

STAFFORD BOROUGH PLAN : Examination session, October 29th 2pm

Further comments submitted by : Jonathan Heal

Re Schedule of Matters and Key Issues 5. STONE TOWN

Item 5.1.c.iii Justification and details of the proposed mixed-use development at Westbridge Park, and its likely impact on recreational/green-space assets, canal and flooding

- The consultation on the Westbridge park supermarket plan was published in April 2013 and I have asked if the results are available for today.
- The consultation revealed large numbers both supporting the proposal advertised and opposing selling off public open space to a developer.
- The consultants did give details about why so many people in Stone opposed the issue of a mixed-use development, although the responses of individuals whose forms were passed on to the council via KWPG (one of the local action groups) were not analysed. The consultants suggested that they could have been. In total though, there were nearly 800 responses in favour of the council's supermarket proposal and over 1200 who did not support it.
- The biggest problem has been in knowing what "mixed-use" development means!
- When this term was being included in the draft plan, there were negotiations with a developer going on that were not advertised in public, and only at the public meeting in November did this emerge.
- It is not clear exactly what sort of supermarket was envisaged. The only statement is "bigger than Aldi, smaller than Morrisons". This means the maps used in the consultation could underestimate what might be built.
- The "artists impression" put out in the consultation was a fiction. The drawing could not represent what was on the map, and the supermarket would have to be more intrusive than shown even if only an Aldi in size.
- Whatever has happened to the 2013 proposals, the inclusion of "mixed use development" on Westbridge Park allows any future borough council to sell off as much of Westbridge Park as they like, to sell off a public open area for a commercial development. That is why I ask that this item to be removed from the plan.

Attached : part of the Consultation leaflet. The artist's impression does not represent what is shown on the map.