

## Examination of the Plan for Stafford

### Development Strategy – Spatial Principle 7 – Supporting the Location of New Development

#### Further Statement on Behalf of Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd land interests Stone

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The following sets out further submissions on behalf Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd in respect of their land interest at Stone and with regard to the issue of Settlement Boundaries, with specific reference to the key questions and matters relevant to their representations to the emerging Plan which are to be addressed at the Examination.

#### Relevant Examination Question to Taylor Wimpey's Representation

##### **Spatial Principle 7:**

**a. SP7 indicates that one of the key elements to deliver the proposed scale and distribution of housing and employment development is the establishment of Settlement Boundaries for each of the settlements in the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy, either in this Plan (for Stafford and Stone) or in neighbourhood plans or the Site Allocations & Policies Document (for Key Service Villages). Is this an appropriate, effective, justified and soundly based way of delivering the scale and distribution of proposed development?**

**b. Are the criteria for establishing Settlement Boundaries appropriate, justified, effective, soundly based and consistent with national policy?**

The move towards the use of Settlement Boundaries is a positive improvement to the Plan compared to earlier draft versions. The approach replaces the former use of Residential Development Boundaries and will logically define a key land use planning distinction between the urban area and Open Countryside. Fundamentally different approaches to development will apply on either side of the line. The plan's evidence base makes it clear that the definition of Settlement Boundaries are a component of the approach to deliver of the Borough's development needs. Their appropriate and effective definition is therefore important to a sound plan.

The Settlement Boundary for Stone is being set within this Plan for Stafford. This is supported.

However the Settlement Boundary which has been drawn for Stone bears no material differences to the former Residential Development Boundary. There is no part of the Evidence base supporting the Plan which shows or explains how the Plan has carefully assessed or evaluated which land should be included within or outwith of the Boundary.

The accompanying text explains that Settlement Boundaries will be established that provide sufficient scope for the proposed scale of development of housing, employment and other uses within the settlement. Policy SP7 sets out various criteria which will be used to assess development proposals and hence influence the line of the Settlement Boundaries to be defined in the areas other than Stafford and Stone. It is logical that this full range of criteria have been used to establish the Settlement Boundaries for Stone which are defined in the Plan however there is no Evidence to explain or justify this.

Whilst the principle of Settlement Boundaries is supported;

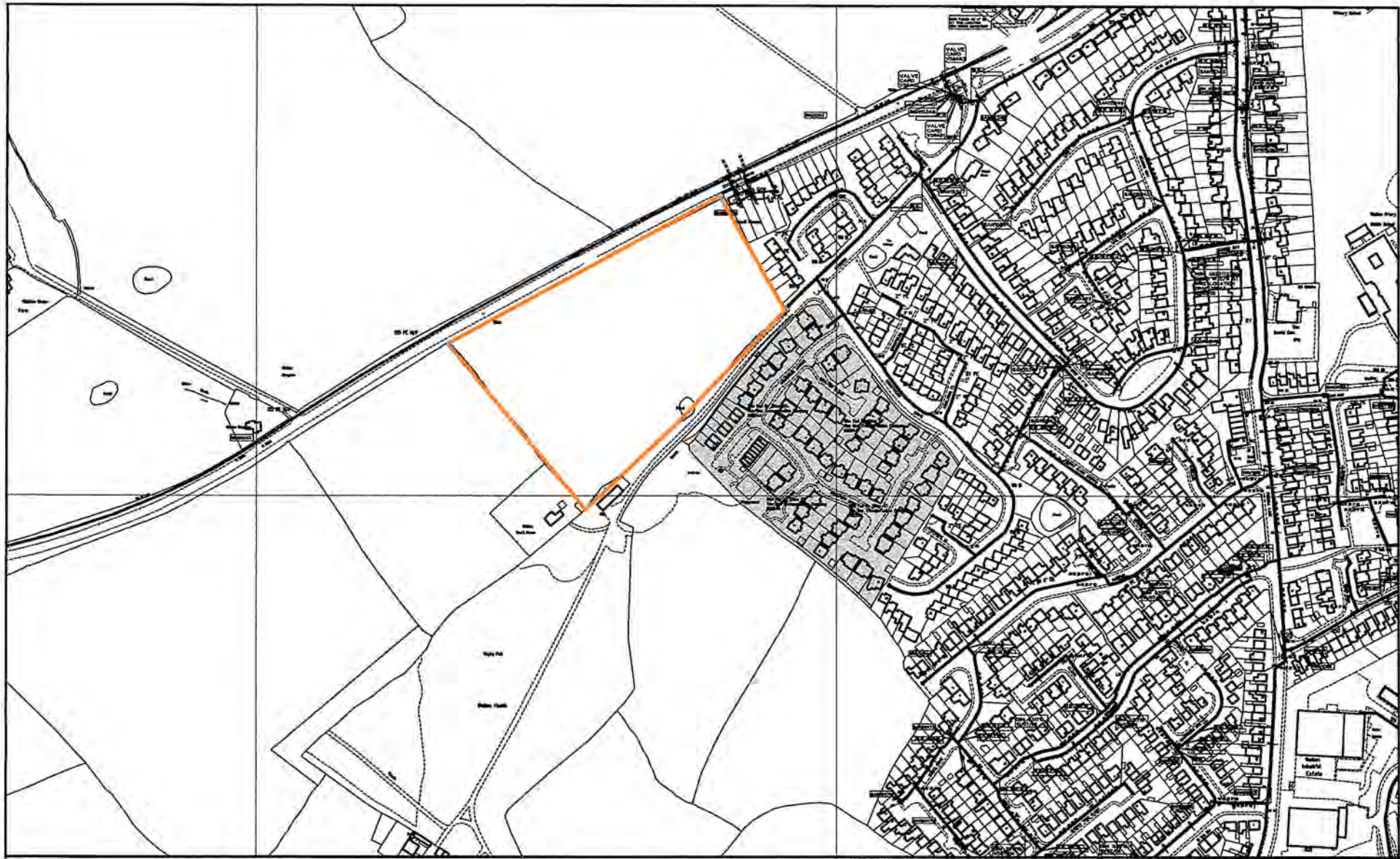
- The proposed Boundary for Stone is defined in the Plan but has not been fully assessed or supported by any evidence to justify its extent.

- Moreover, the Boundary within the Plan does little than merely follow the former Residential Development Boundary of the old Local Plan.
- The Boundary must be established for Stone having regard to the same criteria which are to be used for the wider settlements.
- The Boundary for Stone must include sufficient scope for the proposed scale of development in the Plan for housing, employment and other uses commensurate with its principal role, noting our objections to the scale of development directed to Stone elsewhere.

An example is set out on the attached Plans TWI. It demonstrates an example of where the Settlement Boundary has not been appropriately assessed and could be extended to logically include land which relates closely to the form of Stone and its landscape setting and would be ideal to provide for the scope to meet future housing needs.

The proposed Settlement Boundaries are supported in principle however;

- The Boundary for Stone should be supported by evidence that they have been appropriately defined, provide sufficient scope for anticipated future growth and have adopted the same criteria as for other settlements set out in the Policy.
- They should include the land shown in Plan TWI.



**Plan TW 1 - Land at Common Lane/Eccleshall Road, Stone**