

Stoke Ash & Thwaite Parish Council
Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held 19 October 2017, 8pm at Stoke Ash Village Hall

Present: Cllrs P Morris (Chairman), Mrs J Fleming, M Fleming, G Leggett, T Pulham, D Roth and G Tancred. One member of the public (Mr L Coe).

1 **Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr Mrs F Palmer.

1a **Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda**

Cllr Pulham declared a pecuniary interest in items relating to potential development sites in Thwaite. As a member of the PC Local Plan Working Group members believed Cllr Pulham's contribution to discussions would outweigh his declared interest. It was unanimously agreed a full dispensation was given to allow Cllr Pulham to take part in discussion and decisions.

2. **To consider responses to the MSDC and Babergh joint Local Plan Review consultation document**

Cllr Tancred stated in 2016 a consultancy company was instructed to produce a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to consider the changes in population in the Mid Suffolk and Babergh areas between the current to 2036 to determine housing needs to 2036. For Mid Suffolk the assessment had determined a total requirement of 9951 houses to 2036 – 452 per year of which 5% (22 – 23) would be in small villages and hamlets.

From that assessment Mid Suffolk and Babergh brought out a call for sites to landowners and developers to enable the District Council to consider areas that could be developed.

Mid Suffolk and Babergh decided there should be a renewed look at the Local Plan and put out a consultation document on where development should take place up to 2036 to all parish councils and parishioners in the district. The consultation ends at 5pm on 10 November 2017.

As a result the Stoke Ash & Thwaite Parish Council set up a working party at its September meeting (Councillors Tony Pulham, Gordon Leggett and Geoffrey Tancred) to look at the consultation document in preparation for the full parish council to consider the recommendations from the working group. It was noted that all parishioners in the district were able to make comment on the consultation document via the Mid Suffolk District Council website and it was assumed Mid Suffolk District Council had publicized this fact widely in the district to ensure that parishioners were aware of the consultation and the time frame.

Stoke Ash village

Settlement Boundary - A slightly amended settlement boundary had been proposed for Stoke Ash – two small areas outside the current green line (copy plan showing proposal attached to the Minutes). The working group had no comment or objection to the proposed extended areas.

Sites - MSDC were looking for areas where more than 10 or more than 5 properties could be built. The Working Group had considered the sites put forward for Stoke Ash (copy plan attached to the Minutes) and recommended these were not suitable as they would destroy the rural character of the village and as an alternative recommended sites A and B (copy plan attached to the Minutes) were put forward. These sites were not overlooked and would not overlook existing dwellings. The requirement for affordable housing would be triggered if more than 10 dwellings on the development. It was envisaged the sites would produce 18 - 20 dwellings overall and taking into account the village infrastructure would enable the village to grow and become vibrant with family orientated housing.

In addition the working group recommended that the Stoke Ash Village Hall should be redeveloped as a village centre point with potential for school, shop/post office, crèche and hall.

If a developer comes forward, members agreed it was important to include the need for affordable housing – **this comment to be included in the PC's response to the Plan.**

Regarding a preference for the proposed A or B sites – members agreed A be the preferred site, it being the larger of the two sites and sat well within the village.

The Chairman proposed the meeting was opened to the public at this stage, before discussing proposals for Thwaite, the only member of the public present being a resident of Stoke Ash.

3. **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

When taking any development into consideration Mr Coe urged members to consider the inadequate sewerage system, lack of school and increasing pressure on the doctors surgery. The Chairman stated any developer coming forward would need to take on the responsibility of upgrading the sewerage system.

Cllr Roth stated that the MSDC briefing session had estimated a requirement of 3 primary school places per 40 houses.

Members agreed a development would offer the opportunity to re-develop the village hall with a community shop.

The Chairman thanked Mr Coe for his participation in the meeting.

Meeting closed to the public

4. To consider and agree response to the MSDC Local Plan Review

Thwaite :

Four sites had been put forward in the MSDC Local Plan Review document (copy plan attached to the Minutes).

The meeting agreed there was a need to keep the village vibrant and in considering the sites the working group had recommended three of the sites put forward – A, B and C (copy plan attached to the Minutes) in the following order of preference:

1. Site B – 1.01 hec and would provide approx. 25 dwellings. There were two areas of woodland and a pond on the east of the site. The woodland would provide a noise barrier from the A140.
2. Site C - .06 hec and would provide approx. 15 dwellings. The site could link to the existing access onto the A140.
3. Site A - .85 hec. The least popular as this would extend the village into a rural area.

The meeting retained its view of the proposed site SS0379 due to the lack of access information and extension into a rural area.

Cllr Tancred proposed acceptance of the recommended sites put forward by the working group for both Stoke Ash and Thwaite above, seconded Cllr Roth and unanimously agreed.

Other aspects of the Local Plan relating to both villages:

Review of Parish Plan – Cllr Leggett to circulate the electronic version for consideration at the November parish council meeting.

Question 12 of the Local Plan – Do you agree with the proposed joint settlement hierarchy? If no, please provide further details as to how the hierarchy should be amended:

Hinterland – points were revised as follows:

Stoke Ash – 8 points
Thwaite - 11 points

Spatial Distribution:

- i) Option MHD1 – county town focused – **Meeting agreed preferred development to be county town focused.**
- ii) Option MHD2 – market town/rural area balance – **Agreed**
- iii) Option MHD3 – transport corridor focused – **working group submission**
- iv) Option MHD4 – new settlement focused – **working group submission**

It was agreed that the working group was delegated to go through all remaining questions in the Plan and respond in a proper manner on behalf of the parish council and parishioners for both villages. Working group to meet Monday 23 October 2017, 9.30pm at Brockford Hall to complete and submit the consultation document on behalf of SA&T PC. Members to contact the Group before that meeting should they wish to make any further comments.

The Chairman recorded thanks to Cllr Pulham for use of his office as a meeting place for the working group.

Meeting closed 9.45pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date: