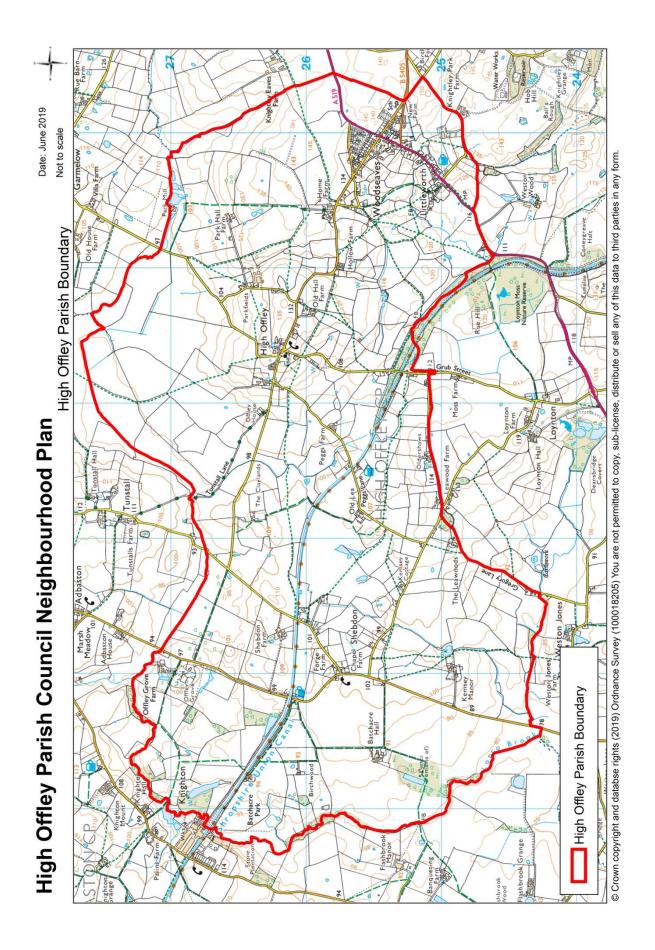




SUBMISSION TO STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL.

Foreword

- 1. High Offley Parish was designated a Neighbourhood Plan area in March 2016 and High Offley Parish Council has produced a Neighbourhood Plan covering the entire High Offley Parish area.
- 2. The Parish Council has produced the High Offley Parish Neighbourhood Plan with assistance from a working group made up of elected residents and council members and help from the Borough Council.
- 3. The Neighbourhood Plan will form the basis for planning decisions applicable to High Offley Parish up to 2031, together with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework, which embraces the whole of the country and the Plan for Stafford Borough which covers the area controlled by the Borough Council. It is the Borough Council as the Local Planning Authority who determine Planning Applications but they will have to consider the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan when reaching their decision.
- 4. This Plan reflects community wide comments, observations and concerns derived from a wide range of consultation, including a parish wide questionnaire, public meetings, views from residents, developers, landowners, businesses and other stakeholders. The Plan sets out a Vision with Aspirations and planning policies aiming to help shape future development in the Key Service Village of Woodseaves and the wider High Offley Parish. The Policies aim to address key concerns raised by local people including protecting the character of our rural communities.
- 5. Other concerns include the types of housing being developed and the future housing needs of the elderly.



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Background

- 1.1. The Neighbourhood Plan process enables communities to shape the environment where they live and inform how development takes place and helps to influence the type, quality and location of that development.
- 1.2. Neighbourhood Planning now provides an opportunity for the community to have a real say over local decision making, to achieve its long term goals through the planning system and address the challenges and opportunities facing the future vitality of the Parish.
- 1.3. The Neighbourhood Plan is based on extensive research and influenced by robust engagement with the local community. In the lead up to the referendum decision makers should consider this to be an important reference point and give it weight as a material consideration in any development planning decisions. When the Plan is adopted it will form part of the Local Plan for Stafford Borough and used in determining planning applications submitted within High Offley Parish.

Location and History

- 2.1. High Offley is a small village and civil parish in Staffordshire, England. It lies 3 miles southwest of the small town of Eccleshall and about 1 mile west of the Key Service Village of Woodseaves, on the A519. Woodseaves is the largest settlement in the parish, which also includes the hamlet of Shebdon to the WSW (west south west) of High Offley, as well as a number of scattered houses and small farms (such as on Grub Street, Peggs Lane and Oldershaws Lane)
- 2.2. The village of Woodseaves contains a post office, a Methodist chapel, a village hall which is linked to a snooker club with two full size and well maintained snooker tables, and a primary school with an Ofsted rating of Good. The village hall is home to a number of evening events, such as "keep fit" classes, a craft club, an "over 55s" club and a fortnightly whist drive. The village is represented by one snooker and two billiards teams competing in the Stafford and District Billiards and Snooker League. A Sunday League football team also represents the village, playing their home games at Knighton Social Club in neighbouring Adbaston Parish. The southern part of the village, on the A519, is known as Littleworth. Formerly a separate hamlet, it is now part of Woodseaves.
- 2.3. The Cock Inn situated on the A519 was originally a farmhouse with a brewhouse added in the nineteenth century. It was taken over and reopened as a free house by its current owners who have recently added a dining area.
- 2.4. The Shropshire Union Canal runs through the parish, to the southwest of the villages of High Offley and Woodseaves, with the Shebdon embankment, aqueduct and wharf in the west of the parish, from Shebdon towards Knighton. Cadburys established a factory along the canal at the perimeter of High Offley parish at Knighton, which today is the 4th largest private sector employer in the borough of Stafford with over 250 employees.
- 2.5. High Offley Church, dedicated to St Mary, has an ancient Gothic fabric and is classified as Grade 1 listed. It has an excellent organ, which was given by John Salmon, Esq, of London, a native of this parish. It has several monuments of the Skrymsher and other families, and a handsome one was erected in 1851 in memory of the late Bishop Ryder. Pevsner dates most of the church to the 13th century with some earlier Norman features and some from later periods.

The Neighbourhood Plan Vision

- 3.1. The High Offley Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote and allow development of the whole parish area to suit the needs and aspirations of the present and future community in a way which is sensitive and sympathetic to the character of the area. In the same way that it has evolved to the present day and to ensure that this development is wholly sustainable in the context of existing infrastructure and services.
- 3.2. Future development may be expected to comprise provision of housing of varied types, but with a significant proportion of bungalows, opportunities for establishment and expansion of local businesses and provision of leisure and recreational facilities to satisfy the needs of the local population.
- 3.3. It should be appreciated that working within the context of the existing infrastructure and character of the Key Service Village of Woodseaves will substantially limit the scale of development possible. The evolution of the village to date has maintained a community that can still operate in a successful and largely self-sufficient manner. The nature of the rural hinterland is primarily farming and small hamlets in an attractive landscape and this should be maintained for future generations. Therefore, further changes should be gradual, in order that the present broadly satisfactory balance is not lost.

The Neighbourhood Plan Strategy

- 4.1. To accommodate additional development in accordance with the requirements of the Local Plan, housing growth is to be accommodated within a new Settlement Boundary. Small groups of dwellings forming infill type of development is supported and the types of houses are also included in the Policies.
- 4.2. Future growth in the rural areas outside the Settlement Boundary will be supported by the Neighbourhood Plan with a small number of locations identified within the plan and other additional dwellings supported.
- 4.3. Green spaces and important views in the countryside are identified in the Stafford Borough Historic Environment Character Assessment, which describes the historic character of the landscape and formed part of the evidence base for Plan for Stafford Borough. The Plan provides adequate policies to protect this environment.

Consultation and Key Issues

5.1. During the last months of 2016 High Offley Parish council consulted Parishioners on a range of topics including Housing, Jobs and Employment, Traffic and Parking, Open Space, Environment and Recreation. Every household, Farm and known Business in the Parish received a questionnaire which produced an overall participation rate of 32%. For the Key Service Village of Woodseaves Parishioners want housing development on small infill sites within or close to the existing settlement boundary. Bungalows near to the centre of the village, no more than 25 homes in total and no more 3 storey housing. Parishioners would also like to see improved parking facilities, a children's play area, allotments and sports facilities.

- 5.2. A Call for Sites exercise carried out in early 2017 utilising the Borough Councils pro forma resulted in 24 responses. Each response set out the type of development that the respondent considered the site was suitable for.
- 5.3. In addition those landowners who were offering land for local amenities as well as housing were invited to present their case to the working group.
- 5.4. These offers were contrary to the consultation results in that the number of houses on all of those site significantly exceeded people's wishes but they did provide the amenities people had expressed a wish to see delivered.
- 5.5. In order to explore this in more detail the working group prepared a presentation to a Parish meeting attended by 114 People making it absolutely clear that if they wanted the amenities they would have to accept more housing. A vote was completed and clearly showed by a majority of two to one that people preferred small sites with limited development over larger developments with facilities. The Parish Council have produced the following policies as a result of the consultation.

Policies Introduction

- 6.1. Planning decisions are guided by policies in the Plan for Stafford Borough, which is referred to when planning applications are made to Stafford Borough Council. The Localism Act 2011, however allows communities to develop their own policies, which will form part of the development plan for the area, provided that they are based on sound evidence, community input and proper principles of planning. Policies have been developed by High Offley Parish Council, which seek to influence planning and development outcomes in order that they help to achieve the vision for High Offley Parish. The Neighbourhood Plan must, with due consideration to the basic conditions set out within legislation, have regard to national policies and advice; and be in general conformity with the strategic policies set out within the Plan for Stafford Borough.
- 6.2. In line with the principles of sustainable development, which require that planning addresses environmental, social and economic issues, the main policy areas that are of most concern to local residents are specified as follows:-

Housing
Traffic and Parking
Local Green Space
Tourism and Leisure
Employment
Telecommunication

Housing

7.1. The Plan for Stafford Borough adopted in June 2014, sets the development strategy for the Borough through Spatial Principles. It plans for 10,000 new houses during the Plan period. These houses will be delivered primarily at the two main settlements of Stafford and Stone (accounting for 8,000 units). 1,200 units in total will be provided in the "Key Service Villages" and 800 units will be delivered in the remaining rural areas.

- 7.2. Woodseaves is one of the 12 Key Service Villages identified in the Plan for Stafford Borough through Spatial Principle 3&4. In the absence of a Neighbourhood Plan Stafford Borough established a new settlement boundary which currently restricts any new development. New settlement boundaries are to be defined through the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.3. The Plan for Stafford Borough states that proposals should maximise the use of brownfield redevelopment sites within the Key Service Villages to reduce the need for greenfield sites. In High Offley Parish, the only brownfield site for consideration is the Old Garage in Woodseaves which has been identified for housing within the Plan. Therefore, edge of settlement greenfield sites have had to be considered for new housing.
- 7.4. The Settlement Boundary for Woodseaves has been defined in accordance with Spatial Principal 7 of The Plan for Stafford Borough and developed as part of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan with input from the local community. The new Neighbourhood Plan settlement boundary provides developers and the general public with a clear indication where residential development and possible employment development will be acceptable.
- 7.5. The settlement boundary incorporates several areas of land which are proposed for new development, these are shown on the settlement boundary map. These sites were assessed as being the most suitable sites for development. The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group considered the suitability of a range of different sites around the edge of Woodseaves and in other locations in High Offley Parish in coming to this conclusion. For each site the following information was collected and assessed:-
 - A Site Allocation plan, identifying the location and overall extent of the land proposed for development.
 - An explanation of the "Key Considerations" affecting the site. These typically include issues such as sustainability, current use of the site, size and type of requested development.
- 7.6. The assessment of all the sites can be viewed on the Parish Council website:http://www.highoffleyparishcouncil.org.uk A number of large sites were put forward for development but these were rejected as they provided for far more development than that desired by the Parishioners.
- 7.7. The consultation showed that the residents of High Offley Parish are positive about further housing development and accepts that a supply of housing is needed to meet the needs of present and future generations. However, 75% of respondents indicated a preference for sites of less than 10 dwellings and 71% for less than 25 dwellings in total within the Key Service Village of Woodseaves. This has informed the decision to include specific areas within the settlement boundary for small developments. The area covered by the Settlement Boundary provides for an approximate additional 1.9 acres of land available for development. It is believed this gives a realistic amount of land for new housing development to meet adequately the demands for additional residential building in accordance with the Plan for Stafford Borough without any new potential developments overwhelming the existing Village.

- 7.8. The KSV's differ significantly in size and can be categorised in the following way:
 - Small KSV's with Less than 500 dwellings being Haughton, Weston, Yarnfield, Woodseaves, Tittensor.
 - Medium KSV's with between 500 and 1000 dwellings being Hixon, Great Haywood.
 - Large KSV's with between 1000 and 2000 dwellings being Gnosall, Eccleshall, Little Haywood / Colwich, Barlaston.
- 7.9. The distribution of additional housing could be shown to be 48 dwellings per Small KSV, 96 Dwellings per Medium KSV and 192 dwellings per Large KSV. Total = 1200.
- 7.10. Throughout the development of this Plan, Woodseaves has had planning approved for 30 new Dwellings since 2011 and therefore 18 additional dwellings were required by 2031 to fulfil an appropriate proportion of the Plan for Stafford 2011 2031. (19 new homes in Woodseaves are within the defined settlement boundary as part of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan). Planning approval on a site for 9 new homes has recently lapsed and a new planning application on this site has been submitted.
- 7.11. 800 new dwellings are required in the rural areas across the Borough. A ratio of 2:1 (KSV to rural area) has been applied to the number of new dwellings in the Woodseaves KSV to the number of new dwellings in the rural area of the Parish, this being the approximate ratio between current dwellings in the Parish. 8 dwellings are already planned or completed in the rural area of the Parish outside the KSV. A further 5 new dwellings are planned in the rural area of the Parish Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.12. The number of new houses on the areas of land identified for building in Woodseaves has been calculated at 19 in total based on 10 dwellings per acre. Although the density is a lower figure than used by the Borough Council in preparing its Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, it is believed to be more appropriate to the rural character of Woodseaves and reflects the low density of housing proposed.

POLICY 1 – HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

The Woodseaves Settlement Boundary has been defined and is indicated on the map in page 15. Proposals for new housing development within the defined settlement boundary will be supported in line with the site development proposals stated on page 19. New housing development will be supported at sites 3, 5, 14 & 20 in the Rural Area in line with the site development proposals stated on page 19. Self build / custom build house proposals will be supported at new housing sites stated on page 19.

- 7.13. The consultation showed that 41% of respondents supported development in the rural areas. 5 additional dwellings have been identified in the rural area on land totalling approximately 1.5 acres, reflecting a lower density of housing in the more rural areas. 11 additional new dwellings including barn conversions will be supported in the rural area, based on the Borough Council's ratio of new dwellings in Key Service Villages versus the rural area. Although these are not identified in the draft Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.14. The Census information 2011 and the Health and Wellbeing District Profile for Stafford Borough 2016 indicate that the average age of residents in High Offley Parish is higher than in Stafford Borough and the wider area. The consultation survey showed 60% support for

bungalows, 44% for semi-detached houses 39% for detached houses and 26% for 1 or 2 bedroom houses. Therefore, there is a requirement for family houses and bungalows to enable people to downsize and encourage young people and families to purchase homes in the Parish, thereby decreasing the average age of the residents of High Offley Parish.

- 7.15. The consultations undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan identified strong support for the provision of 2 storey houses and bungalows (60%) and strong resistance to 3 storey dwellings. Only 3% of consultees support additional 3 storey houses and numerous consultee comments were received stating that 3 storey houses are out of character with the village and should not be built. Sites close to the centre of the village have been identified as suitable for bungalows and only this form of development will be supported at these locations.
- 7.16. Concern was also expressed through the consultation that there are not enough low cost affordable homes for first time buyers, especially young people.

POLICY 2 – HOUSING TYPES

New housing development should provide a mix of housing types. Innovative self- build and custom designed properties within sites will be supported. The provision of 2 storey houses, and bungalows, within housing developments will be supported, but new 3 storey dwellings will not be acceptable, being out of character within the Parish.

7.17. Good design around buildings should be the aim of everyone involved in the future development of High Offley Parish. To improve the environmental quality of the area by improving design, creating vibrant and sustainable developments where people want to live, work and recreate. These principles will help ensure that developments are not only well designed, but also enhance the existing built environment. Any development should also encourage a healthy lifestyle through the provision of open space around developments where people can safely play and exercise.

POLICY 3- BUILDING DESIGN

New building of high quality design will be supported where it:-

- Responds to local character and the form of surrounding buildings.
- Retains wildlife habitats, trees, hedges etc. that will continue to enhance the character of the local area.
- Make provision for adequate, accessible and visually unobtrusive provision for waste and recycling bins.
- Includes Photo Voltaic electricity generation up to 4kWh and electric vehicle charging points.
- Meets the Lifetime home revised criteria July 2010 for all new bungalows.
- Ensures all new boundaries except primary boundaries will be hedges.

Traffic and Parking

- 8.1. Woodseaves is the largest village within High Offley Parish and located around the junction of the main A519, Newport Shropshire to M6 junction 15 Stoke on Trent, with the B5405, Woodseaves to Great Bridgeford / Stafford Road. Significant numbers of HGV's use the A519 as a route from Telford to Stoke on Trent or to connect with the M6 at Junction 15 to travel North and the M6 at junction 14 to travel south. It is also used as a route to bypass the centre of Stafford when travelling from Telford towards Uttoxeter. Hence, traffic is a major concern for residents of the village. The speed of traffic along the A519 through the village has long been a concern for many residents and through the efforts of numerous parties average speed cameras have recently been installed which are having a major impact on the speed of traffic. Consultation showed that 66% of respondents feel that the speed cameras are helping to reduce traffic disturbance.
- 8.2. Parking is a problem which has the greatest regular impact at 3 main services in Woodseaves i.e. at the Primary School / Academy, the Post Office and the Cock Inn.
- 8.3. Recent development of a popular restaurant at the Cock Inn Woodseaves has increased the need for parking facilities at peak restaurant hours. This has resulted in long rows of cars parked on the A519 close to the pub. An extension to the existing car park is proposed at location 6A on page 15 within the Neighbourhood Plan. The Land Owner will sell this parcel of land to the owners of the Cock Inn to convert to car park.
- 8.4. Woodseaves Academy (Primary School) provides education for a significant volume of children who travel to school by car. The current parking facilities are insufficient to cope with the volume of vehicles and thus Dicky's Lane and areas of grass verge along the Stafford Road are used to drop off and collect school children causing congestion during these peak times. High Offley Parish Council have an aspiration to provide additional parking facilities but these cannot currently be accommodated within the Neighbourhood Plan, the finance is currently not available and will not come from developer contributions from the level of development contained within the Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore alternative means of finance will be investigated.

POLICY 4 – TRAFFIC AND PARKING

The development of additional parking provision close to the school, Pub, or shop and improvements to highway safety will be supported. Site 6A has been identified to provide additional parking at the Cock Inn. All new parking provision including residential properties will provide permeable surfaces such as gravel, brick, block, cellular paving and grass reinforcement to reduce rainwater run-off.



Local Green Space

- 9.1. The Parish of High Offley has approximately 3520 acres of mainly agricultural land and has the Loynton Moss Site of Special scientific interest on its border. The rural areas and Sites of Special Scientific Interest are felt to be adequately protected in the Plan for Stafford Borough, which will preclude the development in these areas except in special circumstances.
- 9.2. The Parish is bisected by the Shropshire Union canal conservation area, incorporating the Anchor Inn substantially in its original form.
- 9.3. There is little publicly owned accessible green space in the Parish, as shown on Map 3 on page 16, and must be protected to ensure that it remains a benefit to the community, there is no support for the loss of green space. Consultation shows that there is support for additional facilities e.g. for a children's play area, sports facilities and allotments. 70% of respondents want to see rural views and landscape protected.
- 9.4. There are a large number of Public footpaths and Bridleways throughout the Parish, most of these are well used by local dog walkers, ramblers and horse riders.

POLICY 5 – LOCAL GREEN SPACE

The areas of open land on Willowcroft (LGS1), the School Playing Field (LGS2) and in front of the bungalows on High Offley Road (LGS3) are to be designated as local green space. No development will take place on these sites, other than in very special circumstances. Space for recreation, the retention and improvement of existing informal and formal recreational resources will be supported. See Local Green Space map on page 16.



Tourism and Leisure

- 10.1. High Offley Parish supports a small amount of tourism that is attracted to the wonderful countryside, good walking routes and canal access. Tourism and canal facilities are adequately covered in the Plan for Stafford Borough (Policies E6 and E7). The Shropshire Union Canal is a major feature in High Offley Parish which is suited for the facilities described in Policies E6 & E7. The Shebdon and High Offley area currently has many 'online moorings' and passing boats are obliged to slow right down. A mooring basin provides 'offline moorings' and 2 potential locations where this could be provided have been identified in the Appendix as CMB1 and CMB2 on page 19. Both proposed locations for mooring facilities will be accessed from existing tracks marked in blue on the site plans on page 19, the track from CMB1 which currently serves the boats moored along the canal comes out onto the High Offley to Shebdon road adjacent to where the Lonco brook passes under the road.
- 10.2. There is a small amount of Bed and Breakfast accommodation available and 3 small caravan and camping sites in the Parish but very few alternatives in where to stay while on holiday. Consultation showed support for increased employment opportunities in tourism and Leisure (44%), holiday lets (42%), canal related activities (51%) and caravan / camping sites (31%).

POLICY 6 – TOURISM AND LEISURE

Bed and Breakfast accommodation, small campsites and small-scale canal moorings (with no buildings) for long term boat storage up to a maximum of 40 boats will be supported, subject to consideration of traffic impacts and residential amenity in the locality. Proposed sites are identified on pages 18 & 19.



Employment

- 11.1. The message from the initial consultation regarding employment is difficult for the Plan to address. A significant majority of respondents considered employment opportunities to be inadequate or poor. The majority, 62% of parishioners and 65% of Businesses, wanted to see more employment opportunities. The PFSB and the 2012 Employment Land Review do not point to a need to specifically allocate land for employment development in High Offley Parish.
- 11.2. Woodseaves village is predominantly residential with the exception of the Primary School, the shop and the Public house, whereas the small settlement of Shebdon is home to Shebdon Plant Hire; EJP Agricultural Engineering; G R Howell animal feed transport; Batchacre Hall Farm, livery and Anaerobic Digester. Also close to Shebdon is Offley Grove Farm Holiday lets and B & B accommodation. The large employer Premier Foods is on the Parish Boundary of High Offley and Adbaston Parish.
- 11.3. Small businesses can find it difficult to start up or continue trading because of a lack of flexible premises available. Some businesses become established at residential premises within curtilage outbuildings, and have the potential to make a valuable contribution to the limited employment provision in the Parish. Although small-scale home-based operations do not require planning permission. Policy 7 below applies to proposals which do require planning permission, for example for a change of use.

POLICY 7 – HOMEWORKING

Small-scale businesses will be supported provided it can be demonstrated that: (a) residential amenity and character of the neighbourhood, or rural character, will not be unacceptably harmed by virtue of noise and disturbance, smell, traffic generation, health and safety impacts, scale, design, appearance or nature of operations; (b) the operation of the business activity can be contained within the existing curtilage of the premises; (c) the operation of the business activity does not require substantial external modification of the premises.

Telecommunications

12.1. The public consultation process has indicated strong support for improved mobile communication infrastructure particularly within the business community. 90% of Business that responded to the public consultation suggest that the mobile telephone signal is

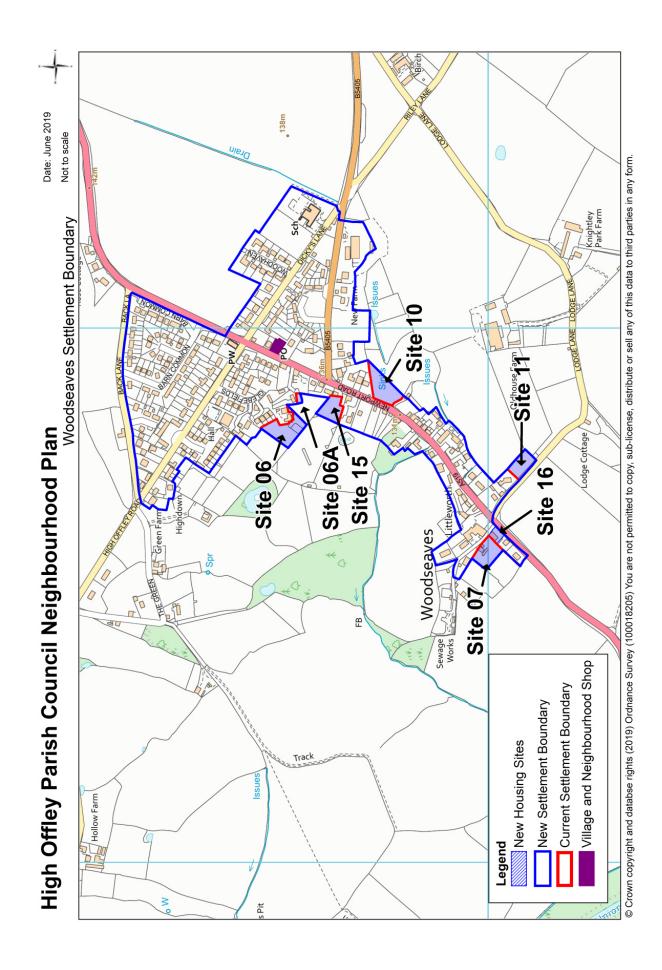
insufficient in the parish. The mobile phone signal will soon improve for some users as a new mobile phone mast is being installed at the Hollies in Woodseaves. If an additional phone mast is required in future, then site 17 on page 18 in the field adjacent to the Hollies would be a suitable location.

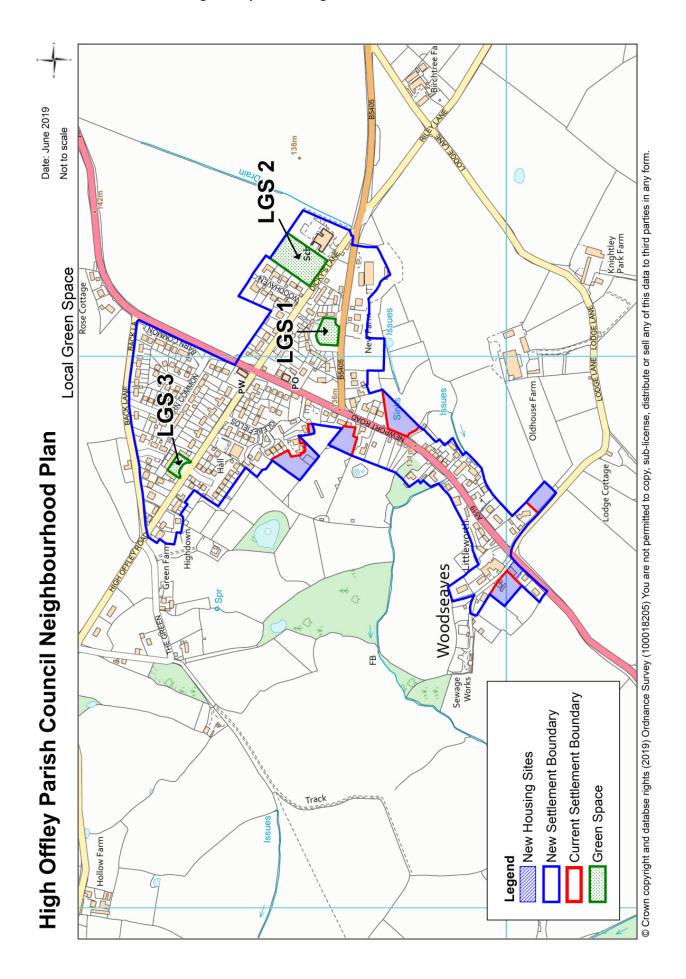
POLICY 8 – MOBILE PHONE INFRASTRUCTURE

Should an additional mast be required for other mobile networks then land has been allocated next to the existing mast in the neighbouring field belonging to Home Farm. See Map of site 17.

Aspirations

- 13.1. During the consultation process it has become clear that the Parishioners support the need for a car park at Woodseaves School, 50% of respondents suggest parking facilities need improving and 41% suggest it needs relocating, but without significant housing development being included in the Plan the finance required to provide the land and ground works is not currently available.
- 13.2. When the Community Infrastructure Levy is introduced the Parish will benefit from a financial contribution for every successful planning application for a new dwelling in the Parish. These contributions could finance the purchase of land which could then enable the provision of a car park close to the school.
- 13.3. The Parish Council will liaise with Stafford Borough Council, Staffordshire County Council and external agencies regarding the above aspiration.



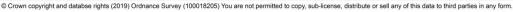


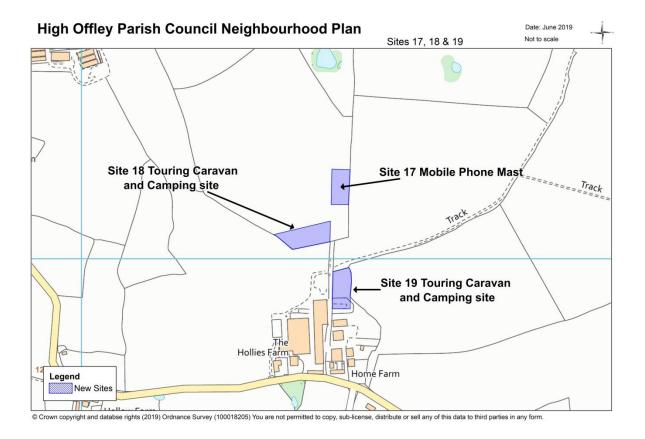


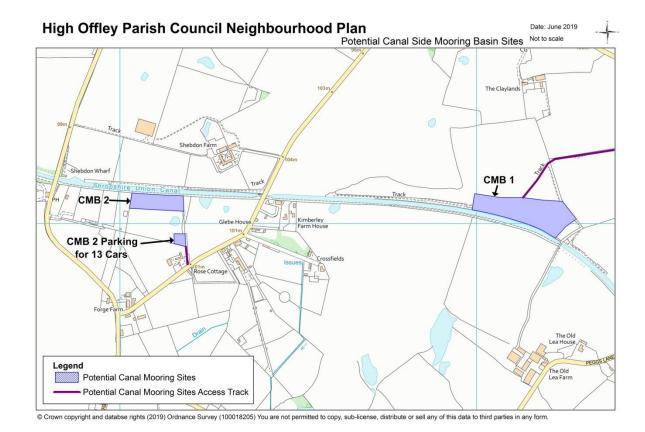
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14.1. Site development proposals inside new settlement boundary

Site Number	Development allowed
Site 6	4 Bungalows
Site 6A	Car park extension
Site 7	4 Houses
Site 10	5 Bungalows
Site 11	1 House
Site 15	3 Bungalows
Site 16	2 Houses

14.2. Site development proposals in the rural area of the Parish.

Site Number	Development allowed
Site 3	1 House
Site 5	2 Semi-detached houses
Site 14	1 House
Site 17	Mobile Phone Mast
Sites 18 and 19	Touring Caravan and Camping site for up to 15 pitches in total.
Site 20	1 House
CMB1 &CMB2	Canal Mooring Basin for up to 40 canal boats, car parking, fresh water
	supply and waste water disposal.