

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

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Report Originator	Head of Development Services	Fwd Plan Ref No: -	
Wards Affected	All	5 June 2019	
Title	SITE SPECIFIC PART 2 LOCAL PLAN – DRAFT PLAN CONSULTATION: STOKE ALBANY		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To agree 'next steps' in progressing planning policies for Stoke Albany, as a part of the Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan.

2. INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the last meeting of this Committee, on 26 February 2019, they were presented with a report that updated Members of the results of the Draft Plan consultation with regards to Stoke Albany. Included was a link to the representations made to the Draft Plan consultation for the Stoke Albany chapter, with officer responses to each. The link is again provided at paragraph 2.3 below. There was also an appendix to the report which provided a summary sheet containing the collective comments made through the consultation, officer comments and conclusions regarding those comments, and a recommendation for a series of next steps. The recommendation to Committee was that Members note the comments received to the consultation, endorse the officer responses, subject to amendment at committee, and agree a series of next steps for officers to advance in the production of a Pre-submission Plan. Included within the next steps were to discount site RA/120 at Stoke Farm, and allocate site RA/221 at Harborough Road for housing.
- 2.2 Members will recall that following a period of debate, it was resolved that a decision on the Stoke Albany section be deferred until after a site visit had been held. Two site visits were arranged, these on 11th and 30th April 2019. The visits were led by officers and enabled Members to view the two sites discussed for allocation; and to observe the character of the village, reflecting on information provided at the meeting, the representations made, and the debate had. Some Members have also expressed they have visited the village independently.
- 2.3 By way of a reminder, the main points discussed at the February meeting have been summarised below. Members are also provided again with a link (https://www.kettering.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/1712/planning_policy_committee) to copies of representations to policies for Stoke Albany, and proposed officer responses to those representations. Also, summary sheets of the comments, officer conclusions, and next steps ahead of drafting policies for the Pre-submission Plan are provided at Appendix 1. Following discussion, Members are

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asked to agree the officer responses to those representations, and the next steps.

- 2.4 Some comments made to the consultation involved what was described as a disproportionate increase in the numbers of dwellings for the village. The numbers of dwellings proposed for each site are set out later in the report. In addition, concern was expressed over the lack of key services in the village, and discussions took place with regards the distance to Wilbarston and the enhanced facilities available in that village. Summary paragraphs from the points discussed previously, including those comments contained within the minutes of the meeting.
- 2.5 Comments were made with regards access to the two prospective sites, the volume and speed of vehicles, and the road widths, including the narrowing in places in Ashley Road. The Chairman of Stoke Albany Parish Council addressed the committee, commenting on disappointment over the status of the village, highlighting that residents favoured the removal of both sites as allocation options. He also drew upon other concerns expressed by the Parish Council, including the potential conflict from development with the commercial stables in the village.
- 2.6 Both site promoters spoke at committee, Mr Carr, representing the promoters of the site at Harborough Road, confirmed that they fully supported the recommendation to allocate the site, that highway survey work had been undertaken, and that they would be happy to undertake an additional speed survey for Desborough Road. Also, a preliminary ecological assessment, heritage assessment and noise assessment had been undertaken, and a drainage assessment had been instructed.
- 2.7 Mr Brodie, the promoter of the Stoke Farm site highlighted that this site is immediately available to contribute to the Council's Joint Core Strategy housing requirement. He indicated that the site already benefits from planning permission for 3 dwellings, and that by extending the present proposed village boundary, the numbers of dwellings could be increased to between 8 and 12 units. He advocates that he would meet a 40% affordable housing requirement. He is willing to use materials to reflect the surrounding character, and contribute towards the provision of a footpath to Wilbarston. In addition, development would result in the removal of two unsightly storage buildings.
- 2.8 There would appear to be four options for Members to consider in making allocations of land at Stoke Albany. These are:
1. No housing allocations
 2. Allocate Harborough Road site only
 3. Allocate Stoke Farm site only
 4. Allocate both Harborough Road and Stoke Farm sites

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Option 1 – No housing allocations

- 2.9 The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) requires the Council to identify sufficient land in the period of the plan (2011-2031) to meet a rural housing requirement of 480 dwellings. The requirement is met through a combination of existing completions within the period, housing commitments (development under-construction or with planning permission), a windfall allowance, and housing allocations. The allocation of land at Stoke Albany for development, along with allocations at other villages in the Borough, will help the Council demonstrate this requirement is being met. Were Members to choose not to allocate land at Stoke Albany, then this would leave a shortfall in the requirement. Officers would need to find alternative land for allocation, to ensure this Plan is in conformity with its requirements in the JCS. This could therefore result in less suitable options needing to be identified/ allocated.
- 2.10 The majority of identified rural growth is located away from the northern villages of the Borough, an allocation at Stoke Albany provides the opportunity to in part redress that balance. Also, allocating land for housing at Stoke Albany, of the scale proposed, provides the potential for affordable housing in the village/ rural area.

Option 2 – Allocate Harborough Road site only

- 2.11 This site is proposed to provide 16 new dwellings for the village, 40% of which would be for affordable housing purposes. The site has been assessed as a logical infill site. This site is outside of the Stoke Albany Conservation Area, but does sit on its border. There is the potential to provide development and still retain the character of this part of the village, through the retention of the hedgerow frontage and a character tree within the site, and provision of allotments and public open space. Development of this site would ensure the authority can demonstrate it is able to provide sufficient land to meet its JCS rural housing requirement of 480 dwellings. The prospective developers have provided a schematic layout plan to show how they envisage the site might be developed. This is provided at Appendix 2.

Option 3 – Allocate Stoke Farm site only

- 2.12 The site owner has provided plans showing a variety of site layouts for consideration. These are provided at Appendix 3. The forecast housing numbers vary between 8 and 12 dwellings. Development of this site would result in the removal of two relatively large storage buildings, and an area of concrete hardstanding. On the face of it this would therefore categorise the site as “brownfield”, but this is not the case as the National Planning Policy Framework in defining brownfield or previously developed land, “*excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agriculture or forestry buildings*”. Part of the land, at the frontage with Ashley Road, has already been granted planning permission for 3 dwellings. The landowner claims to have commenced the development, making the consent extant.

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2.13 The Stoke Farm site lies in the northern part of the village, this part is quite different in character from the southern part, the properties and other buildings contributing towards a more sparse form of development with a distinctly low density centred around the village Church green. The “figure ground diagram” below shows the distinction between the two. Vehicle access between the southern and northern parts of the village is restricted where part of Ashley Road narrows. Additional development could not only change the character of this part of the village, but also add to traffic using the narrow road. The frontage of the site falls within the Stoke Albany Conservation Area, not necessarily a prevention to development, this does however place a requirement that the development contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Development of this site would contribute towards the Council’s JCS housing requirement, however it is unclear it would be sufficient to meet that requirement in full. Development provides the potential for affordable housing, although some options put forward do fall below the affordable housing threshold contained within the JCS, requiring a contribution in policy.

Figure Ground Diagram For Stoke Albany

Source: *Rural Masterplanning Report (2012)*



Stoke Albany – Built form

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Option 4 - Allocate both Harborough Road and Stoke Farm sites

2.14 The scale of development proposed by the development of both sites would be significant for the size of the village, and limited local facilities within it. However, Wilbarston is nearby and does contain a range of services/facilities including a primary school, post office/convenience store, public house, community centre and recreation ground, and employment units. The issues, both positive and negative, still remain through the development of the sites, but the JCS housing requirement is more clearly met with the development of both sites, as is the added provision of affordable housing. Of note however is the level of objection to development expressed by local residents, and Stoke Albany Parish Council, and the issues of concern raised by these parties. These have been largely summarised in above.

2.15 To ensure the Council meets its rural housing requirement contained within the Joint Core Strategy, it is considered it needs to make at least one further housing allocation. The Rural Masterplanning Report considered growth potential and the availability of land for each of the Borough's villages. Stoke Albany is the final settlement for Members to agree planning policies. As such, were Members to conclude that Stoke Albany, and the sites before you, were unsuitable for housing development, then an alternative site would need to be allocated at an alternative village location.

Two housing site options have been assessed and been subject to consultation. Through the assessment process, officers have concluded that the Harborough Road site is the favoured site, and, for the reasons indicated within this report, is considered suitable for allocation in the Part 2 Local Plan.

3. CONSULTATION AND CUSTOMER IMPACT

3.1 This report considers the representations made to the Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan – Draft Plan consultation, with regards to policies affecting Stoke Albany.

3.2 Forty nine objections were received, two supporting and 1 neither supporting nor objecting. Objection was raised to the scale of development proposed in Stoke Albany, the categorisation of the village, the expansion of the settlement boundary and to the two sites identified as potential proposed housing allocations. Concerns raised include the sustainability of the settlement, highway safety, impact on the historic character of the village, capacity of drains/ sewers, and impact on ecology.

3.3 This is the final chapter of the draft plan to be considered by Members, Officers are now preparing the Pre-submission plan which will be reported to Members at a future meeting of this committee, expected to be during September, where Members will be asked to endorse the Pre-submission Plan for consultation.

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3.4 The consultation on the Draft Plan was not a formal consultation stage (Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012). The responses to the consultation will contribute towards Kettering Borough Council's preparation of the next stage of the Part 2 Local Plan for consultation.

3.5 The next stage is Regulation 19 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, otherwise known as the Pre-submission consultation. This document will subsequently be that Submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration (Regulation 20), along with other supporting documentation, consultation responses and any further comments or resolutions agreed by the Authority.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The SSP2 will form part of the North Northamptonshire Development Plan and will guide the provision of sustainable growth in Kettering Borough.

5. USE OF RESOURCES

5.1 The cost of preparation of the SSP2 will be met within the existing Development Services Planning Policy budget.

6. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

- i. Members note the comments received during the Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan – Draft Plan consultation and endorse the Officer responses to these, subject to any appropriate amendments from Members of this committee; and
- ii. Members agree the approach proposed as Next Steps set out in the summary sheets, including the allocation of land at Harborough Road for housing, and for officers to advance in the production of a Pre-submission Plan.

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Previous Reports/Minutes:

Ref: Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan – Draft Plan Consultation
Date: 26th February 2019

Ref: Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan – Draft Plan Update
Date: 22nd January 2019

Ref: Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan – Update
Date: 12th September 2018

Ref: Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan: Draft Plan for Consultation
Date: 6th June 2018