there is no meat on the bones, what will you actually do, will the residents be consulted and listened to, it is our area as well. | The Neighbourhood Plan is planning policy, not an action plan. The policy sets requirements against which development proposals (planning applications) will be considered. There is a legal requirement for planning applications to be publicised and SMDC is required to take any representations into account. |

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| RES1 | This is non-existent there is no such thing as a neighbourhood plan, this needs to be more specific. What will you actually be doing if there was such a thing as a neighbourhood plan. All developments would go to residents for their agreement first. | The Neighbourhood Plan is planning policy, not an action plan. The process, legal requirements and legal status of the Neighbourhood Plan is set out in planning legislation. There is a legal requirement for planning applications to be publicised and SMDC is required to take any representations into account. |
| RES2 | This needs to be deleted as there does not need to be more houses and if you say there is then they don't get made affordable and they aren't big enough to live in. We have to sort out what we have first before building, there is no plan whatsoever at the moment. Hospital beds are more important than housing. | The policy seeks to shape affordable housing provision, where it is required under national and Local Plan policy. Seeking to prevent all new housing would be contrary to national policy, and would fail to meet the Basic Conditions. No change made. |
| DCE1 | Well this sounds good, but you don't do anything with this, new development should be made to account for this, not in the small ways they do. I know the current legislation states they have to do certain things, this is a weakness for the Council. This is a green area and should be protected, we don't want to live in a London 2, they might, we don't, that is why we live here. All areas not built on at the moment should be protected, you can say no to the government. | Policy DCE1 seeks to protect the rural environment and blue and green infrastructure, against the context of national planning policy. No change made. |
| DCE2 | Design, don't make me laugh. I tried to get planning for solar panels to change my roof and I was told I couldn't as it wasn't in the look of the area. There is no design, if you want a decent plan consult with your residents first before putting something together. | The policy supports green design, and also requires the local context to be considered. The policy takes account of the National Design Guide. |
| DCE3 | This at least has a little bit of detail, this is what you need. What are you actually going to do, be vague and then do what you want without consulting residents like the Sainsbury's roundabout where our voices were not heard. | The Neighbourhood Plan is planning policy, not an action plan. |
| DCE4 | Too vague again, put in here what plans you have for the canal. | The Neighbourhood Plan is planning policy, not an action plan. |

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| TCE1 | Ensure building signage and frontages are in keeping with the town's buildings. | Signage and shop fronts are addressed in Policy DCE3(3) and that policy's interpretation. |
| TCE2 | Leek needs to attract bigger retail names. | Comment noted. Three are some national chains in Leek, but part of the attractiveness of the town is also the range of independent businesses. All would fall under Use Class E, so the Neighbourhood Plan cannot differentiate. |
| TCE3 | The mill sites need to be redeveloped and saved. | Comment noted. |
| RES1 | Ensure new residential dwellings are in keeping with surrounding homes and not too many built on each piece of land. The Uk has the smallest homes against ones in Europe. | Comment noted. Design is dealt with in later policies. Neighbourhood Plans can't set space standards, unfortunately. |
| RES2 | Ensure affordable homes are correctly designed and not just small square boxes. | Comment noted. The policy seeks to ensure that affordable homes are of similar design and specification to market housing. |
| DCE1 | Further investigation required to the feasibility of opening the disused railway line through Endon to Leek. | Comment noted. This is an interesting suggestion, but outside of the Neighbourhood Area. |
| DCE2 | Building companies must be made aware of their responsibility for design, some of which is very poor. | The policy seeks to lift design quality. |
| DCE3 | More scrutiny is required for shop frontages and materials used. | The policy does address shop front design and materials. |
| DCE4 | Council need to ensure buildings in the conservation area are in keeping with the area and not intrusive. | Design quality is very important, but the policy would not supress creative design appropriate |

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| | | to the context (the canals are an example of innovation). |
| TRM1 | Feasibility to open the disused train line Endon to Leek as a sustainable alternative. Work had started but never continued. | Comment noted. This is an interesting suggestion, but outside of the Neighbourhood Area. |
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| TCE1 | I support this. | Comment noted. |
| TCE2 | I agree with this but it must be implemented, there are too many buildings that this applies to now in the conservation area, but no action is taken. The policy also needs to consider areas of the town centre not under conservation to ensure shops (vapes, hairdressers, nail bars, stationary suppliers etc) retain the heritage of the town within their signage and frontage. | The policy enables the redevelopment or remodelling of two specific sites. Policy TCE1 deals with all of the town centre. Policy DCE2 deals with design, including shop fronts. |
| TCE3 | Support but action needs to be delivered, there are too many opportunities of old buildings needing a new life but stalled by over restrictive planning. | The policy seeks to enable reuse and refurbishment. |
| RES1 | Existing brown field should be prioritised over brown field development. | The policy does support development of brownfield and other urban sites. |
| RES2 | Agree. | Comment noted. |
| DCE1 | Agree that protection should be afforded and is in legislation, however the policy should also look at enhancement and increased access. | The policy does support enhancement. Policy clause 1 amended to refer to connectivity between green spaces, paths and landscapes. |
| DCE2 | While generally supported higher quality design is not considered sufficiently including modern Lower Carbon materials and replacement of buildings that are not in keeping such as the Smithfield centre which should be fully redeveloped to merge the towns history and modern society needs. | The policy does support materials 'durable to weathering and … use of local or recycled materials, materials with low-embodied energy or materials from sustainable sources. |

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| | | Redevelopment of the Smithfield Centre is supported by Policy TCE2. |
| DCE3 | Agree. | Comment noted. |
| DCE4 | Agree. | Comment noted. |
| TRM1 | The policy should address Leeks terrible parking crisis and support more green transport. | Public car parking falls outside of the scope of the Plan. Policy TRM1 supports sustainable transport and active travel. |
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| TCE1 | Please confirm if you will be taking on the proposed new powers to limit undesirable businesses regarding vape shops and 'barbers'. No issues with promoting arts and cultural activities but more needs to be done in relation to taking on new technologies or Leek will be seen as a town people go to retire. | Vape shops and barbers fall within Use Class E, so change of use from retail would not require planning permission. The policy does support employment and this would include innovative businesses. |
| TCE2 | Totally agree with this element of the plan. | Comment noted. |
| TCE3 | Totally agree with this part of the plan. | Comment noted. |
| RES1 | More notice needs to be taken for the need to provide parking with any plans approved. | Parking would need to be shown for any development proposal. |
| RES2 | Agree with this where required for people in employment. | Comment noted. |
| DCE1 | There is a specific impact on areas of Leek impacted by the Peak Cluster Pipeline. This must be addressed in the Plan as there are sever impacts for local habitats for people and animals. | This project would be a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), so would be considered under the Planning Act 2008. NSIPs are an excluded matter for neighbourhood plans. |

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| DCE2 | Any green designs should be fully investigated as to their merits from a cost-effective perspective not merely adopted in an attempt to greenwash projects. | The policy encourages green design and gives examples to help ensure that development includes meaningful green elements. |
| DCE3 | There should be more control on the types of shop frontage designs approved. Many recent additions are not in keeping with the character of the town and are of poor design. | The policy seeks to address this issue. |
| DCE4 | Would be good to see this actually happen as opposed to just being talked about. | This comment may relate to specific projects related to the canal? |
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| TCE1 | I agree with this policy. | Comment noted. |
| TCE2 | I agree with this policy. | Comment noted. |
| TCE3 | I agree with this policy and hope viable and sustainable use of our most treasured properties gathers pace in the next decade. | Comment noted. |
| RES1 | I agree with this policy provided it does not conflict with Leek's heritage. | Comment noted. Design and heritage protection are delt with in Policies DCE2, DCE3 and DCE4. |
| RES2 | I agree with this policy provided it does not conflict with Leek's heritage. | Comment noted. Design and heritage protection are delt with in Policies DCE2, DCE3 and DCE4. |
| DCE1 | I agree with this policy. | Comment noted. |
| DCE2 | I agree with this policy. I am constantly amazed at the wealth of architecture in Leek and the great value of the terraced stock. But I am also passionate about not preventing new forms to occur that do not follow the precious vernacular. Modern settings in Leek would further promote its rich architectural diversity. | Comment noted. The policy, together with DCE3 and CE4, recognises that the character is based on formal architecture, in addition to vernacular buildings. The policy supports creative schemes, designed for the specific site and context. |

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| DCE3 | I agree with this policy. It would ruin the character of Leek if we had homogenous architecture that has not kept a pace with modern architectural visions. | Comment noted. |
| DCE4 | I agree with this policy. The Leek arm is one of the finest canals on the entire network and its greater use should be encouraged. | Comment noted. |
| TRM1 | I agree with this policy. | Comment noted. |
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| TCE1 | Preserve history and celebrate new. | Comment noted. The Plan does seek to conserve heritage, but also support creative, well-designed new development. |
| TCE2 | Agree. | Comment noted. |
| RES2 | There is a need for housing in Leek – especially for older people. | Comment noted. |
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| TCE1 | Positive but concerningly vague. Should be further specified on what this would look like. | This is planning policy, rather than specific actions or projects for a particular site. Design is dealt with in policies DCE2 and DCE3. |
| TCE2 | Smithfield redevelopment very much needed, upper floors should be artist studios and workshops as opposed to residential housing. The bus station already suffers from issues with drug use and anti-social behaviour, and the inclusion of low budget housing may boost this issue. We also don't have enough art studio spaces in Leek. | Comments noted. This and Policy TCE1 would support creative spaces and workshops. Redevelopment of the Smithfield Centre could include mixed use, including well-designed residential accommodation. |
| TCE3 | Keep residential housing out of listed buildings. These should be retained as either heritage attractions or boons for the local cultural scene. | Residential conversions could be the most viable use and would also provide accommodation in walking distance of the town centre and could help with town centre vitality. No change made. |

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| RES1 | Policy should outline who is responsible for these developments and outline any potential conflicts of interest. | It is not possible to control the sale and ownership of land or to name specific developers. No change made. |
| RES2 | Agreeable. | Comment noted. |
| DCE1 | Agreed. More allotments needed alongside current development, waiting list has been historically high in the area. Access to green spaces which have been lost should also be returned. The fields around 'Killer Hill' and the Churnet on Rudyard track has been restricted despite many years of public right of way and usage. Hundreds of people used this track a day, which is now lost, making Leeks green spaces much smaller overall. The farmer which restricted access is not using the fields for farming purposes, instead to try and limit the land loss to public right of way to protect property value in good faith. There is no point outlining a need to protect green spaces in development when they're not being protected in day-to-day life. | Comment noted and passed to SMDC, regarding public rights of way. The policy does seek to protect or enhance allotments. It would support proposals to provide new allotments, in suitable locations. |
| DCE2 | Agreeable. Keep Leek looking like a historic market town. | Comment noted. |
| DCE3 | 'Conservation area status should not be a barrier to creative or green design' is a ridiculous and bad faith statement, otherwise there's no point protecting them with conservation status at all. We can't just pick and choose what this status means when it benefits us or not. | The Leek Conservation Area contains many buildings which were creative and innovative at the time. There are numerous examples in guides on design in historic areas of high quality creative design enhancing historic areas.<br>There is a contradiction if creative design is then suppressed – this would be very poor conservation practice. |
| DCE4 | 'Conservation area status should not be a barrier to creative or green design' again this as a statement sets an extremely concerning precedent. | Canals were an example of innovation in their day. There is a contradiction if creative design is then suppressed – this would be very poor conservation practice. |

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| TRM1 | Perfectly agreeable. | Comment noted. |
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| TCE1 | Arts and culture in the town have developed and gained prominence in the last 10 years or so. There are annual festivals of music and arts which need to be supported and sustained. There is scope to enhance the cultural offer in the town more. Event organisers would benefit from funding opportunities to achieve this.<br>Listed buildings need to be maintained. I live in one myself and the cost of maintaining it to a decent standard puts a significant financial burden on the leaseholder. Support and advice on accessing any appropriate funds would be welcome. The historical architecture in the town is an important feature of its identity.<br>Both the arts and cultural activities and the unique architecture of the town are strong and vital selling points in attracting visitors and tourists which in turn boost the local economy. Along with helping make Leek a desirable place to live.<br>I strongly support the inclusion of Policy TCE1. | Comment noted and also passed to SMDC, including those on costs and funds (viability). |
| TCE2 | There are some very conspicuous and longstanding eyesores in the town. Particularly on the main approach road of Broad Street. Alos Ashbourne Road. These sites are well known and appear to be neglected by the owners. What powers are there to force them to address the problem?<br><br>Sites that would be better developed or allocated as car parking.<br>Leek has succeeded to a degree in sustaining independent shops which give town centre character.<br>Multi-nationals and chain stores are not quite in keeping with this character but perhaps there is a happy medium. Careful selection of the right retailers could be a solution for these derelict sites. | Comment noted and also passed to SMDC which has enforcement powers, here applicable.<br><br>Independent shops and chains would all fall within Use Class E. The Neighbourhood Plan cannot differentiate. |

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| | Residential parking is a problem with many streets simply not designed for the sheer number of cars per household. Unused or abandoned spaces may be developed as overspill car parks to address this. | Surface car parks could be a temporary solution in some instances, are not the only or necessarily most effective solution for achieving regeneration. |
| TCE3 | Very relevant to the town. As stated previously, I live in one of the converted mills. We have a lot of work to do to bring the building up to standard and maintain it. Leaseholders pay into a management fund annually to support this ongoing work, but this fee is now in excess of £3,000 per year. Some leaseholders have put their apartments up for sale because of this issue. The cost of repairs and maintenance is a disincentive for prospective buyers with the risk of further neglect a consequence. Therein lies a threat to the ongoing maintenance of our historic buildings. This is something that local government needs to be aware of be proactive in addressing. Hopefully this will be a feature of policy TCE3. | Comment noted. LTC shares concerns over leaseholder costs, but this is outside of the scope of planning policy. No change made. |
| RES1 | This is essential. Adequate housing provision for the existing population and even expansion to attract people to move into Leek. Development and conversion of existing buildings and new build where possible. | Comment noted. |
| RES2 | I'm not sure how great the housing need is in the town but to keep pace with demand seems logical. | Comment noted. |
| DCE1 | It's not clear what this means in specific terms. Therefore it's hard to comment meaningfully. | The policy sets out different aspects of the rural environment and blue and green infrastructure and requires impacts of development to be considered. It is not an action or project plan. |
| DCE2 | Yes. Seems the sensible and logical approach. | Comment noted. |
| DCE3 | Fully support this. Even now some of the town centre shopfronts are a bit out of keeping. | Comment noted. |
| DCE4 | Makes sense. I'm not an engineer so don't have much to contribute. Perhaps these areas could be enhanced. They are prime walking routes. | Comment noted. |

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| TRM1 | Active travel should be developed and facilitated. The burden of traffic in the town is great. Walking and cycling are all potential tourist pursuits. | Comment noted. |
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| TCE1 | Time to enhance the areas where people approach Leek and it looks a mess. The derelict land on Broad Street. The street décor and signage. | The policy would enable development of derelict sites. Signage and shopfronts are dealt with in policy DCE3. |
| TCE2 | There are plenty of derelict sites that need to be tidied up. Old boards and rubbish lying around.<br><br>We need to promote these places that are empty to be parking spaces until they can be developed. We have not got enough parking in Leek to support the rise in visitors. | The policy enables the redevelopment or remodelling of two specific sites. Policy TCE1 would enable development of derelict sites.<br><br>Surface car parks could be a temporary solution in some instances, are not the only or necessarily most effective solution for achieving regeneration. |
| TCE3 | So why aren't they being kept in the state they were then? Look at the crossroads at the bottom of St Edwards Street. We can see that Denise White has done up one bit but the other buildings are sad. The mills have been empty for so many years. The town looks tired. | Comment noted. |
| RES1 | What happened to the development of the marina down on the Barnfields estate? Why aren't you so reluctant to let planning permission go through. It's been all my life living in Leek seeing you deny or slow down development. | The policy supports residential development for brownfield sites and in other urban locations. |
| RES2 | It just needs to happen and for the money to be spent doing up the town instead of years of procrastination. | The comment appears to be unrelated to affordable housing provision. The public realm is one of the priorities for use of planning infrastructure monies in 7.1. |
| DCE1 | So create more linked pathways, cycle routes and round the town running routes away from the excessive town traffic we have. | The policy has been amended to make reference to enhancing connectivity. |

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| DCE2 | The town needs a good mix of all styles, it should move toward a more cycle/walking friendly layout with emphasis on heritage trails and art trails. The people in businesses have had to take some things on to their own hands due to the lack of interest from the council. This town needs the existing architecture to be funded to keep it repaired and maintained too. | The policy recognises architectural diversity and places emphasis on pedestrian permeability and connectivity. Active travel is also promoted in Policy TRM1. The repair and maintenance of properties in the town is the responsibility of the building owners. Also, comment passed to SMDC. |
| DCE3 | You're repeating the same boring thing here. You get tied up in old design and put the brakes on new and innovative design.<br>You quote conservation area such as the Broad Street traffic light businesses and then you permit and empty ugly derelict site for 40 years such as the empty old Chris Hinton's garage next to Tool Station. It's a disgrace and an ugly eyesore for people coming into town. You should make private owners maintain the sites or release them for car parking. | This policy, with DCE2, positively supports creative and innovative design. Comment also passed to SMDA, which has enforcement powers. |
| DCE4 | Wow who wrote this boring repetitive policy that isn't saying anything constructive. Of course we need art, nature, good looking buildings and nice things to see. Safe cycle paths and walking paths through town! It's full of ugly lorries. | The policy seeks to ensure development takes opportunities to enhance the canal, including the things listed in the comment. |
| TRM1 | It's saying what I've already answered on previous pages. | Comment noted. |
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| TCE1 | I fully support the ethos to protect our town, the integrity of such must be conducive with local growth supporting local businesses and individuals. | Comment noted. The policy seeks to enhance the vitality of the town centre. |
| TRM1 | Existing routes to our town are becoming more problematic every year. Routes need to be at least streamlined for locals and passing traffic but also inviting to those visitors we need to attract. The continued flow of traffic is imperative, and any disruption has a massive impact on businesses. We desperately need the 'rat runs' looking at, Southbank Street, Junction Road, West Street and Belle Vue to name a few. The road works, ridiculously routed diversions, even parking both sides of the road outside All Saints school cause havoc every day in our town. | Comments passed to the local highway authority, which is responsible for traffic management. |

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| | Perhaps one-way streets and facility carparking should be a major part of future proofing our communities. | |
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| TCE1 | Agree | Comment noted. |
| TCE2 | Agree | Comment noted. |
| TCE3 | Strongly agree | Comment noted. |
| RES1 | Agree | Comment noted. |
| RES2 | Agree | Comment noted. |
| DCE1 | Strongly agree | Comment noted. |
| DCE2 | Strongly agree | Comment noted. |
| DCE3 | Agree but design constraints need to be strengthened. | Comment noted. It is unclear what restraints are being suggested. |
| DCE4 | Agree. | Comment noted. |
| TRM1 | Agree. | Comment noted. |
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| TCE1 | OK | Comment noted. |
| TCE2 | OK | Comment noted. |
| TCE3 | OK | Comment noted. |
| RES1 | OK | Comment noted. |

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| RES2 | OK | Comment noted. |
| DCE1 | OK | Comment noted. |
| DCE2 | OK | Comment noted. |
| DCE3 | OK | Comment noted. |
| DCE4 | OK | Comment noted. |
| TRM1 | All the policies are generalised words without detail, and as such of very little value. | A neighbourhood plan is planning policy for development, and has been drafted as such. It is not an action or project plan. |
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| TCE1 | The policy is commendable. The town centre needs to be the focus of development despite the 'breakaway' retail sites at the supermarkets with their free parking. There is a turnover of retail and leisure business within the town which shows confidence but too much competition. Competition is good but businesses have to make income to survive. Employment use in the town is relatively high but is hampered by parking. | Comment noted.<br><br>Comment on parking passed to the local highways authority, which is responsible for public parking. |
| TCE2 | Both these sites are not, and never have been, fully utilised and therefore are not likely to be viably remodelled. The idea of increasing the height of the Smithfield Centre would darken Heywood Street and Cromwell Terrace. Both sites suffer from lack of short-term free parking. | The policy creates an opportunity for redevelopment. Wording on height amended to refer to 'additional floorspace'. Comment on viability noted, though both sites have been developed in the past and the opportunity for mixed use development, including residential, could improve viability. |
| TCE3 | The District Council has received a report highlighting the fact that any redevelopment of the suggested site is unviable. The cost of conversion is prohibitive and any suggestion of local authority money being used is | It is unclear which site is being referred to. Some of the buildings are listed or within the |

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| | financial folly. A considerable proportion of them should be allowed to be demolished to allow the town to progress into the 21st century. | Conservation Area, so are protected. Heritage-led regeneration can be particularly effective. |
| RES1 | A very positive policy to promote the growth of residential use within the town to stem the drift away of young people and the drift to a retirement town. The cost of conversion of 'above business' premises is almost prohibitive and long-term renting is not a priority amongst Leek people. The allocated sites should be pressed for progress. | Comment noted. The viability of conversion of upper floors varies, based on a range of factors, including accessibility. The Plan allocates two sites (redevelopment opportunities) in Policy TCE2. The Local Plan may make additional site allocations in future. |
| RES2 | Agreed. Costs are escalating and the builders are likely to build high rise to provide affordable housing which is not tenure blind. | Comment noted, though high-rise construction is often more expensive and the local land and property market is unlikely to support it. |
| DCE1 | This policy should see residential policy as the priority as we have too many years of avoiding great crested newts and their like. | There is not a polarised choice between protection of nature and housing development. Well-designed development in the right locations can achieve both. Also, regard has to be made to national policy and environmental legislation. |
| DCE2 | Development is for the provision of somewhere to live, work or relax. It should be functional and viable. The town will not move forward if design is expected to retain the Victorian character of the key buildings. | This and the following two policies explicitly state that they are not intended to impose imitation or suppress creativity. |
| DCE3 | A commendable policy reliant upon private sector money and enthusiasm. Encourage by all means but bear in mind cost and competition when development is proposed. Buy the Nat West and provide a community hub! | The policy seeks to shape development, which is primarily proposed by the private sector. The policy would support community uses in the town centre. |
| DCE4 | No comment. | Noted. |
| TRM1 | Commendable but the market town we live in has insufficient parking for residents, workers and shoppers, let alone visitors. | Comment on town centre parking passed to the local highways authority. |

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| TCE1 | Agree | Comment noted. |
| TCE2 | Agree | Comment noted. |
| TCE3 | Agree | Comment noted. |
| RES1 | Agree | Comment noted. |
| RES2 | Agree | Comment noted. |
| DCE1 | Agree | Comment noted. |
| DCE2 | Agree | Comment noted. |
| DCE3 | Agree | Comment noted. |
| DCE4 | Agree | Comment noted. |
| TRM1 | Agree | Comment noted. |
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| TCE1 | Whilst I will always support arts in my local town, it is important to consider how venues like The Foxlowe are exclusionary to anyone who isn't of an older demographic, into arthouse films and 'Blues and Americana.' The issue isn't with preserving community facilities, it is about working on the public image of such venues, opening it up beyond the committee members and working with younger people to in turn attract a varied audience. | This is outside of the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan. Comment passed to Foxlowe Arts Centre. |
| TCE2 | Build baby build. Towns like Nantwich have preserved their heritage whilst also building shops that aren't 'local cafes' and are doing well. We should follow suit. | The intention of this policy and TCE1 is to support growth and development to enhance the vitality of the town centre. |

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| | There are various sites in Leek that could really bring Leek into the modern age whilst also preserving its heritage but currently there isn't enough to bring people in to even learn about the heritage. | |
| TCE3 | I think instead of wasting money on restoring an old mill which we won't be able to do anything with (as it is a listed building), we should be building family homes and adding in more practical shops. As an idea, you could work with students to build out a virtual mill and map out what it would have looked like back in the day if people are really keen to look inside an old mill. Or reopen a tourist and information centre and have some leaflets on the mill instead.<br>It is a nice idea to restore them however, if there aren't any shops that would attract someone who can afford those flats then there is no point. I think it would save a lot more money if we just knocked them down and build some family homes as we are really behind with housing targets. | The listed building status would not preclude conversion to residential and other uses. The policy has regard to national planning policy. Housing need includes family homes, but also housing suitable for younger and older people. |
| RES1 | Please build more family houses and stop the Planning Committee from overthrowing plans when they already have a house/houses to live in. You cannot live in a flat for your whole life and there just aren't enough houses. I cannot support this enough. Only building 7 houses in 2024/2025 is just ridiculous. | Comment noted. Housing need includes family homes, but also housing suitable for younger and older people. |
| RES2 | I fully support any housing development for families in Leek. | Comment noted. |
| DCE1 | Yes, I am happy with that. Explore opportunities to develop housing near Morrisons, do something with Britannia. | Housing development is supported for brownfield sites and in other urban locations in Policy RES1. |
| DCE2 | I support. | Comment noted. |
| DCE3 | Well if you want to talk about key characteristics then please knock down the Smithfield Centre and start again. It is the first thing you see (after the monument) when you come into Leek and it is an eyesore. Seeing American Candy shops and closed down venues on that place just looks like something from Skid Row. Replace it with some family | Redevelopment of the Smithfield is supported in Policy TCE2. Policy TCE1 supports town centre uses, including food and drink. |

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| | restaurants like the Lounge bars, trees and benches so you can see the monument more prominently. That whole section needs redeveloping. | |
| DCE4 | I support this. | Policy noted. |
| TRM1 | As mentioned, the whole of the Smithfield Centre needs development, and we need to improve the bus station. If I had the money I would do it myself. It would be great if we had a bus that went directly to Stoke Station even if it was every couple of hours.<br>Whilst I agree that cycling and walking is important, we need to recognise that Leek is fast turning into one large car park and cycling in Leek is dangerous (if not too hilly). It would be great if we had a train station but I'm getting ahead of myself, if we don't have any houses being built then asking for a train station would be enough for the nimbys to start a revolution. | Redevelopment of the Smithfield is supported in Policy TCE2. The policy supports balanced transport provision, including sustainable modes and active travel. LTC supports better services. |
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| TCE1 | It is very important to encourage businesses to Leek so that the area can thrive, business rates are key to growth. It would be good to keep young people in t e area instead of travelling for work. Conservation is also very important, our buildings, history and surrounding areas need to be conserved. | Comment noted. The Plan supports town centre vitality, local employment and conservation. |
| TCE2 | Our derelict mills are an eyesore but are also key to the heritage of the town, I appreciate that it would be costly to renovate them but rather that than demolish them. The worst building in the town is the bus station, it does not and has never fit in with the beautiful architecture of the town. | The policy supports redevelopment of the Smithfield Centre. The Plan supports heritage-led regeneration. |
| TCE3 | Agree wholeheartedly. | Comment noted. |
| RES1 | This needs to be looked at very carefully as it could destroy all that is lovely about the town and surrounding areas. Small developments like on the Ashbourne Road, brownfield sites and infill should always be looked at first. The town cannot accommodate any large projects with the infrastructure it has. | The policy supports residential development for brownfield and other urban sites. Policy DCE1 seeks to protect the surrounding rural area. |

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| RES2 | Perhaps extending the Council Estate opposite the Three Horse Shoes would be a good idea as there is scope. It's a shame that the old Army Camp could not be added as building land. | Housing site allocations could be considered by a future SMDC Local Plan or a future neighbourhood plan. |
| DCE1 | All extremely important, soon ruined by overdeveloped housing estates. | Comment noted. |
| DCE2 | Agree | Comment noted. |
| DCE3 | Agree | Comment noted. |
| DCE4 | Agree | Comment noted. |
| TRM1 | We should endeavour to make it easier for people to come into town and park their cars. People will not be forced on to buses. We do not want our roads ruined by cycle routes, I experience the chaos on the pavements in Gloucestershire, the roads are squeezed so that the pavements are wider with a tiny strip for pedestrians. Absolute nightmare! | The policy supports a balanced transport provision in new development, including sustainable modes of transport and active travel. |
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| TCE1 | Important to maintain the historical value plus for a sense of belonging for residents to be proud of Leek whether young or old. | The Plan places emphasis on quality of place, including in Policies DCE2, DCE3 and DCE4. |
| TCE2 | Correct use when opportunities arise with either dwelling or business or recreation, but the emphasis has to be correct use and not convenient use. | The policy would support mixed use, including all of those uses. |
| TCE3 | Expense has to be taken into account in maintaining historical buildings, plus finding skilled craft persons to actually work on these projects is easier said than done. | The viability challenges are fully recognised. The policy recognises the regeneration potential of the buildings, having regard to national policy. |
| RES1 | Locations have to be attractive for the Council, building developers and residents where the location is appropriate for development, not all mentioned above will be coherent on every location. | The policy recognises sustainable locations for development. Development schemes would also be subject to other policies, including DCE1, DCE2, DCE3. |

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| RES2 | Affordable housing is more important than ever with the younger generation struggling with that first step on the property ladder. Are affordable housing a priority for large building developers! | The policy seeks to shape affordable provision, but does amend thresholds or proportions set out in the Local Plan. |
| DCE1 | Building developments have to be in harmony with nature which is biodiversity at its best and is now a prerequisite not an after thought as building projects from the past. | Biodiversity net gain requirements are now specified in legislation. |
| DCE2 | Actually probably harder to install in today's society than in keeping with Leek's traditional appearance, modern green ideas versus conventional aspects could be a case of mix and match. | The policy focuses on quality and response to context, but avoids being prescriptive on stylistic matters. The most authentic response to historic environments is in creative, high-quality buildings, not stylistic parody. |
| DCE3 | Expense needs to be accounted for not cheap in upkeep of historical properties. | The effective way of keeping historic properties in good repair is keeping them in productive use. |
| DCE4 | Canals have been underfunded for a long while and require more attention for a 21st century future. | Comment noted. |
| TRM1 | This is basically a general policy beyond the boundaries of Leek as residents travel further than just Leek and require more than walking, running, cycling but buses, trains and car transport. | The Neighbourhood Plan applies to the designated Neighbourhood Area (Leek Parish). Whilst LTC recognises the importance of wider linkages, the Neighbourhood Plan can't apply outside of the Neighbourhood Area. |
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| TCE1 | Forward planning for development of Leek over the next two decades is an excellent idea. | Comment noted. |
| TCE2 | Tidying up and reutilisation of derelict areas can only produce positive results and enhance the attractiveness of the town to residents and visitors. | Comment noted. |
| TCE3 | Disused mills have been a blight on the area for several years. Owners of Listed Buildings must be encouraged to maintain their properties to at least the condition they were in when listed. | Comment noted. Comment passed to SMDC which has enforcement powers. |

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| RES1 | Residential development should focus on brownfield sites rather than further incursions into precious greenfield areas. The importance of gardens should not be overlooked. | The policy does focus on brownfield and urban sites. Gardens are addressed in RES1 and DCE2(2). |
| RES2 | Affordable housing is important but should not be interpreted as fitting as many dwellings as possible on a certain area at the expense of contact with nature. | This policy and DCE2 address affordable housing and design. |
| DCE1 | Green and blue infrastructure is becoming more and more important to mitigate the impact of pollution. Tree Preservation Order must be rigidly enforced and financial penalties for violation greatly increased. It would be really beneficial if the Leek Canal Basin could be restored. | Comments noted. |
| DCE2 | Much modern design of domestic buildings is quite banal and needs to be improved. The importance of 'swift bricks' is vital for avine welfare and provision of 'hedgehog holes' in fencing between properties should be mandatory. | The Plan seeks to promote more creative and site-specific design. Policies can encourage wildlife-friendly features, but not set mandatory requirements. Hedgehog gaps have been added to the list of wildlife-friendly features in the interpretation to Policy DCE2. |
| DCE3 | 'Living above the shop' may seem an outmoded concept but with High Streets facing more and more competition from the internet and shopping centres, the utilisation of unused space at first and second floor levels above retail outlets seems eminently sensible.<br>Allowing kerbside parking round Leek Market Place detracts seriously from the positive impact which many Listed Buildings in the area should have. | Use of upper floors is supported in Policy TCE1.<br><br>Comment on parking passed to the local highway authority. |
| DCE4 | The Caldon Canal Conservation Area needs sympathetic development. Just turning the area into an overdeveloped housing estate is not the answer. The reinstatement of the Canal Basin is just as important as the provision of new houses and could do wonders for attracting visitors to the area. | Comments noted. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate housing sites around the Caldon Canal. |
| TRM1 | The design of roads on new housing developments should enable easy access for emergency vehicles such as ambulances and fire engines. Some existing estates seem to have neglected this provision. | Additional clause on emergency and service vehicles added to the policy. |

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| TCE1 | Fine but making it happen? | The policy will be used in the development management process as a basis for determining planning applications. |
| TCE2 | Very high-quality development needed. | Comment noted. |
| TCE3 | Very important to a place like Leek. Do not forget arts and cultural users (p.2). The Historical Mills should be used for residential development (Policy RES1) and should not be pulled down. | Comment noted. |
| RES1 | Yes. The number of dwellings seems very low. | Comment noted. Increasing the residential population is one of the ways of enhancing the vitality of the town centre, in addition to meeting local need. |
| RES2 | Very important and do NOT be put off by developers pleading they cannot make a profit (or not a big enough profit) if affordable housing is included. | Comment noted. |
| DCE1 | Yes. | Comment noted. |
| DCE2 | Very careful evaluation required of sites and their overall setting. | Comment noted. Text added to the policy interpretation. |
| DCE3 | Overall design is essential and not just design for individual sites. The reinstatement of historic shop fronts is important to maintain Leek's distinctive character. Approval should be sought for modern garish shopfronts including logos. Resist 'brands'. | The policy addresses shopfronts, including guidance in the interpretation. |
| DCE4 | No comment. Seems good. | Noted. |
| TRM1 | Access to Leek from outside is very important if the town is to thrive. I should worry less about internal circulation. | Both external linkages and circulation are important. The Neighbourhood Plan can only include policies for development in the Neighbourhood Area. |

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| TCE1 | Need more jobs less charity shops. | Comment noted. Charity shops would fall within Use Class E, as with other retail. |
| TCE2 | Build homes on derelict land. | The policy relates to specific opportunity sites. Development of derelict sites elsewhere would be supported by Policy RES1. |
| TCE3 | The mills are an eyesore coming from Ashbourne or Macclesfield. | The policy supports their refurbishment and reuse. |
| RES1 | Need more social houses and decent homes for elderly people. | Comment noted. The policy supports a mix of accommodation to meet diverse local needs. |
| RES2 | Definitely need more accommodation. | Comment noted. |
| DCE1 | Plant more trees and leave nature reserves when building new estates like up The Mount. | Policy DCE2 places emphasis on green infrastructure. |
| DCE2 | Enhance the high street, more benches, pedestrianises Derby Street. | The priorities for use of planning infrastructure monies in 7.1 includes public realm works. Also, comments passed to SMDC. |
| DCE3 | Need to keep churches for community events. | This would be a matter for the organisations managing the churches. Generally, the Neighbourhood Plan would support diversification to create community facilities. |
| DCE4 | Footpaths to countryside like Greenway in Newcastle | Comment noted and passed to SMDC. |
| TRM1 | Railway station. | Comment unclear. |

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| TCE1 | The challenges for Policy TCE1 in the Leek Neighbourhood Plan stem from its limited ability to fully protect town centre vitality amid national planning changes and local economies realities. Recent forms for the Use Classes Order and permitted development rights allow easy conversion of ground floor/retail commercial spaces to residential use, often creating 'dead frontages' and undermining the policy's encouragement to retain active public-facing units – directly compromising its core aim of enhancing attractiveness, vitality and viability. Additionally, Leek's historic buildings (including mills) face significant viability hurdles for employment reuse due to conversion challenges, car parking shortages, and physical constraints, potentially deterring investment despite the policy's support for sensitive refurbishment. These factors, combined with ongoing issues like shop vacancies, high business rates, and post-COVID impacts, risk marketing TCE1s protective and supportive measures harder to enforce effectively in practice. | Comments on national legislation and policy noted. One of the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans is having regard to national policy.<br><br>Comments on viability noted. There may be a role for third sector bodies and alternative approaches to funding in securing regeneration.<br><br>TCE1 creates a policy context, but improving the vitality of the town centre will require other initiatives outside of the Neighbourhood Plan. |
| TCE2 | Overall, it's one of the stronger, more proactive elements of the plan – directly addressing long-standing community concerns about dated, underperforming assets like the Smithfield Centre (highlighted in engagement as a detractor to vitality and public realm). By encouraging mixed-use regeneration, heritage sensitive improvements, and better connectivity, it aligns well with NPPF town centre goals, the Leek Town Centre Masterplan SPD, and the vision for economic diversification and attractiveness. | Comments noted. |
| TCE3 | Compared to TCE1s protective limitations, TCE3 feels more proactive and solution-orientated, with good potential to deliver tangible regeneration benefits for Leek's heritage-driven economy if viability barriers are navigated. It's a solid policy that enhances the plans overall heritage focus. | Comments noted. |

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| RES1 | I think this policy is pragmatic and well-integrated, complementing the plans heritage and town centre focus (eg cross references to TCE3 for mill conversions) while promoting high-quality, sustainable housing post-COVID (emphasising space, amenity, and home working flexibility). It avoids over-prescription, giving developers options in a market town with limited greenfield potential, and aligns with NPPF housing supply goals without conflicting with strategic local plan policies. | Comments noted. |
| RES2 | I have no real comments on this one – seems OK | Comment noted. |
| DCE1 | My only comment is it focus on protection and enhancement of existing assets rather than adding anything new. | The policy also refers to taking opportunities for enhancement. |
| DCE2 | I like the integration and thoughtfulness of this one – no further comment. | Comment noted. |
| DCE3 | Reads like a strong, evidence-based policy that safeguards Leek's unique historic market town identity through clear, character-specific guidance, especially on shopfronts and overall design harmony. | Comment noted. |
| DCE4 | No major comments. | Noted. |
| TRM1 | I am most passionate about this and the possibility for change in Leek to be more pedestrian and cyclist friendly. The policy is protective and proportionate rather than highly prescriptive – no major new cycle lanes or specific route proposals are mandated, and wording like 'where possible' or 'no significant adverse impact' gives flexibility that could lead to minimal delivery. However, I do strongly support TRM1s focus on active travel but suggest strengthening it to require developments (especially larger ones) to deliver segregated or protected cycle facilities and continuous walking links where feasible in line with national LTN 1/20 standards and Staffordshire's updated LCWIP. This would better address the infrastructure priorities in Chapter 7 (eg extending footpath/cycling networks and Caldon Canal-town centre links) are welcome. To make them more deliverable, add specific references to funding bids or developer contributions for key gaps, such as safer | The Neighbourhood Plan is policy for development, rather than an action or project plan.<br><br>It would be over prescriptive to require segregated cycle facilities, and only very large - scale development could provide such infrastructure.<br><br>Detailed comments on transport infrastructure passed to the local highway authority and SMDC. |

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| | crossing on St Edward Street, better integration of the Rudyard Trail/Churnet corridor with the town centre, and protected routes along main approaches (A53/A52) to reduce car dependency and improve safety for all users safety concerns on busy roads and encourage more people to walk/cycle daily. As a regular cyclist/walker in Leek, I experience issues with poor visibility at junctions, narrow pavements and vehicle dominance in shared spaces. Amend TRM1 and DCE2 (Design) to explicitly prioritise 'LTN 1/20 compliant' designs that ensure safe, accessible routes for all ages/abilities, including lighting, dropped kerbs and traffic calming – tying into the plan's health and climate vision. It would be great to see kids walking or cycling to school safely. Enhancing active travel would support the plan's vision for 'improved connectivity' and health, reduce congestion/town centre traffic, boost tourism 9eg canal/trail access) and align with county wide efforts like the LCWIP update. Could we also consider the complete pedestrianisation of Leek town centre? | |
| | Cllr Derek Hilyer, Town Councillor (personal opinion) | |
| | The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines a plan as **"a detailed proposal for doing or achieving something**" (Concise OED) but this is not what we find in the document presented to us.<br>The government's Guidance on Neighbourhood Planning (www.gov.uk/guidance/neigborhood-planning-2) (2014 updated 2020) states that<br>• "neighbourhood planning **gives communities direct power** to develop a **shared vision** for their neighbourhood and **shape the development and growth** of their local area".<br>• a parish or town council may choose to establish an **advisory committee** or sub-committee under section 102(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and **appoint local people** (who need not be parish councillors) to those bodies… The terms of reference | LTC has worked with a steering group and also undertaken varied engagement with local people and stakeholders. |

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| | for a steering group or other body should be published and the minutes of meetings made available to the public.<br>There is no sign, since 2019, that exercise of this direct power has been facilitated; it is unclear who has been appointed to the current advisory committee; the committee's current terms of reference are unknown and what it has decided over the years has not been published.<br><br>**Government Guidance**<br><br>This plan states that "the Leek Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by **Leek Town Council** working with the **Leek Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group** and includes policies to shape development". But it does not quote, or follow, the government guidance (above), which continue "they (communities) are **able to choose** where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, **have their say** on what those new buildings should look like and **what infrastructure should be provided**, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead. Neighbourhood planning provides a **powerful set of tools** for **local people to plan** for the types of development to meet their **community's needs…".**<br><br>The project's website Love Leek states that "Neighbourhood Plans are a means for the local community to **have a direct say** over policies governing the future development of the town. The website has been set up to **keep the local community informed** of progress and, as importantly, to **receive comments and feedback** from local people". There is little activity on the website since 2019 and although the plan lists considerable engagement up till that year there is nothing till 2024, and then very little. The covid years were an ideal opportunity to fully exploit the website and social media to engage the community, particularly its younger media-aware members. Market stalls have been utilised in the past year but they only reach a narrow and mainly older | The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared using the statutory process set out in planning legalisation, policy and planning practice guidance, including meeting the Basic Conditions. The Plan does not make housing site allocations.<br><br>Informal community engagement has been varied and widespread. Statutory requirements for consultation have also been met. |

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| | demographic. No one who reads the plan can think that it is in any way the result of the community having a direct say over policies. It has been drafted by the Steering Group, government policies have been inserted by consultants, and now the community is being asked to pass judgement on what has been done for them. Some data has been added, but without comparator figures (eg for the Moorlands, for Staffordshire, for England) they are not useful statistics. | |
| | **The guidance states that the Council** "should be **inclusive and open** in the preparation of its neighbourhood plan or order and ensure that the wider community: is kept **fully informed** of what is being proposed; is able to make their views known **throughout the process**; has opportunities to be **actively involved** in shaping the emerging …plan; is made aware of **how their views have informed the draft neighbourhood plan**…". And **the Roadmap for Neighbourhood Planning** (2026) says that "It is also advisable to consult any neighbouring local, town or parish councils, significant landowners, local businesses and local community organisations, such as chambers of commerce, civic societies and local trusts". | Statutory bodies have been contacted, including as part of this Regulation 14 consultation. |
| | The roadmap requires neighbourhood plans to "be compatible with human rights law. A useful approach to assessing impact on human rights is to undertake an **equalities impact assessment**… for a neighbourhood plan, this would be an assessment of impacts against different characteristics protected by law (such as gender, ethnicity and disability). This can be useful in demonstrating that a plan does not breach human rights law." None of the above applies to this plan, the community has not been continually involved, the necessary consultations have not taken place, the impact assessment has not taken place (or anyway is not reflected in the plan). | The policies have drafted to meet the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. The submission of the Plan will include a Basic Conditions Statement, including Equalities Assessment. In addition, the Plan has been screened, and does not require full SEA and HRA. |
| | **With regard to business,** in particular, there is no indication in the plan of support for, or even acknowledgement of, the town's financial (eg Cooperative Bank, Leek Building Society), food processing (Cottage Delight, Ornua) or chemical (Eternis, Polynt, Esterchem) companies. Two of these are located on industrial estates at Leekbrook, but this | The TC has engaged with various businesses, including local shops and market stall holders, the Totally Locally initiative and other key stakeholders such as the Foxlowe. There was also a specific presence in the local market. |

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| | concentration of business employment is not mentioned. It is also noticeable that Britannia House, a largely redundant 8,600 square metre building, is ignored in the plan, as either an opportunity or a risk.<br>**The promise to Leek**<br>The Love Leek website assured residents that "Leek Neighbourhood Plan is being produced so that the views of people living and working in Leek can be properly reflected in the planning policies and proposals which govern how the town will develop in the future. **The Leek Neighbourhood Plan will cover the whole of the town of Leek**, i.e. the area within the remit of Leek Town Council. This is called the Neighbourhood Area and defines the geographical area where the policies and proposals of the Neighbourhood Plan will apply". The map on the cover of the plan is of the whole of the Council area, as is that on Love Leek.<br><br>There is no indication in the current draft that residents in specific areas have been invited to choose where they want new homes, what they should look like, what infrastructure is needed. In 2019 Love Leek invited residents to a public meeting by saying "the Leek Neighbourhood Plan presents an ideal opportunity to create a design master plan for Mount Road". The interim plan did have that section, but it was removed when the question was asked: why were Leekbrook, Haregate, Barnfields not also covered? When an update was given to Council in March 2024 it was pointed out that there were no references to what the consultants described as "outlying settlements": the response was that Council members could fill in gaps, but the whole point of the exercise is that it is community-led. Ward councillors could have easily produced a detailed and useful analysis of their ward whereas nothing relevant has been produced by the Steering Group in seven years. The guidance requires advisory (steering) groups to publish their terms of reference and all their minutes – neither of these have happened since covid and | These interactions resulted in text being added into the Neighbourhood Plan and also other actions outside of the Neighbourhood Plan process.<br><br>The designated Neighbourhood Area is the whole parish.<br><br>The Neighbourhood Plan does not make housing site allocations outside of the Town Centre, but does allocate two opportunity sites in the Town Centre for mixed use, including residential development. Residential development is also supported through the conversion of historic mills. |

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| | there is no indication that the Council, in appointing the advisory group, meant that the plan should cover only the central part of the town or that it subsequently gave permission for this limitation.<br><br>**Housing, Mills and Parking**<br>*Policy RES1: Residential Development* states that, "in addition to allocated housing sites, **RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT** will be positively supported in the following locations: conversion of upper floors of commercial properties within Leek Town Centre, providing it does not conflict with existing commercial uses; development of brownfield sites or building conversions within the defined Development Boundaries; redevelopment of existing housing, providing there is no loss of heritage assets; sensitive refurbishment and reuse of historic buildings; infill development of street-frontage gaps between existing housing built-frontages or garden development". Barnfields is perhaps the most obvious site for housing development, but it is not mentioned, there is no note of community preferences, and there is no discussion of the changes to infrastructure needed to develop this site. Potential sites in Leekbrook, West End, Haregate, Burchill (and even the Mount) are similarly unexplored.<br>*Section 3 Town Centre and Employment* of the plan states that "the **HISTORIC MILL BUILDINGS** and other historic buildings have proved to be challenging due to issues around viability, car parking and physical challenges around conversion. A **flexible approach will be required** to secure heritage-led regeneration. It is recognised that refurbishment of the Mill Buildings **may require** involvement of a community or other third sector organisation with capacity to raise capital funds". It further says that "residential development **will be positively supported** in the following locations", which include the "sensitive refurbishment and re-use of historic buildings sensitive refurbishment and reuse of historic mill buildings will be supported for the following uses: residential accommodation; workspace, including offices and co-working space; arts and cultural uses; ancillary car and cycle parking at the lower levels of | Housing site allocations are made in the Local Plan. It should be noted that the Neighbourhood Plan could not allocated housing sites in the Green Belt, or where they would be contrary to national or local policies.<br><br>A Neighbourhood Plan is planning policy, not a project or action plan or specific development proposal. It would be for applicants for planning permission to commission the necessary information for specific schemes. |

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| | the building. Where there are viability challenges in converting historic buildings, **consideration should be given** to the flexible application of parking requirements, based on a green travel plan to support walking and cycling". But there are no actual plans, only assertions including such formulations as 'will be required', 'may require', 'should be given', will be supported'.<br><br>*Policy DCE2: Design* states that "**CAR PARKING** should be integrated into the design and layout of development, so that streets and spaces are not car-dominated…ensuring that cars do not dominate streets". But again, no positive steps (such as residents' parking, parking dedicated to mill-dwellers, additional parking floors at Buxton Road/Portland Street or Smithfield etc) – only the word 'should'.<br>**Responsibility for the Plan**<br>The Guidelines state that "in a designated neighbourhood area… **the town or parish council is responsible for neighbourhood planning.** Where a parish or town council chooses to produce a neighbourhood plan or Order it should work with other members of the community who are interested in, or affected by, the neighbourhood planning proposals to allow them to play an active role in preparing a neighbourhood plan or Order. It (the council) **may choose** to establish an **advisory committee** or sub-group and appoint local people to those bodies" - in Leek this has been described as the Steering Group). The guidelines further require that "the relationship between any group and the formal functions of the town or parish council should be **transparent to the wider public**", but this has not been apparent since the Love Leek website fell out of use in 2019.<br><br>**The Council, over seven years, has relied on the Steering Group to help the community to exercise its "direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and (to) shape the development and growth of their local area"; and in that the Council, and the community, has been failed. The initiative has squandered public money, it has missed** | A Neighbourhood Plan is planning policy, not a project or action plan or specific development proposal. It would be for applicants for planning permission to commission the necessary information for specific schemes. |

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| | **an opportunity to revitalise the town, and there has been a grievous waste of officer time - there should be no criticism of officers who have diligently supported the Steering Group throughout the process.** | |

| | **STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL** | |
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| | Please find below:<br>1. A table including general comments relating to the draft document and<br>2. A table which includes comments on the draft policies.<br><br>A track changes version of the Reg 14 document should be read in conjunction with this response. It reflects the general comments suggested in the table below and some suggested wording to aid clarity which we hope you will find useful. | The track changes document was based on a converted PDF, based on a superseded version, and with various formatting errors, so it is unusable. |
| | **1. GENERAL COMMENTS** | |
| Document header | Draft Leek Neighbourhood Plan added | Document amended to refer to 'submission version'. |
| References to NPPF | References updated to 2024 version. | References to the NPPF changed to December 2024. This can be updated further, if a new NPPF is issued in time. |
| All paragraphs throughout document | Paragraphs have been numbered so they can be referenced by DM officers. | This was considered. The draft numbered document that provided by SMDC was very congested. A simpler numbering system has now been used, based on the hierarchy of chapter and secondary headings. The interpretations are intended as helpful guidance, as part of the policy, so numbering the paragraphs would be unhelpful. Within the |

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| | | policies, just the clauses are numbered, using a consistent numbering system. |
| General Maps | Pages have been set to landscape orientation where landscape maps used in order to aid viewing online. | This breaks the simple A4 format of the document. Change not made. However, for the final version of the Plan, an alternative version could be created, so that those downloading it could choose. |
| Map 1 | Please include scale. | The maps have been provided by the local authority. Linear scales would be helpful (so that they move when the document is zoomed). The local authority could provide these so that they could be added at the examination stage. |
| Map 2 | -Map should show the location / extent of the Neighbourhood Plan Area for context.<br>-Please include scale. | Map 2 replaced, to show neighbourhood area. See above comments on linear scale. |
| Page 10 pie charts:<br>Occupation / Housing Accommodation type | Please state the percentages for each segment on both circles. | Chart replaced. |
| Section 3 Rationale and Evidence<br>Last paragraph | 'Proposals for a 'Foxlowe cultural corridor'….' Could more information be provided or is there a specific document or report that can be referenced? | The Neighbourhood Plan is not an action or project plan, but does make reference to this in the planning rationale and the interpretation to Policy TCE1. |
| Policy TCE1 Interpretation | With regard to the 2nd paragraph "Policy TCE1 would support arts and cultural uses that would complement and expand the local arts and culture offer." This measure doesn't seem to be specifically supported in the policy. | The policy supports uses to 'complement or enhance the attractiveness, vitality and viability of the Town Centre …'. The interpretation then clarifies that this would include 'retail, food and |

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| | | drink and other uses in Use Class E and some uses in Use Classes F1 and F2. They would also include uses to diversify the offer, including performance venues, arts and culture, community facilities and other Town Centre uses'. The policy is structured in this way for flexibility, but also so that changes to Use Classes do not date the policy. |
| | -Suggest amendment to 6th para for clarity: "The suggested restriction of Use Class E development could involve precluding retail uses for larger sites outside of the Town Centre." | Text amended, as suggested. |
| | Page 31 Interpretation section on trees and hedges could refer to SM Local Plan Policy NE2. | Reference to NE2 added. |
| | Page 32 Under Community Green spaces, there is a reference to "planned green spaces". Please can this be clarified as it is currently unclear where these are. | The word 'planned' has been deleted. |
| | Policy DCE2 Design<br>Interpretation The 3rd paragraph refers to 'green materials'. It would be helpful to clarify/define what this term means. i.e. high environmental performance materials or green walls or roofs. | Examples of green materials added. |
| | 13 Leek Public Rights of Way map Could consider including some supporting text that introduces this map. | Label added to refer to the Staffordshire County Council web site, for up-to-date information. |
| | 7.1 Infrastructure Priorities The last bullet refers to EV charging points. Clarification as to whether this means in all locations, or within public car parks or within new developments would be helpful. | EV charging now required in development by the Building Regulations. Item removed from 7.1 |

| | 2. THE POLICIES | |
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| | **The Policies**<br><br>**Comments on Policies**<br><br>The Neighbourhood Plan needs to comply with the Basic Conditions, as set down in legislation. The basic conditions are set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as applied to neighbourhood plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The plan will be tested against these during the examination process. The five questions, which seek to establish that the Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions test, are as follows: -<br><br>• BC1 Is it appropriate to make the Plan having regard to the national policies and advice contained in the guidance issued by the Secretary of State?<br>• BC2 Will the making of the Plan contribute to the achievement of sustainable development?<br>• BC3 Will the making of the Plan be in general conformity with the strategic policies set out in the Development Plan for the area?<br>• BC4 Will the making of the Plan breach or be otherwise incompatible with EU obligations or human rights legislation? | The Basic Conditions were amended, replacing 'general coiformity' with strategic local policy with a new Basic Condition:<br><br>*The making of the neighbourhood development plan would not result in the development plan for the area of the authority proposing that less housing is provided by means of development taking place in that area than if the neighbourhood development plan were not to be made.*<br><br>Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan was drafted to be in general conformity, the new housing requirement has been added to the rationale of the housing chapter.<br><br>In addition, there are new legal requirements:<br><br>*the plan must be designed to secure that the development and use of land in the neighbourhood area contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change; and …*<br><br>*the plan must be designed to take account of any local nature recovery strategy under section 104 of the Environment Act 2021 that relates to all or part of the neighbourhood plan area.* |

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| | • BC5 Will the making of the Plan breach the requirements of Regulation 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017?<br>National Planning Practice Guidance on Neighbourhood Planning (Paragraph: 041 Reference ID: 41-041-20140306) contains the following reference:<br>**"How should the policies in a neighbourhood plan be drafted?**<br>"A policy in a neighbourhood plan should be clear and unambiguous. It should be drafted with sufficient clarity that a decision maker can apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. It should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence. It should be distinct to reflect and respond to the unique characteristics and planning context of the specific neighbourhood area for which it has been prepared."<br>This has been used by the Council to consider the content of the policies set out in the Neighbourhood Plan. | Material has been added to demonstrate that the Plan meets the new requirements. Climate change is addressed in several polices, dealing with mixed use, sustainable transport, active travel, design and environment.<br>Nature recovery was already considered in the Plan, including in Policy DCE1. A requirement to consider any local nature recovery strategy has been added into Policy DCE1. |

| Page number, paragraph number or policy issue | Comment no | Comments (Informal Officer Comments) | Complies with the basic conditions Y/N | LTC Response |
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| Map 3 | 1 | Please confirm that the Leek Town Centre Boundary proposed reflects that in the SM Local Plan? | Y – if this is the same boundary in the SM Local Plan. | Map replaced with adopted Local Plan version. |
| Policy TCE1: Leek Town Centre, Employment and Facilities | 2 | The Policy is a little confused which will hinder DM officers ability to implement.<br>Section 1:<br>Part (c): refers to 'shopping streets' which are not defined or marked on Map 3. As currently drafted the wording could be interpreted to mean ground floor uses open to the public 'anywhere' in the town centre. | N – based on draft wording and lack of 'shopping streets' definition. (BC1 & BC3) | The words 'within shopping streets' have been deleted, to make clear that the policy relates to all of the defined town centre. |
| | 3 | Section 2:<br><br>-The reference to E class uses is confusing. Could this refer to Main Town Centre Uses (MTCU) (Glossary to NPPF) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdfor to specific E use sub-classes, e.g.<br><br>E(a) Retail (was A1) | | Retail is in Use Class E, so uses not in Use Class E would require planning permission to change to retail. |

| Page number, paragraph number or policy issue | Comment no | Comments (Informal Officer Comments) | Complies with the basic conditions Y/N | LTC Response |
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| | 4 | E(b) Café / Restaurant (was A3)<br><br>E(c) Prof. Services (was A2)<br><br>E(g)ii Offices (was B1a)<br><br>See https://www.planningportal.co.uk/permission/common-projects/change-of-use/use-classes for quick guide. | | |
| | 5 | Part (a): as drafted this generally supports Use Class E development 'within Leek Town Centre' however as not all class E uses are Main Town Centre Uses. Allowing non-retail or non-MTCUs within primary shopping frontages may conflict with SM Local Plan and NPPF. See SM Local Plan Policy TCR2. | N – due to potential conflict with Primary Shopping Frontages / MTCU. (BC1 & BC3) | The NPPF recognises Use Class E. Older Local Plan policies on primary shopping frontages are now out-of-date and undermined by Use Class E. |
| | 6 | Part (b): as drafted this generally supports Use Class E development 'within existing built settlements'. Is it the intention that this refers to the Leek built up area only or all built settlements within the Neighbourhood Plan Area? The Leek NP | Y – subject to clarification. | It would support employment, but the third clause would restrict retail. |

| Page number, paragraph number or policy issue | Comment no | Comments (Informal Officer Comments) | Complies with the basic conditions Y/N | LTC Response |
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| | | Area also includes Leekbrook (defined as a smaller village) and Ladderedge which forms part of the Leek development boundary.<br><br>Part (c): as drafted this supports the 'redevelopment of existing employment sites' but again could conflict with the SM Local Plan and NPPF policies if these are located in the Primary Shopping Frontages. | N – due to potential conflict with Primary Shopping Frontages / MTCU. (BC1 & BC3) | The NPPF now recognises Use Class E. Older Local Plan policies on primary shopping frontages are now out-of-date and undermined by Use Class E. |
| Policy TCE1 | 7<br><br>8 | Section 3:<br><br>-As drafted also refers to Use Class E (see above).<br><br>-Suggest adding 'of 200m2 or more net floorspace' to reflect figure in SM Local Plan Policy TCR3 and add other 'main town centre' uses. Current wording is considered to be overly restrictive and could potentially cause vacancies. | Y – subject to clarification. | The policy already only applies where retail uses could harm the vitality and viability of the Town Centre. Tet added to the interpretation, referring to the Local Plan figure of 200 $m^2$. |
| Policy TCE1 | 9 | Section 4:<br><br>-Reference to 'community facilities'. A definition would provide clarity. Both the | Y – subject to clarification. | |

| Page number, paragraph number or policy issue | Comment no | Comments (Informal Officer Comments) | Complies with the basic conditions Y/N | LTC Response |
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| | | SM Local Plan and NPPF provide a glossary definition of this. | | Interpretation amended to refer to NPPF description of community facilities. |
| Policy TCE2: Town Centre Redevelopment Opportunities | 10<br><br><br><br>11<br><br><br>12 | Section 2:<br><br>-Is it likely that the Smithfield Centre will be redeveloped / remodelled by 2035? It would be helpful to include evidence to support this and any landowner intentions/views/ relating to this.<br><br>Part (a) Does an 'additional 2-3 storeys' mean over the height of the current structure(s)? i.e. 4-5 storeys?<br><br>Part (b) Does 'town centre uses' mean Main Town Centre Uses? | Y – subject to clarification around deliverability and landowner intentions.<br><br>Y – subject to clarification.<br><br>Y – subject to clarification<br><br>Y – subject to clarification | Land and building owners were contacted. This is an enabling/encouraging policy. Achievement of the Basic Conditions does not depend on the scheme happening.<br><br>The wording has been amended in response to other comments, now referring to 'additional floorspace'. Town Centre uses would be as specified in TCE1, though there is flexibility in interpretation, recognising changing trends the importance of diversification in achieving high street recovery. |

| Page number, paragraph number or policy issue | Comment no | Comments (Informal Officer Comments) | Complies with the basic conditions Y/N | LTC Response |
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| | | General comment regarding Sections 2) and 3):<br>-Should the assessment criteria for both sites, also include reference to taking into account the proximity of the town centre conservation area, and any other heritage assets (given that both sites abut the Conservation Area)? | | The interpretation already refers to the application of heritage special statutory duties. Additional text added for clarity. DCE2 sets design requirements, and DCE3 would also apply, which relates to the Leek Conservation Area. |
| Policy TCE2 | 13<br><br><br><br>14<br><br>15<br><br>16 | Section 3:<br>-Is it likely that the Pickwood Road Shopping Centre will be redeveloped / remodelled by 2035? It would be helpful to include evidence to support this and any landowner intentions/views/ relating to this.<br><br>Part (a) Would this include both Pickwood Road and Brook Street?<br><br>Part (b) Presumably this envisages residential development on the upper floor only? | Y – subject to clarification<br><br>Y – subject to clarification<br><br>Y – subject to clarification | Land and building owners were contacted. This is an enabling/encouraging policy. Achievement of the Basic Conditions does not depend on the scheme happening.<br><br>The policy relates to the site shown on Map 4. Wording has been added into the policy, referring to the scale of the surrounding context.<br><br>The Policy specifies residential for upper floors. Town centre uses would be as set out in Policy TCE1. This takes |

| Page number, paragraph number or policy issue | Comment no | Comments (Informal Officer Comments) | Complies with the basic conditions Y/N | LTC Response |
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| | | Part (b) Does 'town centre uses' mean Main Town Centre Uses? | | account of national policy and also work undertaken by the High Street Task Force. |
| Policy TCE3 and Map 5 | 17<br><br>18 | Section 2:<br><br>Part (a) As currently drafted this refers to allowing the sensitive re-use of historic mills to [amongst other uses] residential. There is a potential conflict with SM Local Plan Policy E3 that protects premises deemed to be in existing employment use [as determined by LPA], from redevelopment to other uses. Policy TCE3 would appear to allow mill conversions to residential or cultural uses without needing to justify the loss of employment use.<br><br>Map 5 – Does map 5 only identify those mill premises covered by Policy TCE3, or could other historic premises also apply against this policy? | N – due to potential conflict with SM Local Plan Policy E3. (BC3).<br><br>Y – subject to clarification | The Local Plan Policy has not secured reuse and refurbishment. Also, it is likely that the employment uses have been abandoned. National policy is very skewed to supporting residential development. Our planning consultants have advised that employment use is very unlikely to be viable. Residential development would be the most likely to be viable, and even then would be likely to require third sector partnership and public funding.<br><br>The Policy does relate to Map 5. However, Policy TCE1 would support development of other historic sites. |

| Page number, paragraph number or policy issue | Comment no | Comments (Informal Officer Comments) | Complies with the basic conditions Y/N | LTC Response |
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| 4 Residential Development<br><br>Rationale and Evidence | 19 | Page 25 last para "The existing site allocations and policies of Neighbourhood Plan should meet housing need by 2030". Suggest that this paragraph is deleted as it does not appear to be the intention of the Neighbourhood Plan to make provision for housing. The SM Local Plan which looks to 2033 includes a minimum net housing requirement for Leek Parish of 890 dwellings however the government has adopted a new standard method for calculating local housing need which is significantly higher for the Staffordshire Moorlands District (482 dwellings per annum) compared to the housing requirement in the SM Local Plan (320 dwellings per annum). | N – as drafted (BC1 & BC3). | The Neighbourhood Plan does make provision for housing, including the circumstances set out in Policy TCE1 and the sites/buildings in TCE2 and TCE3.<br>Wording on Page 25 amended in recognition of the August NPPF 2026.<br>The Plan meets housing need, based on the information currently available.<br><br>There may be opportunity to update the wording further, based on updated housing figures. |
| Policy RES1: Residential Development | 20<br><br>21 | Section 1:<br>Part (a) unclear if this is reference to conflict between existing commercial business on the upper floors or the operation of adjacent commercial premises. | Y – subject to clarification<br><br>N – as drafted (BC1 & BC3). | Paragraph added to interpretation, for clarity. |

| Page number, paragraph number or policy issue | Comment no | Comments (Informal Officer Comments) | Complies with the basic conditions Y/N | LTC Response |
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| | | Parts (b) & (d) there may be a conflict as brownfield sites and historic buildings in employment use are protected by Local Plan Policy E3. | | The Local Plan policies could lead to the loss of historic buildings, as employment uses tend to be less viable. The policy has regard to national policy. General conformity with strategic local policy is no longer a Basic Condition. The Policy does meet the Basic Conditions. |
| Policy RES1 | 22 | Section 3:<br><br>This section appears to conflict with the SM Local Plan and NPPF as it seeks to restrict development in various locations. SM Local Plan designates a development boundary for Leek which already distinguishes between Leek, and Ladderedge and Leekbrook. Development proposals within Ladderedge would be deemed to fall inside Leek development boundary of the Local Plan. Leekbrook is a smaller village according to the spatial strategy where separate policies apply. SM Local Plan Policy H1(4) sets out how peripheral development | N – as drafted (BC1 & BC3). | The policy enables residential development in sustainable locations. Wording amended, adding reference to the development boundaries to the first part.<br><br>The Policy does have regard to national policy - a Neighbourhood Plan may not amend Green Belt boundaries, unless first enabled by a Strategic of Local Plan. |

| Page number, paragraph number or policy issue | Comment no | Comments (Informal Officer Comments) | Complies with the basic conditions Y/N | LTC Response |
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| | | to villages is considered. Additionally, this could be seen to be in conflict with the NPPF which includes a new standard method to determine local housing need and also the need to review the Green Belt in line with the updated guidance. | | |
| Policy RES1 | 23<br><br>24 | Section 7:<br>Part (a) Clarify if this should be for new 'build' dwellings.<br><br>Part (b) Clarify the meaning of 'personal vehicles' as it could be interpreted to include cars rather than mobility scooters. | Y – subject to clarification<br><br>Y – subject to clarification | It would apply to new build or conversions. Wording amended for clarity.<br><br>Wording amended to refer to mobility scooters. |
| Policy DCE1: Rural Environment, Green & Blue Infrastructure | 25<br><br><br>26 | Section 1:<br>-The policy wording refers to having 'no significant adverse impact' but it is unclear what this is in relation to?<br>-It is unclear if this would apply to all development proposals within Leek, or just those on the settlement edge? | Y – subject to clarification<br><br><br>Y – subject to clarification | Wording of part 1 amended, also taking account of other representations.<br><br><br>Sentence added to the interpretation, for clarity. |
| Policy DCE1 | 27 | Section 3:<br>-This refers to wells/springs/watercourses. These don't appear to be mapped? | Y – subject to clarification | Due to the complexity of water features, it has not been possible to |

| Page number, paragraph number or policy issue | Comment no | Comments (Informal Officer Comments) | Complies with the basic conditions Y/N | LTC Response |
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| | 28 | - Are the landscape corridors and settings mapped somewhere?. | | map them. The local authority may be able to prepare such a map, which could then be added at the examination stage. |
| Policy DCE1 | 29 | Section 5:<br>As drafted it refers to 'other historic narrow rural lanes' but it is not clear which these are? | Y – subject to clarification | List added to the interpretation. |
| Policy DCE1 | 30 | Section 6:<br>As currently drafted it requires development to have no significant impact on 'outlook' from certain land uses however it is not clear what the meaning of 'outlook' is. Many of these green spaces will be adjacent or within the built up area. | Y – subject to clarification | Reference to 'outlook' deleted. |
| Policy DCE2: Design | 31 | Section 4:<br>Some clarification regarding 'green spaces and green streets' would be helpful. For example, does this mean within the development site and internal estate roads. | Y – subject to clarification | Wording amended for clarity. |
| Policy DCE2 | 32 | Section 7:<br>Note that the level of off-street parking required would depend on application of | Y | The policy relates to urban design and does not seek to amend SMDC parking |

| Page number, paragraph number or policy issue | Comment no | Comments (Informal Officer Comments) | Complies with the basic conditions Y/N | LTC Response |
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| | | wider policies such as NPPF para 115 and SM Local Plan Policy T1. | | standards. National policies would always apply. |
| Policy TRM1: Sustainable Transport and Active Travel | 33 | Section 4:<br>Clarify the meaning of 'personal vehicles' as it could be interpreted to include cars rather than mobility scooters. | Y – subject to clarification | Wording changed to 'mobility scooters'. |

| Policy/page number | Representation | Response |
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| | **CANAL & RIVER TRUST** | |
| DCE1 | We consider that Policy DCE1 is an appropriate and positive policy which should assist in protecting and enhancing the natural environment; we particularly welcome the specific reference to the Caldon Canal at DCE1 (3) and suggest that this should also include reference to the Rudyard Feeder Channel and that the feeder channel could also be identified on Map 6. The feeder channel forms part of Ladderedge Country Park, running along the northern edge of the park , and we feel that it is a valuable feature in its own right, worthy of explicit mention in the policy and/or its supporting text . | Comment noted.<br><br>Reference to feeder added and Map 6 amended. |
| | DCE1 (3) could also be strengthened by inclusion of a n explicit requirement to avoid adverse impacts on water quality ; we suggest the following wording may be appropriate:<br>“Development should take opportunities to enhance and should have no significant adverse impacts on the character, accessibility , amenity and water quality of the River Churnet, the Caldon Canal, wells, springs and other watercourses and their landscape corridors and settings ”. We further suggest that it would be appropriate to include references either within Policy DCE1 or its supporting text to the importance of new development proposals effectively and appropriately mana ging water and drainage and minimising the risk of flooding. It would also be beneficial to highlight the importance of ensuring that adverse impacts from external lighting are avoided - waterway corridors are often used by nocturnal species such as bats as foraging or commuting routes and therefore the illumination of water spaces is best avoided. | Reference to water quality added.<br><br>Reference to surface water flood risk added to the interpretation of Policy RES1. Reference to SuDS added into Policy DCE2.<br><br>Wording on lighting impacts added to the interpretation of DCE1. |

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| DCE4 | We welcome the inclusion of Policy DCE4 and consider that it should provide additional protection for the canal and its heritage value, and we agree with the statement in the supporting text that it should be helpful in applying the special statutory duty relating to conservation areas set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 . The canal is an important feature in helping to understand how the area has grown and evolved over the last 200 years and as such it is important that nearby development proposals ensure that it is protected and wherever possible, enhanced. The reference to specific features at DCE4 (1) a) to e) provides a high degree of clarity to the policy and should assist in ensuring that inappropriate development proposals can be resisted. The aims of enhancing the accessibility and recreational role of the canal set out at DCE4 (2) provide an important acknowledgement that the canal is a prime example of a historic asset that is widely used, and that a major aspect of its value is that it is both useable and accessible, for boaters and towpath users alike, as a piece of working heritage. New development nearby should always aim to enhance the historic significance of the canal and seek to better integrate with the surrounding area by taking advantage of the canal as an attractive feature to provide a focus, backdrop and context for new built development as well as facilitating ready access to the canal towpath wherever practicable. | Comment noted. |
| TRM1 | We consider that Policy TRM1 provides an appropriate overarching policy for encouraging sustainable travel and enhancing active travel options. We suggest that the canal towpath should be referenced within the policy as part of the walking and cycling network within the Plan area which also connects the Plan area to the wider network beyond its boundaries. We recommend TRM1 (3) includes specific reference to the canal tow path along with the other routes already referred to. | Canal towpaths added into the wording. |

| | **HISTORIC ENGLAND** | |
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| TCE2 | With regards to redevelopment or remodelling of the Smithfield Centre- we agree that any development should be high quality, however, we have concerns re the potential addition of 2-3 Storeys. The scale of buildings in this part of conservation area is predominately 2-3 storeys. Therefore, we are unclear as to the justification/ evidence base for a building of this height in this position. We suggest you seek further advice from the Council's Conservation Officer in this regard. | Wording amended to refer to additional floorspace. The viability of redevelopment depends on this. Redevelopment could also enhance the vitality of the town centre and viability of the Leek Conservation Area. Given the wider character of the conservation area, there is justification for additional height in this location. |
| TCE3 | 1c - states "…. reinstatement of historic buildings to a more original state, including reversal of harmful alterations and reinstatement of missing features;'' we suggest slight re-wording of this to provide more clarity - "…….reinstatement work which enhances the buildings significance, including reversal of harmful alterations and reinstatement of missing features" | Wording amended. |
| DCE3 | We support this policy, especially as the conservation area is on our Heritage at Risk Register (as vulnerable). The policy aim should assist in trying to address its vulnerability, ie safeguarding historic features/fabric/public realm etc. Perhaps reference to this could be added to the 'Interpretation section underneath the policy. | Text added to interpretation, as suggested. |
| DCE4 | We support this policy. There may be an opportunity to make more of the industrial significance of the canal, and its historic link to Stoke on Trent. | Additional text on historic interest added. |

| | FORESTRY COMMISSION | |
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| | The Forestry Commission is committed to supporting sustainable development and the protection of our natural environment. We would like to highlight several key considerations that should be integrated into your planning framework: National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) The NPPF states that development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, such as ancient woodland and veteran trees, should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons, and a suitable compensation strategy exists We recommend that your local plan aligns with these national policies to ensure the protection and enhancement of woodland areas. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) From February 2024, major developments must deliver a Biodiversity Net Gain, ensuring a positive impact on nature. Trees play a crucial role in achieving BNG by providing habitats for wildlife, improving air quality, and contributing to climate resilience. We encourage the integration of tree planting and woodland creation into your development plans to meet BNG requirements and enhance local biodiversity. Standing Advice Our Standing Advice on ancient woodland, ancient trees, and veteran trees is an important planning consideration for local planning authorities. This advice emphasizes the importance of these irreplaceable habitats for biodiversity, carbon capture, and cultural heritage. This advice should be considered when making planning decisions that affect ancient woodland, ancient trees, or veteran trees. Benefits of Trees Trees and woodland offer numerous benefits to communities, including improving air quality, reducing flood risk, and enhancing mental health and well-being. They are essential components of green infrastructure, contributing to the creation of resilient, sustainable places to live. We advocate for the inclusion of tree planting and preservation in your local plan to maximize these benefits for residents. Further information for support on tree | Reference to woodland and orchards added into the policy, for clarity.<br><br>Text on trees and climate resilience added to interpretation. |

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| | planting and woodland creation can be found on our website. We look forward to collaborating with you to ensure that your local plan supports the sustainable management and expansion of woodland areas. | |
| | **NATURAL ENGLAND** | |
| | Natural England is a statutory consultee in neighbourhood planning and must be consulted on draft neighbourhood development plans by the Parish/Town Councils or Neighbourhood Forums where they consider our interests would be affected by the proposals made. Natural England does not have any specific comments on this draft neighbourhood plan. However, we refer you to the attached annex which covers the issues and opportunities that should be considered when preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and to the following information. Natural England does not hold information on the location of significant populations of protected species, so is unable to advise whether this plan is likely to affect protected species to such an extent as to require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. Further information on protected species and development is included in Natural England's Standing Advice on protected species. Furthermore, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all environmental assets. The plan may have environmental impacts on priority species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites, soils and best and most versatile agricultural land, or on local landscape character that may be sufficient to warrant a Strategic Environmental Assessment. Information on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees is set out in Natural England/Forestry Commission standing advice. We therefore recommend that advice is sought from your ecological, landscape and soils advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local soils, best and most versatile agricultural land, landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by the plan before | Comment noted. Natural England guidance was taken into account in preparing the Plan. |

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| | determining whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment is necessary. Natural England reserves the right to provide further advice on the environmental assessment of the plan. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make. If a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required, Natural England must be consulted at the scoping and environmental report stages.<br>Annex 1 - Neighbourhood planning and the natural environment: information, issues and opportunities Natural environment information sources The Magic1 website will provide you with much of the nationally held natural environment data for your plan area. The most relevant layers for you to consider are: Agricultural Land Classification, Ancient Woodland, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Local Nature Reserves, National Parks (England), National Trails, Priority Habitat Inventory, public rights of way (on the Ordnance Survey base map) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (including their impact risk zones). Local environmental record centres may hold a range of additional information on the natural environment. A list of local record centres is available from the Association of Local Environmental Records Centres . Priority habitats are those habitats of particular importance for nature conservation, and the list of them can be found here2 . Most of these will be mapped either as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, on the Magic website or as Local Wildlife Sites. Your local planning authority should be able to supply you with the locations of Local Wildlife Sites. National Character Areas (NCAs) divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each character area is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and cultural and economic activity. NCA profiles contain descriptions of the area and statements of environmental opportunity, which may be useful to inform proposals in your plan. NCA information can be found here3 . There may also be a local landscape character assessment | |

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| | covering your area. This is a tool to help understand the character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and identify the features that give it a sense of place. It can help to inform, plan and manage change in the area. Your local planning authority should be able to help you access these if you can't find them online. If your neighbourhood planning area is within or adjacent to a National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the relevant National Park/AONB Management Plan for the area will set out useful information about the protected landscape. You can access the plans on from the relevant National Park Authority or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty website. General mapped information on soil types and Agricultural Land Classification is available (under 'landscape') on the Magic4 website and also from the LandIS website5 , which contains more information about obtaining soil data.<br>Natural environment issues to consider The National Planning Policy Framework6 sets out national planning policy on protecting and enhancing the natural environment. Planning Practice Guidance7 sets out supporting guidance. Your local planning authority should be able to provide you with further advice on the potential impacts of your plan or order on the natural environment and the need for any environmental assessments. Landscape Your plans or orders may present opportunities to protect and enhance locally valued landscapes. You may want to consider identifying distinctive local landscape features or characteristics such as ponds, woodland or dry stone walls and think about how any new development proposals can respect and enhance local landscape character and distinctiveness. If you are proposing development within or close to a protected landscape (National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) or other sensitive location, we recommend that you carry out a landscape assessment of the proposal. Landscape assessments can help you to choose the most appropriate sites | |

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| | for development and help to avoid or minimise impacts of development on the landscape through careful siting, design and landscaping.<br>Wildlife habitats Some proposals can have adverse impacts on designated wildlife sites or other priority habitats (listed here8 ), such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest or Ancient woodland9 . If there are likely to be any adverse impacts you'll need to think about how such impacts can be avoided, mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for. Priority and protected species You'll also want to consider whether any proposals might affect priority species (listed here 10) or protected species. To help you do this, Natural England has produced advice here11 to help understand the impact of particular developments on protected species. Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land Soil is a finite resource that fulfils many important functions and services for society. It is a growing medium for food, timber and other crops, a store for carbon and water, a reservoir of biodiversity and a buffer against pollution. If you are proposing development, you should seek to use areas of poorer quality agricultural land in preference to that of a higher quality in line with National Planning Policy Framework para 112. For more information, see Guide to assessing development proposals on agricultural land 12 .<br>Improving your natural environment Your plan or order can offer exciting opportunities to enhance your local environment and should provide net gains for biodiversity in line with the National Planning Policy Framework. If you are setting out policies on new development or proposing sites for development, you should follow the biodiversity mitigation hierarchy and seek to ensure impacts on habitats are avoided or minimised before considering opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. You may wish to consider identifying what environmental features you want to be retained or enhanced or new features you would like to see created as part of any new development and how these could | |

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| | contribute to biodiversity net gain and wider environmental goals. Opportunities for environmental enhancement might include: • Restoring a neglected hedgerow. • Creating a new pond as an attractive feature on the site. • Planting trees characteristic to the local area to make a positive contribution to the local landscape. • Using native plants in landscaping schemes for better nectar and seed sources for bees and birds. • Incorporating swift boxes or bat boxes into the design of new buildings. • Think about how lighting can be best managed to reduce impacts on wildlife. • Adding a green roof to new buildings. • Providing a new footpath through the new development to link into existing rights of way.<br>Site allocations should be supported by a baseline assessment of biodiversity value. The statutory Biodiversity Metric may be used to understand the number of biodiversity units present on allocated sites. For small development allocations the Small Sites Metric may be used. This is a simplified version of the statutory Biodiversity Metric and is designed for use where certain criteria are met. Further information on biodiversity net gain including planning practice guidance can be found here You may also want to consider enhancing your local area in other ways, for example by: • Setting out in your plan how you would like to implement elements of a wider Green Infrastructure Strategy (if one exists) in your community. • Assessing needs for accessible greenspace and setting out proposals to address any deficiencies or enhance provision. Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework sets out further information on green infrastructure standards and principles • Identifying green areas of particular importance for special protection through Local Green Space designation (see Planning Practice Guidance13). • Managing existing (and new) public spaces to be more wildlife friendly (e.g. by sowing wild flower strips in less used parts of parks or on verges, changing hedge cutting timings and frequency). Planting additional street | Text on environmental enhancement added to interpretation. |

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| | trees. • Identifying any improvements to the existing public right of way network, e.g. cutting back hedges, improving the surface, clearing litter or installing kissing gates) or extending the network to create missing links. • Restoring neglected environmental features (e.g. coppicing a prominent hedge that is in poor condition, or clearing away an eyesore). Natural England's Environmental Benefits from Nature tool may be used to identify opportunities to enhance wider benefits from nature and to avoid and minimise any negative impacts. It is designed to work alongside the statutory Biodiversity Metric and is available as a beta test version. | |
| | **ENVIRONMENT AGENCY WEST MIDLANDS AREA** | |
| | We previously provided comment on the Leek Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening Report back on 14 May 2024 (our ref: SV/2024/112434/SE-01/SC1-LO1), noting no proposed allocations and that an SEA would not be required. In the absence of the allocation of specific sites for development within your plan area, we have no comment to make. We do not offer bespoke advice on policy. We advise you to ensure conformity with the Local Plan and refer you to guidance within our local Neighbourhood Plan proforma (attached) which should assist you moving forward with your plan. Matters relating to surface water (pluvial) flooding should be directed to Staffordshire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). | Additional flood risk requirements added to Policies RES1, and DCE2, in response to other representations. |
| | **LEEK & DISTRICT CIVIC SOCIETY** | |
| TCE1 | Forward planning for development of Leek over the next two decades is an excellent idea. | Comment noted. |
| TCE2 | Tidying up and reutilisation of derelict areas can only produce positive results and enhance the attractiveness of the town to residents and visitors. | Comment noted. |
| TCE3 | Disused mills have been a blight on the area for several years. Owners of Listed Buildings must be encouraged to maintain their properties to at least the condition they were in when listed. | Comment noted. |

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| RES1 | Residential development should focus on brownfield sites rather than further incursions into precious greenfield areas. The importance of gardens should not be overlooked. | Comment noted. Gardens are addressed in Policies RES1 and DCE2. |
| RES2 | Affordable housing is important but should not be interpreted as fitting as many dwellings as possible on a certain area at the expense of contact with Nature. | Comment noted. The Plan includes policy to protect the rural areas and blue and green infrastructure. |
| DCE1 | Green and blue infrastructure is becoming more and more important to mitigate the impact of pollution. Tree Preservation Order must be rigidly enforced and financial penalties for violation greatly increased. It would be really beneficial if the Leek Canal Basin could be restored. | Comment noted. Policy DCE4 deals with the Caldon Calan Conservation Area. |
| DCE2 | Much modern design of domestic buildings is quite banal and needs to be improved. The importance of 'swift bricks' is vital for avine welfare and provision of 'hedgehog holes' in fencing between properties should be mandatory. | Comment on design noted and agreed. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote more creative and distinctive design. Reference to bird bricks and hedgehog gaps added to interpretation. |
| DCE3 | 'Living above the shop' may seem an outmoded concept but with High Streets facing more and more competition from the Internet and Shopping Centres, the utilisation of unused space at first and second floor levels above retail outlets seems eminently sensible. Allowing kerbside parking round Leek Market Place detracts seriously from the positive impact which the many Listed Buildings in the area should have. | Comment noted.<br><br>Comment on parking passed to SMDC and the local highway authority. |
| DCE4 | The Caldon Canal Conservation Area needs sympathetic development. Just turning the area into an overdeveloped housing estate is not the answer. The reinstatement of the Canal Basin is just as important as the provision of new houses and could do wonders for attracting visitors to the area. | Comment noted. |
| TRM1 | The design of roads on new housing developments should enable easy access for emergency vehicles such as ambulances and fire engines. Some existing estates seem to have neglected this provision. | Policy amended to make reference to service and emergency vehicles. |