

Stone Neighbourhood Development Plan (Submission Plan) Stafford Borough Council response to Examiner's queries (April 2019)

The Borough Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to the initial queries raised by the Examiner for the Stone Neighbourhood Development Plan as set out below in order to progress through this stage of the process.

Following the submission of the Town Council's comments, the Borough Council will provide a further response to any outstanding issues.

In summary the Borough Council considers that serious consideration should be given to the two most contentious issues arising from the Stone Neighbourhood Development Plan, with the necessary amendments made, to reflect those set out in the Examiner's queries.

Is the Plan positively framed?

On page 2 of the Examiner's queries, the Borough Council considers that the Neighbourhood Plan could have taken the opportunity to allocate sites for housing, as guided by the Ministerial Statement of December 2016, with consideration given to reserve sites as highlighted through the Planning Practice Guidance (ref: 41-009-20160211).

Do all of the proposed Local Green Spaces (LGS) meet the NPPF criteria?

In terms of the table on page 4 of the Examiner's initial queries, the Borough Council would welcome the opportunity to assist the Examiner with a Neighbourhood Area map of Stone with the proposed Local Green Space locations marked, if this is acceptable to Stone Town Council and the Examiner.

In terms of the table on page 4 and LGS 40 the Borough Council would highlight that since the Examination of the Stone Neighbourhood Development Plan began a planning application has been validated on part of this site. Planning application reference 19/29876/FUL on land adjacent to The Fillybrooks (A34), Walton, Stone is a full planning application, currently under consideration, for a 66 bedroom, two storey care home for older people with associated access, car parking and landscaping. Further information is available on the Borough Council's web-site at the following link:

<https://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/planning-public-access>

Policy H1: Housing Tenures and Types

The Borough Council considers that changes are required to Policy H1 to reflect those set out in the Examiner's queries, with reference made to the available evidence. It is considered that this evidence must be submitted in order to demonstrate how Policy H1 would be applied through future planning applications submitted for decision making to the Borough Council within Stone Town.

Policy H2: Housing Design

The Borough Council considers that changes are required to this policy of the Stone Neighbourhood Development Plan to address the queries raised by the Examiner, with further consideration given to the designation of the Special Character Area through a definition of “infill” and its interpretation through the planning application process.

Policy BE1: Small Home Based Businesses

The Borough Council considers that changes are required to Policy BE1 of the Stone Neighbourhood Development Plan in order to demonstrate how it would be applied through future planning applications submitted for decision making to the Borough Council within Stone Town.

Policy BE2: Stone Town Centre and Local Retailing

The Borough Council considers that changes are required to this policy of the Stone Neighbourhood Development Plan to address the queries raised by the Examiner, with further explanation provided to ensure that clear decisions can be made through future planning applications in Stone Town Centre.

Policy CAF1: Local Play, Sports and Recreation Facilities

The Borough Council considers that changes are required to this section of the Neighbourhood Plan, to reflect those set out in the Examiner’s queries. Furthermore the Borough Council would welcome responding to evidence presented by Stone Town Council concerning developments delivering Local Area for Play and Locally Equipped Area for Play at schemes of 11 units or more.

Policy CAF2: Green Infrastructure

The Borough Council considers that changes are required to this policy of the Stone Neighbourhood Development Plan to address the queries raised by the Examiner. In addition the Borough Council considers that the financial commitment raised by the Parish Council would be more appropriately addressed through the ‘Non-planning Issues’ section of the Neighbourhood Plan or through a companion annex.

Non-planning Issues

The Borough Council considers that amendments are required to ensure that this separate section includes appropriate material for the Stone Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Appendices

The Borough Council considers that changes are required to the Appendices to reflect those suggested through the Examiner’s queries to the Stone Neighbourhood Development Plan, with consideration given to including the Stone Conservation Area map.