

Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber on Thursday 2 July, 2015

PRESENT: Councillor R Kenney in the Chair and
Councillors Ms L Bakker-Collier, Mrs C Collier, G Collier, J Davies, K Green, M
Green, Mrs J Hood, T Jackson, P Leason, Mrs E Mowatt, G Neagus, A Osgathorpe,
Mrs J Piggott and M Shaw

ABSENT: Councillors Mrs J Farnham, Mrs M Goodall and M Williamson

GP16/028 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs J Farnham, Mrs M Goodall and M
Williamson.

GP16/029 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Mrs K Green declared a personal interest in Grants for Age Concern
Stone & District and Stone Lions.

Councillor M Green declared a personal interest in Grants for Stone Lions.

Councillor Ms L Bakker-Collier declared a personal interest in Grants for Age
Concern Stone & District and Stone Puppet Festival.

Councillor Mrs J Hood declared a personal interest in Grants for Age Concern
Stone & District.

GP16/030 **To receive the report of the County Councillors**

County Councillor I Parry

County Councillor I Parry was not in attendance

County Councillor P Jones

County Councillor P Jones reported that the free health-check for “Healthy Heart”
has had a slow uptake in Stone. There are still spaces for 600 eligible people in
Stone to be tested.

He has given a grant to all First Schools in Stone for the second year running
which will encourage children to appreciate the English language through a
children’s author.

The speed indicator device has been on Lichfield Road and Old Road in Stone.
County Councillor P Jones asked if there were any requests for locations for it to
be sited. Councillor T Jackson asked that it be situated between St Michael’s First

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School and Little Stoke again. Councillor Mrs J Piggott asked for it to be located on Tilling Drive.

Councillor M Green asked that the County Council observe developments taking place in Stone as there is mud on footpaths by a development on Pirehill Lane which prevents mobility scooters from using the footpath.

Councillor Leason informed the County Councillor that the Rotary Club is doing blood pressure and blood sugar tests in the Crown Hotel on Saturday.

Councillor Mrs J Hood advised County Councillor P Jones that there is a 150 page consultation regarding the future of the Fire Service in Stone with a deadline of 6th July. 7 Firefighters and an appliance may be lost. Stone's Fire Service regularly supports surrounding areas. MP for Stone Sir Bill Cash has issued a press release regarding the issue. Councillor Hood asked for the County Councils help. County Councillor P Jones stated that the County Council have rejected the proposals and will not support proposals which put lives and property at risk.

GP16/031 Representations from Members of the Public

Mrs Gill Stanford spoke on behalf of Nicholl's Lane Field Action Group regarding settlement boundaries. (A copy of her report is attached to the minutes).

GP16/032 Minutes

RESOLVED

- a) that the minutes of the Mayor's Charity Sub-Committee* held on the 30th April, 2015, copies having been circulated to the members, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record, and that the recommendations of the Sub-Committee be adopted

GP16/033 To agree the new Schedule of Meetings from September 2015

All meeting dates were agreed apart from Thursday 24th September.

RESOLVED: to schedule a different date for the Planning, Estates and Management meetings proposed for 24th September.

GP16/034 Building Maintenance Reserve

The Clerk reported that £10,000 is included in the budget annually for building maintenance, but that the majority of the 2014-15 provision had remained unspent pending the outcome of an investigation into the possibility of fitting a stair lift at the Council offices.

It had now been confirmed that it was not possible to fit a stair lift in a way that would be consistent with building regulations. The funds earmarked for this purpose would therefore now be available to supplement the 2015-16 budget allocation.

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The Committee considered priorities for maintenance spending in 2015-16.

RESOLVED: to complete the necessary works to reinstate an electricity supply in the Market Square

GP16/035 **Stafford Borough Consultations**

Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2

Members considered the documents and map. A response to the consultations is attached.

With regards to the proposed new boundary on Westbridge Park, Councillor Mrs J Hood proposed that to prevent any further development the boundary should remain as it is. This was seconded by Councillor M Green. Councillor Mrs J Hood asked for a named vote.

| | | |
|------------|---------------------|---------|
| Councillor | Ms L Bakker-Collier | against |
| | Mrs C Collier | for |
| | G Collier | for |
| | J Davies | for |
| | Mrs K Green | for |
| | M Green | for |
| | Mrs J Hood | for |
| | T Jackson | for |
| | R Kenney | for |
| | P Leason | for |
| | Mrs E Mowatt | for |
| | G Neagus | for |
| | A Osgathorpe | for |
| | Mrs J Piggott | for |
| | M Shaw | for |

14 for, 1 against, no abstentions and 3 absent

Community Infrastructure Levy

RESOLVED: to accept the Community Infrastructure Levy as set out and to start preparing the Neighbourhood Plan as soon as possible.

GP16/036 **The new Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire (2015-2013) Final Draft**

This was noted.

GP16/037 **To consider the following requests for grant from local organisations**

Stone ATC Squadron £500

Councillor J Davies proposed the full amount of £500 be awarded. This was seconded by Councillor Mrs J Hood.

RESOLVED: to award £500 to Stone ATC Squadron.

Stone Puppet Festival £500

Councillor T Jackson proposed to award £500 to the Stone Puppet Festival. This was seconded by Councillor Mrs J Hood.

RESOLVED: to award £500 to Stone Puppet Festival

Richmond Fellowship £200

Councillor Mrs C Collier proposed the full £200 be awarded. This was seconded by Councillor Mrs J Piggott.

RESOLVED: to award £200 to Richmond Fellowship.

Age Concern Stone & District £1500

Councillor G Collier proposed that £1500 be awarded. This was seconded by Councillor P Leason.

RESOLVED: to award £1500 to Age Concern Stone & District

Staffordshire Women's Aid - £500

Councillor P Leason proposed £500 be granted. This was seconded by Councillor Mrs J Hood.

RESOLVED: to award £500 to Staffordshire Women's Aid

Staffordshire Therapeutic Independent Neurological Group (STING) £500

Councillor Mrs J Hood proposed that £500 be given. This was seconded by Councillor Mrs K Green.

RESOLVED: to award £500 to STING

Stone & District Ex-Servicemen's Bowling Club (unspecified amount)

Councillor G Collier proposed that £250 be awarded. This was seconded by Councillor M Shaw.

RESOLVED: to award £250 to Stone and District Ex-Servicemen's Bowling Club

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Stone Lions £500

Councillor Mrs J Hood proposed £500 be granted to Stone Lions. This was seconded by Councillor G Collier.

RESOLVED: to award £500 to Stone Lions

Stafford Samaritans £250

Councillor G Collier proposed £250 be given to Stafford Samaritans. This was seconded by Councillor Mrs J Hood.

RESOLVED: to award £250 to Stafford Samaritans

It was agreed to suspend Standing Order 1(z) due to the time.

GP16/038 Members Motions Under Standing Order 4

Councillor Mrs K Green

“I think this item will be helpful to local organisations and those further afield.

Would you consider whether we should have the 3 Civic Events on a set day of the month every year. This would mean those wishing to attend these events would know what the dates were, so they could put them in their diary at the beginning of each year.

We would have to consult both Rev Cardinal and the Hotel for their input.

The 3 Civic Events would be the Civic Parade, The Civic Carol Service and the Civic Dinner”.

This was seconded by Councillor J Davies.

RESOLVED: to support the motion

GP16/039 Members Motions Under Standing Order 4

Councillor Mrs J Hood

“The High Street furniture is in a poor state of repair – finger posts, benches, bike railings and also surrounding bus shelters.

I would like the Council to establish which of these listed above are the responsibility of Stone Town Council, as there is always confusion, especially regarding bus shelters. Then a maintenance programme to repair and refurbish to be established”.

This was seconded by Councillor P Leason

RESOLVED: to support the motion

GP16/040 **Members Motions Under Standing Order 4**

Councillor Mrs J Hood

“It is becoming an increasingly alarming problem in Stone High Street with what are commonly known as “Chuggers” their slang title comes from charity muggers!

I often sit in the High Street and watch chuggers (sometimes as many as 5 or 6) stop members of the public to try and get them to sign up to and donate to the charity they are fund raising for. When a “no” is given they follow the person in the High Street trying to persuade them to change their mind. People feel threatened and intimidated which could put them and others from coming to shop in our High Street.

I would like to ask the Town Clerk to contact Public Fundraising Regulatory Association Chief Executive to see how to prevent the chuggers operating the stop and sign up methods used by them in our High Street”.

RESOLVED: to discuss this item further at the Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee on 16th July.

GP16/041 **Members Motions Under Standing Order 4**

Councillor Mrs J Hood

“I have been finding it increasingly difficult to park on the Council car park due to lack of spaces. I believe the problem is that the car park is still being used by people who do not have the authority to park there.

I was challenged by a police officer who asked me if I had the right to park there and when I replied yes I was a Councillor, he asked for proof of identity.

A parking pass which can be displayed on our dashboard, to say we have the authority to park, would stop the police having to waste their valuable time checking who we are. Hopefully it will also make it easier for them to identify unauthorized parked vehicles.”

RESOLVED: to issue non-transferable passes to Officers and Councillors

GP16/042 **Members Motions Under Standing Order 4**

Councillor G Collier

“I have been approached by Market Traders in Stone High Street regarding the rents charged. They are concerned that they are paying £41 in rent in Stone, which includes a covered stall and only paying £27 and £29 elsewhere, providing their own covered stall.

I propose that the Estates Sub-Committee be asked to reconsider the decision that stalls be provided on Tuesday and Saturday markets, and review the rents accordingly”.

RESOLVED: to refer this item to the Estates Sub-Committee in September.

GP16/043 **To receive reports from the Town Councillors on attendance at meetings of local organisations and outside bodies as a representative of the Town Council**

Councillor Mrs C Collier attended the Stafford and Stone Access Group. All disabled toilets in Stafford had been checked to see if the facilities were appropriate for disabled people. It is hoped that a survey will be taken out in Stone. Councillor Mrs Collier also reported that a leaflet has been produced informing retail outlets of the use of A-boards. There will also be some checks regarding the safe placement of wheelie bins after they have been emptied. Councillor Mrs J Hood mentioned that the disabled toilets on Crown Street do not have soap or hand dryers.

Councillor M Green proposed that the following items on the General Purposes Committee agenda be discussed following the Planning Committee meeting. Councillor Mrs C Collier seconded this motion. This was resolved.

GP16/044 **To resolve, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting whilst the next items of business be discussed on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the debate**

This was resolved.

GP16/045 **Stone Youth Centre**

The Town Clerk reported on his further discussions with the County Council regarding the potential lease for operating the former youth centre.

RESOLVED:

- a) To withdraw the Town Council's bid to operate the Youth Centre building due to the potential costs and risks involved
- b) To issue a press release setting out the Council's position.

TOWN MAYOR

Forward Planning
Civic Centre
Riverside
Stafford
Staffs
ST16 3AQ

13 July, 2015

Dear Sir,

Please find comments below from Stone Town Council to be included in The Plan for Stafford Borough: Part 2.

Question 10

Do you agree with the location of the Settlement Boundary for Stone? Please explain any change you propose

The Green Belt should be extended into the area due to being an area of historical significance, and any buildings would be out of keeping with the area. Please also see attached information from Nicholl's Lane Field Action Group which the Town Council have supported in its entirety (appendix 1) – marked 19 on the attached map.

The area at the end of Common Lane, close to Walton Heath House (marked 1 on the attached map) should be removed because in paragraph 2.49 the development you refer to (14/20854/OUT) has not been approved as is stated and is not included in the Plan for Stafford Borough Part 1. It is essential that this area remains outside of the local development boundary.

With regards to the Settlement Boundary, Stone Town Council does not accept the proposed new settlement boundary line adjacent to Westbridge Park. Stone Town Council request that the current proposed settlement boundary line that incorporates Westbridge Park be removed, and instead, continues along the Trent and Mersey Canal as shown by a dashed line on the map. Paragraph 2.48 should read "The Southern edge of the northern part of the town boundary runs along the Trent and Mersey Canal".

Question 11

Do you agree with the areas identified as protected community facilities on the inset maps? Are there any other community facilities, within the settlement boundaries that you think should be designated as protected community facilities? Please explain why they are key community facilities

| Type of protection | Area on Map | Location | Rationale |
|---------------------------|--------------------|--|---|
| Community Facilities | 18 | Area between Trent and Mersey Canal towpath and access road on Westbridge Park | Community sports facility, children's play area and tennis courts. Needs to be consistent with, for example, Youth Centre, Sports Clubs and Schools, (not only the buildings but also the surrounding areas have been included) |

Question 12

Do you agree with the areas identified as Local Green Spaces on the inset maps and the rationale behind their designation? Are there any other spaces, within the settlement boundaries, that you think should be designated as Local Green Spaces? Please explain any other suggested green spaces meet the criteria set out above.

Stone Town Council would like to add the following:

| Type of protection | Area on Map | Location | Rationale |
|---------------------------|--------------------|---|---|
| Local Green Space | 2 | Newcastle Road Allotments, land off Newcastle Road, Stone | Allotment gardens used for growing fruit and vegetables and supporting healthy lifestyles |
| Local Green Space | 3 | Sports ground adjacent to Walton Allotments | Green space for recreation includes a football pitch and children's play area. Allotments are adjacent to the site. |
| Local Centre | 4 | Pirehill Lane Shops, Pirehill Lane, Walton | As per paragraph 2.30 and area identified on Eccleshall Road as "Local Centre" |
| Local Centre | 5 | Eccleshall Road Shops, adjacent to Walton Roundabout, Stone | As per paragraph 2.30 and area identified on Eccleshall Road as "Local Centre" |

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| | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|--|---|
| Local Centre | 6 | Garage on Lichfield Road, Stone | As per paragraph 2.30 and area identified on Eccleshall Road as "Local Centre" |
| Local Green Space | 7 | Heathfield Avenue | Green space for local recreation |
| Local Green Space | 8 | Mount Road Allotments, Between Mount Road and Chestnut Grove | Allotment gardens used for growing fruit and vegetables and supporting healthy lifestyles |
| Local Green Space | 9 | Green area between Birch Road and Ash Road | Green space with children's play area. Plus numerous green areas highlighted as "9" on the map. These areas conform to paragraph 2.35 |
| Local Green Space | 10 | Between Pingle Lane and Jordan Way | Green space for local recreation |
| Local Green Space | 11 | Land adjacent to Lyndhurst Grove | Green space for local recreation |
| Local Green Space | 12 | Land adjacent to Bakewell Drive | Green space with children's play area |
| Local Green Space | 13 | Green area at the end of Spode Close | Green area with children's play area |
| Local Green Space | 14 and 15 | Green area on Crestwood Drive | Green space for local recreation |
| Local Green Space | 16 | Green area adjacent to Redwood Avenue and Valley Road junction | Green space for local recreation |
| Local Green Space | 17 | Roundabout on Whitebridge housing estate | Green space for local recreation |

The following Protected Land in Stone needs amending:

| Type of Protection | Location | Rationale |
|--------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Local Green Space | Green space off Pembroke Drive, Aston Lodge | Green space with children's play area |

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Question 13

Do you agree with the areas identified as protected employment areas on the inset maps? Are there any other employment areas, within the settlement boundaries that you think should be designated as protected employment areas?

Stone Town Council agrees with the identified protected employment areas.

Community Infrastructure Levy – Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule for Consultation June 2015

Members of Stone Town Council are in favour of the Community Infrastructure Levy – Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule for Consultation – 2015

Yours faithfully,

Mr Les Trigg
Town Clerk

Forward Planning
Civic Centre
Riverside
Stafford
Staffs
ST16 3AQ

15th July, 2015

Dear Sir,

Please find comments below from Stone Town Council to be included in The Plan for Stafford Borough: Part 2. This is in addition to a letter sent to you on 13th July.

With regards to the Retail Boundaries in Stone, please note the following areas should be categorised as secondary retail:

- Crown passageway
- Adies Alley
- Joules Passage
- Mill Street (both sides including The Hanley Economic Building Society, Subway , Bargain Booze, Tinsley Garner Estate Agents, Shabby Chic and James du Pavey)
- Church Street

Yours sincerely,

Mr L Trigg
Town Clerk

STONE TOWN COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

TOWN COUNCIL UNABLE TO FUND STONE YOUTH CENTRE

In December 2014, the Town Council submitted a bid to operate the Stone Youth Centre building as a community centre. This was due to the decision of Staffordshire County Council to close the open access youth club in Stone and to cease operation of the Youth and Community Centre building.

The purpose of the Town Council's bid was to ensure the continued availability of the Centre for both existing users and potential future users of this valuable community facility.

The Town Council were expecting to subsidise the operation of the centre by around £23,000 per annum. Reductions were made in other areas of the Town Council's budget to accommodate this without increasing the Town's share of the Council Tax.

Extensive discussions have been held with the County Council with a view to the Town Council entering into a five year lease to operate the Centre. As these discussions have progressed, however, more information has become available which has increased significantly both the potential cost and the risk to the Town Council. At a meeting on 4 June 2015, the Town Council reluctantly accepted that, as a small organisation with a very limited budget, it could not afford to take on the level of cost and risk now anticipated and asked the Town Clerk to go back to the County Council to attempt to re-negotiate the terms of the lease.

Unfortunately, it did not prove possible to arrive at an agreement which was both acceptable to the County Council and in which the level of cost and risk would be manageable by the Town Council. On 2 July 2015, therefore, the Town Council decided to withdraw its bid to the County Council for operation of the Youth Centre building.

General Purposes Committee Chairman, Councillor Rob Kenney, said "I am disappointed that the Town Council has been unable to secure the future of the Youth Centre building, but unfortunately the level of cost and risk involved in accepting the lease being offered by the County Council was too great for an organisation the size of the Town Council. It would have resulted in both an unacceptable level of increase to the Town's share of the Council Tax and a severe limitation in the funds we would have had available for other developments within the town.

The Town Council already operates both the Frank Jordan Centre and the Stone Station Community Centre and we will do our best to accommodate any current Youth Centre users that would like to move to one of these facilities"

ENDS

Proposed Settlement Boundary for North East Stone

This paper highlights one particular proposed settlement boundary which has recently been under scrutiny as a result of a 6 day Public Inquiry in October 2014. This relates to the north east boundary of Stone where Stafford Borough Council (SBC) has proposed that the settlement boundary follows the backs of the gardens of Airdale Rd, Airdale Spinney and across to Oulton Cross (see map), and **does not** include the field in Nicholl's Lane owned by the developer Seddon's Homes Ltd.

Seddon's Homes Ltd are likely to lobby SBC for this field to be included within the settlement boundary. Stone Town Council has always supported the campaign to prevent development of this field, and it is hoped are able to continue this, by supporting SBC's boundary in this location for the following reasons:

1) On May 15th 2015 Inspector Lyman dismissed Seddon's Homes Ltd Appeal to build up to 34 homes on the site. He stated the **field formed the setting to the Moddershall Valley Conservation Area (MVCA) and Grade II listed Hayes Mill**. In doing so he echoed a previous Inspector's Report on the 2001 Local Plan who was of a similar opinion.

He was not persuaded by the argument that the proposed development was a logical extension of Airdale Spinney, commenting, **'Airdale Spinney itself appears on plan as an urban extension protruding into the countryside with the Moddershall Valley on one side, the rolling appeal site on the other and with the exception of a few intervening houses, (on Nicholl's Lane), the Green Belt on the third side..... with only a narrow link to the existing estate the proposed development would appear as an intrusive and incongruous urban projection into the open setting of the Conservation Area with all the associated noise, disturbance, garden paraphernalia and light pollution from 34 dwellings close to the MVCA**

2) In making reference to English Heritage's guidance on evaluating significance he said the MVCA was of **'particularly high significance' in terms of evidential, historical and aesthetic values** and Hayes Mill **'scores highly in terms of significance' under the same criteria**. Furthermore Hayes Mill can **'clearly be read today as a former historic mill complex in a rural setting'**.

He stated that **views of an urban housing estate within the immediate setting of the MVCA which is characterised by isolated small clusters of buildings would not preserve the character of the MVCA or the significance of this heritage asset.**

3) He acknowledged the valley played an important part in the growth and development of the Pottery Industry. He supported the view that interest in the history of the Pottery Industry is growing nationally and that **the character and appearance of the Moddershall Valley is more than local interest.**

4) He commented that **'the historic nature of the Valley is further enhanced as it is the home of the first purpose built wet grinding mill which survives in good condition today'**. The importance of such examples of technological innovation is recognised by English Heritage in its document 'Conservation Principles – Guidance and Policies'.

5) He referred to the Historic Environment Character Assessment which places the Moddershall Valley, including Nicholl's Lane field, as the **'most highly sensitive to housing expansion'** in the whole of Stone and its environs.

6) He concluded the development would **conflict with the objectives of Policies of N8 and N9 of the Plan for Stafford Borough, and would not satisfy the objective policy SP7 criterion 'f'. Neither would it accord with Section 66(1) of the Listed Buildings Act. He also concluded it did not represent sustainable development as it failed to protect and enhance the historic environment, a requirement of the environmental dimension of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).**

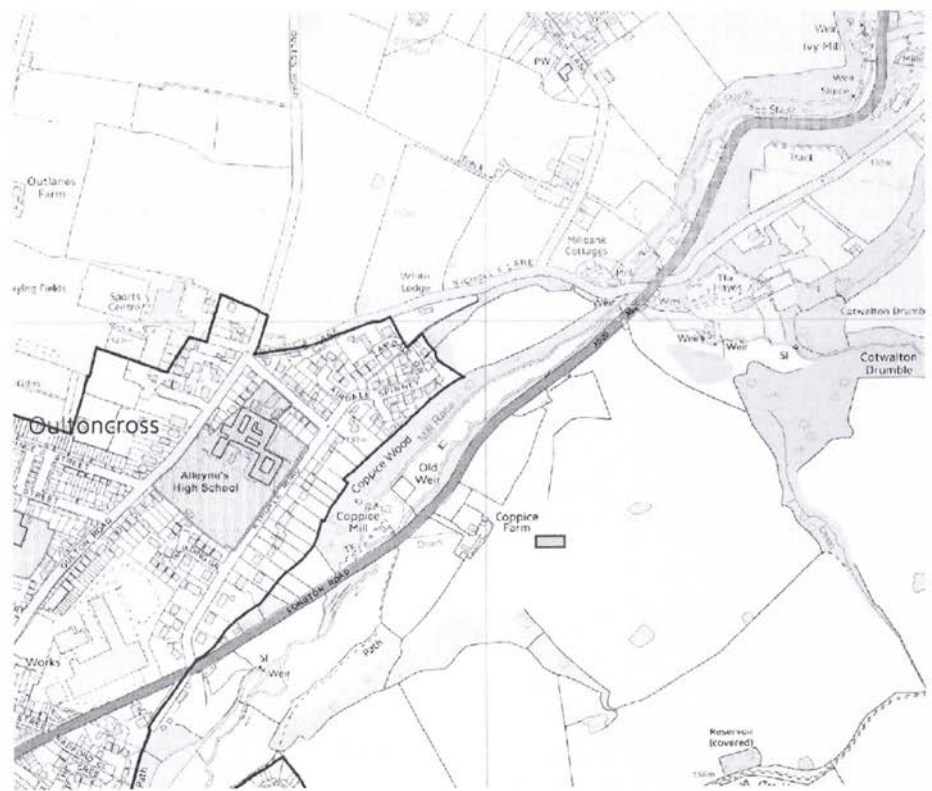
7) The Inspector attached **considerable weight to the harm to the significance of the heritage assets** arising from the proposed development within the setting of the Conservation Area and listed Hayes Mill. He considered that this harm was **not** outweighed by the identified public benefit. **He concluded therefore, the development would not accord with one of the core planning principles of the NPPF, which seeks to conserve Heritage Assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.**

8) Finally SBC has recently published the Five Year Land Supply Statement for 2015. SBC has actually increased their 5 year deliverable supply from 5.43 years as of March 31st 2014 to 6.84 years as of 31st March 2015. Furthermore SBC have stated in a recent report that housing commitments are 'overshooting' in Stone, thus adding to the argument, that there is no need for development to take place in this area of 'particularly high significance' and 'sensitivity'.

Nicholl's Lane Field Action Group (NLFAG)

www.nichollslane.co.uk

This map shows the Settlement Boundary for north east Stone following the rear of gardens to Airdale Road, Airdale Spinney and Oulton Cross. Nicholl's Lane Field, located across Nicholl's Lane opposite Millbank Cottages, is outside the boundary .



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