

<b>Section Title</b> 12.15 Stoke Albany
<b>Number of responses</b> 52
<b>Summary of main points</b>  Total number of Objections - 49 Total number of Support - 2 Total number of neither Object nor Support - 1  <u>Statutory Consultees</u>  Northamptonshire County Council – Archaeology Support for criterion b) of Policy STA02  CPRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There are larger villages with better infrastructure which could better absorb growth.</li><li>• Policy STA03 will significantly urbanise the part of Stoke Albany in which it is located</li><li>• A smaller yield for Policy STA02 would be more suitable given the character of this part of the village</li></ul> <u>Other Consultees</u>  <u>General Comments</u> The proposed allocations increase the number of dwellings by 15% and is disproportionate, over-development and does not represent small-scale growth. <b>(id.51), (id.84), (id.92), (id.124), (id.127), (id.153), (id.167), (id.227), (id.390), (id.391), (id.404), (id.442), (id.470), (id.472), (id.473)</b>  Significant concerns in relation to the draft approach to housing delivery within rural areas of Kettering Borough. <b>(id.567)</b>  The allocations do not reflect the identified housing need. <b>(id.124), (id.128), (id.129), (id.404)</b>  Objection to Table 12.30. <b>(id.87)</b>  Concerns that the development of the proposed allocations will mean further 'boundary creep'. <b>(id.126), (id.167)</b>  The level of development proposed is neither sound nor justified. <b>(id.567)</b>  Stoke Albany has historically been considered as an unsuitable and unsustainable location for new residential development due to the settlement's inability to accommodate further growth. <b>(id.567)</b>  The level of infrastructure within and surrounding the settlement is incapable of accommodating further housing growth. <b>(id.567)</b>

The Rural Masterplanning Report and Housing Needs Survey are considered out-of-date as evidence to support allocations in Stoke Albany. **(id.567)**

Object to the proposed allocations due to concerns of road safety and harm to the rural and historic character of the village, including impact on heritage assets. **(id.84), (id.92), (id.124), (id.128), (id.129), (id.132), (id.390), (id.391), (id.514), (id.517)**

No research has been undertaken to determine whether the proposed allocations will be beneficial to the village. **(id.84), (id.92)**

Concerns regarding the capacity of the sewage system in the village and subsequent flooding. **(id.84), (id.92), (id.132), (id.388)**

Stoke Albany has no facilities/services to support the proposed housing allocations. **(id.88), (id.124), (id.132), (id.153), (id.442), (id.472), (id.473), (id.567)**

There is no public transport provision in Stoke Albany which exacerbate the traffic issue. **(id.84), (id.90), (id.92), (id.124), (id.378), (id.472), (id.567)**

The roads in the village are incapable of handling additional traffic. **(id.84), (id.90), (id.92), (id.97), (id.110), (id.116), (id.117), (id.118), (id.119), (id.124), (id.129), (id.132), (id.153), (id.167), (id.227), (id.329), (id.341), (id.378), (id.380), (id.381), (id.383), (id.384), (id.389), (id.390), (id.391), (id.404), (id.442), (id.464), (id.470), (id.473), (id.514), (id.517), (id.567)**

Insufficient consideration has been given to local needs, character and form of the village and availability of facilities and services. **(id.567)**

The character and charm of the village should be recognised within the Plan. **(id.567)**

#### Village Categories

The housing allocations contradict the village's Category A status in relation to the settlement boundary. **(id.89), (id.329), (id.390), (id.470), (id.473), (id.567)**

Through the categorisation of Stoke Albany as a Category A, the suitability and sustainability of the settlement as a location for new residential development has not been considered. **(id.567)**

The designation of Stoke Albany as a Category A village is incorrect and instead should be considered as a Category B village. **(id.442), (id.567)**

#### Settlement Boundary

Concerns relating the expansion of the settlement boundary to accommodate

additional housing development. **(id.84), (id.89), (id.92), (id.126), (id.167), (id.390), (id.391), (id.470), (id.473), (id.567)**

The allocations represent a violation of a previously agreed building line from 2011. **(id.128), (id.129), (id.153), (id.227)**

The current settlement boundary for Stoke Albany is tightly constrained. **(id.567)**

The parts of the proposed allocations which fall outside of the settlement boundary should be removed. **(id.567)**

#### Policy STA01 – Stoke Albany Development Principles

Concerns regarding the evidence to justify the provision of highway and public realm improvements in Policy STA01. **(id.216)**

#### Policy STA02 – Stoke Farm

Object to Policy STA02 as it's outside of the settlement boundary, has issues related to access/highway safety and will have a detrimental impact on the character of the village. **(id.84), (id.88), (id.90), (id.92), (id.97), (id.110),(id.116),(id.118), (id.119), (id.125), (id.128),( id.153),( id.167) (id.180), (id.216), (id.380), (id.381),( id.384),( id.388), (id.390) (id.391), (id.404),(id.464), (id.470),( id.472), (id.473), (id.526)**

Policy STA02 does not reflect historical planning decisions, where applications have been refused on the site. **(id.128), (id.129)**

Policy STA02 includes contradiction where criterion h) and j) do not reflect the allocation of the housing sites. **(id.128)**

No explanation has been provided following the past discounting of site RA/120 which is now been identified under Policy STA02. **(id.125), (id.128)**

The density proposed in Policy STA02 is not reflective of the character of the village and contradicts criterion (i). **(id.128), (id.153), (id.167), (id.404), (id.464)**

Criterion g) and j) on Policy STA02 do not reflect the housing allocation in terms of density and affordable housing. **(id.128), (id.153), (id.167), (id.404), (id.464)**

Paragraph i) of Policy STA02 does not address the need for road alterations. **(id.124), (id.128)**

The allocation of the Stoke Farm site will compromise the scenic nature of footpath HA15. **(id.128)**

Policy STA03 – Land south of Harborough Road

The allocation of the Harborough Road site will compromise the scenic nature of footpath HA15. **(id.128)**

Object to Policy STA03 on the basis of existing car parking issues and road safety. **(id.84), (id.92), (id.110), (id.116), (id.117), (id.119), (id.124), (id.128), (id.129), (id.132), (id.153), (id.167), (id.182), (id.217), (id.227), (id.324), (id.329), (id.341), (id.378), (id.380), (id.383), (id.389), (id.390), (id.391), (id.404), (id.464), (id.470), (id.472), (id.514), (id.517), (id.566)**

Concerns relating to Policy STA02 and STA03 in relation to the impact on biodiversity. **(id.84), (id.110), (id.129), (id.132), (id.153), (id.167), (id.227), (id.329), (id.341), (id.388), (id.390), (id.404), (id.470), (id.473)**

Support for Policy STA03. **(id.217)**

The allocation of the Harborough Road site will compromise the scenic nature of footpath HA9. **(id.129), (id.404)**

The allocation of the Harborough Road site will be detrimental to the character of the southern area of the settlement. **(id.214)**

Concerns for the future of the hedgerow on Harborough Road. **(id.84), (id.92), (id.110), (id.116), (id.153), (id.329), (id.390), (id.470), (id.472), (id.473)**

**Implications of New National Planning Policy Framework**

Refer to this section in the 'Rural Area' chapter summary sheet considered at Planning Policy Committee on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019 (agenda item 5).

**Summary of officer comments**

Comments relating to the scale of development in the village are noted. The level of proposed growth included in the draft plan of 24-28 dwellings is considered to be significant given the size of the village and this will be reviewed in light of the comments received. It is noted that there is a lack of key services in the village. However, Stoke Albany is closely related to Wilbarston which has additional facilities, including a school and shop. The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy identifies a requirement for 480 dwellings in the rural area in the period 2011-31. The SSP2 will need to allocate sites across the rural area to meet this requirement.

The site allocations have been subject to a site assessment which included consultation with NCC Highways, which did not raise concerns that could not be overcome.

The impact on the historic environment and character of the village has also been considered through the site assessment process and through the preparation of policies STA02 and STA03 which include criteria to ensure that development of these sites reflect the local vernacular (criterion a – Policy

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STA02) and local character (criterion h – Policy STA02) and (criterion f – Policy STA03) as well as consider the impact on the Stoke Albany Conservation Area (criterion b – Policy STA03). However, comments relating to the impact of site RA/120 on the character of this part of the village and on the conservation area and listed building are noted, it is recognised that the development of this site would impact on the character of this part of the village, which is currently low density and scattered with an organic layout. The site will be reviewed in light of the comments received.

It is recognised that the ecological importance of the hedgerow must be considered for site RA/221 (Policy STA03), this was considered as part of the assessment process. A criterion will be added to the policy for this site requiring an ecological assessment which includes an assessment of the hedgerow.

The Wildlife Trust did submit comments through the initial site assessment process and required an ecological survey to determine the impact on biodiversity. This requirement was not initially included within the draft criterion for Policy STA03. However, through this draft SSP2 Local Plan consultation, a number of comments relating to wildlife and biodiversity concerns have been raised, including your comments. As a result, the Wildlife Trust recommendation will be included as an additional requirement within Policy STA03. The assessment will also investigate the ecological significance of the hedgerow and field to determine the extent of the impact which could result from development of the site, and set out any necessary mitigation measures, exploring opportunities to protect and enhance biodiversity. In addition to this, potential mitigation measures will also be considered with respect of the hedgerow, to include the provision of an access road behind the hedgerow to maintain the majority of the existing hedgerow. With respect of the tree to the rear of the site, this area of land will be removed from RA/221 housing allocation in response to other comments received, in order to see the site scaled down to follow the extent of the indicative layout and prevent over-development of the site.

The proposed settlement boundary will replace the existing boundary from the 1995 Local Plan. New allocations are included within the proposed boundary in accordance with Principle 2d) of the Settlement Boundary Defining Principles.

The extent of site RA/221 16 dwellings as considered through the site assessment.

Planning application KET/2014/0354 for a single dwelling situated (west) adjacent to Denman Close [which also abuts site RA/221 to the west] was previously refused on two grounds, the principal reason being that the proposal would result in new development within open countryside and not within Stoke Albany, and the second reason was highway safety grounds.

The reclassification of the settlement from a restricted infill village to a category A village takes forwards established principles set out within the

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existing Local Plan for Kettering Borough (1995), with other restricted infill villages also placed within category A, including the village of Mawsley which was designated through the 1995 Local Plan.

Stoke Albany does not share the special characteristics or qualities of a category B village.

Stoke Albany has a similar number of facilities as the following category A villages: Thorpe Malsor, Weston by Welland, Sutton Bassett, Great Cransley, which are felt should also not be regraded to category B status.

Through the SHLAA (Feb 2009) Stoke Albany was considered together with Wilbarston for inclusion within the study area due to their close proximity to each other, their significant population and good range of existing community facilities/services. It is acknowledged that the bus service within the two villages has been reduced, but this has also happened throughout the rural area, and there remains a requirement to deliver housing throughout the rural area as set out in Policy 29 (JCS).

Through the allocation process, site RA/221 (Policy STA03) was considered alongside site RA/120 (Policy STA02). Site assessments informed recommendations for the sites were taken to Planning Policy Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017. Site RA/221 was recommended to be designated as a draft housing allocation, whilst site RA/120 was recommended for rejection as a housing allocation. Members agreed to designate both sites as draft housing allocations to enable members of the public to make comment on both sites through the public consultation on the SSP2 Local Plan. It was not necessarily the intention of Members for both sites to be allocated in the Pre-submission SSP2 Local Plan. It is acknowledged that the allocation of two housing sites within the village will result in a significant increase in the proportion of dwellings within the settlement. The 'options for growth' section of the draft plan does state that the second option was for small scale growth, and allocating a single site would accord with this approach.

It is considered necessary to allocate sites in the rural area in order to meet the housing requirement for the rural area, as set out in Policy 29 (JCS), which would accord with the approach to delivering small scale growth in Stoke Albany.

The majority of dwellings located on Desborough Road (B669) benefit from on-site parking, with the public house (The White Horse) also having a relatively large car park. Comments already received from NCC Highways assessed issues of highway safety and capacity at a site assessment stage for both sites, and considered site development acceptable subject criterion set out in Policy STA01 - 03. NCC Highways has been informally consulted again regarding issues raised in relation to highway safety and capacity, particularly at the Harborough Road / Desborough Road junction, but no further comment has been made with respect of this. However, Kettering Borough Council consider that the comment raised about the pub car park frequently over spilling does require further investigation as this could affect

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highway safety concerns at key times. As a result, an additional wording will be applied to criterion (c) of Policy STA03 to extend the highway survey to include Desborough Road and Harborough Road and cover issues of both traffic speeds and parking.

Issues relating to potholes and lack of gritting of the existing highway network is a highway maintenance issue which falls outside of the scope of this consultation and is not a material consideration within the plan making process.

It is acknowledged that allocation of both sites will result in a significant increase in the proportion of dwellings within Stoke Albany, and there is a lack of key services in the village when considered in isolation of Wilbarston.

Contained within the draft Policy WIL01 (iii) for Wilbarston is a requirement for development to create a safe footpath connection with Stoke Albany. The reality of this requirement being deliverable is limited, due to the limited level of planned growth in the two rural settlements and the costs associated with providing such infrastructure, although this is worded appropriately within Policy WIL01 to reflect this. A similar criterion will also be included within Policy STA01 for Stoke Albany to provide greater clarity and provide a mechanism for planned growth in both villages to facilitate a pedestrian connection between the two settlements.

The impact that site RA/120 has on the listed buildings in close proximity has been taken into account as part of the assessment for the site.

Construction traffic issues are a material consideration at planning application stage, and can be addressed through the requirement of a Construction Management Plan if necessary to overcome harm.

Services and facilities serving Stoke Albany are limited, but are commensurate with the level of service/facility provision at other rural settlements, some of which also have draft housing allocations (e.g. Weston by Welland, Great Cransley, Braybrooke). Whilst two sites have been promoted for consideration at Stoke Albany, comments raised through the draft SSP2 Local Plan Consultation will be reported back to Members for consideration.

Anglian Water confirm both potential housing sites are not constrained by the capacity of water infrastructure or drainage, and confirm that local issues reported through the public consultation resulted from blockages and not hydraulic overload caused by capacity issues. Any proposed development within the village will be considered in consultation with Anglian Water and will be required to provide adequate drainage. As a result, there is no evidence available to demonstrate that the proposed housing allocations within the village will exacerbate existing issues.

The Housing Needs Survey only identifies need for affordable housing. The need for development in the rural area is identified in the North

Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy which sets a requirement for 480 dwellings in the rural area in the period 2011-2031. The SSP2 will allocate sites across the rural area to meet this requirement.

It is considered that an element of affordable housing could deliver a rural, farmyard character as historic farm buildings typically follow a linear layout which often intersect to form a courtyard layout. In this instance however, this needs to be carefully balanced against the overall housing yield for the site so that development in the northern area of the village responds to the surrounding grain of historic development in the area through layout and density. Whilst the requirement for 50% affordable homes set out in criterion (j) of Policy STA02 was proposed by the site promoter on the basis of an indicative site layout of 12 dwellings, this was not supported with a viability assessment. In the absence of a viability assessment, there is no evidence to verify that such a high level of affordable housing will be delivered, which increases the risk of this requirement being challenged following allocation on viability grounds. Conversely, site RA/221 will be required to provide a 40% affordable housing element as its anticipated site yield exceeds the affordable housing threshold set out in Policy 30 (JCS).

Criterion (b) of Policy STA02 requires an appropriate heritage impact assessment to be undertaken to demonstrate how heritage issues (including the management of trees within the Conservation Area), but it will be challenging to justify their removal on the grounds of protecting or enhancing the Conservation Area.

The issue raised through other consultation comments regarding parked vehicles on Harborough Road and the impact of this on highway safety will also be addressed through additional criterion to Policy STA03 to require a combined parking and speed survey.

The need for additional housing sites in the rural areas is set out in the Policy 29 (Joint Core Strategy), and is the primary justification for now considering the housing allocation sites across the rural area where a greater need is identified, including the two draft housing allocation sites [RA/221 and RA/120] at Stoke Albany for inclusion within the SSP2 Local Plan.

In terms of compliance with proposed policies, criterion (h) of policy STA02 seeks for the local character to be reflected with large dwellings in large plots. The indicative layout for eight dwellings responds to this requirement but needs further work to deliver a rural, farmyard character. However, it is acknowledged that the indicative layout for twelve dwellings does result in a more densely formed layout which would not be appropriate in its current form when considered within the context of the historic development in the northern end of the village in terms over housing density.

The Council is aware of the historic planning permissions granted on some of the land identified as site RA/120. Through the plan making process, the enlarged site of RA/120 has been considered and assessed. Policy STA02 is relevant to this site.



Site assessments included impact on the highway network in Stoke Albany, in consultation with NCC Highways. A number of issues were raised in respect of both sites. Specifically, a visibility splay of 2.4m x 40m was originally required at site RA/120. A transport statement (incorporating a speed survey) was submitted by the promoter of site RA/120 to demonstrate that a shorter visibility splay would be sufficient to preserve highway safety for development of the site up to 14 dwellings, which was accepted by NCC Highways subject to the removal of two trees within the highway verge.

Development control principles set out within the Conservation Area appraisal (1982) state *'The demolition of existing boundary walls or the removal of trees where these form important elements in the street scene will be resisted.'* Removal of any 'sound' trees would conflict with the Local Planning Authorities duty to pay special attention to preserving/enhancing the character and appearance of the Stoke Albany Conservation Area and would have a detrimental impact on the surrounding verdant character. A recent planning application made by NCC (KET/2018/0974) to undertake maintenance on the trees [in the highway verge adjacent site RA/120] also indicates that they are worthy of retention.

NCC Highways raised no objection to development on the grounds of highway capacity in the area. NCC Highways raised highway safety concerns with respect of site RA/221, but accepted that these could be overcome through the use of speed reduction measures on the A427 slip road. This informed criteria (c) and (h) of Policy STA03 to ensure that access can be safely made onto Harborough Road.

Policies relating to specialist housing are included in the Housing chapter (4) of the Plan, and will be developed further and informed through an up-to-date background paper.

There is no planned intention of delivering industrial or warehouse units as part of the site allocation for RA/221 through the plan making process.

Policy STA01, criterion (b) seeks new development to use a limited palette of materials to reflect the historic buildings in the village. The indicative layout mirrors the existing post war development on Harborough Road as well as the development on Chapmans Close / Debdale. However, any final scheme would need to go through the full planning process and demonstrate that adequate parking is provided. Solutions are available to respond to the existing character in both instances whilst still providing adequate on-site parking.

Policy STA02 includes criteria to ensure that development of these sites reflect the local vernacular (criterion a – Policy STA02) and heritage assets (criterion b) and local character (criterion h – Policy STA02). These reflect comments received through the site assessment for RA/120 which state that impacts on heritage assets could be mitigated through the use of design principles to secure the retention of the two historic stone barns;

protection/enhancement of landscaping, use of ironstone in the construction of new buildings, and careful design in terms of building heights and site layout.

Additional criterion will be considered to provide a buffer between site RA/221 and the Conservation Area as well ensuring footpath HA9 is maintained and protected.

**Concluding officer comments**

The Council now needs to consider whether it is appropriate to allocate both draft housing sites RA/221 and RA/120, just one of the sites, or none of the sites, in light of comments received through the draft SSP2 Local Plan public consultation.

On the whole, there were a large number of objections received in relation to any new housing site allocations within the village, mainly on the grounds of highway safety/capacity, impact on character of the settlement, ecology/biodiversity, drainage capacity, and sustainability of the settlement in terms of facilities and services.

The SSP2 will need to allocate sites to meet the rural housing requirement set out in the JCS. Stoke Albany is considered a suitable location for small scale growth. When considered alongside Wilbarston the settlement has access to a reasonable range of facilities. However it is considered that the allocation of both potential housing sites would result in a level of growth which is significant for the size of the settlement. The allocation of one site would accord with the approach for some small scale development.

Anglian Water confirm that drainage issues raised did not result from drainage capacity issues and should not preclude development at either site. Matters relating to ecology/biodiversity are more likely to be present on site RA/221 than RA/120 due to site characteristics. An appropriate ecological assessment can be carried out prior to development to determine whether there are any significant issues, and inform a mitigation strategy necessary to deliver acceptable development. The potential for ecological / biodiversity impacts will be further lessened as a result of reducing the extent of the site allocation to limit yield in line with the site assessment as recommended within the response to consultation comments.

NCC Highways has been informally consulted regarding issues raised in relation to the safety of the Harborough Road / Desborough Road junction, but no further comment has been made with respect of this. However, Kettering Borough Council consider that the comment raised about the pub car park frequently over spilling does require further investigation as this could affect highway safety concerns at key times. As a result, an additional wording will be applied to criterion (c) of Policy STA03 to extend the highway survey to include Desborough Road and Harborough Road and cover issues of both traffic speeds and parking.

Site RA/120 was originally considered through the Rural Masterplanning Report and identified through the SHLAA (February 2009). Stoke Albany and

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Wilbarston were considered together as a pair of villages for inclusion within the SHLAA, due to the combined level of facilities/services that they offer and close geographical proximity. It is for this reason that Stoke Albany is not considered in isolation to Wilbarston. For the same reason, there is strong justification for better physical connections between the two settlements such as a linked footpath.

At Planning Policy Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017, Members were recommended to discount site RA/120 in favour of RA/221 for the following reasons:

1. Despite RA/120 being developed as a farm yard, it is not defined as previously developed land in the NPPF and is parity with site RA/221 with respect of this consideration;
2. To achieve adequate site access to site RA/120, two trees within the Conservation Area will need to be removed. Development control principles set out within the Conservation Area appraisal (1982) state 'The demolition of existing boundary walls or the removal of trees where these form important elements in the street scene will be resisted.' Removal of any 'sound' trees would conflict with the Local Planning Authorities duty to pay special attention to the preserving/enhancing the character and appearance of the Stoke Albany Conservation Area and would have a detrimental impact on the surrounding verdant character. The land affected is more sensitive than site RA/221 which sits adjacent but outside of the Conservation Area.
3. The figure ground diagram for Stoke Albany shows that the majority of housing development within the village is organised over a distinct linear form within the southern end of the settlement. By comparison, there are a total of 9 existing dwellings scattered over the northern end of the village, which is characterised by a more organic layout. An appropriate and sensitive response to the village structure would therefore focus a greater level of new development within the southern end of the village.
4. Site RA/221 offers greater scope for the delivery of affordable housing units compared to site RA/120 which could only deliver a similar yield through unilateral undertaking.[In response to this, the site promoter did submit a layout indicating a 50% affordable housing element on a yield of 12 dwellings, which was not supported by a viability assessment. In the absence of a viability assessment, there is no evidence to verify that such a high level of affordable housing will be delivered, which increases the risk of this requirement being challenged following allocation on viability grounds]
5. Delivery of 16 dwellings on site RA/221 and the 3 dwellings which were historically granted planning permission on the same land as site RA/120 was considered to deliver the optimum level of housing for the village which responds to the character of the two parts of the village.

The additional comments received through the draft SSP2 Local Plan Consultation did not raise any new issues which would support an alternative recommendation.

### Next Steps

- Discount site RA/120 for the reasons set out above.
- Reduce the size of site RA/221 to limit the yield to a level set out within the site assessment (16 dwellings), and designate the site as a housing allocation within the Pre-submission SSP2 Local Plan on the basis that the site is less sensitive than site RA/120 and presents an opportunity to deliver an appropriate level of housing with an affordable element as set out in Policy 30 (JCS).
  
- Include additional criterion to Policy STA03 to :
  - Require an ecological assessment for the site which includes an assessment of the hedgerow (adjacent Harborough Road), and wider field and other natural features within the site, or affected by the development of the site, together with appropriate measures to mitigate any impacts and protect and enhance biodiversity.
  
  - Expand criterion (c) of Policy STA03 to require a combined parking and vehicle speed survey which also incorporates Desborough Road and its junction with Harborough Road, taking into account peak times at The White Horse Inn when on-road parking may exacerbate highway safety.
  
  - Protect use of and access to footpath HA9
  
- Include additional criterion to Policy STA01 to:
  - Seek for development to facilitate improvements to the village, potentially those identified in the Rural Masterplanning Report , including:
    - Creation of a safe, paved footpath connection with Wilbarston;