

Annex B

Baseline Data

1.1 OVERVIEW

Drawing on a range of data sources, a profile of Tamworth Borough has been built up which describes the baseline conditions existing in the Borough currently. It presents information under five main headings:

- Living: covering strategic housing issues, community facilities, open space, crime and health among other topics;
- Learning and working: providing an economic profile of Tamworth and looking at issues such as business needs, employment land, employment opportunities, education and skills;
- Looking after the environment: covering biodiversity, water and air quality, flood risk and management, renewable energy, biodiversity and built heritage and the historic environment.
- Shopping and spare time: providing an overview of retail need and capacity, sport, culture and leisure facilities and tourism.
- Moving about: looking at private and public transport, car parking, walking and cycling.

1.2 OUTCOMES

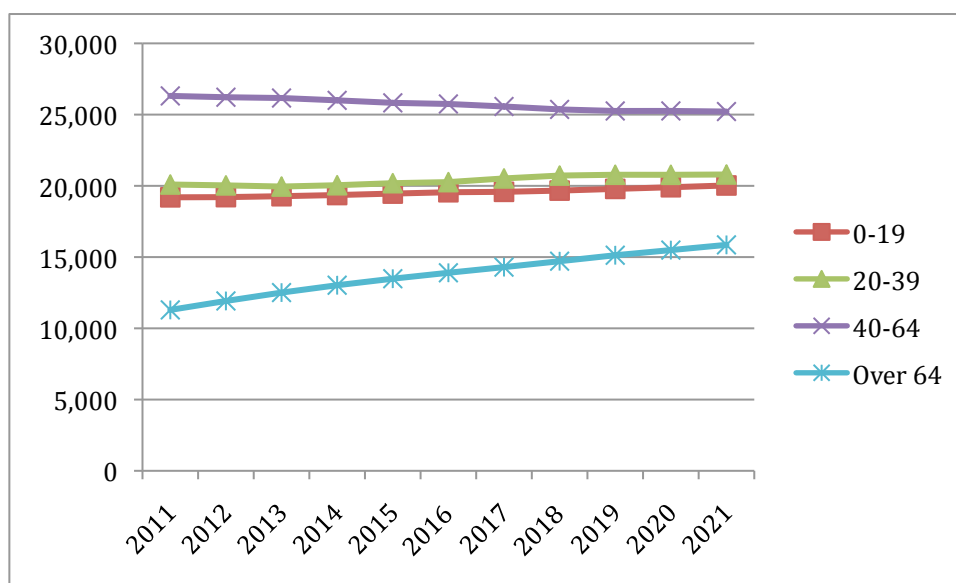
The following paragraphs present a profile of Tamworth, with baseline data to illustrate the environmental, social and economic conditions in the Borough.

1.2.1 Living

Population

In 2011 the resident population of Tamworth was recorded as 76,895. The percentage distribution throughout the various age groups is broadly the same as the national picture. It has been estimated that the population of Tamworth will increase to 81,895 by 2021, an increase of 6.5%, with most of the increase occurring among the over 64 age group.

Figure 3.1: Population projections for Tamworth Borough



Source: ONS population projections, from NOMIS

Housing

Most people live in post-war family housing. Most properties are of a modern standard, and there were no properties owned by Tamworth Borough Council considered as failing the Decent Homes Standard in April 2012¹. This is a significant improvement on the situation in April 2006, where 30% were classed as non-decent.

The average house price in Tamworth in the first quarter of 2013 was £146,854 which represented a 1.6% reduction on the previous year. This was below the regional average of £172,455 and the UK average of £238,976, both of which represented increases on the previous year.² However, average earnings are also below the national and regional average, at £22,478, compared to £23,670 for the region and £27,302 for England. The housing waiting list in Tamworth has been consistently high since 1996/97, albeit with a decline over the past few years. This has been accompanied by a generally low level of affordable housing supply which has not been sufficient to address the backlog of need.

More small homes (1 or 2 bedrooms) are required in the future and consideration needs to be given to the needs of an ageing population.

The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment³ showed that there is a need for 9 additional residential pitches for 2007-2026 and 5 extra transit pitches from 2007-2012.

100% of housing completions were on previously developed land in the year 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011. This has increased from previous years but will drop in the future as the remaining Local Plan allocations are developed as these are mainly greenfield sites.

In general, Tamworth Borough Council will struggle to meet its housing requirements within the borough in the future, as there is not much development land suitable for housing remaining. Tamworth's housing requirements arise both from the needs of the existing resident population and to accommodate in-migrants from the Birmingham conurbation. Providing housing for in-migrants will place additional pressure on the available developable land.

Deprivation

There are several small areas that face issues of deprivation in Tamworth, although the extent of deprivation is below the national average. According to the Index of Multiple Deprivation⁴, 7 local areas fall in the top 20% of deprived local areas in England, and one is in the top 10%. A number of these areas are concentrated in the Glascote ward. Low income, education and training, lack of employment opportunities and high crime rates are the main problems.

Health

Levels of health are similar compared to the national average. In the 2011 census, 81% of residents reported good or very good health, the same percentage as in England as a whole. However, there are some small pockets of health deprivation. For Tamworth as a whole life expectancy for both men and women is similar to the England average, 78.7 for men and 82.7 for women in Tamworth compared to 78.6 and 82.6 years in England. However there is

¹ Local Authority Housing Statistics data returns for 2011 to 2012, DCLG, December 2012, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/local-authority-housing-statistics-data-returns-for-2011-to-2012>

² http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/in_depth/uk_house_prices/html/houses.stm

³ Southern Staffordshire and Northern Warwickshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Final report, Universities of Salford and Birmingham, February 2008

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-indices-of-deprivation-2010>

significant variation between the most deprived areas of Tamworth and the least deprived areas, 7.7 years lower for men and 6.8 years lower for women.

Obesity rates amongst adults are estimated to be the highest in England, at 31% compared to an England rate of 24%, and a Staffordshire rate of 27%. The rate of physical activity for participation in at least 3 days per week of 30 minutes moderate activity is lower in Tamworth than the England average, at 19% compared to 22%.⁵

Crime

Compared with Staffordshire, Tamworth experiences fairly low levels of recorded crime. In March 2013, there were 4470 recorded crimes, the highest category being criminal damage and arson. This represented 59 crimes per thousand population, compared with 69 per thousand people for Staffordshire as a whole. Total levels of recorded crime in Tamworth have been falling steadily over the previous decade.⁶

Open spaces

A review of open space provision in 2011 showed that at a Borough wide level there is sufficient open space within the Borough. Ensuring that new development contributes to an improvement in the quality of existing open space will be of great importance moving forward. The review did not highlight a shortfall due to the scale of the study, however it took forward the 2007 Open Space Position Statement in highlighting the importance of the quality of an area of open space in recommending a standard of access to a good quality open space. A number of recommendations were made, including:

1. Lack of an urban park on the eastern side of the Borough which can be addressed by considering the re-designation of the network of spaces around Glascote Heath and Stonydelph.
2. Public realm improvements are needed at Ellerbeck and Exley civic spaces.
3. A deficiency in play space in all areas except the east can be addressed by requiring new developments in these areas to include a play area or contribute towards enhancement of existing play spaces in need of improvement.
4. Protect what we have in general, but consider disposal of low quality/low value sites.
5. Identify sites for alternative uses.⁷

1.2.2 Working and learning

Economic Sectors

Many of Tamworth's traditional firms have closed down over the last 20 years. However, Tamworth has risen to the challenge of diversifying its employment base. It remains heavily influenced by the manufacturing sector, but service industries such as transport, communication and distribution now also play an important role.

⁵ Tamworth Local Plan 2006-2028 Health Impact Assessment, Tamworth Borough Council, June 2012

⁶ ONS statistics, <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-322086>

⁷ Open Spaces Topic Paper, Tamworth Borough Council, November 2012

Tamworth's employment base has developed from coal mining, textiles and heavy metal working. Manufacturing has been an important employment sector for Tamworth and has included agricultural machines, papermaking, aluminium ware and motor vehicles. The car maker Reliant produced cars in Tamworth until 1999.

However, in the mid to late 1990s Tamworth experienced job losses in a number of the Town's larger manufacturing firms. This led to an economic restructuring of the Town's employment base with a shift from a manufacturing to service sector based economy.

Table 3.1: Employee jobs by industry, 2008

	Tamworth	Tamworth	West Midlands	Great Britain
Manufacturing	3,600	12.8%	13.8%	10.2%
Construction	2,400	8.6%	4.9%	4.8%
Services, of which:	21,800	78.5%	79.7%	83.5%
Distribution, hotels & restaurants	8,600	31.0%	23.6%	23.4%
Transport & communications	2,200	7.7%	5.8%	5.8%
Finance, IT, other business activities	5,500	19.7%	18.6%	22.0%
Public admin, education & health	4,200	15.3%	27.0%	27.0%
Other services	1,300	4.7%	4.6%	5.3%
Tourism-related†	2,100	7.6%	7.4%	8.2%

Source: NOMIS official labour market statistics

Note: Totals do not add up to 100%, partly because of rounding and partly because the tourism sector consists of industries that are also part of the services industry, according to sectoral definitions.

Unemployment

Tamworth has a low unemployment rate. In the year to March 2013, 80% of the working age population were in employment, compared with 75% for the region and 77% for England as a whole⁸. However, pockets of unemployment are concentrated in certain areas of the town which also experience other forms of deprivation, particularly Glascote and Amington.

Despite the relatively low unemployment rate, a large percentage of Tamworth's residents receive benefits. Focusing on current unemployment rates (Staffordshire Economic Bulletin, August 2011), relative to Staffordshire and specifically Tamworth at August 2011. Tamworth has the second highest level of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimants in Staffordshire at 3.7% second to Cannock Chase at 4.0%. However there is evidence across Staffordshire that these trends are fluctuating on a monthly basis highlighting a particularly volatile economy during the current economic downturn which is not necessarily an indication of the long term situation.⁹

Education and Qualifications

A variety of education and training facilities exist in Tamworth. However, schools generally perform below the national average, with 27% of people over 16 having no qualifications at all, compared with 23% for England. Only 15% of over-16s had level 4 qualifications or higher in the year to December 2012, compared to 34% for England as a whole.¹⁰

⁸ NOMIS official labour market statistics,
<http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157180/report.aspx>

⁹ Employment Land Review, Tamworth Borough Council, January 2012

¹⁰ NOMIS official labour market statistics,
<http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157180/report.aspx>

1.2.3 Looking after the environment

Heritage

Tamworth has grown rapidly since the 1960s and is now characterised by modern development. However, it is also an historic town that was once the capital of the Kingdom of Mercia. Tamworth still retains a range of important historic buildings, which need to be protected. Heritage assets include 218 listed buildings, of which 138 are nationally listed with 3 grade I and 5 grade II* and 80 are locally listed buildings, and 3 scheduled monuments. Two of the scheduled monuments are classified by English Heritage as being 'at risk', namely the Saxon defences and the deanery wall.¹¹

The Staffordshire Extensive Urban Survey has produced an assessment of the historic character of Tamworth¹². This revealed that the areas which exhibit the greatest heritage significance and value are mostly associated with historic settlement cores principally that of Tamworth which comprises the greatest number of nationally and locally listed buildings, but also Amington Green, Dosthill and Wilnecote. There is also high potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive as well as for the extant historic buildings to retain earlier fabric.

Tamworth contributes significantly to our understanding of the early mediaeval era of history as has been revealed by previous archaeological excavation. It also played a significant role in Aethelflaed's offensive against the Danes in the early 10th century. Its medieval town plan, which includes the castle, is particularly well preserved, alongside the wealth of important historic buildings. Whilst the town is largely characterised by modern development, the historic environment continues to influence the character of particular areas of the town. The Tamworth Extensive Urban Survey has identified that earlier historic character survives in certain areas around the town and is particularly associated with earlier settlement cores (e.g. Tamworth, Glascote, Amington Green and Dosthill). Away from the settlement cores Wigginton Park (HUCA 10) incorporates several important heritage assets, not all of which are designated. These include the Grade II Listed country house, its associated landscape park, as well as the surviving medieval ridge and furrow earthworks. In total 12 Historic Urban Character Areas were identified where the historic character continues to contribute to the aesthetics of the townscape. Within the rural hinterland, well-preserved historic landscapes have been identified within five Historic Environment Character Zones.

Listed buildings are spread throughout many parts of the Borough. Some parts of the Borough contain features and structures of importance from the 19th and 20th centuries, and several areas have the potential for archaeological remains to have survived.

There are seven Conservation Areas within Tamworth: Tamworth Town Centre, Amington Green, Amington Hall Estate, Dosthill, Wilnecote, Victoria and Albert Road and Hospital Street.

Ecology

¹¹ The National Heritage List for England, <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/>; Heritage At Risk Register, <http://risk.english-heritage.org.uk/register.aspx>

¹² Tamworth Historic Character Assessment, Staffordshire County Council, April 2011

Despite the fact that Tamworth is a very urban borough, it still has important ecological habitats. It has two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at Alvecote Pools. Most of the SSSI is categorised as having an unfavourable but recovering status.

There are Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) at Dosthill Park, Kettle Brook, Tameside, Warwickshire Moor and Hodge Lane. Other local wildlife designations are Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) and Biodiversity Alert Sites (BAS). The Borough has 16 SBIs and 5 BASs.

In addition to sites within the Borough, there are SSSIs nearby at Kingsbury Brickworks, Birches Barn Meadows and Middleton Pool SSSI, all within Warwickshire and all categorised as having a favourable ecological status.

There are also sites of international importance near Tamworth:

1. Ensors Pool SAC, which is 19.5km away from the centre of Tamworth;
2. River Mease SAC, which is 4.5km from the nearest part of Tamworth Borough and 8km from the centre of Tamworth;
3. Cannock Extension Canal SAC, which is 19km away from the centre of Tamworth.¹³

A key theme of the NPPF and the White Paper on the Natural Environment 'Securing the Value of Nature' are the importance of considering ecology at the landscape scale and ecological connectivity. The particular designated sites identified above are important links in the green infrastructure network within the Borough that assist ecological connectivity, but other undesignated areas of green infrastructure are also vital in ensuring the effective functioning of ecological networks. Priority habitats and species are components of these networks. A Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping Study was carried out in 2010 which identifies opportunities for localised habitat work throughout the Borough, including potential new locations for the development of habitats, managing and improving existing areas of open space and linear features and creating new links.

Section 117 of the NPPF states that to minimise impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity, planning policies should:

1. plan for biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries;
2. identify and map components of the local ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them and areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration or creation;
3. promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations, linked to national and local targets, and identify suitable indicators for monitoring biodiversity in the plan

Water Quality

Two rivers, the Tame and the Anker, flow through the borough. Within and downstream of the borough, surface water quality is mixed. Water quality data generally indicate a slight improvement in recent years. The chemical and biological status of surface waters are classed as 'good' or 'fairly good', but levels of nitrates are classed as 'very high' and phosphates are

¹³ MAGIC Interactive Mapping, <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

‘excessively high’. There is therefore a need to improve the nutrient status of surface waters through the Borough.

Table 3.2: Surface water quality, 2009

River	Chemistry	Biology	Nitrates	Phosphates
Anker	Good	Fairly good	Very high	Very high
Tame	Fairly good	No data	Very high	Excessively high
Coventry Canal	Fairly good	Good	Moderately low	Low
Black-Bourne Brook	Good	Fairly good	Very high	Excessively high
Langley Brook	Good	No data	Very high	Excessively high

Source: What’s in My Backyard, Environment Agency

Water Supply and Wastewater Treatment

Tamworth Borough is located wholly within the South Staffordshire Water (SSW) supply area. The 2010 Water Cycle Study considered the availability of water resources to meet three scenarios for development. According to SSW’s Final Water Resource Management Plan, there is enough water available to meet annual housing growth of 145 dwellings per annum, however this is reliant on the implementation of metering, leakage and water efficiency measures and the Code for Sustainable Homes. There is insufficient resource within the supply area to meet the higher scenarios for development considered, namely 159.5 dpa and 188.5 dpa, especially the higher of these two scenarios.¹⁴

Although SSW are generally confident that water can be supplied to all areas of the Borough, some locations have been identified as potentially requiring more investment than others.

Tamworth WwTW has limited headroom and, as such, will require quality improvements in order to accommodate the proposed development.

The Water Cycle Study The River Basin Management Plan for the River Tame has also been reviewed and highlights the river as having a poor ecological status overall. As a result of this poor classification and the number of directives applicable to the watercourse the Environment Agency is likely to place tighter discharge quality consents on the WwTW. As a result, they may not increase the discharge consents if requested by STWL without additional processing of the effluent or, in the worse cases scenario, not at all. As the WwTW is crucial to all the development within Tamworth it is likely that STWL will need to invest in improving quality of the effluent released from the WwTW in order to accommodate the increase in flows.

In addition to the availability of water resources, physical pressures such as weirs, culverts and impoundments, non-native species and flooding are all considerations for water quality.

Air Quality

Although Tamworth currently has no Air Quality Management Areas, the conclusion of a 2012 report was that nitrogen dioxide is the only pollutant that the air quality standards might be exceeded and that this occurred at the A5 Dosthill, Two Gates Crossroads. For all other pollutants recognised within air quality standards it has been previously established and confirmed by Defra that there are no exceedences likely to occur. Given these results it is necessary to undertake additional monitoring at locations which may inform whether it is necessary to proceed to a detailed assessment for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) for the Two Gates

¹⁴ Southern Staffordshire Outline Water Cycle Study, Royal Haskoning, July 2010

Crossroads area.¹⁵

Issues of odour, dust and smoke are also considerations for air quality. However, no information is available to indicate the existence or extent of any problems within Tamworth with these issues.

As well as impacts on people, air quality can have effects on the natural environment, notably on species and habitats including on areas of nature conservation value. A number of sites in or near to Tamworth are known to be sensitive to air quality effects, specifically nitrogen deposition and acidity. These are Ensor's Pool SAC, River Mease SAC, Cannock Extension Canal SAC, Cannock Chase SAC, Alvecote Pools SSSI and Middleton Pools SSSI.

Flood risk¹⁶

Tamworth town, and therefore the Borough, is centred on the confluence of the River Tame and the River Anker. In addition, the Bourne Brook confluence with the River Tame is located slightly upstream on the Borough border. As the area of the Borough is so small, the risk of flooding from these watercourses is highly dependent upon activities beyond its boundaries, both within Lichfield District and in Warwickshire and the Birmingham conurbation.

A significant history of flooding has been recorded on both the River Tame and the River Anker within the Level 1 SFRA, including June 1955, December 1992 and Summer 2007.

Tamworth has been classified as having a high probability of fluvial flood risk and a high consequence of fluvial flooding. The Borough is also identified as having a medium probability of residual flooding from the overtopping/breaching of flood defences, with a high predicted consequence. A significant proportion of Tamworth's land is at risk of flooding. As such it is a very important issue for consideration within the Borough.

There are no known problems with groundwater flooding within the Borough.

Two canals flow through Tamworth Borough - the Coventry Canal which cuts across the town centre, and the Birmingham and Fazeley canal, which has a junction with the Coventry Canal on the western Borough border. There are no records of flooding within the SFRA for either of these canals.

The flood risk from reservoirs is very low due to the high standards of inspection and maintenance required by legislation.

The Environment Agency is a key organisation involved in the management of flood risk. However, the Floods and Water Management Act has transferred some responsibilities for flood risk management to Staffordshire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority, including in relation to the non-main or "ordinary" watercourses in the area and reviewing and approving surface water design on new developments.

Climate Change

Emissions of carbon dioxide are fairly low in Tamworth compared with the rest of Staffordshire and England as a whole.

¹⁵ Tamworth Local Air Quality Report 2011-12, Tamworth Borough Council, September 2012

¹⁶ Southern Staffordshire Outline Water Cycle Study Addendum, Royal Haskoning, April 2011

Table 3.3: Per capita emissions of CO₂, 2011

	Tamworth	Staffordshire	England
Industry and commercial	1.8	3.1	2.7
Domestic	1.8	2.1	2.0
Road transport	1.0	2.9	1.9
Total	4.6	8.1	6.7

Source: DECC CO₂ local and regional emissions estimates

Levels of per capita emissions of carbon dioxide have shown a fairly steady decline in the seven year period from 2005 covered by the dataset.

However, the level of renewable energy generated in Tamworth is low compared to Staffordshire as a whole, with only 2.1% of energy generated being renewable when both installed and proposed capacity is considered. This compares to 9.8% renewable energy generation in Staffordshire overall, with levels as high as 32.3% in South Staffordshire and 21.3% in Cannock Chase.

Waste

Tamworth has achieved a moderately high recycling rate due to improvements in recent years. In 2011/12 49% of waste collected by Tamworth Borough Council was sent for recycling, compared to an average of 42% for England as a whole.

Land and Soil

A significant part of Tamworth Borough is already urbanised, and there is a shortage of developable open space. However, there are some open spaces surrounding the urban area. The largest of these is to the north east of the Borough, north of the railway line, but there is also open land around Dosthill and Hockley in the south and near Dunstall Lane in the west.

Although a significant part of Tamworth Borough is urbanised, it is surrounded by agricultural land, some of this falling within the Borough boundary. Much of this land is of relatively poor quality (grade 4), but some is grade 3 and there are some parcels of land in the north of Anker Valley and south of Hockley are grade 2 and therefore represent some of the best and most versatile agricultural land in the Borough. The NPPF states that planning authorities should safeguard the long term potential of such land.

With regard to soils, contaminated land, soil quality, soil sealing, degradation, compaction, erosion and the loss of organic matter are all considerations. However, there is no evidence to indicate whether and to what extent these are problems in Tamworth.

Tamworth has in the past been an important area for mineral extraction, and still contains mineral reserves of potential value. Land to the north east of the Tamworth urban area, (west and north west of the village of Shuttington) is allocated as an area of potential future coal extraction. An area within the Green Belt included in the administrative area of Tamworth Borough is identified for future clay extraction. This area also lies adjacent to existing clay extraction and related activities.¹⁷

Tamworth also has a Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Site at Dosthill Church Quarry, as it is the best exposure of Millstone Grit rocks in south east Staffs and within the

¹⁷ Tamworth Future Development and Infrastructure Study, Drivers Jonas, July 2009

former boundary of Warwickshire. Much older Cambrian mudstones are also exposed, along with an intrusion of igneous rock.¹⁸

1.2.4 Shopping and spare time

Retail

Tamworth town centre consists of a large number of small retail units, which are largely occupied by small independent or specialist retailers rather than large national multiple chain retailers. Its central location provides good opportunities for residents to access a wide range of retail facilities, services and leisure facilities by sustainable modes of transport.

A number of out of town centre retail parks are situated close to the town centre (i.e. Ventura, Jolly Sailor and Cardinal Point) and occupy a larger retail floor space than the town centre. These retail parks are highly successful and are an important source of employment locally. In addition, Tamworth contains a network of local and neighbourhood centres which are situated across the borough. They enable residents to fulfil their day to retail needs and other services within their locality.¹⁹

A detailed health check has been carried out in Tamworth Town Centre to assess its vitality and viability. The overall vitality and viability index for Tamworth Town Centre is 3.4 which represents a better than average level of vitality and viability. This is scored on a 5-point scale where 1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = fair, 4 = good and 5 = very good. There are concerns that the town centre's vitality and viability could decline in the short term as it faces strong competition from the retail parks and before new redevelopment takes place in the town centre which will enhance its vitality and viability.

The health check appraisal shows that the town centre's main strengths are the range of leisure and entertainment facilities (including those outside the town centre); the capacity for growth and change; the street markets; good pedestrian flow; good car parking; accessibility by public transport; ease of movement in the town centre; consumer satisfaction; safety and security; the physical appearance of properties; and overall environmental quality. The main weaknesses are the amount of competing floorspace outside the centre; and the lack of food shopping in the town centre.²⁰

Leisure and Culture

Existing leisure provision in Tamworth is generally adequate to meet the needs of local residents. There is unlikely to be sufficient demand in Tamworth for another multiplex cinema, bingo hall, bowling alley or night club. However, there is an identified requirement for a new 25 metre swimming pool and a 4 court sports hall. There is also a need for additional café and restaurant provision in the town centre.²¹

Tamworth has a range of attractions including the Snowdome, Tamworth Castle, the Assembly Rooms and Arts Centre, and shops in the town centre and at Ventura Retail Park. There were an estimated 917,600 tourist trips to Tamworth in 2010, with a total visitor related spend of £49,714,000 supporting an estimated 1362 jobs in Tamworth or about 3% of all employment.²²

¹⁸ Staffordshire Geodiversity Action Plan, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, 2004

¹⁹ Retail and Town Centre Topic Paper, Tamworth Borough Council, November 2012

²⁰ Tamworth Town Centre and Retail Study, England and Lyle Ltd, July 2011

²¹ Tamworth Town Centre and Retail Study, England and Lyle Ltd, July 2011

²² Tamworth Tourism Economic Impact Assessment 2010, The Research Solution, October 2011

1.2.5 Moving about

*Transport*²³

Tamworth has good connections to the national transport network. The A5(T) provides links to Cannock, Nuneaton, the M42 and the M6 Toll. The A51, A513 and A4091 local routes also run north-south through the Borough. It is estimated that 50% of the working population out-commute each day to work and 69% of employed residents drive to work. Around 6% travel by bus which is higher than most other Districts in Staffordshire and walking and cycling levels are similar to national averages.

Tamworth is well-served by a local bus network and has hourly or more frequent daytime bus services to Lichfield and the West Midlands conurbation. These bus services are supported by the Tamworth Community Transport scheme which provides transport by mini bus and car for local residents. Tamworth rail station is located in close proximity to the town centre, whilst Wilnecote station is to the south of the town centre near Two Gates. Both stations are located on the Cross Country line between Birmingham/Tamworth/Burton upon Trent whilst Tamworth station is also located on the West Coast Mainline. There is significant passenger and freight demand along both corridors, although there is no dedicated local service on the Cross Country line so demand is catered for by less frequent stops of longer distance services. According to 2011 census data 4% of residents in Tamworth travel to work by bus and 2% by train. Accessibility to Tamworth town centre is good with the majority of households within a 20 minute door-to-door travel time.

Tamworth has an extensive cycle network covering 30 miles within a 12 square mile area, including a network of off-road links. According to the 2011 census data, only 2% of residents in Tamworth cycle to work and 9% walk.

Department of Transport data for 2011/12 shows that:

- Overall delays in Tamworth tend to be worse in the AM rather than the PM peak.
- There is traffic congestion at Ventura Retail Park with delays at Saturday peak times ranging from 1.5 to 10 minutes. The worst delays are experienced on Ventura Park Road westbound, the main retail access across the site.
- The Upper Gungate corridor currently operates over capacity. Ashby Road and Comberford Road show consistently high delays during the AM peak.
- Peak PM delays tend to be experienced on local routes to the A5(T) such as Hints Road, close to the A5(T) Mile Oak junction.

The main transport achievements in Tamworth relate to:

- meeting Local Transport Plan targets to reduce all road casualties;
- transport improvements around Ventura Retail Park;
- upgrade to buses used in town services;
- investment in increased rail capacity, improving connectivity between key locations;
- improvements at Tamworth station.

The draft Transport Strategy identifies the following priorities for the future:

- accommodating proposed brownfield and Sustainable Urban Extensions;

²³ Draft Tamworth Borough Integrated Transport Strategy 2014-2031, Staffordshire County Council, May 2014

- manage congestion and reduce carbon emissions on the local network and A5(T);
- support retail and housing growth and job creation in the town centre that complements Ventura Park;
- improve public transport connectivity to the West Midlands conurbation;
- provide sustainable transport connectivity to key destinations throughout the urban area;
- maintain the current condition and safety of the highway network;
- improve public transport connectivity and quality of life for local communities;
- raise awareness of environmental issues and encourage people to lead more sustainable lifestyles, helping to reduce carbon emissions.