

STAFFORD BOROUGH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

KEY STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSIONS

MEETING WITH STONE TOWN COUNCIL
14th JANUARY 2008 – 6.30pm

MINUTES OF MEETING

Attendees

Cllr W D Davis (Chair) – Ward Member for Milwich and Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration.

Mr P Windmill – Forward Planning Manager, Stafford Borough Council

Mr G Unwin – Planning Officer, Stafford Borough Council

Mrs N Perry – Planning Assistant, Stafford Borough Council

Cllr Mrs J W Farnham MBE JP – Ward Member for Stonefield & Christchurch

Mr D Dowey – Stone Town Council

W R Goodall – Stone Town Council

Ms J Price – Stone Town Council

Cllr G R Collier – Ward Member for St Michael's

Ms L Davies – Stone Town Council

Ms Wendy Key – Stone Town Council

Cllr P E Jones – Ward Member for St Michael's

L R Green – Stone Town Council

Mr S Brooks – Stone Town Council

Ms K Moss – Stone Town Council

Apologies

Mr D Turner, Stone Town Council

- 1. Welcome & Introduction – Cllr W D Davies**
- 2. Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 – saved policies**

The Local Plan largely remains the same as it was. A list of those policies not to be extended was shown.

- 3. LDF – Progress to date**

LDF work commenced in September with the publication of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, Annual Monitoring Report and Land for New Homes

The discussion paper *The Plan for Stafford Borough* introduced – this document contains wide choices for development in the Borough, and will be narrowed down as the LDF progresses.

4. Implications of the Regional Plan - Submission

Stafford Borough Council have limited freedom in terms of the level of development as the Regions, through Regional Spatial Strategies divide development across local authorities.

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands Phase II Revision states 10,100 houses to be in Stafford Borough, 7,000 of which are to be at Stafford. In addition, the RSS outlines employment land (the equivalent of 200 football pitches) and an increase in comparison good retail and offices. Not all issues are looked at in the Phase II revision and will be covered in the Phase III revision.

A recent announcement indicated that the level of housing outlined in the RSS is not sufficient and there will be a need to increase housing to 400,000 across the region. The region are now undertaking work as to where these extra houses could be accommodated – Stafford could be one of these areas where extra growth will be considered.

Due to regional and national policy, Stafford Borough need to work within certain parameters when drawing up the LDF.

Q: What criteria do RSS base the housing figures on?

PW – The region use statistics on

- Natural growth, children, ageing population etc
- Migration; international, regional and within the region itself
- Growth from West Midlands needs to be displaced as MUA's cannot meet / accommodate increased levels of housing
- Sustainability of locations, such as transport links also a consideration

National housing situation – there is a drive nationally to increase number of houses in order to slow down house price growth. However the housing market can fluctuate and so a longer plan period needs to be considered.

Q: Can RSS figures be challenged?

DD – No, figures are fixed

PW – The RSS must follow procedural requirements. Respondents to the RSS can be heard at an examination. The RSS preferred option is now be consulted on along with inviting comments on how additional comments can be accommodated across the region – this may postpone the examination of the RSS.

Q: The recent housing developments in Stone, e.g. apartments are empty – why build more?

PW – Affordability is an issue and this will be covered in the LDF, including a % of housing required as affordable housing and part socially rented housing.

Key Issues for the new Development Plan

3 main constraints – Green Belt
Cannock Chase AONB and SAC
Stoke-on-Trent & the outflow of migration reversed - want Stafford to restrict development in order to help address this issue

The questions asked in the consultation document are very broad questions. There will be at least 2 more opportunities to respond. There are real options, especially in how the remainder of housing development is to be distributed.

Q: Population of 14,500 in Stone is not correct as it doesn't take into consideration new build.

PW – Housing completions are monitored every year in Land for New Homes. Those completed from 2006 taken into consideration in the 10,100 figure.

Issue / Q: A few employment sites have been developed for housing, in particular ABB in Stone

DD – The Council do not want to see development of employment sites, in particular Creda (in Green Belt so different policy constraints to other employment sites). There will continue to be a policy protecting employment sites. In addition employment and infrastructure must be considered alongside future housing development.

Q: There are other options to consider, including a new settlement

PW – This hasn't been included in the consultation document, as it was not outlined in the RSS, however it will still be considered.

Norton Bridge as a possible location for a new settlement was suggested

DD – must consider level of services and facilities, including transport to locations.

Q: Do different types of housing all count as dwellings?

Yes, all are counted in the Land for New Homes document

7. Settlement Assessment of Services & Facilities (document circulated)

Q: Sewage system in Stone – does this need upgrading?

PW – These issues are being discussed with various organisations as part of the LDF evidence base.

8. Future Evidence Gathering – update on current evidence base documents

9. LDF – Next Steps & Future Engagement

Mrs N Perry introduced the Limehouse consultation software, in particular how to register, make comments and view what comments have already been made. All comments made on the document will be publicly available.

10. Any other business

Mr S Brookes thanked the chairman and planning team for the meeting and it was agreed that a follow up meeting, around the time of the next stage of consultation would be useful.

Meeting ended 20.30