



A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR STONE PARISH 2020-2035

CONSULTATION STATEMENT
OCTOBER 2020

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1. Introduction

This consultation statement has been prepared to fulfil the legal obligations of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 in respect of the Stone Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2020-2035.

The legal basis of the statement is provided by Section 15(2) of part 5 of the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, which requires that a consultation statement should:

- Contain details of the people and bodies who were consulted about the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Explain how they were consulted
- Summarise the main issues and concerns that were raised
- Describe how those issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan.

2. Aims of the Consultation Process

The Stone Parish Neighbourhood Plan directors group acknowledged that effective communication and community engagement was essential to inform and involve residents in the development of the Plan.

The communications aim of the group was:

- To produce a plan led by the community
- To provide opportunities at each stage of the plan for the community to provide input and give feedback
- To ensure the Neighbourhood Plan is representative of the views of the whole community, including young people, and to ensure efforts have been made to effectively engage with every household in the parish.

A copy of the Community Engagement Strategy can be found at Appendix 5.

3. Methods of Communication

The director's group has communicated to consultees using a wide range of both traditional and digital forms of communications. The various methods of communication are summarised below:

- Dedicated Stone Parish Neighbourhood Plan website – **www.stoneneighbourhoodplan.uk**
- Updates in weekly council e-newsletters
- Emails to database
- Flyers delivered to every household
- Online and offline surveys
- Consultation meetings
- Exhibition stands at local supermarkets, summer festivals and Christmas lights switch-on event.

4. Community Consultation Process

A community survey was carried out during April and May 2014 to provide the parish council with a steer on local strategic priorities. 148 responses were received. Feedback received via the survey formed the basis of consideration regarding whether a Neighbourhood Development Plan would be an appropriate mechanism to provide or address the needs and issues raised.

An open meeting was held on 1st November 2014, to receive a presentation regarding the potential for a Neighbourhood Plan, which 7 parish councillors, the Parish Clerk, two speakers and 53 members of the public attended.

Stone Parish Council formally resolved to undertake production of a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Stone Parish on 12th November 2014.

The application for a designated Neighbourhood Plan area for Stone Parish was submitted to Dartford Borough Council on 5th December 2014. This was subject to consultation for a period of six weeks and resulted in 7 responses, 2 which objected to the proposed application.

An amended Neighbourhood Area was resolved at a Dartford Borough Council Cabinet meeting on 23 July 2015. The Cabinet report and Decision Document is included at Appendix 8 & 12.

Following this meeting, the council sought recruitment of a Neighbourhood Plan steering group to guide and direct the neighbourhood process and to ensure the plan was community-led. This was also ensured through the established Terms of Reference for the steering group, which constrained the membership to four parish councillors and the Parish Clerk alongside 10 community representatives.

The Neighbourhood Plan Directors Group formally met for the first time on 29th April 2015, which appointed officers, adopted terms of reference, and agreed initial objectives. Minutes of the Directors Group meetings can be found on the Stone Parish Neighbourhood Plan website.

This initial meeting also reviewed the responses to the earlier parish survey to enable early consideration of priorities. Directors noted the perception among respondents that there had already been too much development in the area and that this, unsurprisingly, was placing immense pressure on local infrastructure such as schools and doctor's surgeries, with similar issues experienced with parking, traffic and congestion.

Individual directors were charged with reviewing specific areas of focus to determine the current position and highlight potential improvements.

A significant exhibition took place at the annual Stone Fete in July 2015 to both raise awareness of the initiative and enable further submissions to the previous survey to increase the response rate.





As well as the survey, other consultation activities consisted of a 'Good, Bad & Ugly' board, where residents could make general comments regarding the area, a flag mapping activity that enabled residents to make comments regarding a specific location, and a route map that enable residents to draw a line on a map to capture their most travelled journey.



Land Logical, a local landowner of a former landfill quarry, also used this opportunity to consult regarding potential options for their site, known locally as Stone Pit I.

In August 2015, Land Logical, provided a presentation at the monthly Director's meeting following consultation at Stone Fete to set out their aspirations for Stone Pit 1, which was to be renamed as Atlas Park from a planning perspective.

Directors were keen to obtain further response to the activities undertaken at Stone Fete and arranged further events in October 2015 to specifically consult with under 18's at uniformed group sessions, as well as four public sessions to provide additional opportunities to find out more about the process, as well as add to the data obtained from the consultation activities.



Following these events, directors met monthly to collate, assess and use the evidence to begin outlining plan objectives. Six thematic areas were established that were felt to respond to the various areas identified as priorities. These were: open spaces, housing, health & wellbeing, infrastructure and local services, getting around the parish, and community, leisure & recreation.

These themes and potential objectives were developed further between January and June 2016 to enable the launch of theme objectives at Stone Fete 2016. The consultation, both at the event and subsequently online for a further month, utilised specialised map survey software that enabled certain questions to be responded to through use of pins dropped at specific locations to denote favourable places to plant trees or buildings considered heritage assets, or through the drawing of lines over a map to indicate potential new footpaths and cycle paths.

Utilisation of this interactive map-based questionnaire not only provided key location-specific data, but also supported extensive consultation within the three local primary schools and at teenage youth activities as the children found this a familiar and exciting method of response.

Hard copy questionnaires were made available at key locations across the Parish, including Stone Pavilion, Stone Baptist Church, and Stone St Mary's Church. The monthly Stone Senior Citizen's tea morning received a presentation and encouraged attendees to complete surveys at the event. Flyers promoting the online survey were placed in local shops and public houses. Paid social media advertising was also used to drive traffic to the online survey.

109 survey responses were received from over 18's. Due to the activities undertaken within the schools and at teenage events, a total of 598 responses were obtained from under 18's providing invaluable data for directors to consider.

In October 2016, following a change in legislation, an application to request re-designation of the Neighbourhood Plan area to conform to the parish boundary was submitted to take advantage of the legal requirement for automatic approval if the requested boundary aligns with the parish administrative boundary. The new Neighbourhood Area was made effective from November 2016.

In November 2016, Dr Bora and Dr Chen from Elmdene Surgery attended the directors meeting to discuss proposals for expansion of GP services in the parish, possibly from a new location to be identified through neighbourhood plan activities.

Consultation in late November 2016 at the Parish Christmas lights switch-on event investigated residents 'Christmas wishes for the Parish'. A total of 66 responses were received: 39 wished for improved parks and open spaces; 25 wished for an affordable home; 22 wished for a new health centre; and 14 wished for better air quality.

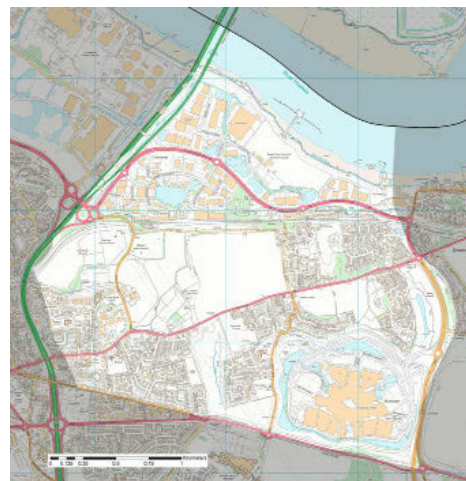
In February 2017, directors participated in two workshops designed to scope out options for policy objectives. These included a workshop to provide details regarding the potential for a Community Land Trust to enable direct provision of affordable homes for Stone Parish residents, as well as a workshop facilitated by AECOM, to support development of thematic policy objectives for inclusion in the draft plan.

Directors spent between March and June 2017 exploring and determining policy objectives, enabling production of thematic 'Key Themes and Objectives' vision boards which were launched at Stone Fete 2017 and subsequently formed the basis of an online consultation for two months.

In July 2017, in response to the overwhelming evidence regarding the prioritisation of valuable local green spaces, Stone Parish Council commissioned a SWOT analysis of Stone Recreation Ground to assess potential upgrades and improvements.

Natural England also attended the July director's meeting to provide details regarding the Thames Coastal path improvements.

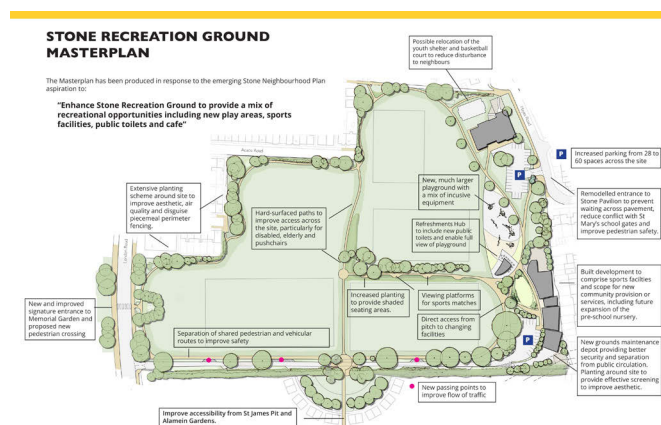
Further public consultation events on the Draft Plan Key Themes and Objectives were delivered at Asda Greenhithe on 21st August 2017 and at the Welsh Tavern Public House on 23rd August 2017.



A total of 54 responses were received to this round of consultation and, while there was a majority of support (84% or more) was seen for the individual thematic areas, it was clear that inclusion of policy objectives for housing were much more contentious, with 59% in support of proposals versus 41% against.

This appeared to indicate the extent to which local residents feel that the area has already received sufficient housing development. It also seemed likely there was an incorrect view that the Neighbourhood Plan was proposing further housing, when in fact it was trying to ensure through policy that the housing already earmarked for the area best serves Stone Parish residents through local prioritisation.

In November 2017, the parish council commissioned a full masterplan to be produced for Stone Recreation Ground to support inclusion of potential improvements in the draft plan as a local priority.



Following its launch at the Annual Parish meeting in May 2018, the Recreation Ground masterplan was the subject of a month-long consultation, both online and offline. A copy of the masterplan proposals was delivered to each household in the parish, along with the annual report which contained an update regarding the progress of the neighbourhood plan.

In June 2018, a paid social media campaign was conducted to create awareness of the individual areas to be consulted on at Stone Fete 2018. These included: proposals for a new cycle path and footpath network to support sustainable movement around the parish and to link key amenities; investigation into local support for self-build housing; and the community's vision for Horns Cross Centre.

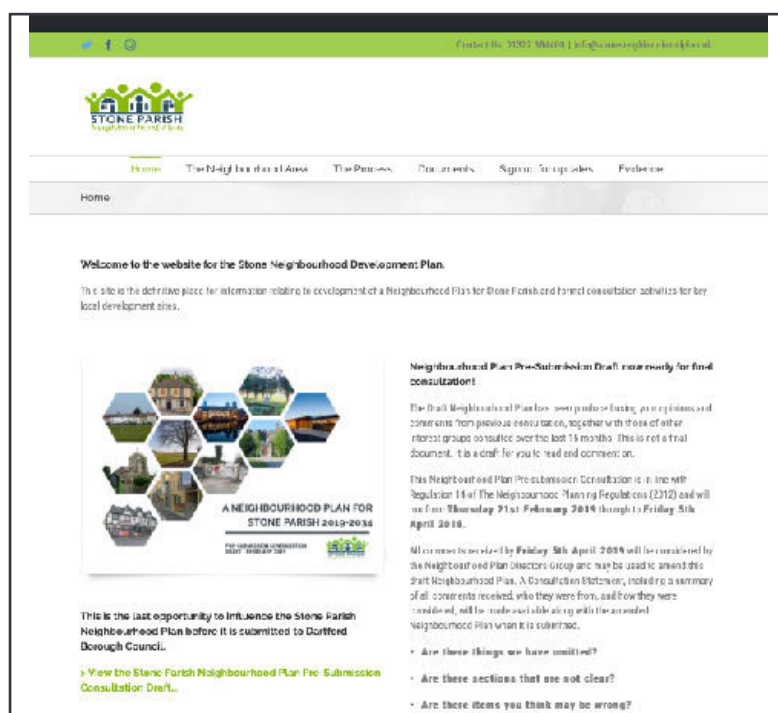
Exhibition boards based on the above were displayed at the annual Stone Fete and were also subsequently made available online.

In August 2018, following what had deemed to be sufficient consultation on all proposed thematic areas, directors began the task of concluding final policy objectives to enable production of the pre-submission consultation draft plan.

Regulation 14 Consultation

The pre-submission consultation draft plan was completed and approved for public consultation by Stone Parish Council as the Qualifying Body on 16th January 2019.

The Regulation 14 consultation took place between 21st Feb 2019 and 5th April 2019. This comprised the draft plan being published online and static displays at two churches, Two Trees Tearoom and the main community centre at Stone Pavilion.



Copies of the draft plan and consultation were also sent to statutory consultees and 88 other stakeholders, including elected representatives and local authority officers at both other tiers, local organisations such as churches, uniformed groups and sports clubs, local businesses, service providers such as Age UK and GP practices, landowners, neighbouring parish and town councils and housing organisations.

Comments were received from a total of 50 respondents. A summary of the responses is contained from page 12. 88% stated they would support the plan at referendum.

A second Regulation 14 consultation took place between 9th March 2020 and 27th April 2020 on the Plan as amended following the first Regulation 14 consultation.

This extended period recognised the Covid-19 social distancing restrictions which were introduced during the consultation period.

This consultation included a newsletter delivered to every household in the parish (including those not now within Stone parish) in the week commencing 1st March), statutory consultees identified in Schedule 1 of the Regulations being sent an email on Monday 9th March, circulation to business interests identified by Dartford Borough Council and full publication of the consultation online, by email and at static locations including Stone Pavilion. The second consultation was triggered by concerns expressed by Dartford Borough Council that the first Regulation 14 consultation did not fully meet statutory requirements.

A review of the process confirmed that some stakeholders were not notified of the consultation directly until midway through the process and Network Rail was not consulted. Two representations were made in response to the second Regulation 14 consultation, from Thames Water and Dartford Borough Council, and these are addressed in section five.

The Stone Parish Neighbourhood Plan website has been the central portal for communications of the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan. The website and e-newsletters has kept residents and other bodies informed during each phase of the plan. The website contains news, statutory information, copies of meeting agendas and minutes, neighbourhood plan documents and evidence base.

5. People and Bodies Consulted

In addition to parish residents, local landowners, businesses and third sector organisations were consulted throughout the various stages of the Neighbourhood Plan process. The consultation included all the statutory consultees required by Regulation to be engaged.

Some local landowners were also regular attendees at directors' meetings, along with a number of other groups and organisations that contributed to the plan's development.

These included:

- Debbie Stock (Dartford, Gravesham & Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group)
- Dr Bora and Dr Chen, Elmdene Surgery
- Francesca Sanchez and Caroline Hoggart (Natural England Coastal Paths Team)
- Stephen Hill (Community Land Trust)
- Nick Katz, George Dillaway and Robin Jones, Land Logical (Owners of Stone Pit 1)

Throughout the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, the director's group has kept in contact with officers and councillors from both Dartford Borough Council and Kent County Council.

Stakeholder consultation responses to the Regulation 14 consultation, and the director's group consideration of these responses, is contained on the next pages.

A full list of statutory and non-statutory consultees can be found at Appendix 21.

| Stakeholder Responses | Consideration by NDP Directors | Relevant Policy/Location in Plan |
|--|---|---|
| Kent County Council | | |
| KCC Regeneration & Projects Division: would welcome support within the Plan to improve primary and secondary school provision | Agreed - confirm the plan's support for the provision of a new primary school in the area | Page 37 – Local Infrastructure |
| KCC Regeneration & Projects Division: Objects to Policy GS4 as the designation of this land as green space would affect the lands value and KCC's ability to sell the land | Not agreed – purpose of designation unrelated to KCC's operational priorities | GS4 |
| KCC Regeneration & Projects Division: Support for policy HW3 and LI3 | Support welcomed | HW3 & LI3 |
| KCC Digital Infrastructure: Support for policy L13 | Welcomed – plan strengthened to address digital infrastructure | L13 – Digital Infrastructure |
| KCC Public Rights of Way and Access Service (PROW): Policy Omission HW3 cycling not included in title | Agreed - title changed to Walking & Cycling Neighbourhood | HW3 – Page 32 |
| KCC Public Rights of Way and Access Service (PROW): Map Omission – footpaths missing | Agreed – maps have been amended to include omitted footpaths | Figure 6 |
| Dartford Borough Council | | |
| Objection to GS1 | Not agreed – value of Local Green Space supported through consultation and evidence | GS1 |
| Concerns over GS2 | Need for further clarification agreed – plan amended to confirm that any proposal would be subject to planning permission and policy amended to reference the need to give consideration to local amenity. | GS2 |
| Clarification that part of the site will provide the extended neighbourhood centre | Need for further clarification agreed – plan amended to say 'some of this land' | GS3 |
| Concerns how Clements way buffer would work with the highway improvement scheme | Consider policy approach remains appropriate and is supported by consultation - no change required | GS4 |
| Do not think Aecom work should be referred to as not sufficiently robust evidence | Not agreed - plan describes basis of measurements and these were seasonally adjusted in line with Defra's technical guidance | Page 26 – Trees, Shrubs and Air Quality |
| Image on page 31 sends different message to the one being advocated in the plan | Agreed - image changed to children cycling to school with parent | Page 31 – Travel Plans |
| How does HW2 fit with Dartford local plan policies | Clarity provided that the plan 'supports and develops Dartford Borough Council's planning policy for development at Stone to demonstrate it has addressed potential capacity issues through provision of a travel plan (Policies CS4(2) and CS15(1h)).' | HW2 |

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| Believe there is no justification for conflict in Policy H1 with paragraph 63 of the NPPF; this states that the provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments (defined as those with 10 or more homes) | Plan amended to provide further clarity that 'Given the aims of this plan and local evidence, it is important to secure variety on sites of all sizes.' | H1 |
| Disagrees with H2 – not achievable under the Council's adopted housing allocations policy | Plan amended to align with Dartford Borough Council's Housing Allocations Policy. | H2 – Page 36 – Local Housing |
| Asked that stations outside the plan boundary be mentioned | Not agreed – Plan addresses station located within neighbourhood area. | L11 |
| HC1 supporting text should clarify that the proposals are an extension of the existing neighbourhood centre rather than a new one | Agreed that this is the intention – Policy HC1 wording refer to applications that 'strengthens' the neighbourhood centre 'where they support the vitality and viability of the existing centre'. | HC1 |
| Object to policy D2 as being over-prescriptive and going beyond what is appropriate for a policy | Not agreed – provision of appropriate information is essential to effective delivery of the Plan and quality design. It is supported by the NPPF ("The right information is crucial to good decision-making") and Planning Practice Guidance | D2 |
| Thames Water | | |
| No Specific Comments on Stone Neighbourhood Plan | No Action Necessary | N/A |
| Network Rail | | |
| No objections to the Plan. Happy to discuss any suggestions with the council. | No Action Necessary | N/A |
| Highways England | | |
| No objection to the Stone Parish Neighbourhood Plan | No Action Necessary | N/A |
| 1st Stone Guides | | |
| Full support of the plan | Support welcomed | N/A |
| KCC Member for Dartford East, Penny Cole | | |
| Fully support the plan and willing to provide assistance if needed | Support welcomed | N/A |
| Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council | | |
| In favour of St Clements Way buffer. Wanted clarification on if health centre will be one surgery/multiple etc | Support for Policy GS4 welcomed. Details of health provision at Horns Cross would be a matter for the Clinical Commissioning Group at planning application stage | GS4 and HC1 |
| West Kent Homes | | |
| Pleased to note commitment to ensuring affordable housing | Support welcomed | Policy H1, H2 |

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| Natural England | | |
| No specific comments | No Action Necessary | N/A |
| Environment Agency | | |
| No Specific Comments on the Plan | No Action Necessary | N/A |
| Local Resident Responses | | |
| Mrs C J Cooksey – Support for the plan, green space and doctor's surgery | Support welcomed | N/A |
| Mr & Mrs Canham – Protect green space and want doctor's surgery but not extra units | Support welcomed | N/A |
| Ryder Mirrise – Full support | Support welcomed | N/A |
| V Winchester – Full support of plan – very behind the air quality aspects as Dartford is so polluted | Support welcomed | N/A |
| Leah Ives – Support the plan. Worried over more housing | Support welcomed | N/A |
| Mr Terry Britton – 'Do not move the pavilion car park entrance opposite my house' | Policy amended to reference the need to give consideration to local amenity. | N/A |
| Dorothy Bartlett – Full Support of Plan | Support welcomed | N/A |
| Johnny Sharp – Preserve green space, no more housing | Support welcomed | GS1 |
| Cliff Cork – Supports doctors surgery, too much housing. More green space, possibly by the river | Support welcomed | N/A |
| Sharon Letchford – Protect Chapel of St Luke's | Support welcomed | GS1 |
| Mrs C Neal – Support protecting green space in parish | Support welcomed | GS1 |
| Mrs Tarnya Barr – Support green space allocations over Stone | Support welcomed | GS1 |
| Mr S Hopkinson – Green spaces must be protected | Support welcomed | GS1 |
| Mrs V Jeeves – Protect green spaces | Support welcomed | GS1 |
| Colin Martin – No Provision made about St James Lane | Issue not addressed in Plan | N/A |
| Julie James – Protect Green Spaces | Support welcomed | GS1 |
| Josh Payne – No more housing, protect green space | Support welcomed | GS1 |
| Sally Rose - No more housing, protect green space | Support welcomed | GS1 |
| Robert Mitchell – Supports the plan. Important to protect green spaces | Support welcomed | GS1 |
| Margaret Mitchell – Full Support of the plan | Support welcomed | N/A |

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| Jessica McQueen – Support the plan, need medical centre urgently | Support welcomed | HC1 |
| Peter Lippard – Full support, protect green spaces | Support welcomed | GS1 |
| Millie Willis-Baugh – preserve green space | Support welcomed | GS1 |
| Chris Willis-Baugh – protect St Luke's Chapel | Support welcomed | GS1 |
| Sashi Sekhar – Add TFL buses to stop on London Road and the Brent to reduce car traffic near the schools | Provision of public transport services is not a matter for the Plan | N/A |
| Clare O'Donnell – Fully support the plan | Support welcomed | N/A |
| Kerstin Peters – Air Pollution exceeding limits. Need to re-establish greenery and trees. | Agreed – Plan seeks to help achieve this | HW1 |
| Susan Martin – Need space for doctors and green spaces | Support welcomed | GS1, HC1 |
| John Clare – support the plan and its aims to reduce air pollution and increase sustainable travel | Support welcomed | N/A |
| Keith Mison – suggestion that extra planting by 'green-linking' between each end of the footpaths proposed | Support for green link is included in the Plan | N/A |
| Joseph Finnegan – disappointed that plan is focused around recreation ground as never visited. Welcomes Horns Cross centre development. Would like the St Clements Way Buffer to be green space | Support for Policy HC1 welcomed. Evidence does not support St Clements Way buffer meeting criteria for Local Green Space designation but the Plan seeks to protect it as a green buffer. | GS4, HC1 |

6. Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Pre-constitution Parish Questionnaire
- Appendix 2 – Invitation to launch event held Saturday 1st November 2014
- Appendix 3 – Request for designation of Neighbourhood Area to DBC sent
5th December 2014
- Appendix 4 – Invitation to become a Neighbourhood Plan Director to the
steering group held 21st March 2015
- Appendix 5 – Community Engagement Strategy
- Appendix 6 – Stone Fete exhibition map & flag activity data
- Appendix 7 – Instructions for Map & Flag activity
- Appendix 8 – Cabinet original decision for Designation of Stone
Neighbourhood Area
- Appendix 9 – Youth Survey results
- Appendix 10 – Youth events / Xmas Lights signage & responses
- Appendix 11 – Youth Survey summarized results
- Appendix 12 – Revised decision from DBC regarding Designated
Neighbourhood Area
- Appendix 13 – Stone Neighbourhood Plan Discussion Week on Social Media
posts
- Appendix 14 – Draft Objectives Consultation
- Appendix 15 – Draft Objectives responses & suggestions
- Appendix 16 – Stone Fete 2017 Exhibition Consultation
- Appendix 17 – Asda/Welsh Tavern Exhibition & Consultation data
- Appendix 18 – Plan Proposals for Exhibition & Consultation
- Appendix 19 – Stone Recreation Ground Masterplan leaflet
- Appendix 20 – Pre-Submission Consultation Documents
- Appendix 21 – Statutory and Non-Statutory Stakeholder List

Prepared by the Stone Parish Neighbourhood Plan Directors
on behalf of Stone Parish Council.

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