

Yarnfield and Cold Meece
Parish Council

Neighbourhood Plan

January 2026

Working Draft

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1. Introduction

1.1 Why a Neighbourhood Plan?

The Yarnfield and Cold Meece Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council to guide future development of the neighbourhood area which encompasses the whole of the administrative boundary of the Parish Council.

Urban Vision Enterprise CIC was appointed as the Neighbourhood Planning consultant. A government grant was obtained for just under £14k over three financial years to assist with the preparation of the plan. Additional funding was provided by Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council

The Neighbourhood Plan is based on analysis of data and evidence and the views of residents. Building upon the early community engagement, the themes for the Neighbourhood Plan emerged, providing insight into local issues of importance to the community.

The Yarnfield and Cold Meece Neighbourhood Plan will not only provide a positive strategy for growth but also help to ensure that such growth is sustainable. The Plan does not make site allocations but does make provision for growth in its policies which focus on the themes of residential development, employment, design, natural landscape, green space, heritage, transport and other matters.

1.2 Status of the Neighbourhood Plan

Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council submitted proposals to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan (Figure 1 – Plan of Neighbourhood area) which was approved by Stafford Borough Council on 5 August 2021.

The Yarnfield and Cold Meece Neighbourhood Plan contains planning policies, against which planning applications will be considered. The Neighbourhood Plan, once made, will form part of the statutory development plan, together with the adopted Stafford Borough Part 1 and Part 2 Local Plan or successor plans once adopted.

The Neighbourhood Plan will be in force until the end of 2040 or until an updated plan is made. The Plan will be reviewed regularly to assess whether an update is necessary.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not deal with excluded matters including waste, mineral extraction or nationally significant infrastructure.

1.3 Monitoring and Review

The Plan will be monitored by Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council throughout the Plan period up to 2040. The Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed and updated, when necessary, and a regular report will be prepared on the monitoring.

Monitoring will include:

- planning decisions to see how the plan is being used in practice;
- any changes in national policy, guidance or legislation;
- any changes in local plan policy or guidance; and
- any other changes in the Neighbourhood Area (social, economic and environmental).



Figure 1- Neighbourhood Plan Boundary

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2. Background and Context

2.1 Yarnfield Parish

Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council came into existence on 1st April, 2019 following a governance review by Stafford Borough Council which was prompted by a campaign by residents to break from the previous parish council.

2.2 Location

Yarnfield and Cold Meece is a rural parish in the north of Stafford Borough and lies 2 miles to the west of the town of Stone, with the M6 motorway passing through the east of the Parish.

Residents have a choice of travelling to Stone, Stafford, Newcastle or Stoke-on-Trent to access larger retailers and railway stations. The nearby M6 also provides easy access to major cities, such as Manchester and Birmingham.

2.3 Characteristics of the Area

The civil parish has a population of about 2,145¹ and covers an area of about 3.51 square kilometres. The region is best known for its agricultural heritage, and the part it played during World War II as the site of a Royal Ordnance facility at Cold Meece and as the central location for the United States Air Force, both of which have had a significant impact on the two villages we see today.

Yarnfield and Cold Meece are nestled in the Staffordshire countryside, surrounded by rolling hills and picturesque scenery. Despite its small size, Yarnfield and Cold Meece is a vibrant community, with a range of local businesses and community groups providing services and activities for residents and visitors alike. The area is also well-connected, with easy access to nearby towns and cities such as Stafford and Stoke-on-Trent.

The villages of Yarnfield and Cold Meece are approximately 1/2 mile apart, with Cold Meece to the west. Yarnfield is the larger of the villages.

There is a limited bus service from both Yarnfield and Cold Meece to Stone, with onward travel to Stafford and Stoke on Trent possible from Stone.

Walking and cycling routes between Cold Meece, Yarnfield and Stone are very poor.

2.4 Key Issues

The Neighbourhood Plan is based on analysis of data and of evidence; and the views of the community. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group which was formed in November 2021. Building upon the early community engagement, the themes for the Neighbourhood Plan emerged, providing insight into local issues of importance to the community. Further engagement included a range of activities including householder survey in January 2022; Parish Assembly, May 2022; Green Spaces consultation in September 2022.

2.5 Emerging themes from community cons

The plan focuses on Local Green Spaces, Local Heritage Assets, Housing Needs Assessment (AECOM) and the Design Code (AECOM). The

Neighbourhood Plan consists of the following themes:

- Housing and community
- Employment opportunities
- Heritage of key properties in the parish
- Rural nature of the area
- Protection of green spaces
- Transport links to neighbouring settlements and between Yarnfield and Cold Meece

2.6 North Staffordshire Green Belt

The village of Yarnfield village is surrounded by the North Staffordshire Green Belt. Only Cold Meece lies outside of the North Staffordshire Green Belt. Map reference 2.

¹ 2021 census data

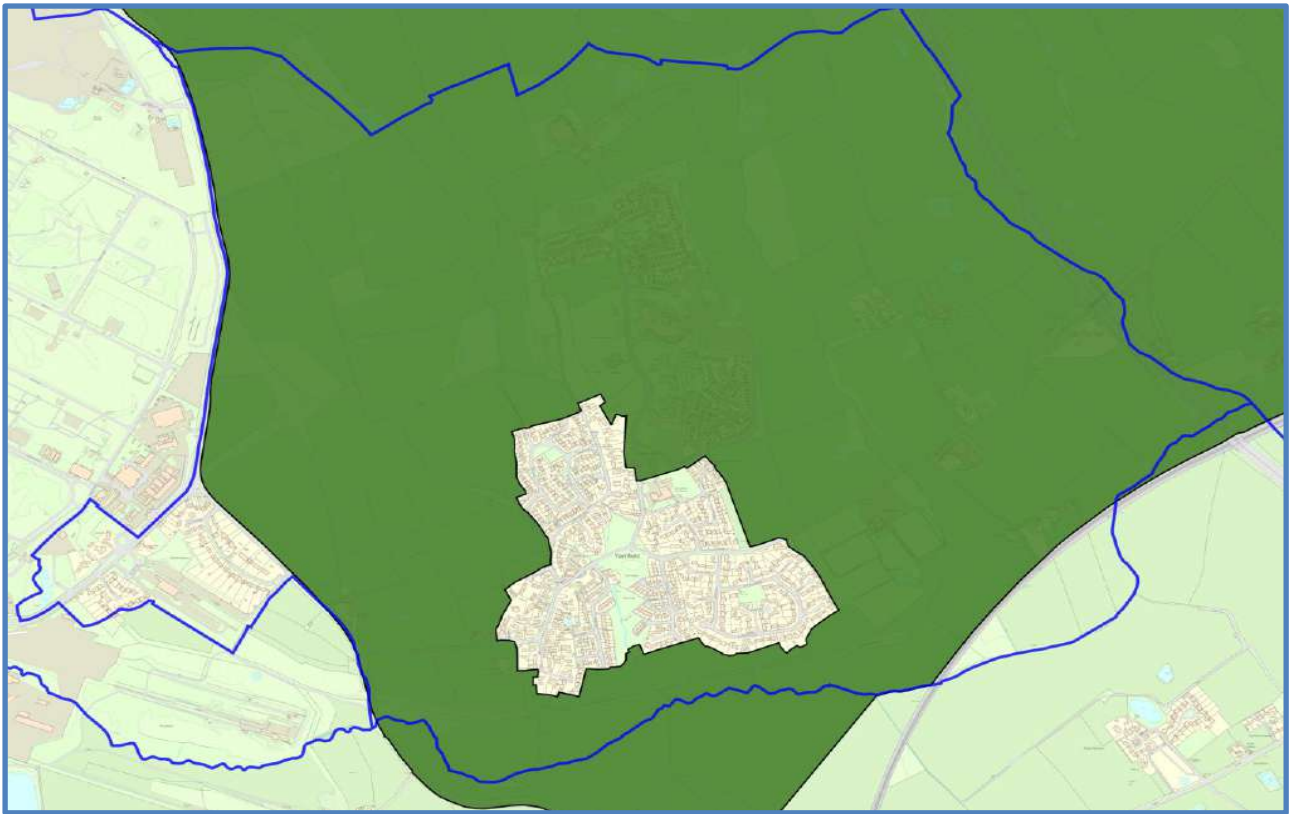
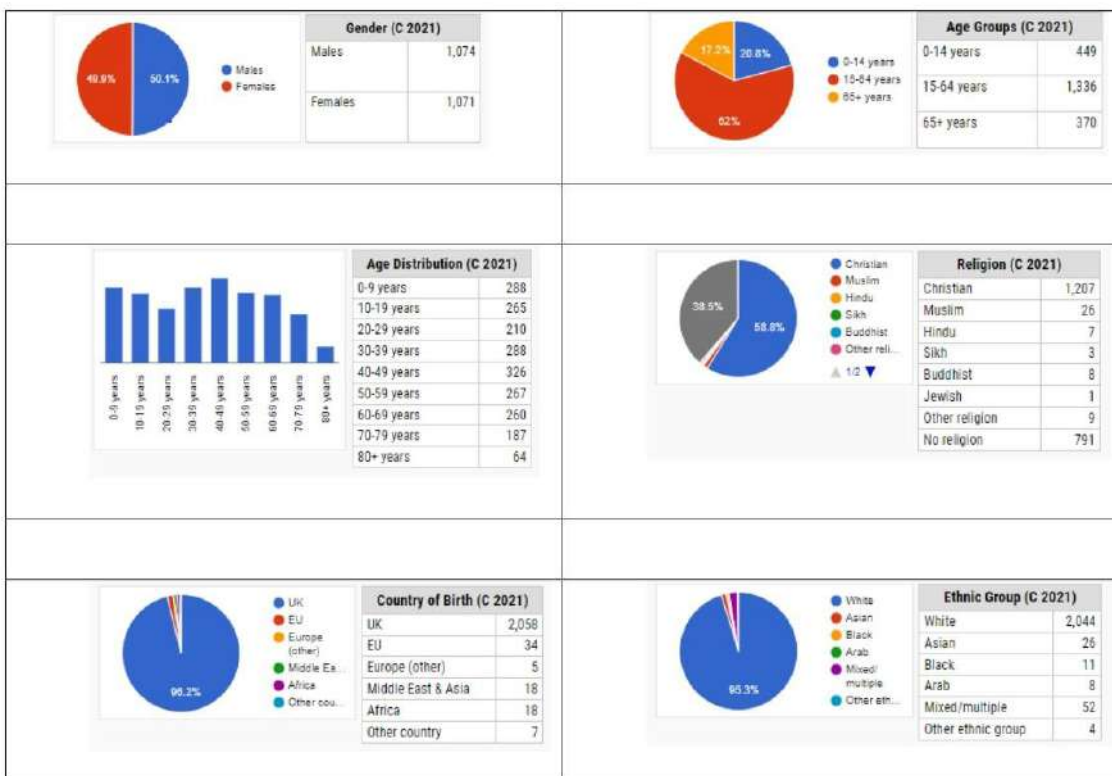


Figure 2 - North Staffordshire Green Belt

2.7 Population of Yarnfield and Cold Meece



2.8 Key Dates

- September 2021 – Facebook – call for Steering Group members
- November 12, 2021 – Village Hall Neighbourhood Planning inaugural meeting of the Steering group
- January 26, 2022 – PC meeting with HB
- February 2, 2022 – Household Survey Facebook advert consultation (M&S vouchers)
- May 30, 2022 – Annual Parish Assembly – how do you see the village now and in the future?
- September 30, 2022 – Green Spaces Subgroup meeting
- May 23, 2023 – Annual Parish Assembly – Neighbourhood Plan update
- July 25, 2023 – Steering Group meeting – update and Master Plan
- August 10, 2023 – Master Plan site visits

2.9 Summary of the key issues including information from the householder survey:

The environment, green spaces and the sense of safety were identified as being what respondents valued about living in the parish.

There was a strong sense that future housing development:

- should only take place on brownfield sites (71%) or infill development (26%);
- should protect existing green spaces, the environment and the integrity of the parish;
- there was a recognition that community facilities should cater for the growing number of young people in the parish;
- there was a recognition that all housing tenure types should be included in future developments with respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing;
- respondents favoured developments that consisted of smaller traditional, two or three bedroom dwellings. This reflects the recognition that there is an oversupply in the parish of larger 4 + bedroom dwellings.
- In relation to future housing need only 7 respondents identified possible future housing

need for themselves or members of their family living in the parish. No conclusion could be drawn from the results to identify the cause of any future need. Given the age profile of respondents this could suggest a significant level of under occupation of dwellings in the future or a belief that the housing market will cater for future housing needs.

- The village shop and green spaces were reported as being used most frequently.
- 53% of respondents reported a desire to see greater employment opportunities with agriculture and social sector scoring highest.

2.10 Vision

To protect and enhance Yarnfield and Cold Meece parish as a place that continues to be a thriving, safe and friendly place where people want to live, work, and play and to ensure any development opportunities are sustainable and appropriate to the scale and nature of the parish, respecting its historic, agricultural and rural character.

2.11 Aims of the Neighbourhood Plan

The Yarnfield and Cold Meece Neighbourhood Plan objective is to protect, create and enhance the neighbourhood area through 10 specific aims:

- achieve sustainable development and growth through the range of policies within the Neighbourhood Plan;
- set out sustainable locations for growth and planning requirements for housing, employment, community, and other development;
- ensure that new housing will be supported within the agreed Settlement Boundary;
- ensure that new housing includes a mix of sizes and types of accommodation to meet the latest evidence of local need;
- protect the approved Settlement Boundary for Yarnfield Village;
- support development to create employment space and community facilities in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan policies.
- Ensure that development is well-designed and sustainable.

- Protect the historic and natural environment of the area in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan policies relating to Design, Heritage and Natural Environment.
- Protect Local Green Space in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan policies.
- Ensure that development is supported by sustainable infrastructure in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan policies.

2.12 Overall Planning Strategy

The Yarnfield and Cold Meece Neighbourhood Plan seeks to achieve sustainable development and growth. This is achieved through the policies in the Plan, which have been prepared to reflect the needs of all groups: including families with children, older people, students, and people with disabilities, both now and in the future.

The Plan does not undertake housing site allocations, leaving this to the Stafford Borough Council adopted Local Plan. However, it does cater for the small-scale level of growth identified through policy [YCM-1: Housing](#). This sets out the principle for suitable housing growth and includes sufficient capacity to deliver the growth strategy in the Plan period.

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the need to support existing community facilities and the development of new facilities through policy [YCM-2: Community Facilities](#).

The importance of local employment opportunities within the neighbourhood plan area is seen as a key component policy [YCM-3 Yarnfield Park](#).

Sustainable and innovative design including high energy performance and low carbon development is supported through policy [YCM-4: Sustainable Design and Character](#).

The neighbourhood plan area has within it a range of heritage assets, including 3 Grade II list buildings, a Grade II listed memorial cross and numerous non-statutory assets. Policy [YCM-5: Local Heritage and Character](#) encourage sensitive refurbishment and reuse to preserve and enhance the heritage assets across the Neighbourhood Area.

The natural environment is a key priority of the Neighbourhood Plan. Key landscape characteristics, features and habitats are identified in policy

[YCM-6: Landscape and Biodiversity](#), recognising the importance of the rural landscape character.

Local Green Space designations are also included, some of which contribute to biodiversity or support local wildlife and contribute to the wider green infrastructure of the area. The Local Green Spaces designated are demonstrably special to the community they serve for recreation, leisure, and the value to the natural environment. These are listed in policy [YCM-7: Local Green Space](#).

The plan promotes a balanced and sustainable range of transport in policies [YCM-8 Sustainable and Active Travel](#) supporting the existing path network, active travel routes and the needs of people with a range of different mobilities, including those using wheelchair and prams.

The policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are intended to augment those in the Stafford Borough Council adopted Local Plan, setting requirements more specific to Yarnfield and Cold Meece Neighbourhood Area.

2.13 Format of Policies

The following policies are supported by analysis of key issues, national and local policies, the outcomes of community and stakeholder engagement and relevant evidence documents. This includes the following key evidence documents:

- Yarnfield and Cold Meece Housing Needs Assessment, 2022
- Yarnfield and Cold Meece Design Codes, 2023
- Yarnfield and Cold Meece Master Plan, 2024
- Staffordshire Wildlife Trust mapping data

The policies are grouped into five themed chapters:

- Housing and Community
- Economy
- Design and Heritage
- Environment and Green Infrastructure
- Transport

The structure of the policies is as follows:

- Purpose (what the set of policies seek to achieve)
- Planning Rationale (concise summary of the thinking behind the policies).
- Local Context

Then for each policy:

- The policy (requirements for development proposals to meet)
- Interpretation (notes on how the policy should be applied in decision making).

2.14 National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF)

The NPPF provides a framework within which locally prepared plans can provide for sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development, and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner. The principle of sustainable development requires that the planning system has three fundamental principles:

- an economic objective
- a social objective
- an environmental objective

So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way; at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies.

The Yarnfield and Cold Meece Neighbourhood Plan policies have been prepared to deliver the NPPF core objectives.

2.15 The Plan for Stafford Borough (2011 – 2031)

Stafford Borough Council abandoned the 2020-2040 review of the adopted local plan in March 2025 following significant changes in national planning policy, new government housing targets, and the inability to meet deadlines under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), leading to a fresh start with a New Local Plan 2025-2045 to align with updated requirements and address governance changes, including the move towards unitary authorities in Staffordshire.

The adopted plan “The Plan for Stafford Borough” (adopted in June 2014) is still the Plan used for decision-making purposes as its timeframe is 2011 - 2031.

The Local Plan for Stafford Borough, which was adopted on the June 2014 consists of three documents:

- The Plan for Stafford Borough which sets out the strategic policies for the Borough.
- The Plan for Stafford Borough: Part 2 which sets out an approach to development in the sustainable settlement hierarchy, establishes settlement boundaries for Stafford, Stone and the Key Service Villages,
- The Policies Map (including inset maps) identifies the precise locations and boundaries affected by policies and proposals in the two parts of the Plan.

The Plan for Stafford Borough policies on residential development, housing mix, affordable housing and other related matters are now somewhat out-of-date due to the age of the plan and in particular changes to national policy and guidance.

It is anticipated that there will be an increase in the number of challenges by developer until the new plans is adopted.

3



3. Housing & Community

3.1 Purpose

To meet the needs of the local community through sustainable growth in sustainable locations.

3.2 Planning Rationale

National Planning Policy Framework, 2025

The NPPF contains a presumption in favour of sustainable development whereby strategic policies should, "as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed housing needs" It further states that neighbourhood plans, "should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies. "

NPPF, Chapter 5: “Delivering a sufficient supply of homes” sets out how, through the planning policy, who future housing need will be met for all groups, including those with specific housing requirements.

Chapter 5 also makes clear that neighbourhood plans should consider where small and medium sites for housing could go. The Neighbourhood Plan positively addresses by identifying suitable locations for housing across the Neighbourhood Area. Site allocations will be dealt with through the Local Plan owing to the constraints of the Neighbourhood Area including Green Belt.

NPPF, Chapter 8 - Promoting healthy and safe communities: Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places and beautiful buildings which:

- promote social interaction,
- are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion,
- enable and support healthy lifestyles

The Plan for Stafford Borough (2011 – 2031)

The NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) December 2024 introduced mandatory housing targets, setting Stafford Borough's requirement at 751 dwellings per year (or 15,020 over 20 years), with an

applied 10% buffer leading to a plan-making target of 826 homes/year (16,520 total), superseding older figures published in the Plan for Stafford Borough.

SP1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development²: When considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

SP2 - Stafford Borough Housing & Employment Requirements: supports new growth and investment over the plan period. Throughout the Borough, provision will be made for the development of 500 dwellings per year over the plan period.

SP3 - Stafford Borough Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy¹: establishes a settlement hierarchy as the basis for establishing the future sustainable pattern of growth. The hierarchy identified Yarnfield and 11 other villages as “Key Service Villages” in which there was sufficient available land to accommodate future growth, as identified through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

SP4 - Stafford Borough Housing Growth Distribution: to achieve the scale of new housing identified in the Plan the annual targets for housing development, supported by necessary infrastructure, in the key service villages was set at: Key Service Villages 12% and 8% for the rural parts of the Borough.

SP7 – SUPPORTING THE LOCATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT: Settlement Boundaries will be established for the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy defined in Spatial Principle SP3.

Yarnfield was designated as a “Key Service Village in the Plan and the settlement boundary extended in 2017 by the Plan for Stafford Borough: Part 2

Settlement Boundaries will be defined to ensure that development within that boundary will, in principle, be acceptable because it will not lead to the loss of locally important open space or, in the case of housing and employment, other locally important community facilities (unless adequately replaced);

² - The Plan for Stafford Borough: Part 1

3.3 Local context

Yarnfield and Cold Meece Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) December 2021 (AECOM)

The HNA has estimated the parish's housing need based on current population estimates rather than 2011 household statistics used in the Stafford Borough Council Economic and Housing Development Needs Assessment (EHDNA). This method produces a larger housing need for Yarnfield and Cold Meece of 6 dwellings per year compared to the 4 per year identified in Stafford Borough Council's EHDNA. This 50% uplift aligns closely with the rate of expansion of the parish through new development since 2011. It can therefore be seen to more realistically reflect the current size and status of the parish.

The HNA recommends that the 2040 target mix of new dwellings should remain relatively stable in terms of 1-bedroom dwellings, but that the proportion of mid-size 2-bedroom and 3-bedroom properties should increase relatively significantly based on the 2021 housing stock.

Community consultation November 2021

Respondents favoured developments that consisted of smaller traditional, two or three bedroom dwellings. This reflects the recognition that there is an oversupply in the parish of larger 4 + bedroom dwellings.

There was a strong sense that future housing development:

- Should only take place on brownfield sites (71%) or infill development (26%);
- Should protect existing green spaces, the environment and the integrity of the parish.;
- There was a recognition that all housing tenure types should be included in future developments.

Respondents recognised the need to support existing community facilities and expressed a desire to see a wider range of service in the parish

Yarnfield has some retail and community facilities including a primary school, village shop and post office, beauty salon and hairdressers; vibrant village hall, as well as good transport links to Stone.

3.4 Policy YCM1: Housing

1. Residential development will be supported in the following locations:
 - a. within the Yarnfield settlement boundary (see Plan 3);
 - b. brownfield sites or infill within the built settlement in the green belt boundary (see Plan 4) where it would be appropriate development in the Green Belt;
 - c. conversion of agricultural buildings;
 - d. sensitive conversion of historic buildings.
2. The mix of accommodation in residential development should be based on the latest evidence available and comprise:
 - a. 2 and 3-bedroom properties, as the predominant part of the mix;
 - b. housing suitable for older persons and for people down-sizing.
3. Housing design should be flexible for different needs, including homeworking.
4. Residential development should include positive design and landscape features to reduce carbon use and promote biodiversity, having regard to the Sustainable Design and Character policy in this Plan.
5. All new dwellings should include:
 - a. screened storage for bins and recycling;
 - b. secure and screened storage for cycles and personal vehicles.
6. High speed broadband infrastructure should be provided within the site of all new housing, to be ready as local services are improved.

3.5 Interpretation

The housing mix clause requires 2/3-bedroom properties to be a predominant part of the mix and encourage housing suitable for older people. The AECOM Housing Needs Assessment identifies the need for approximately 58% 3-bedroom and 36% 2-bedroom properties.

The mix could include some 1-bedroom properties, but not as a significant part of the mix. There is currently an over-supply of 4-bedroom properties, so they should be a very small part of the mix, if included at all.

The policy should not be interpreted as supporting inappropriate development in the green belt.

Ways of ensuring that housing is flexible to different needs is to include ample storage space or to achieve generous space standards.

Secure and screened storage for cycles could include garages of sufficient size.

Design, transport and other requirements for residential development are contained in other policies.

Personal vehicles would include mobility scooters

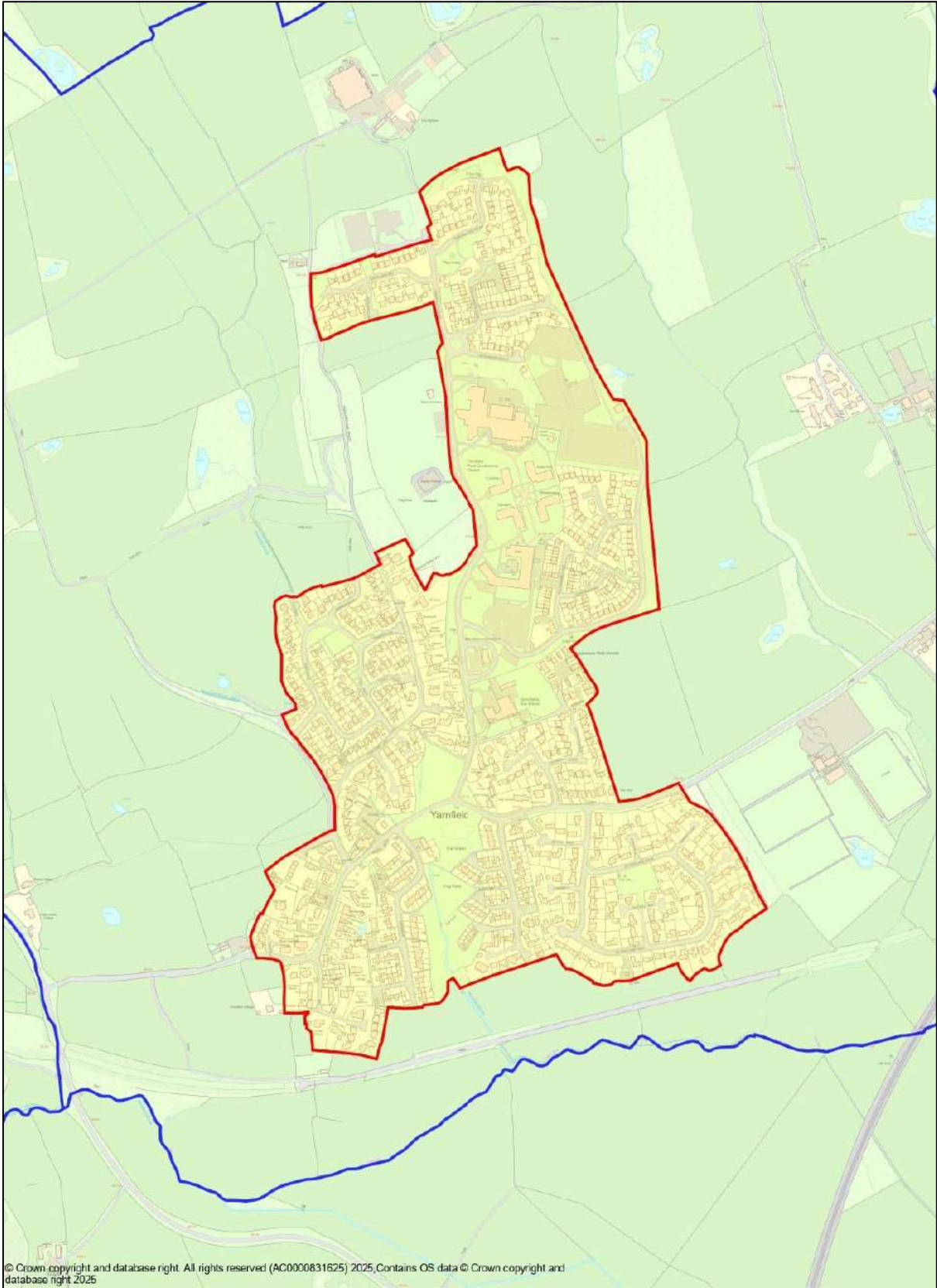


Figure 3 - Yarnfield Settlement Boundary

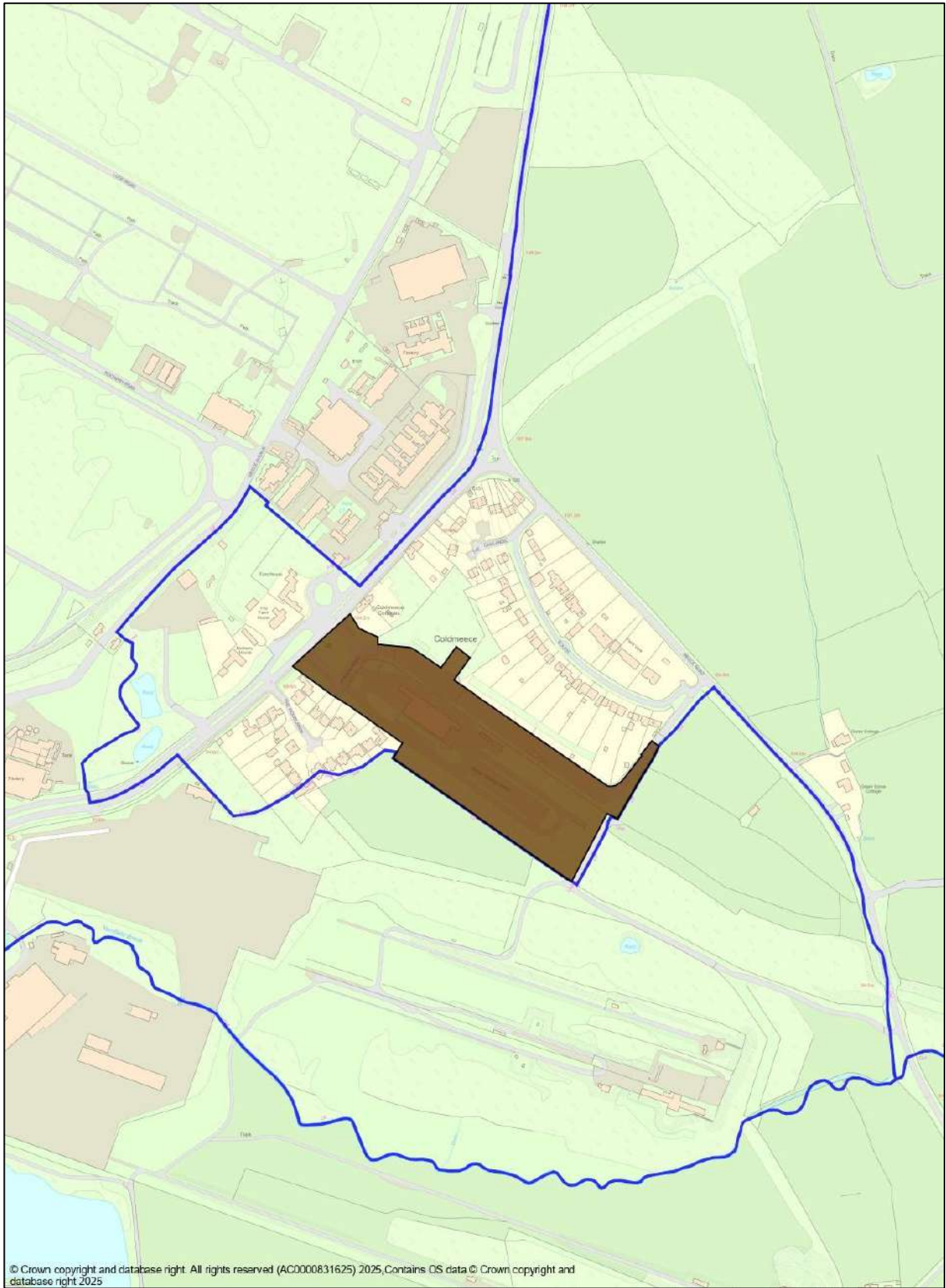


Figure 5 - Brownfield Site - Cold Meece

3.6 Policy YCM2 Community Facilities

1. New community facilities will be supported in the following locations:
 - a. within the Yarnfield settlement boundary (see Plan 3);
 - b. brownfield sites, but excluding inappropriate development in the Green Belt;
 - c. conversion of agricultural buildings;
 - d. sensitive conversion of historic buildings.
2. Support will be given to the improvement or diversification of the following key community facilities:
 - a. The post-office, public house, shop and personal services;
 - b. Yarnfield Village Hall;
 - c. Springfields First School;
 - d. Wellbeing Park Football Ground and Playgrounds (Greenside, Yarnfield Parkway, Worthington Grove).
3. Support for new or improved community facilities is subject to:
 - a. There being no significant harm to the amenities of residential properties;
 - b. There being no significant harm to the natural or historic environments, having regard to policies Y5 and Y6.

3.7 Interpretation

Community facilities would include uses in Use Class E and F1.

Personal services could include nail bars, hairdressers, dog grooming and holistic therapies.

Loss of existing community facilities is dealt with in the Local Plan.

Design, transport and other requirements for community-related development are contained in other policies.



4

4. Economy

4.1 Purpose

To support sustainable growth in sustainable locations, to meet the needs of the local community.

4.2 Planning Rationale

[National Planning Policy Framework, 2024](#)

Chapter 6 - Building a strong, competitive economy: the NPPF makes clear that significant weight should be given to supporting economic growth and activity.

Planning policies and decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, new buildings; the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses; sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

[The Plan for Stafford Borough \(2011 – 2031\)](#)

SP6 - Achieving Rural Sustainability: Priority will be given to supporting the rural sustainability of the Borough by protecting and enhancing its environmental assets and character whilst sustaining the social and economic fabric of its communities. This will be achieved by promotinga sustainable rural economy.

SP7 - Supporting the Location of New Development:

Development proposals should maximise the use of brownfield redevelopment sites within the Borough's towns and villages to reduce the need for greenfield sites.

Policy E1 Local Economy The local economy will be sustained by supporting the location, diversity and intensity of new economic development through a range of policies including: (d) supporting the rural economy in accordance with Spatial Principle SP6, and encouraging developments consistent with Spatial Principle SP7.

4.3 Local Context

The predominant employment opportunities in the Neighbourhood Area include agriculture with most of the land being grades 2 (very good quality agricultural land) and 3 (Grade 3 - good to moderate quality agricultural land), Yarnfield Park Conference Centre and a number of other smaller business and services across the parish such as the local shop, Wellbeing Park sports facility and Beauty Rebellion.

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the essential role that Yarnfield Park Conference Centre has as a major provider of employment and the clear ambition of the centre to provide employment throughout the plan period.

53% of respondents reported a desire to see greater employment opportunities with agriculture and social sector scoring highest.



Figure 6 - Yarnfield Park Conference Centre

4.4 Policy YCM3: Yarnfield Park

1. Development will be supported within Yarnfield Park (see Figure 7), providing:
 - a. it would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt;
 - b. it maintains and complements the conference centre and/or employment use of the site;
 - c. it would retain the open character of the site as a green campus.

4.5 Interpretation

The policy seeks to ensure that Yarnfield Park remains in use as a conference centre (use class F1) and employment site (including use class E uses), to maintain local employment and avoid the village from becoming an unsustainable mono-use (residential) dormitory town.

The need to retain the open and green campus character of the site would include retention of landscaped areas and treatment of parking and servicing areas through high-quality landscape design and planting.

For new employment development, the local planning authority may wish to consider use conditions, where retail uses could cause harm to surrounding facilities.

General industry or distribution are not explicitly mentioned in the policy but could cause problems with residential amenity (noise and traffic) and could impact on existing light industrial and business uses in Yarnfield Park.

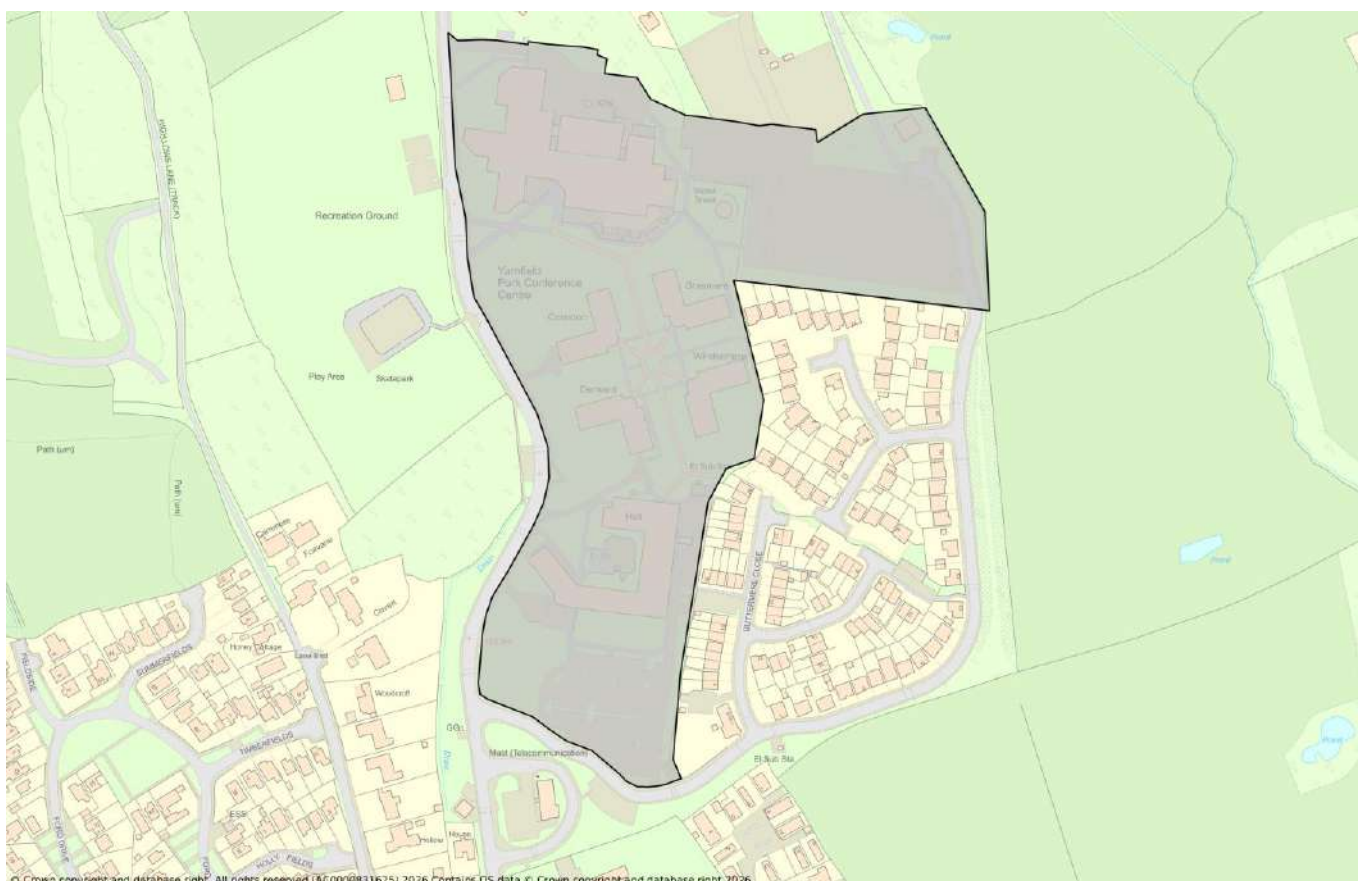


Figure 7- Yarnfield Park Conference Centre

5



5. Design and Heritage

5.1 Purpose

To ensure that development is well-designed and sustainable; to protect the historic and natural environment of the area; and help to deliver good quality places within Yarnfield and Cold Meece.

5.2 Planning Rationale

[National Planning Policy Framework, 2024](#)

Chapter 12 - Achieving well-designed and beautiful places: The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Design considerations include function, adding to the quality of the area, visual attractiveness, effective landscaping, being sympathetic to local character and history, not discouraging innovation and change, maintain strong and distinctive sense of place, optimising site potential, and making safe, inclusive and accessible places.

The NPPF is augmented by the National Design Guide (2021) which illustrates how well-designed places have ten characteristics. These are context, nature, identity, use, resources, movement, built form, public space, homes and buildings and lifespan.

Chapter 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment: Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

- the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

[Stafford Borough Council Local Plan](#)

One of the plan's primary goals is to promote high design quality across all new development. To that end, the plan establishes clear design policies, and the integration of new development within the surrounding environment. The plan sets out to protect heritage assets so that developments don't impact adversely on the special character of the area.

[Stafford Borough Design Supplementary Planning Document \(SPD\) 2018](#)

The SPD sets out the design principles and guidelines that Stafford Borough Council requires for all new development, including new build (both commercial and residential) and those seeking to alter or extend their houses.

5.3 Key evidence

The Neighbourhood Plan is supported by a Design Code commissioned from AECOM which will provide urban design guidance to help deliver good quality places within Yarnfield and Cold Meece that can be applied to future development within the Neighbourhood Area.

Community consultation recognised the importance of the local character, landscape and heritage of the area and the need for new development to respect its setting.

5.4 Local Context

There is a predominance of semi-detached and detached housing in Yarnfield and Cold Meece. The prevalence of this lower density housing contributes to the character of the Neighbourhood Area.

The heritage assets in Yarnfield and Cold Meece parish complement the area's rich history and cultural heritage. They continue to be a significant component of the community's identity today and serve as a reminder of the area's rural heritage.

Duncan Hall, Beatty Hall, and Howard Hall were built in 1938 for munitions workers transferred from Woolwich Arsenal to the Royal Ordnance factory in Cold Meece. During World War II, they were occupied by the United States Army Air Force.

Cold Meece was used to house personnel at the Royal Ordnance Factory. It was also the location for a large railway station used to transport workers to the factory during World War II. The sites of Duncan Hall, Beatty Hall and Howard Hall have now been used to build new houses and estates in Yarnfield. Since 2011 Yarnfield has seen a 57% increase in the number of homes. Today, the villages retain a mix of older and newer structures, reflecting the area's changing needs and demographics over the last century.

- The parish of Yarnfield and Cold Meece contains several heritage assets, including listed buildings and other non-statutory assets of historical and cultural significance.

Grade II listed Boundary Cottages and Elton Cottage are one of the parish's most notable heritage assets. The buildings are one storey with attics, colour washed brick with tiled roof.

Originally the building was a four bay open hall house of cruck framed construction. Yew Tree Farm in Yarnfield, a Grade II listed building is a converted timber-framed brick barn with some exposed timber frame on the west side.

- A range of outbuildings adjoining the north-east side of Meece House is another important Grade II listed building which consists of a range of 3 blocks, the end block with gable to road, red brick and cement rendering.
- The Grade II listed Cold Meece War Memorial: an eloquent witness to the tragic impact of world events and the sacrifices made in the First World War. Architectural interest: an elegant and well-carved Celtic cross

The parish also has several non-statutory heritage sites, including the Yarnfield Village Hall, the former St Barnabas Church and the White House on Yarnfield village green.



Figure 8 - The Barns, Yarnfield: Grade II listed building

5.5 Policy YCM 4: Sustainable Design and Character

1. Development should be high-quality and sustainable to create a locally distinctive sense of place, meeting the following requirements of this policy proportionate to the scale and nature of the scheme.
2. Development should include high quality green infrastructure, including:
 - a. retention of existing trees and hedgerows, which should be incorporated into the design and layout of schemes;
 - b. taking opportunities to plant new trees and hedgerows, including as part of boundary treatments;
 - c. incorporating high quality landscape design, based on local native species or other species of high environmental value;
 - d. taking opportunities to create or enhance existing green spaces.
3. Development should include positive design and landscape features to reduce carbon use and promote biodiversity.
4. Development should complement the site and surrounding context in terms of scale, height, setback from the road, pattern of gardens, and other townscape characteristics.
5. Development should use high quality and durable materials, and support will be given to the use of:
 - a. local traditional materials;
 - b. recycled materials;
 - c. materials from sustainable sources and with good environmental credentials.
6. Development should prioritise pedestrian and cyclist safety and convenience by:
 - a. allowing for ease of movement within the site and providing links to surrounding paths;
 - b. providing a high-quality of public realm;
 - c. ensuring that streets and spaces are not dominated by carparking
7. Support will be given to innovative or creative green design solutions

5.6 Interpretation

The policy should be read in conjunction with the principles established in the Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council Design Guidance and Code 2023.

Ways of building green can include:

- use of efficient heating and cooling systems, or design to reduce dependency on heating and cooling systems.
- superior insulation properties and airtightness;
- natural ventilation and air flow (for warmer months) to help avoid over-heating;
- use of local, low-embodied energy, recycled and recyclable materials;
- living (green) walls or roofs;
- orientation to maximise passive solar gain;
- rainwater capture, storage and reuse (grey water);
- use of LED or other low wattage lighting;
- space for natural clothes drying;
- bins for recycling;
- flexible spaces and layouts to accommodate changing demands.

The public realm and green infrastructure should be designed to support movement, recreation, social interaction, play and exercise.

Sustainable Drainage Systems can be incorporated into landscape design. This includes ensuring that hard surfaces are water permeable.

Use of traditional hedges for boundary treatments creates a greener environment and enhances the historic and rural character of the area.

Use of skilled and experienced design teams can make compliance with this and other policies much easier.

5.7 Policy YCM5: Local Heritage and Character

1. Development should complement the rural and green village character, based on the following key characteristics:
 - a. properties set back from the roads, behind front gardens or verges;
 - b. boundary treatments comprising trees and hedges or low brick walls;
 - c. the domestic character and scale of residential properties;
 - d. architectural diversity, based on different periods of construction;
 - e. use of simple building forms;
 - f. the predominant two storey height of buildings.
2. Development should preserve or enhance the Cold Meece War Memorial and its green open space setting.

5.8 Interpretation

Green infrastructure is an important part of character, including trees, hedges, verges and gardens.

In terms of architectural diversity, the village includes different periods of construction, including older domestic properties and post-war housing with a clear Scandinavian influence (larger windows and steeped pitches). Some later housing is less distinctive, using an 'anywhere' and generic 'heritage' style.

The policy places emphasis on the importance of the war memorial and its landscape setting.



6



6. Environment and Green Infrastructure

6.1 Purpose

To protect and enhance the natural environment, landscape character and green infrastructure.

6.2 Planning Rationale

Planning for green spaces needs to be considered as an integral part of the wider planning for the area with new developments complimenting the open green spaces.

[National Planning Policy Framework, 2024](#)

Chapter 8 - Promoting healthy and safe communities: The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them

The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.

Chapter 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change: The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

Chapter 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment: Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, intrinsic character and beauty of the landscape, habitats, and provide net gains in biodiversity. This includes consideration of protection of valued landscapes, intrinsic character, biodiversity net-gain, pollution and mitigation.

[Stafford Borough Council Local Plan](#)

The Borough will have a rich natural environment which is resilient to the effects of climate change, is well maintained and enhanced with more people enjoying the area through a greater sense of health and wellbeing.

A high quality strategic network of accessible green space will have been developed in and around Stafford, Stone and other areas as well as enhanced and managed historic environment and natural resources providing a clean, safe and enjoyable place to live and visit, facilitated by an improved road and public transport network.

6.3 Local Context

The environmental benefits of green spaces help to make local places sustainable. Green spaces, both within and surrounding Yarnfield and Cold Meece, have a positive impact on the people living in the area providing a vital link with nature which helps to promote health and wellbeing.

Local green spaces in Yarnfield and Cold Meece are extremely important to the community. The pride in the green spaces, evident from the consultation, overwhelmingly identified the appropriate protection of these spaces as being a major part of the Yarnfield and Cold Meece Neighbourhood Plan.

Most of the neighbourhood area is over-washed by the North Staffordshire Green belt which both limits development but at the same time provides a degree of protection to the environment and green spaces of the area.



Figure 9 North Staffordshire Greenbelt

6.4 Key evidence or data

Evidence prepared by the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust has been used to support the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan policies.

The evidence shows:

- Pilstone Wood – 10.7 hectare of ancient woodland.
- Public footpath, YCM-11, that provide a green corridor running from the north of the area linking Pilstone Wood with Yarnfield Common and the village green.
- Habitat distinctiveness mapping provides multiple uses outside of the biodiversity metric 2.0, including:
 - Identifying areas of high biodiversity value that are a priority for protection and expansion within a local plan whilst working in line with biodiversity mitigation hierarchy (avoid minimise, remediate, compensate).
 - Flagging areas that may contain medium value (semi-natural) habitat. These could be highlighted in policy as requiring a comprehensive biodiversity evaluation if they are put forward for planning purposes (based on mitigation hierarchy). Biodiversity offsetting/compensation may be required in these areas if they are developed.
 - Identifying possible wildlife corridors which can be highlighted and designated as part of a local plan/Green Infrastructure Strategy. These areas could be the target of restoration projects/funding/aspirational opportunity areas funded through development compensation (obviously the allocation of funds is based on broad scale spatial analysis as opposed to the methods of calculating the offsetting requirement of a specific site)

6.5 Policy YCM6: Landscape and Biodiversity

1. Development should conserve and not harm habitats, including those for tawny owls, great spotted woodpeckers, reed buntings, and hares, and should:
 - a. avoid habitat damage; or
 - b. minimise habitat damage where it can't be avoided altogether; and
 - c. take opportunities to restore damaged or lost habitat; and
 - d. as a last resort, where habitat loss or damage is unavoidable, compensate for such damage through positive design or landscape features or other measures to support wildlife.
2. Development should conserve and cause no harm to the green character, flora and fauna and wildlife connectivity of the following linear green corridors (see Figure 10: Habitat Distinctiveness)
3. Development should retain and cause no harm to mature trees, hedgerows, woods and ancient woodlands.
4. Development should conserve and cause no harm to the biological importance of the following designated sites: (see figure 10 – Yarnfield and Cold Meece Designated sites)
 - a. Pilstone Wood;
 - b. Yarnfield Meadow;
 - c. Area South of Yarnfield.
5. Development should retain and avoid harm to the following landscape features:
 - a. Yarnfield Brook, streams, ponds, soakaways, balancing ponds, and water features;
 - b. Wetland and reed beds;
 - c. Different orchid varieties, including Marsh Orchids and perennial wildflowers including Ragged Robin;
 - d. Ridge and furrow landscape.

6.6 Interpretation

Existing landscape features, landform and green infrastructure should be retained and be incorporated into redevelopment and enhanced as far as possible.

Design features to support wildlife include:

- Bat boxes and bird boxes;
- Hedgehog gaps in fences;
- Badger routes;
- Wildlife connectivity via grass verges and footpath edges;
- Meadow edge grasses, wildflowers and bee-friendly planting is desirable.

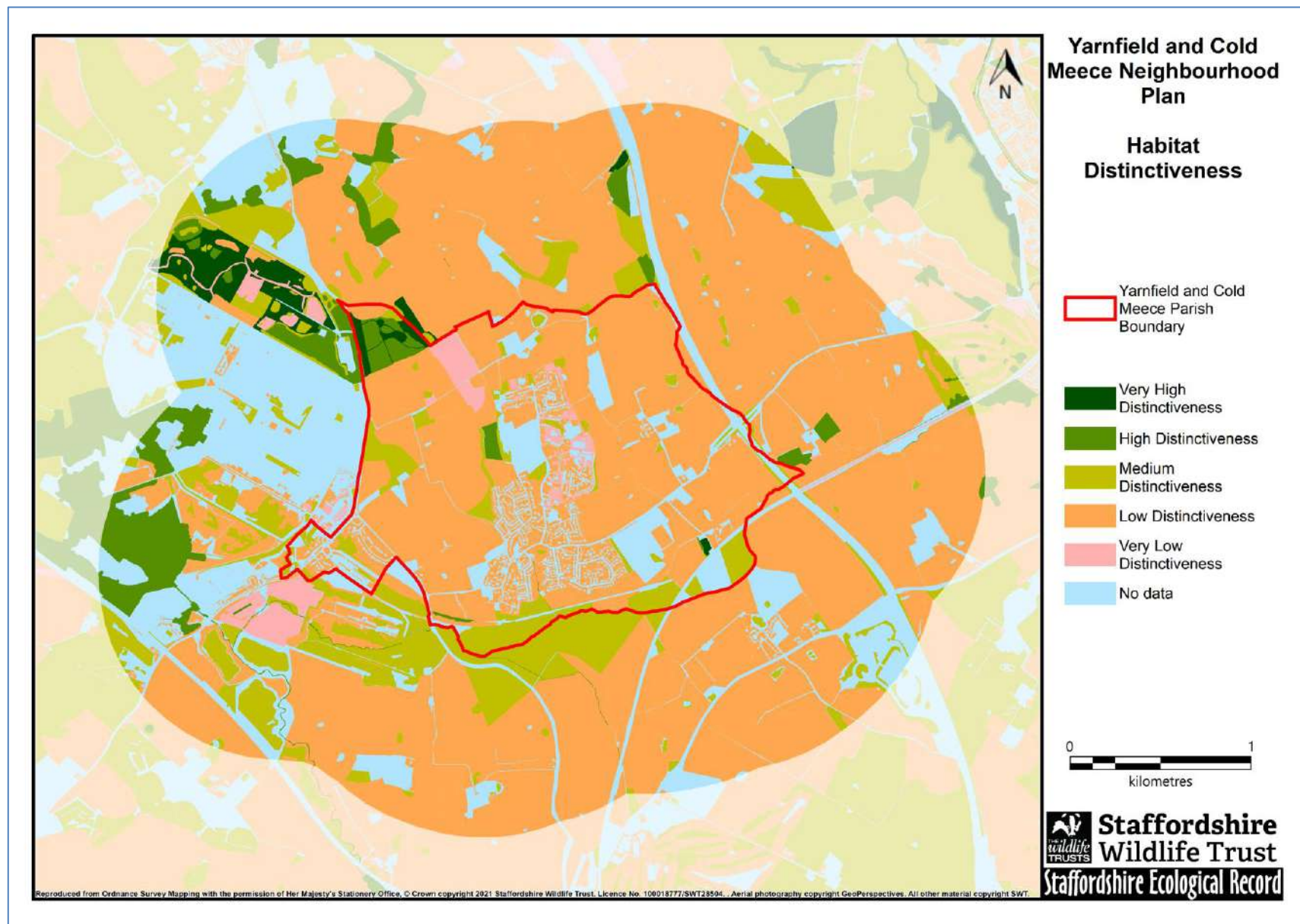


Figure 10 – Yarnfield and Cold Meece Habitat Distinctiveness

**Nature Conservation Sites and Species
 within Yarnfield Parish (SJ865330)**

Note: Badger records are excluded, and only 100m precision sightings are plotted

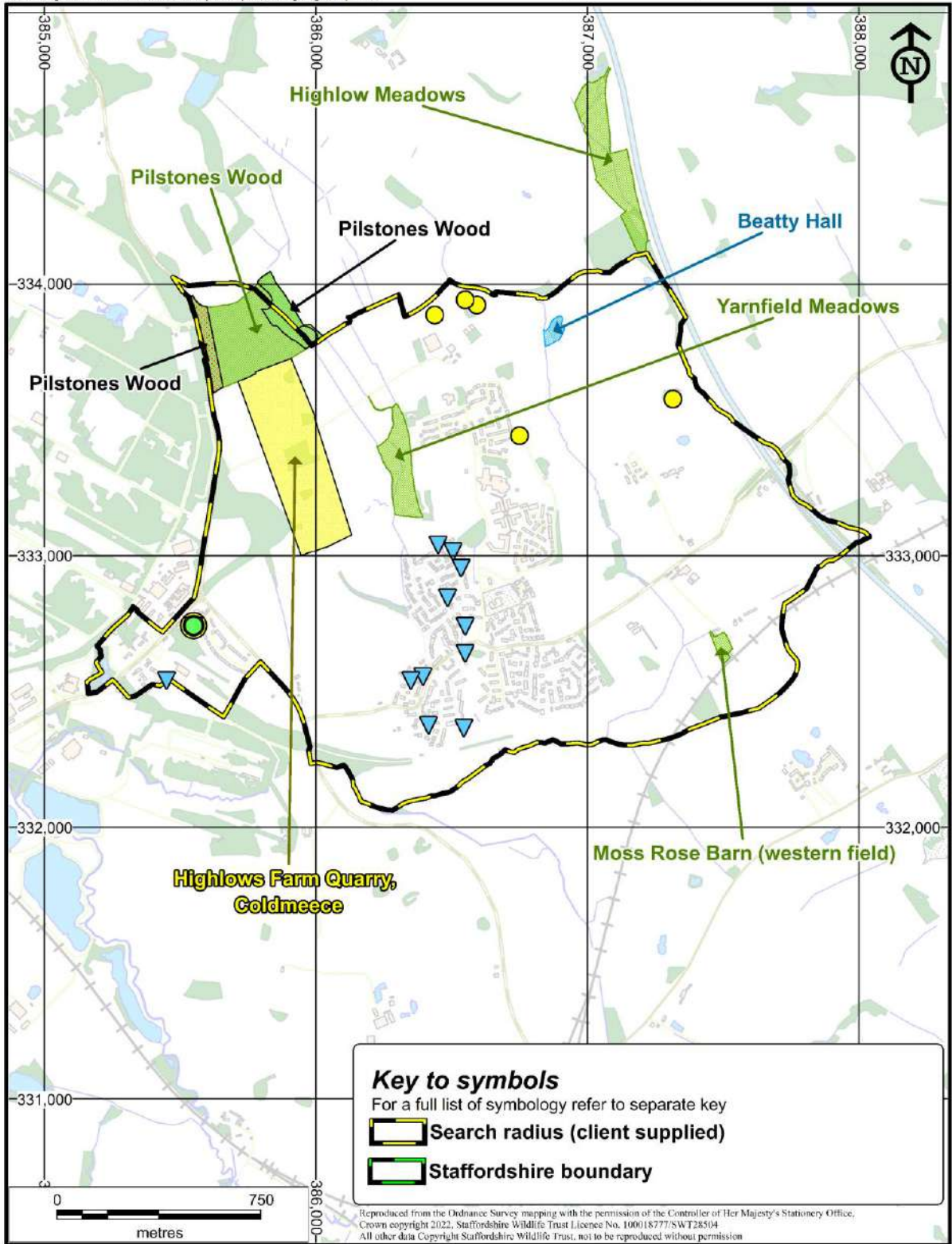


Figure 11 - Yarnfield and Cold Meece: Designated sites

6.7 Policy YCM7: Local Green Space

1. The following spaces are designated as Local Green Space:
 - LGS1: Ashdale Park;
 - LGS2: Yarnfield Village Green – northwest;
 - LGS3: Yarnfield Village Green – northeast;
 - LGS4: Yarnfield Village Green – central;
 - LGS5: Yarnfield Village Green – south;
 - LGS6: Ford Drive;
 - LGS7: Yarnfield Park Multiuse Area;
 - LGS8: Worthington Grove Play Area;
 - LGS9: Cold Meece War Memorial;
2. Development should have no adverse impact on the amenity, safety, accessibility, or open and green character of Local Green Space.

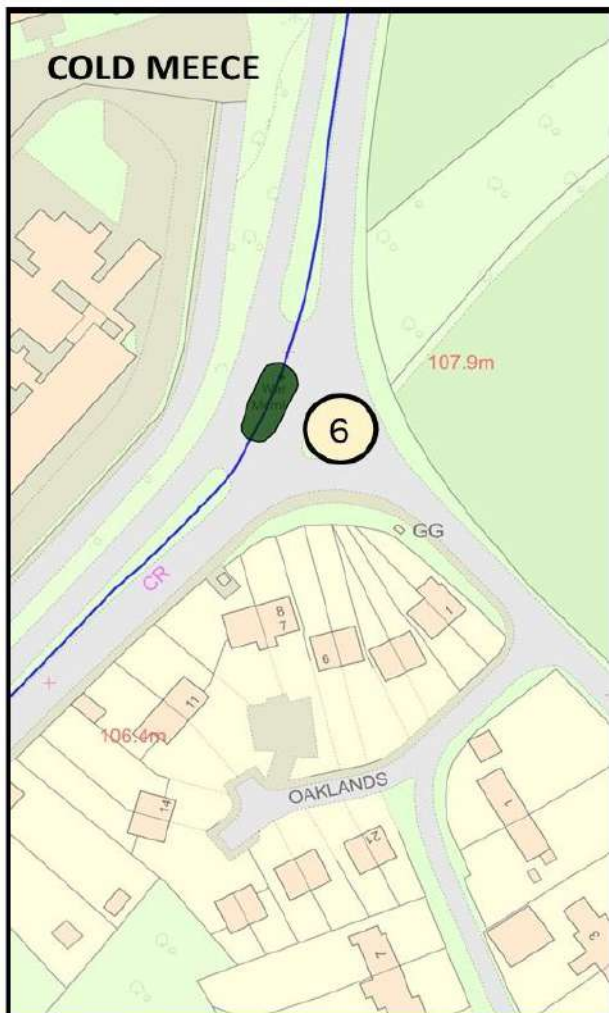
6.8 Interpretation

National policy states that Local Green Space has similar protection to Green Belts. It should be noted that the purpose of Local Green Space designation is related to community value, so is different to the five purposes for Green Belts. The second clause to the policy draws on the National Design Guide.



Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council

Neighbourhood Plan — Local Green Space Site Proposals



Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council, working with residents, has identified 6 sites that are valued by the community as local green spaces.

Yarnfield: the 5 sites are over washed by the North Staffordshire Greenbelt and as such already have a degree of protection. The proximity of the community and the special characteristic of the sites warrants further protection to guarantee each continues to be available to future generations.

One site, the village green, is partly made up of common land and requires no further protection. However the southern and middle sections of the village green is not common land and as such warrants being designated as local green space.

The site identified in Cold Meece, while small, is of great significant to the community with links to both the 1st and 2nd World War, being a place of remembrance.

The location of the six sites:

- Worthington Grove - 1
- Yarnfield Parkway - 2
- Ford Drive - 3
- Village Green - 4
- Ashdale Park - 5
- Cold Meece War Memorial - 6

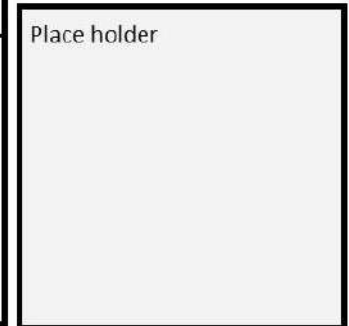
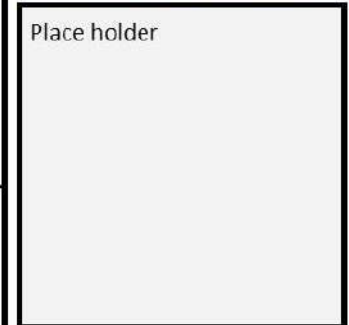
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**YCM-LGS 1 – Worthington Grove
Yarnfield**

OS Reference: SJ865335
Area = .25 Hectares

1



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Current use of the site

- Public open space on the Yarnfield Park housing development
- Children's play provision for under 12s.
- Used by residents' for walking, dog walking and by the community running club.
- Site is maintained by Trustgreen on behalf of the of the Resident's Management Committee.

How close is the space to the community it serves?

- The site is within walking distance for residents of Yarnfield Park.

Planning Permissions or site allocation

- 09-12911/OUT—site formed as a public open space to service the housing development.
- Site is not included in the Stafford local plan 2011—2031 as local green space.
- Site owned by the developer, Barratts West Midlands .

The space is special to the local community and holds local significance

- The site is enjoyed by all ages for informal recreation with younger children's play equipment and benches.
- Spring flowering bulbs planted along the perimeter of the site.

Recreational value

- Children and families use the space throughout the year for informal recreation.
- Dog walkers use the space to exercise and train their dogs
- Local community running club use the site.
- Its visual attractiveness and contribution to the character of the surrounding housing estate.

**YCM-LGS 2– Yarnfield Parkway
Public open space, Yarnfield**

**OS Reference: SJ865332
Area = 2.9 Hectares**

2



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Current use of the site

- Multiuse play area with basketball court, football pitch, changing rooms, play equipment and benches
- Used for walking, dog walking and by the community running club
- Has been used to stage community events

How close is the space to the community it serves?

- The site is within walking distance for residents of Yarnfield Park
- Site is not included in the Stafford local plan 2011—2031 as local green space.

Planning Permissions or site allocation

- 09-12911/OUT—site formed as a public open space to service the housing development
- Site currently owned by the developer, the parish council is in discussions to acquire the site.
- Site not included in the Stafford local plan 2011—2031 as local green space.

The space is special to the local community and holds local significance

- The site is enjoyed by all ages for informal recreation with younger children's play equipment and benches.

Recreational value

- Children and families use the space throughout the year for informal recreation.
- Multiuse play area with basketball court and play equipment used throughout the year by the community and visitors to the parish.
- Dog walkers use the space to exercise and train their dogs



Placeholder

**YCM-LGS 3 – Ford Drive
Yarnfield**

OS Reference: SJ863329
Area = .2 Hectares

3



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Current use of the site

- Public open space at the centre of the Ford Drive housing development.
- Site for community defibrillator to be completed by March 2025
- Site owned and maintained by Stafford Borough Council .

How close is the space to the community it serves?

- At the centre of the Ford Drive estate
- Max 2 minutes' walk from every home on the estate.

Planning Permissions or site allocation

- Open space included in as part of the development of the estate in the mid 1970's.
- Site owned by Stafford Borough Council
- Site recognised as local green space.

The space is special to the local community and holds local significance

- Provides a sense of space and the mature oak tree is a valued characteristic of this space.
- Provides a quiet, calm space in the centre of the development.
- Residents of all ages use and value the site
- In the spring daffodils, paid for by the parish council and planted by residents, line the pavement

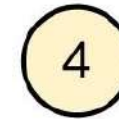
Recreational value

- Site used by residents and the wider community as an amenity for walking, dog walking,
- Informal games, and recreation for family to enjoy open space
- Its visual attractiveness and contribution to the character of the surrounding housing estate.



YCM-LGS 4 – Village Green
Yarnfield Lane, Yarnfield

OS Reference: SJ865326
Area = 2.5 Hectares



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Current use of the site

- The site is made up of Yarnfield Common, Middle Green and South Green
- Public open space at the centre of the Yarnfield
- Children’s playground is located on the south green
- Site owned by Stafford Borough Council and maintained by Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council .

How close is the space to the community it serves?

- The village green is at the centre of Yarnfield.
- Easy walking routes available from all parts of Yarnfield

Planning Permissions or site allocation

- The 3 north sections of the village green is Common Land. (see plan)
- Site not included in the Stafford Local Plan 2011—2031 as local green space.

The space is special to the local community and holds local significance

- Runs through the centre of the village providing a sense of space and adding to the wellbeing of the community.
- The site is highly valued by the community and visitors to the parish. It is visually very attractive and provides a tranquil space with trees, park benches.
- The village green is enjoyed by all ages for informal recreation. The village green is recognised as providing a significant contribution to the village’s unique character and historic identity.

Recreational value

- Football, cricket and other games are played by children and parents;
- Children and families use the space throughout the year
- Dog walkers use the space to exercise and train their dogs
- Annual summer events are held on the village green
- Parish council playground on the southern green is frequently used by children and families. Parish Council investing in new equipment for the play area funded by s106 money provided by Stafford Borough Council.



**YCM-LGS 5 – Ashdale Park
De Havilland Drive , Yarnfield**

**OS Reference: SJ868325
Area = 0.27 Hectares**

5



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Current use of the site

- Public open space at the centre of the Ashdale Park housing development.
- Parish Council—community defibrillator located on the site.
- Site owned and maintained by Stafford Borough Council .

How close is the space to the community it serves?

- At the centre of the Ashdale Park estate
- Max 2 minutes' walk from every home on Ashdale Park.

Planning Permissions or site allocation

- Open space included in planning application 88/21607/OUT
- Site owned by Stafford Borough Council
- Site not included in the Stafford local plan 2011—2031 as local green space.

The space is special to the local community and holds local significance

- Provides a sense of space and the trees are a valued characteristic
Provides a quiet calm space in the centre of the development.
- Residents of all ages use and value the site
- In the spring daffodils, paid for by the parish council and planted by residents, line the pavement
- 2 mature oak trees with TP Orders, 3 newly planted cherry trees

Recreational value

- Its visual attractiveness and contribution to the character of the surrounding housing estate.
- Football, cricket and other games are played by children and parents; snowmen are built in the winter
- Children and families use the space throughout the year
- Dog walkers use the space to exercise and train their dogs
- Safe space for children to play



**YCM-LGS 6 – Cold Meece
War Memorial & Rose Garden**

OS Reference: SJ855328
Area = 0.005 Hectares

6



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Current use of the site

- WW1 Grade II listed War Memorial
- The rose garden and community bench maintained by Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council.

How close is the space to the community it serves?

- The site is within walking distance for residents of the parish.

Planning Permissions or site allocation

- Planning Permission—none
- Site appears to form part of the Staffordshire County Council highways estate
- Site not included in the Stafford local plan 2011—2031 as local green space.

The space is special to the local community and holds local significance

- Historical significance: the site has a long history of being used by residents and the family and relatives of the many thousands of women known as the “Swynnerton Roses” and other personnel who worked at The Royal Ordnance Factory No. 5 Swynnerton from 1940 — 45.
- The War Memorial is the site of annual Remembrance Day Services held by the community and MOD Swynnerton.

Recreational value

- This area is special to the local community and visitors.
- Park bench by the rose garden used by residents, local families and others as a place to rest and remember.



Place holder

7

Place Holder



7. Sustainable and Active Travel

7.1 Purpose

To ensure that development in the parish is serviced by a mix of transport options that prioritises walking, cycling, and public transport, and improving public health, and overall quality of life for all residents.

To create greater connection between the settlements of Yarnfield and Cold Meece.

7.2 Planning Rationale

National Planning Policy Framework, 2024

The rationale for travel planning focuses on creating sustainable, accessible, and attractive places by encouraging walking, cycling, and public transport, reducing car dependency, and ensuring new developments support healthy lifestyles.

NPPF - Promoting sustainable transport: transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, using a vision-led approach to identify transport solutions that deliver well-designed, sustainable and popular places. These should:

- make transport considerations an important part of early engagement with local communities;
- understand and addressing the potential impacts of development on transport networks;
- identify and pursuing opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use.

The Stafford Borough Local Plan 2020-2040

The Stafford Borough Integrated Transport Strategy (SBITS) prepared by Staffordshire County Council, is linked to the broader Staffordshire Local Transport Plan and Local Plan. The SBITS focuses on improving sustainable transport, managing traffic, and supporting economic growth in Stafford borough. Key goals include enhancing public transport, promoting walking/cycling, and accommodating new housing/employment sites.

Decarbonising Transport Plan, 2021

The Government's Decarbonising Transport Plan sets out a vision for future transport which aims to address the climate agenda, improve health and wellbeing,

create better places to live whilst providing ways of travelling which are affordable and reliable.

The Neighbourhood Plan positively addresses this through policy, which addresses sustainable transport, including active travel.

7.3 Local Context

Yarnfield and Cold Meece are connected by Footpath 10 do not have an all-weather footpath connecting them.

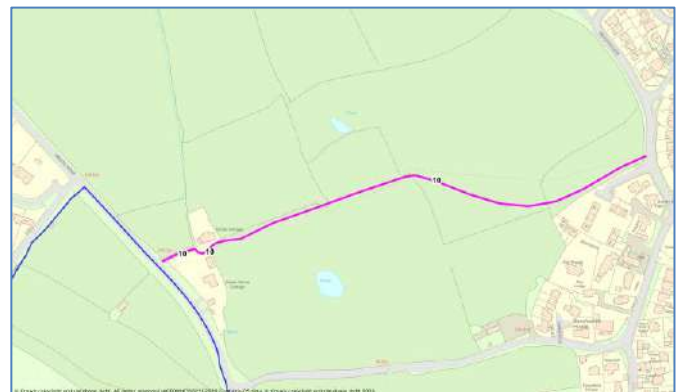


Figure 12 - Footpath YCM10 linking Cold Meece and Yarnfield

7.4 Policy YCM8: Sustainable and Active Travel

1. Development likely to generate additional need for travel should be supported by balanced transport provision, including opportunities for sustainable and active travel.
2. Opportunities should be taken to improve links for pedestrians and cyclists to surrounding paths and facilities, including public transport facilities.
3. New footpaths should be of sufficient width to accommodate people with a range of mobilities and for the use of wheelchairs and prams.
4. Development should cause no significant harm to the amenity, safety, accessibility or functioning of existing footpaths and cycleways.
5. Parking provision should include secure, covered storage for cycles and personal vehicles.

7.5 Interpretation

Active travel includes cycling and walking

8. Infrastructure Priorities

The following is a list of priorities for the use of planning infrastructure monies.

-
- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Improved public transport services, including connections and frequencies. | 2. Traffic calming measures on Yarnfield Lane |
| 3. Improved walkway between Yarnfield and Cold Meece. | 4. New off-road cycle routes and bridleways. |
| 5. Improved sports facilities. | 6. Improvement of local community facilities. |
| 7. Allotments/community gardens | 8. Create signage to give the parish an identity. |
-

9. Contacts

Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council

c/o 5 De Havilland Drive,
Yarnfield
Staffordshire, ST15 0SX

www.yarnfieldandcoldmeece-parish council.org.uk

clerk@yarnfieldandcoldmeece-parishcouncil.gov.uk
