

A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR STONE PARISH 2020-2035

SUBMISSION DRAFT - OCTOBER 2020



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Foreword

Dear Resident,

Stone Parish is a busy and vibrant commuter neighbourhood with much happening both in terms of development and activity. The parish population continues to grow at high speed, placing increasing demand on local services.

The Stone Parish Neighbourhood Plan started back in 2015 when the parish council appointed a steering group comprising parish councillors, local residents, and representatives of local churches and organisations to ensure it really is a community-led initiative.

Following years of development, with little investment into local infrastructure, the parish council was keen to give local people the opportunity to influence how further development comes forward and also ensure development taxes are spent on parish priorities.

The Stone Parish neighbourhood plan sets out a vision for the area that reflects the feedback of local people and their wishes for the community. The Plan sets objectives for key themes, such as getting around the parish, open spaces, air quality, and health and wellbeing.

It seeks acknowledgement and support from other tiers of authority, partners and local organisations for delivery of outcomes that will

improve the appearance and functionality of the parish and therefore, the quality of life of local residents.

The Parish Council is keen that its own strategic delivery corresponds with the wishes of local people and prioritises objectives that will make a real difference to the community. It expects to incorporate many neighbourhood plan objectives into the council's future plans.

There are a number of documents supporting the neighbourhood plan, including details of public consultation, supporting research and other evidence and relevant Dartford Borough Council documents. These can all be found on the Stone Parish Neighbourhood Plan website at www.stoneneighbourhoodplan.uk

We commend this draft neighbourhood plan to you.

Yours Faithfully,

Paul Winchester

Chairman , Stone Parish Neighbourhood Plan Directors

Stone Parish Story

Location

The parish of Stone is in North West Kent and lies 17 miles from London. It is at the heart of the major regeneration area of the Thames Gateway. To the north lies the River Thames estuary and the west is bordered by the M25 and the Dartford Crossing.

There are a large number of green, open spaces hiding pasts as excavated chalk pits and, latterly, as landfill sites. Lines of pylons form dominant features in this open and often treeless landscape with urbanisation and large settlements visible due to lack of any woodland screening.



The parish takes its name from the stony situation of it; Stane in Saxon signifying a Stone. It is referred to as Estanes in the Domesday Book and has a history reaching back as far as Saxon times demonstrated by large quantities of Iron Age and Roman pottery excavated locally.

The proximity to the Dartford Crossing and M25 means the parish is a cut-through for traffic. The Dartford Crossing sees 145,000 vehicles daily and if the bridge gets closed due to bad weather the parish can come to a complete standstill.

Population

Stone is a medium-size parish with approximately 4,700 households. The 2011 census states the population as 10,778, although this will have increased to over 12,000 due to new developments since that time. There is an almost 50% ratio between males and females. The largest age group is the 25-34, with the average age being 35. This is younger than both the Dartford (38) and Kent County (41) averages.

Leisure

The Recreation Ground comprises 15 acres at the heart of Stone and features football pitches, children's playground, multi-use games area and youth shelter. Youth and senior football teams operate from Stone Recreation Ground. Other children's playgrounds are located at a number of other sites across the parish.

Stone Pavilion is a vibrant community facility that offers a wide variety of clubs for all age ranges, fitness and health activities, and interest groups. Youth clubs run at Stone Pavilion and Stone Baptist church.

Uniformed group activities are provided at two different parish locations. A new activity centre is due for imminent construction to further enhance provision of uniformed group and Duke of Edinburgh award scheme activities.



Employment

Although a commuter neighbourhood, statistically more people commute daily into Stone Parish than out, mainly due to the presence of Crossways Business Park and Bluewater Shopping Village.

Due to these two significant employment sites, the parish provides more than a third of the jobs in Dartford Borough. Unemployment among parish residents is low at 1.6%.

Health & Wellbeing

The life expectancy of parish residents is 75 for men and 79 for women. This is lower than that of Dartford and Kent.

The parish contains a General Practice with two GPs. Many residents in the west travel out of the parish to access GP services at the Dartford East Clinic.



Housing

Much of Stone's architectural history disappeared in a few decades. Many prominent and characteristic buildings such as the former school, rectory and imposing residences were demolished and replaced with residential development of a different character.

The townscape that emerged by the end of the century was a strange contrast of old and new, a hotchpotch of buildings and developments co-existing uneasily in an ever-changing landscape. A range of building heights is evident. Terrace buildings are prevalent in both traditional and modern forms.

More parish residents rent their home than average. A mix of housing types can be found, with 37% comprising apartments, 31% terraced houses and 32% detached and semi-detached houses/bungalows.

Housing density is relatively low in the older parts of Stone, but high at newer developments. An average of 89 homes has been completed per year in the parish since 2007.

Key Facts about the Parish

49.7% FEMALE
50.3% MALE

12,000
RESIDENT POPULATION
IN
4,700
HOUSEHOLDS

32%

of households have dependent children

Main Ethnic Groups

White - 86%
Asian/Asian British - 5.9%

Qualifications

19% of the population have
no formal qualifications

Employment

Largest Employment Group - Lower
Managerial, Administrative, Professional
Occupations - 22%

Health

4% of the population have bad or very
bad health, 44% are in very good health

27%

*of the Parish population is aged
between 30-44
with a mean age of 35 (Dartford 38)*

58%

of properties are Owner Occupied

39%

are rental properties

Neighbourhood Planning

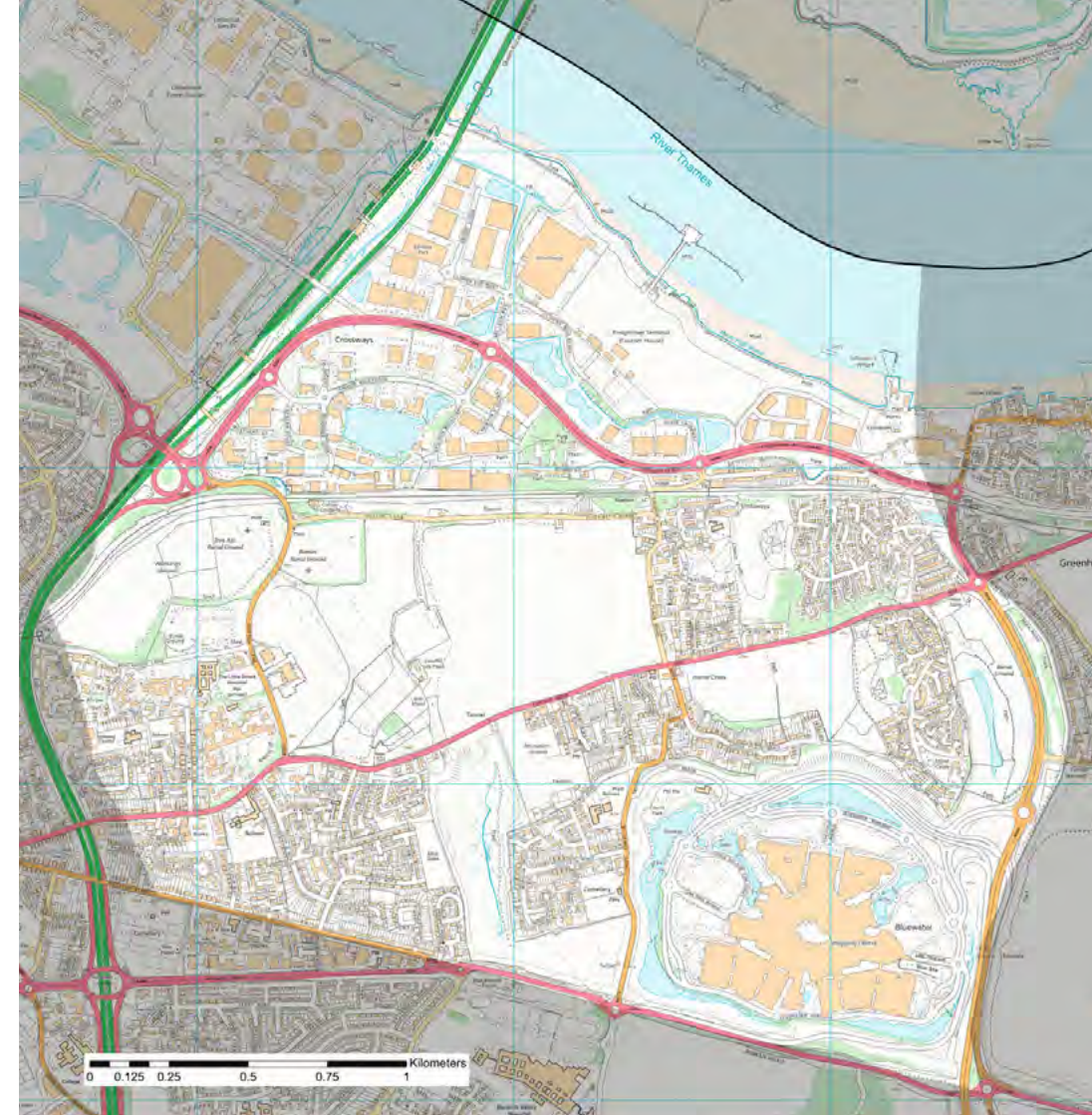
A neighbourhood plan is a community-led document that provides planning policies against which planning applications must be assessed.

The Neighbourhood Plan policies will combine with the Local Plan policies prepared by Dartford Borough Council to provide the development plan for the area. **The neighbourhood plan has the same legal status as the Local Plan.**

The Dartford Local Plan comprises the Core Strategy 2011 and the Development Policies Local Plan 2017. A review of the Local Plan is underway. The neighbourhood plan supports the Local Plan and the relevant Local Plan policies are referenced alongside each neighbourhood plan policy. Neighbourhood Plans provide local communities with the chance to shape the future development of their areas. They can only contain land use planning policies that can be used for the purpose of determining planning applications and so cannot address all the issue of interest to the local community.

All neighbourhood plans must meet some “Basic Conditions” requiring it to fit within national planning policy and the strategic policies of the Local Plan. They must also support sustainable development and meet regulations governing environmental impact and habitat protection. Neighbourhood plans also need to be based on effective local consultation.

These requirements will be tested by an independent Examiner following a further period of public consultation on a revised version of this neighbourhood plan. If the neighbourhood plan passes the Examination then it must be agreed by a majority of those voting in a public referendum.



Neighbourhood Area

The area of the neighbourhood plan for Stone was agreed by Dartford Borough Council in 2016 and is for the parish area at that time.

This will remain the area of the neighbourhood plan after the small changes to the Stone Parish boundary in May 2019 which follows a recent Community Governance Review by Dartford Borough Council.



Engaging Stone's Community

The neighbourhood plan has been developed through consultation with the local community since 2015. Exhibitions, events and other consultation activity have generated more than 1700 responses and details of the consultation are available on the neighbourhood plan website.

The consultation activity has included several online surveys, exhibitions at the Stone Fete and the Greenhithe ASDA, a social media discussion and an event targeted at young people. There has also been consultation on the Recreation Ground Masterplan.

Consultation on a draft of the full plan was undertaken between February and April 2019 and again between March and April 2020.

There is overwhelming support for protecting and improving the area's green spaces and creating more links between different parts of the neighbourhood area. The local community also strongly supports measures to improve local services, including a new medical centre.

There is widespread concern over the impact of new housing and strong support for it to meet the needs of people living in the area as a priority. The results of this consultation have informed the Vision, Key Themes and Objectives for the neighbourhood plan and underpin its policies.

Our Vision

Over the next 15 years, it will have become clear that our community is a sustainable, proud, enterprising, friendly, healthy, safe and caring place to live and a place where people can afford to put down roots, have their say locally and really thrive.

By 2035, this means we will have strengthened Stone's environment, public spaces, the affordability of its homes, community infrastructure provision & the economic and social opportunities it offers residents and businesses.

Our Key Themes and Objectives



GREEN SPACE & RECREATION

Objective
Create a high quality environment through provision of, and access to, good quality open spaces and recreational activities.

- Policies**
- GS1 Local Green Space
 - GS2 Stone Recreation Ground
 - GS3 Stone Pit 1
 - GS4 St Clements Way Buffer



HEALTH & WELLBEING

Objective
Develop good quality accessible health provision and opportunities for people to live healthier lives and move sustainably around the parish in a cleaner environment

- Policies**
- HW1 Trees, Shrubs and Air Quality
 - HW2 Travel Plans
 - HW3 Walking & Cycling Neighbourhood



HOUSING

Objective
Provide opportunities for 'whole-lifetime parish residency', which means that there are accommodation choices available to residents to enable them to continue to live in the parish when their housing needs change.

- Policies**
- H1 Range of housing provision
 - H2 Local housing

The neighbourhood plan is part of how we aim to achieve these objectives for Stone, alongside working on projects and collaboration with others (including local authorities, infrastructure providers, landowners and developers and the existing and future community). We have also developed policies to help deliver the neighbourhood plan.



LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Objectives
Ensure new and existing local infrastructure is of high quality and supports the needs of the existing and future community to prosper.

- Policies**
- LI1 Stone Crossing Station
 - LI2 Stone Castle
 - LI3 Digital infrastructure



HORNS CROSS CENTRE

Objectives
Strengthen the role of Horns Cross as a focus for the neighbourhood providing a range of community facilities, local services and additional green space.

- Policies**
- HC1 Horns Cross Centre



DELIVERING THE PLAN

Objectives
Secure the neighbourhood plan's delivery through effective engagement and quality design.

- Policies**
- D1 Planning application and consultation requirements
 - D2 Design and Development Information



FIGURE 1. APPROACH MAP

LEGEND



LOCAL GREEN SPACE - POLICY GS1
ST CLEMENTS WAY BUFFER - POLICY GS4



STONE CROSSING STATION - POLICY LI1
STONE CASTLE - POLICY LI2



HORN'S CROSS CENTRE - POLICY HC1



STONE RECREATION GROUND - POLICY GS2



GREEN CORRIDOR - POLICIES HW1 & HW3



PROPOSED NEW ROUTE - POLICY HW3



PROPOSED IMPROVED ROUTE - POLICY HW3



EXISTING ROUTE - POLICY HW3

Our Approach

The accompanying Figure 1 summarises some of the locational policies in the neighbourhood plan.



Policies

This section of the neighbourhood plan provides the planning policies which will support delivery of the objectives.

Each policy is set in a local context and supported by relevant evidence and appropriate references to the most relevant policy in Dartford Borough Council's Local Plan (comprising the Core Strategy (2011) and Development Policies Plan (2017)).



Green Space & Recreation

Objective: Create a high quality environment through provision of, and access to, good quality open spaces and recreational activities

CONTEXT

The quality of green space and recreational facilities is a major contributor to the quality of life for everyone living and working in Stone. The importance of open spaces and opportunities to enjoy them was a recurring theme during public engagement over the plan. For 57% of those surveyed the area's green spaces were the thing they most valued about living in Stone and over 90% supported the green space proposals.

The public benefits of high quality, accessible green space are well documented (e.g. The value of public space, CABI Space, 2015; Spatial planning for health, Public Health England, 2017).

The neighbourhood area is strategically located in the Thames-side Green Corridors Biodiversity Opportunity Area in the Local Plan. Biodiversity Opportunity Areas create ecological links that are required to be protected and enhanced. They are supported by the Kent Nature Partnership and support implementation of the Kent Biodiversity Strategy.

Stone is an area with limited access to green space despite large parts of the neighbourhood area not being developed. The majority of these areas are not publicly accessible. This makes the remaining publicly accessible green space all the more important.



LOCAL GREEN SPACE

A review of the potential for identifying areas to be recognised as Local Green Space was undertaken, informed by feedback during community engagement on the plan. This concluded there were three potential areas and these have been assessed against the criteria in the National Planning Policy Framework. The results of this assessment are provided in Annex 1.

Once designated these areas are subject to the same planning policy as Green Belt. The proposed areas complement existing protected areas already designated by Dartford's Local Plan in Stone as Borough Open Space (Alamein Community Garden, Stone Castle Park) or Protected Local Green Space (Kirby Road Allotments, Charles Street Pocket Park).

GS1 – Local Green Space – The following areas identified in Annex 1 are designated Local Green Spaces where inappropriate development should not be approved except in very special circumstances:

- Setting of St Luke's Chapel
- Alamein Gardens
- Horns Cross Gardens

Supporting Local Plan policies CS14, DP23, DP24

THE FUTURE STONE RECREATION GROUND

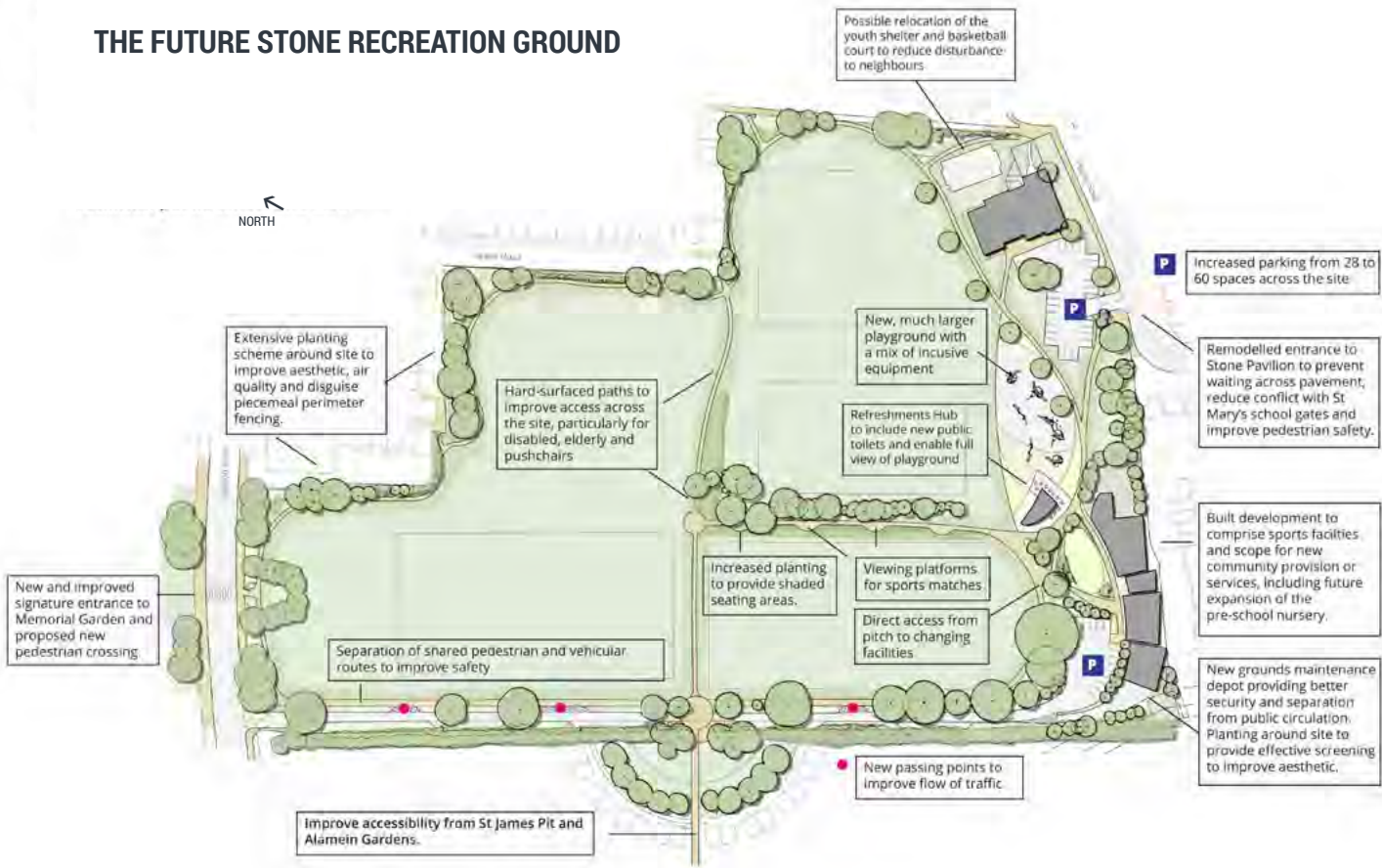


FIGURE 2. FUTURE STONE RECREATION GROUND



STONE RECREATION GROUND

Stone Recreation Ground is the principal open space and recreational asset in the neighbourhood area. It is owned and managed by Stone Parish Council and protected as Borough Open Space in the Dartford Local Plan.

A masterplan has been developed with engagement of the local community to inform its future. The full Masterplan proposals can be [viewed on the neighbourhood plan website](#).

The Masterplan has been subject to wide public consultation and is presented in Figure 2. It supports delivery of “improvements to Stone Recreation Ground” identified in Dartford Borough Council’s Core Strategy CS4(1d).

Policy GS2 seeks both to protect Stone Recreation Ground from development which would impact negatively upon it and support implementation of the Masterplan. Delivery of the Masterplan would require a planning application that would address any impact on local amenity.

GS2 – Stone Recreation Ground – Planning applications for development at Stone Recreation Ground should protect and enhance the recreation ground and support delivery of the Stone Recreation Ground Masterplan while addressing any impact on local amenity.

Supporting Local Plan policies CS4(1d), CS14, CS2

STONE PIT 1

With planning applications already submitted or approved, the neighbourhood area may accommodate significant new development over the period of the neighbourhood plan with the restoration of the former pits. Development proposals for pit restoration should strongly support green space and health & wellbeing objectives.

The former Stone Pit 1 site presents the area’s most significant opportunity for the provision of new accessible open space, subject to viability.

Stone Pit 1 is a historic quarry and landfill site which covers 41ha. A large part of it is actively being restored. Some of this land will also contribute to an extended neighbourhood centre at Horns Cross (Policy HC1).

Ambitions for the provision of a significant area of new accessible green space on this site are thought to be consistent with objectives of the current landowner.

GS3 Stone Pit 1 Planning applications for development should provide for a new accessible green space.

Supporting Local Plan policy CS14

ST CLEMENTS WAY BUFFER

The review of potential areas for recognition as Local Green Space also identified the important role played by the green buffer that runs along St Clements Way Figure3.

This does not fully meet the Local Green Space criteria but can make a positive contribution to the public realm on a key route to Greenhithe station. This buffer should also contribute to the plan’s health and well-being objective (Policy HW1).



FIGURE 3. ST CLEMENTS WAY BUFFER

GS4 St Clements Way buffer Planning applications for development at or in the vicinity of the open space along St Clements Way (Figure 3) should protect or enhance its role as a green buffer, where appropriate.

Supporting Local Plan policy CS14



Health & Wellbeing

Objective: Develop good quality accessible health provision and opportunities for people to live healthier lives and move sustainably around the parish in a cleaner environment

CONTEXT

The plan supports the National Planning Policy Framework in seeking to reduce the need to travel and provide alternative modes (paragraph 103) and support traffic and travel management and green infrastructure provision and enhancement (paragraph 181).

It also responds to the recognition by the Government in the Clean Air Strategy (Defra, 2018) that “Air pollution is a major public health risk ranking alongside cancer, heart disease and obesity. It causes more harm than passive smoking” and the Strategy’s support for active travel and tackling pollution hotspots along roads.



TREES, SHRUBS AND AIR QUALITY

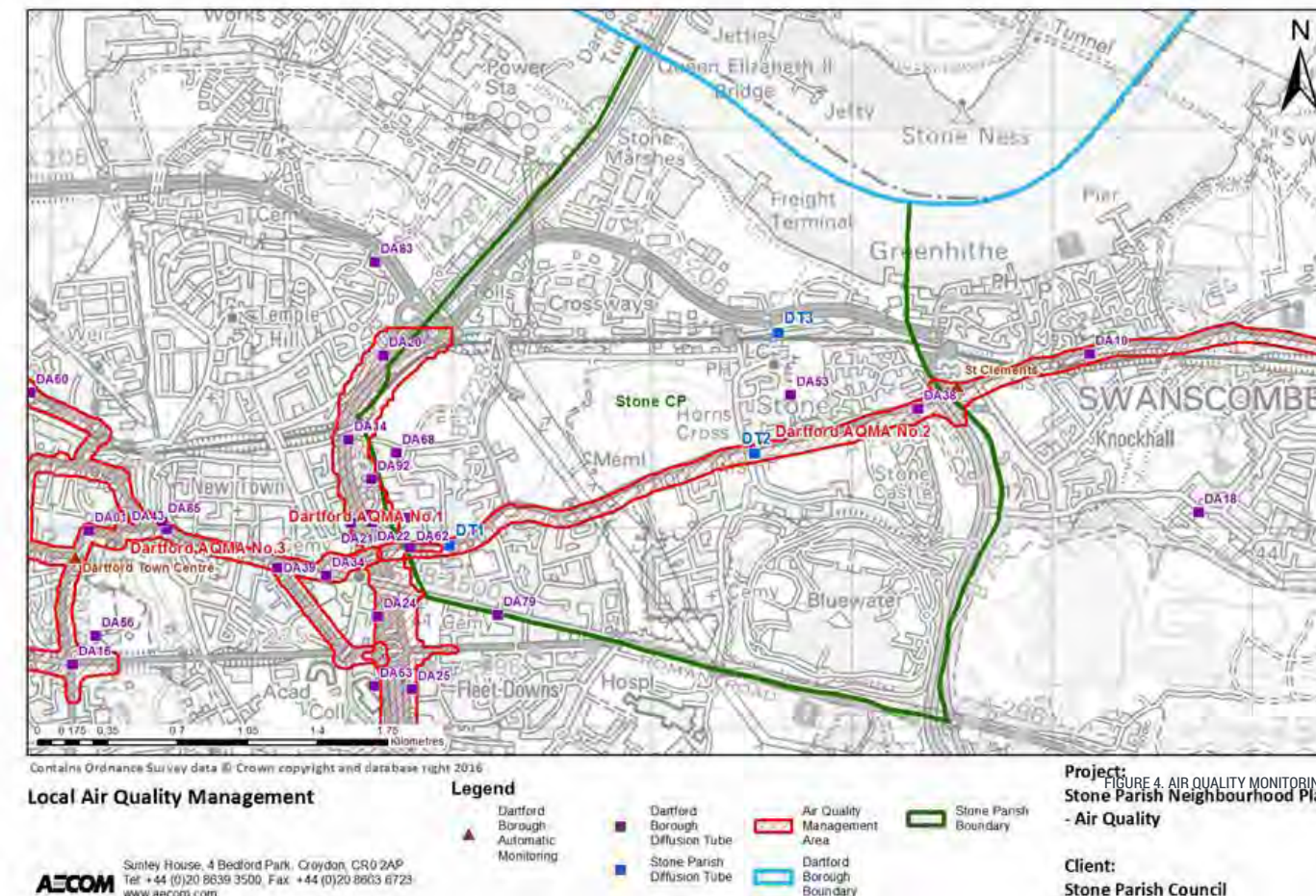
Community engagement on the neighbourhood plan identified strong support for addressing air quality through expanding tree cover and planting shrubs. This is backed by widespread evidence of the benefits of green space for air quality (e.g. Urban green spaces and health. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2016; Urban air quality, Woodland Trust, 2012).

The Kent and Medway Air Quality Partnership Planning Guidance (2015) also supports using green infrastructure, in particular trees, to absorb dust and other pollutants. The approach of Policy HW1 is consistent with national planning policy that “opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green

infrastructure provision and enhancement. So far as possible, these opportunities should be considered at the plan-making stage.” (NPPF, paragraph 181).

In the absence of a continuous monitoring station in the neighbourhood area AECOM was commissioned to survey its air quality and review existing data (Air Quality in Stone, AECOM, 2017). The results are based on measurements from diffusion tubes over a three month period, which were seasonally adjusted in line with Defra’s technical guidance.

The areas monitored are shown in Figure 4.





AECOM's report shows that large sections of London Road have consistently exceeded World Health Organisation guidelines for NO₂ of an annual mean of 40 µg/m³ for more than 10 years.

Dartford Borough Council has identified London Road as one of four Air Quality Management Areas and that it exceeds objectives for both nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate (PM₁₀) levels. It identifies the major source of these pollutants as road traffic. Dartford Borough Council is developing an Action Plan for each of its Air Quality Management Areas. This is supported by the neighbourhood plan.

The National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) guideline also advises "including landscape features such as trees and vegetation in open spaces" as part of plan making to address air pollution (Air pollution: outdoor air quality and health, NICE guideline, June 2017).

LHLA was commissioned to inform the best approach to mitigating the impact of vehicle pollution from London Road through investment in green infrastructure and planting of trees and hedgerows (Proposed Green Corridor, London Road Air Quality Management Area LHLA, 2018)). This identified four zones along London Road and the planned interventions supported in Policy HW1 for this green corridor are in Figure 5. The LHLA Green Corridor report can be viewed on the neighbourhood plan website.



FIGURE 5. GREEN CORRIDOR ZONES

HW1 – Trees, shrubs and air quality

Planning applications for development should protect existing hedgerows, trees, shrubs and woodland and provide additional tree cover, shrubs and hedgerows along the London Road green corridor (Figure 5), where appropriate. Where development is approved which would result in the removal of hedgerows, shrubs or trees then equivalent and appropriate replacement planting will be required.

Supporting Local Plan policy DP5, DP25



TRAVEL PLANS

An important role for the neighbourhood plan is to encourage active travel which promotes alternatives to vehicle use and supports healthy ways of moving around the neighbourhood area.

The need to address the traffic implications of new development and promote alternatives was raised consistently during community engagement. The benefits of active travel are well established (e.g. A healthy city is an active city, World Health Organization, 2008).

The plan supports the expectation in national planning policy that “all developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.” (NPPF, paragraph 111).

It also 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)). Travel plans could include measures such as car clubs and improved walking/cycling routes to achieve their objectives.

Policy HW2 establishes the need and identifies the time period for monitoring compliance consistent with National Planning Practice Guidance (Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 42-012-20140306).



HW2 – Travel plans – Planning applications for development (including schools) which generates significant amounts of movement should be accompanied by a travel plan that encourages active travel, supports use of low emission vehicles and is monitored annually for implementation for a minimum of ten years after completion.

Supporting Local Plan policies CS4(2), CS15



WALKING & CYCLING NEIGHBOURHOOD

The community engagement identified a demand for more opportunities to walk and cycle around the neighbourhood area using improved existing routes, public rights of way and new routes. This will provide healthier forms of travel as well as reducing air pollution and public exposure to air pollution. The benefits of planning for more active lifestyles are well documented (e.g. Active by design, Design Council, 2014; Building connected communities, LGiU/Ramblers 2017)).

Stone Parish Council commissioned AECOM to identify priorities for investment and establishing new routes (Stone Neighbourhood Plan: walking and cycling study, 2018). This work was developed further by LHLA (Proposed Pedestrian and Cycle Network, 2019). The plans are set out in Figure 6 and the neighbourhood plan supports development which will either protect existing routes or secure delivery of these plans. It also supports direct footpath and cycle routes within new developments that connect to this network.

HW3 – Walking & cycling neighbourhood – Planning applications for development should protect or improve the network of walking and cycling routes, including public rights of way, and/or make provision for new walking and cycling routes within new development that connect with the network identified in Figure 6 and Annex 2.

Supporting Local Plan policies CS15, DP4



FIGURE 6. PEDESTRIAN & CYCLE NETWORK

LHLA

Louise Hooper Landscape Architect



Housing

Objective: Provide opportunities for ‘whole-lifetime parish residency’ which means that there are accommodation choices available to residents to enable them to continue to live in the parish when their housing needs change

CONTEXT

Stone is one of the fastest growing parishes in Kent. There are plans for substantial housebuilding over the next 20 years, largely as the result of the development of the former quarry and landfill sites.

A recurring concern during community engagement was the lack of provision for local people and more affordable homes. There was strong support for ensuring that, given the large amount of development planned, it should

be possible for any existing resident to have choices of suitable places to live at a price they can afford.

There is community support for self- and custom-build housing and the Local Plan makes provision for this in Policy DP9.

Stone Parish Council is strongly supportive of a Community Land Trust being established in the area.



RANGE OF HOUSING PROVISION

It is important to secure a wide range of housing provision within the new development planned for the neighbourhood area. The majority will come forward on large development sites according to Local Plan policies CS18 and CS19.

Given the aims of this Plan and local evidence, it is important to secure variety on sites of all sizes.

Policy H1 supports national planning policy to provide for the range of sizes, types and tenures of housing needed for different groups in the community (NPPF paragraph 61).

- H1 – Range of housing provision – Planning applications for new homes or alterations and extensions to existing buildings for residential use will be supported which increase the local supply of:**
- i. Financially more affordable non-open market homes including Starter Homes;
 - ii. Later life homes meeting Building Regulations Requirement Part M4 (Category 2);
 - iii. Accessible homes, including ‘Wheelchair user dwellings’ as defined by Building Regulations Requirement Part M4 (Category 3); and/or
 - iv. Suitably sized developments for Class C2 (for people in need of care).

Supporting Local Plan policies CS18, CS19, DP7, DP8, DP9

LOCAL HOUSING

An important part of the 'whole lifetime parish residency' objective is to secure homes which mean that there are accommodation choices available to residents to enable them to continue to live in the parish when their housing needs change. Given the number of new homes planned for Stone Parish during the lifetime of this plan, it is a reasonable expectation of Stone residents that their affordable housing needs will be met.

Dartford Borough Council's current Housing Allocations Policy includes "local connection" requirements for the allocation of affordable rented housing provided on new developments under Dartford Core Strategy policy CS19 and Development Policies Plan policy DP9.

The general requirement is that the prospective occupant has lived continuously in the Borough for a minimum of 2 years up to the point of application. It sets out bands of need according to the circumstances of the applicant.

H2 – Local housing – Affordable rented homes provided in accordance with development plan policy should be made available to those who satisfy the “local connection” requirements of Dartford Borough Council's Housing Allocations Policy.

Supporting Local Plan policy CS19, DP9



Local Infrastructure

Objective: Ensure new and existing local infrastructure is of high quality and supports the needs of the existing and future community to prosper

CONTEXT

This section of the neighbourhood plan addresses some of the pressures and opportunities for the area which can come from development.

Stone Parish Council supports the need for development to contribute to the improvement and expansion of public services, including the need for a new primary school within Stone Parish.

The process of community engagement and a review of potential opportunities have identified three priorities which can be addressed through planning policy.



STONE CROSSING STATION

Stone Crossing provides the main public transport connection for the neighbourhood area. It has recently benefitted from investment in a foot bridge and an improved service to a wider range of destinations.

The station is poorly located in relation to the rest of the neighbourhood area with access from the south confined to a narrow road and limited pedestrian and cycling connections.

The railway presents a significant barrier to north/south movement and the only reasonable access is from the A206 which largely serves needs arising from outside the neighbourhood area.

There are development opportunities on sites near to the station and Policy LI1 supports those which will improve Stone Crossing station and its accessibility to the rest of the neighbourhood area.

This approach received strong support during community engagement.



LI1 – Stone Crossing Station – Planning applications for development at or in the vicinity of Stone Crossing station should improve its facilities, directly encourage better provision and use of public transport and/or improve pedestrian and cycling connections to the rest of the neighbourhood area shall be supported.

Supporting Local Plan policy DP4

STONE CASTLE

Stone Castle is an important historic site in the neighbourhood area. It dates to the 12th century and is on the site where William the Conqueror signed a treaty in 1067. It is now part of a 19th century building in office use.

The Castle is Grade II listed and in private hands. Stone Castle was well recognised during community engagement and is a source of local pride. It has the potential to play an even more significant community role which also recognises its historic importance.

A community role may be demonstrated through providing a service or facility that by its scale and function is focussed primarily on local users, whether open to general members of the public as customers or occupied by local businesses, or alternatively active uses provided by the public or community or voluntary organisations.

LI2 – Stone Castle – Planning applications for development at Stone Castle should strengthen its community role and respect its historic interest.

Supporting Local Plan policy CS4(h), DP12, DP13



DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

New development in the neighbourhood area can upgrade its digital connectivity by providing high speed broadband to new homes, offices, retail or community facilities.

Given the significant growth expected in the neighbourhood area, it is important for Stone to be digitally well connected. While the provision of broadband is a decision to be made by each developer it can be supported by ensuring that all relevant developments are designed to make it as easy as possible.

The Government has stated that “developments with Fibre To The Premise (FTTP) connections are truly fit for 21st Century living - developments with no, or slow, connections are inexcusable.” (New Build Developments: Delivering gigabit-capable connections, DCMS, 2018).

This will be supported by Policy LI3 ensuring new development in Stone is designed to be gigabit capable, which will usually mean being served by providing fibre optic cable to the premises.



LI3 – Digital infrastructure – New developments consisting of new dwellings, retail or office use or social infrastructure will be expected to be designed to be gigabit capable.



Horns Cross Centre

Objective: Strengthen the role of Horns Cross as a focus for the neighbourhood providing a wide range of community facilities, local services and additional green space

CONTEXT

The neighbourhood area lacks a central focus which provides a range of local community facilities. There is an opportunity to strengthen the role of Horns Cross to provide a wider range of generally small scale and walkable facilities or essential community services. This received widespread support through community engagement.



HORNS CROSS NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

The neighbourhood plan identifies Horns Cross as the location for development of a neighbourhood centre on the north side of London Road in the south eastern part of Stone Pit 1. This supports and extends identification of Horns Cross as a neighbourhood centre in Dartford's Local Plan.

Any new retail units would need to be of an appropriate scale and be designed so they integrate with existing services and do not undermine their function.

Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group has plans for the provision of a new health centre and dentist to address the acknowledged shortfall in provision. It would be appropriate to locate this within the extended neighbourhood centre.

HC1 – Horns Cross Neighbourhood Centre – Planning applications for development which strengthens Horns Cross neighbourhood centre will be supported where they support the vitality and viability of the existing centre and are well related to it in size, function and layout; and where commercial provision does not create a destination dependent on private vehicle access.

Proposals for a new health centre in this location will also be supported.

Supporting Local Plan policy CS4(1b), DP18, DP21



Delivering the Plan

Objective: Secure the neighbourhood plan's delivery through effective engagement and quality design.

CONTEXT

The Stone Community is keen to play a stronger role in supporting good design and ensuring a smoother planning process by working pro-actively, constructively and positively with landowners and developers.

This can best be achieved through early engagement prior to the submission of planning applications for the most significant development and the sharing of a minimum level of information on proposals.

The neighbourhood plan supports Dartford Borough Council's Statement of Community

Consultation (2017) which supports "the principle of 'front loading' public involvement as early as possible in the process, so it can really influence proposals.....and in particular encouraging developers of major developments to consult with the public before an application is submitted." (paragraph 1.7).

For the purposes of policies D1 and D2 major development is as defined by the Government in regulations (currently article 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (England) Order 2015).

PLANNING APPLICATION AND CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

The benefits of early engagement and sharing of local knowledge with developers and landowners as part of the design and development process for significant sites in the neighbourhood area is recognised in national planning policy:

“Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.”
NPPF paragraph 128

There are significant benefits to landowners and developers from early consultation as it allows them to take into account possible issues and opportunities the community is interested in.

D1 – Planning application and consultation requirements – Planning applications which are accompanied by evidence of early, proactive and effective community engagement in their evolution shall be looked on more favourably than those that are not. Major development proposals should be accompanied by a Statement of Community Consultation which includes:

- i. An explanation of how a broad cross-section of local people, both in the immediate and the wider neighbourhood are likely to be affected by the development proposals; and**
- ii. A record of the views expressed by local people and Stone Parish Council on the proposed development; and**
- iii. An explanation of how the proposals have addressed the views, ideas and any issues or concerns raised by local people and Stone Parish Council.**

DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION

National planning policy emphasises the importance of making “appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development”. These include workshops to engage the local community, design advice and review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for Life 12. These are of most benefit if used as early as possible in the evolution of schemes, and are particularly important for significant projects such as large scale housing and mixed use developments.” (NPPF paragraph 129)

These tools will help ensure planning applications are accompanied by the right level of design information to allow the local community to understand what is being proposed and engage in a meaningful consultation process.

This can be presented in the Design and Access Statement required to be submitted as part of a planning application. Policy D2 requires a reasonable set of information to be included with planning applications for major development in order that they can be considered in the light of national and development plan policy.

- D2 – Design and Development Information**
Major development proposals should be accompanied by all relevant information which will facilitate informed and meaningful consultation, including, but not limited to:
- a statement of how the development proposal contributes to achieving Stone Neighbourhood Plan’s Vision and Objectives and is consistent with relevant policies; and
 - all the supporting information identified in Dartford Borough Council’s local validation checklist necessary to determine the planning application

Major development proposals are strongly encouraged to develop this information through a collaborative design process which engages the local community early in the design process and ahead of submission of a planning application.

Supporting Local Plan policy DP2

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Once made the neighbourhood plan becomes a part of the development plan along with the Dartford Local Plan. All planning applications are required by law to be in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Stone Parish Council is committed to working with landowners and potential applicants to secure development which helps to deliver the objectives of the neighbourhood plan. Stone Parish Council will also work with and support Dartford Borough Council in its development management role.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

Stone Parish Council is committed to monitoring implementation of the neighbourhood plan. It will consider a report on progress on an annual basis. Stone Parish Council will also consider the need for reviewing the neighbourhood plan to strengthen or extend its role.

LOCAL GREEN SPACE

Policy GS1 designates three areas of Local Green Space. This Annex provides maps of their locations. A separate assessment of how they meet the criteria for Local Green Space in the National Planning Policy Framework is contained in supporting evidence.



SETTING OF THE CHAPEL OF ST LUKE'S

Chapel Drive, Dartford, Kent DA2 6FF



ALAMEIN GARDENS OPEN SPACE

Behind Kirby Road, Dartford, Kent DA2 6HE



HORNS CROSS GARDEN

Off London Road, Greenhithe, Kent DA9 9JX

PEDESTRIAN & CYCLE NETWORK



LHLA Louise Hooper Landscape Architect
Detail Area 1 Stone Pit 1 Pedestrian & Cycle Network

Figure 7 Detail Area 1 Stone Pit 1 Proposed Pedestrian and Cycle Network

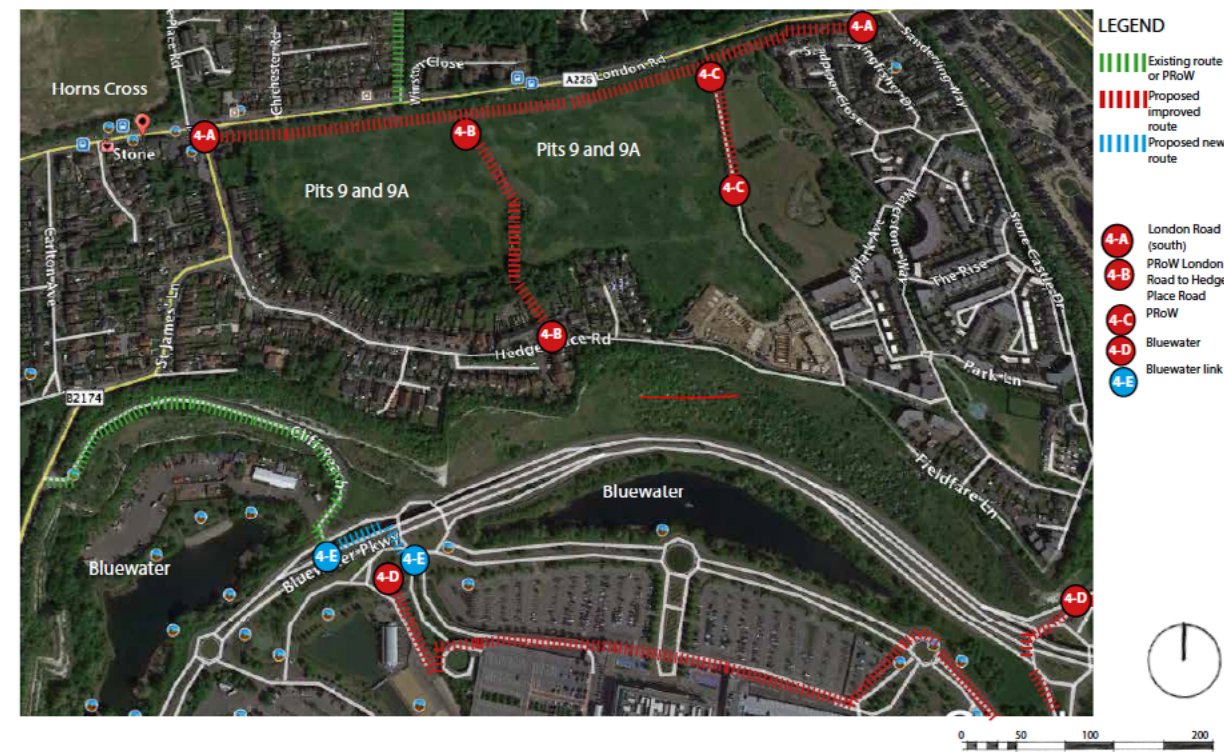


LHLA Louise Hooper Landscape Architect
Detail Area 2 Stone Pit 2 Pedestrian and Cycle Network

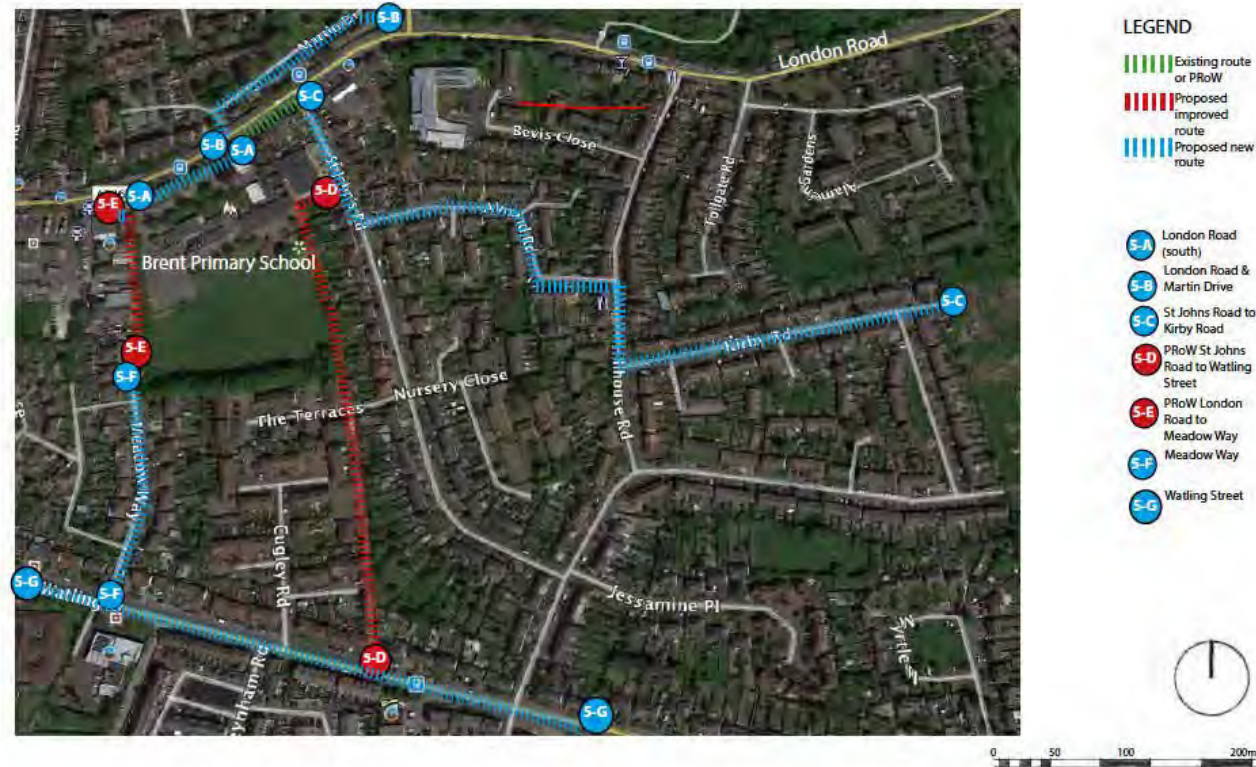
Figure 8 Detail Area 2 Stone Pit 2 Proposed Pedestrian and Cycle Network



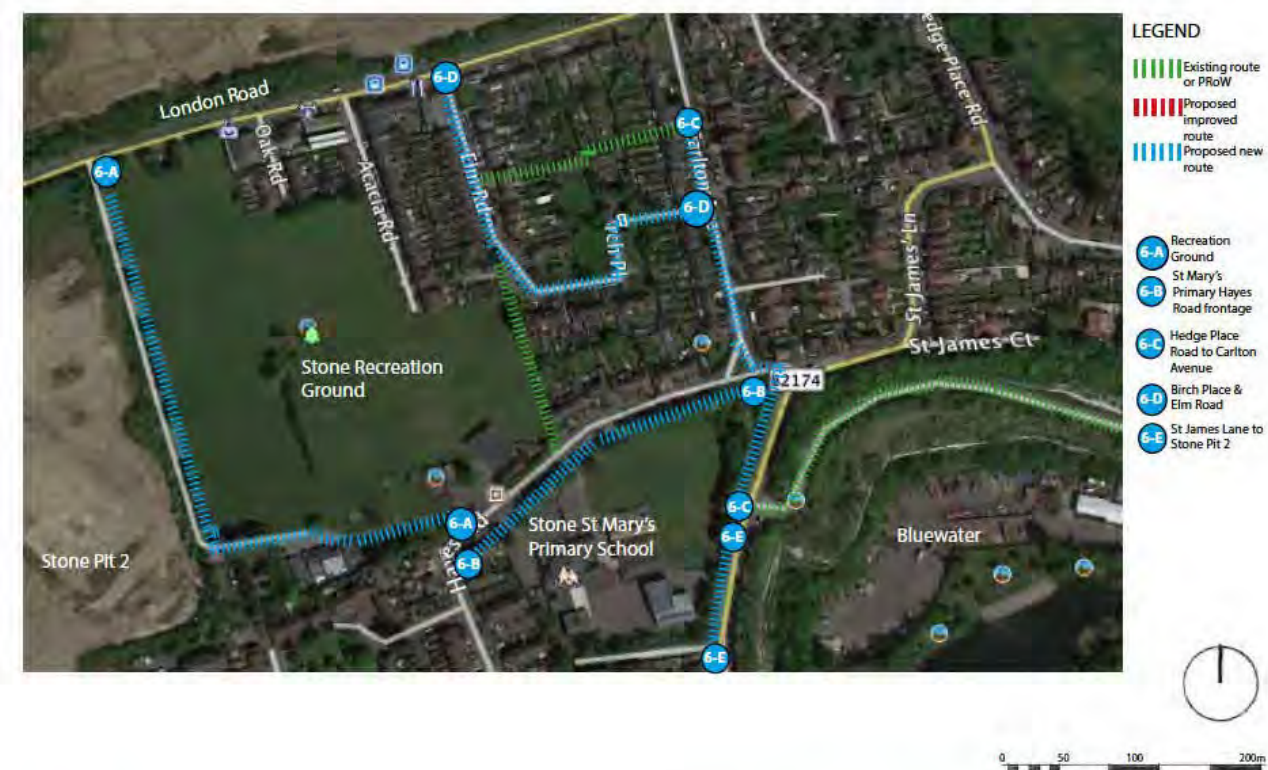
Stone Neighbourhood Plan:
 Detail Area 3 Stone Lodge Pedestrian and Cycle Network
 Preferred Projects for Stage One



Stone Neighbourhood Plan:
 Detail Area 4 Stone Pits 9 & 9A & Bluewater Pedestrian and Cycle Network
 Preferred Projects for Stage One



Stone Neighbourhood Plan:
Detail Area 5 Brent Primary School Pedestrian and Cycle Network
Preferred Projects for Stage One



Stone Neighbourhood Plan:
Detail Area 6 Stone St Mary's Primary School Pedestrian and Cycle Network
Preferred Projects for Stage One

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

STONE PARISH COUNCIL

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