

Guidance on the Redevelopment of Mulberry Farm

Marrons have asked for input from Stoke Golding's Parish Council on the design and redevelopment of Mulberry Farm. Drawing on the recently approved Neighbourhood Plan and a meeting with HBBC Planning and Conservation staff, the Parish Council offers the initial comments below.

There are 13 points for consideration. The Parish Council seeks to understand how they are being addressed in your design proposals. A future meeting may be appropriate but, in the first instance, the Council requests a reply in writing which we can share with the Councillors and Neighbourhood Plan committee.

Further into the planning process, the Council is also keen to engage with you and the developer to understand (and perhaps contribute to) the development plan and approach.

1. Policy SG2 in the Neighbourhood Plan allocates a specific site

SG2 allocates Mulberry Farm as follows:

Mulberry Farm, High Street - Some 0.9 hectares of land at Mulberry Farm, High Street, as shown on Maps 3 & 4 and the Policies Maps (pages 66 & 67), is allocated for housing development.

Development will be supported subject to the following criteria:

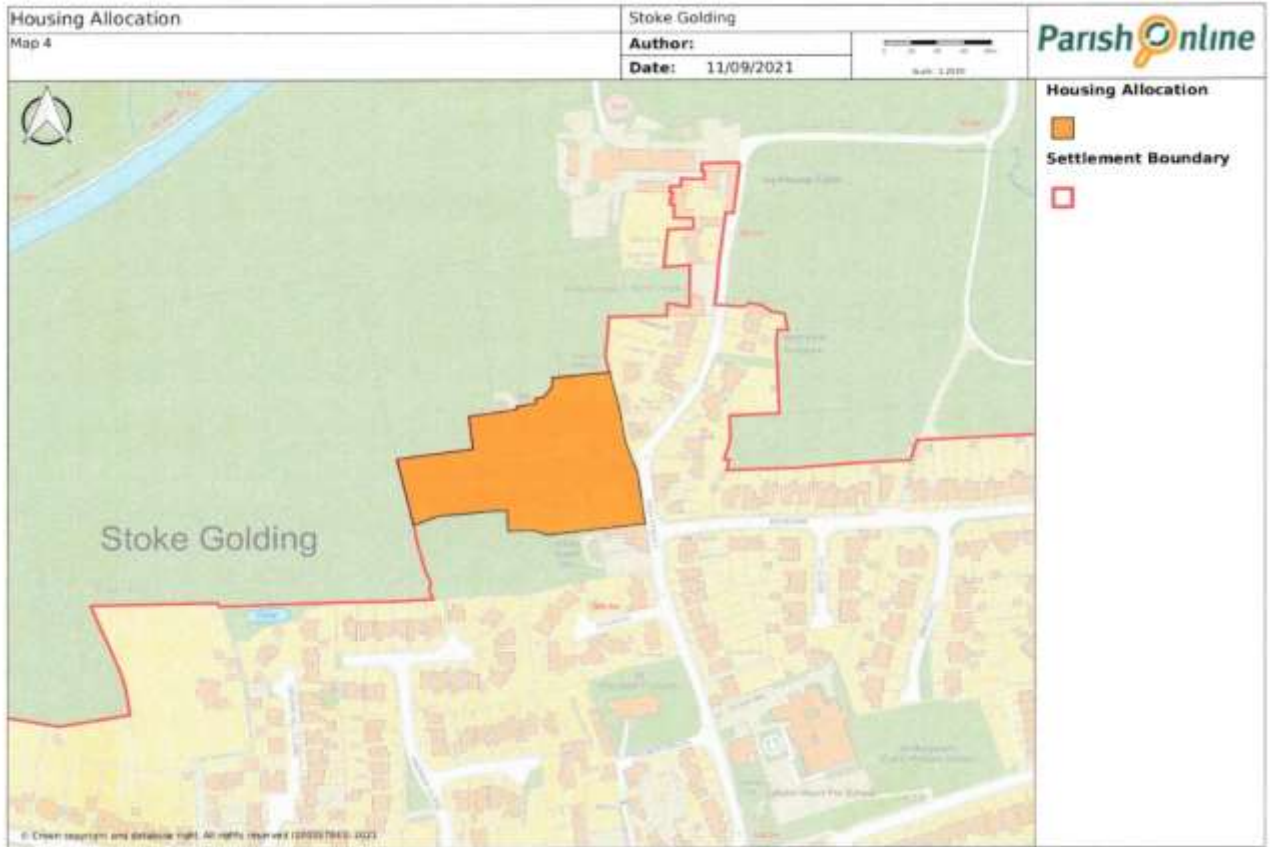
- 1. The development shall provide approximately 25 dwellings;*
- 2. The principal access should be off High Street;*

There are other criteria which are considered under separate headings below.

In addition, the Parish Council is aware of the proximity of this site to the adjacent White Swan site which has been the subject of several attempts at redevelopment. The Parish Council wishes to be clear that any development of Mulberry Farm implies no support for any development of the White Swan site, which is on battlefield land.

2. The Development needs to be contained within the settlement boundary and not extend out onto battlefield land

The site allocation included in the neighbourhood plan is shown below. This aligns with the settlement boundary.



The public consultation document from Marrons and Stronghold Homes included an indicative plan which shows the following:

The Countryside (land outside Settlement Boundary as defined on Map 3 and the Policies Maps (pages 66 & 67)) will be protected for the sake of its intrinsic character, beauty, heritage and wildlife, the wealth of its natural resources and to ensure it may be enjoyed by all. In countryside locations only the following types of development will be supported:

- 1. Recreation and tourism that cannot be provided within the Settlement Boundary;*
- 2. Development by statutory undertakers or public utility providers;*
- 3. Subdivision of an existing dwelling; and*
- 4. Development that is otherwise in accordance with: national policies; or strategic planning policies or allocations; or with the other policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.*

3. Any development proposal needs to maintain the rural character of the area and protect important views

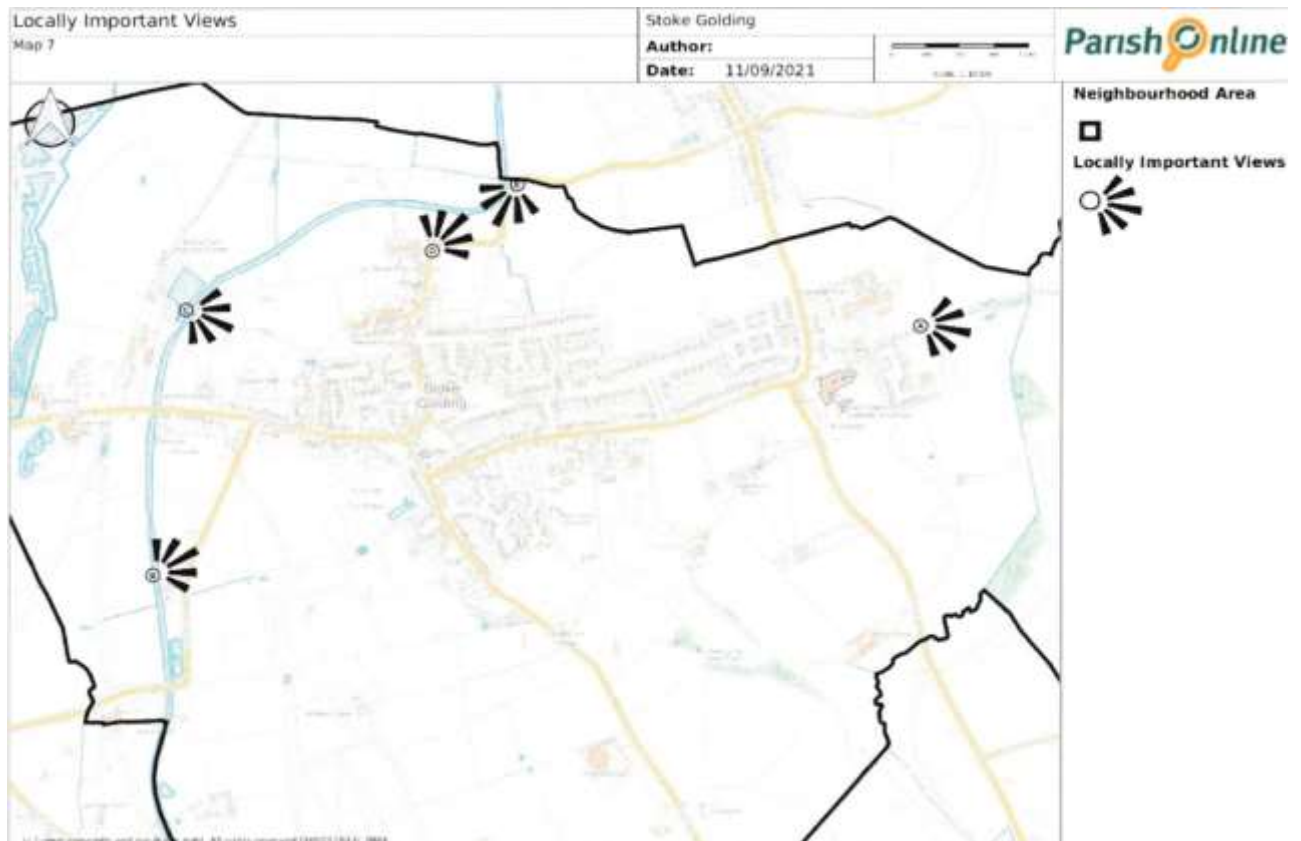
The neighbourhood plan has a policy on protecting Locally Important Views. Policy SG10 on states:

Development should be located and designed in a way that is sensitive to the open landscape, with extensive vistas dominated by natural features that characterise the Neighbourhood Area. Proposals will not be supported if potential impacts on landscape cannot be adequately mitigated through design and landscaping. Particular sensitivity should be shown for the locally important views from publicly accessible locations that are regarded as highly characteristic, as listed below and identified on Map 7:

- A. View from the track adjacent to Convent Drive looking towards Stapleton and Sutton Cheney*
- B. View from Ashby Canal towpath looking towards Stoke Golding*
- C. View from Ashby Canal near marina looking towards Stoke Golding (Ivy House Farm)*
- D. View from Ivy House Farm looking towards Dadlington*
- E. View from Stoke Lane towards Stoke Golding.*

Major development proposals, and proposals that could affect the above Locally Important Views should be supported by a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment.

Clearly our concern is with the impact on view E, looking from Dadlington direction towards Stoke Golding. This is shown in the map below. The proposed Mulberry Farm development is directly in line of sight.



The site is made more prominent by being on the rise of the hill, with the site rising further as one moves into it and away from High Street. Therefore, the visual impact of the development needs to be managed, particularly so because the site is on battlefield land.

In a meeting between the Stoke Golding Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee and officers from HBBC's Planning and Conservation teams on 12th March 2020, the topography of the site was a concern. HBBC officers felt that at the slope rises, low rise development would be appropriate. This could be conversion of the existing single storey farm buildings into barn conversions or the development of bungalows instead of houses.

Further, in policy SG2, the plan also proposes the following condition:

10. The site layout should create a sensitive transition to the countryside to the west.

4. The Existing Mulberry Farmhouse needs to be retained

Your indicative plan shows apartments replacing the existing house. Our policy SG14 on Locally Valued Heritage Assets specifically identifies Mulberry farmhouse as an asset to be retained and enhanced. The policy states:

The determination of planning applications which would affect locally valued heritage assets (as listed below and shown on Map 10 and the Policies Maps (pages 66 and 67)) will be assessed having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. New development should take opportunities to enhance heritage assets or better reveal their significance.

- A. Ivy House Farm, High Street
 - B. Zion Baptist Chapel, High Street
 - C. 54-56 High Street
 - D. Honeysuckle Cottage & The Cottage, High Street
 - E. Mulberry Farmhouse, High Street
 - F. The White Swan PH, 47 High Street
- Etc.

5. To maintain character, as much of the other buildings on the site should be retained as possible

Criteria 3 of policy SG2 states:

3. Every effort should be made to retain the traditional brick buildings at Mulberry Farm, unless removal is necessary to provide a safe and suitable access

6. The design of the development should be consistent with the traditional character of the village

Policy SG15 covers Design and applies to all new development. This states:

Only development that reflects the traditional character of Stoke Golding will be supported unless the development is of exceptional quality or innovative design. Development must also:

- 1. Be in keeping with the scale, form and character of its surroundings;*
- 2. Protect and where possible enhance important features such as jitties, traditional walls, hedgerows and trees;*
- 3. Have safe and suitable access;*
- 4. Integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones, while also respecting existing buildings and land uses around the development site;*
- 5. The amenities of residents in the area should not be significantly adversely affected, including by loss of daylight/sunlight, privacy, air quality, noise and light pollution;*
- 6. As appropriate to the scale of development create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character and:*
 - i) Protect and where possible enhance the setting of the canal and battlefield site, particularly through the integrity of farmsteads and dispersed built form on the main approaches to the village;*
 - ii) Protect and where possible enhance Stoke Golding's historic street pattern, including jitties and yards;*
 - iii) Development in Stoke Golding Conservation Area should respond to the prevalent 18th and 19th century styles which incorporate a range of domestic, industrial, agricultural, and commercial influences;*

7. *Take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates;*
8. *Ensure buildings are designed and positioned to enhance streets and spaces;*
9. *Be designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds;*
10. *Ensure parking is integrated so that it does not dominate the street;*
11. *Ensure public and private spaces are clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe; and*
12. *Provide adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles.*

In addition to these design criteria, the meeting in March 2020 with HBBC officers provided guidance. In their subsequent opinion to us (for which a copy is in the Evidence Base on Stoke Golding's web site) they add:

The proposed development would affect the significance of the battlefield in a key area of the course of the battle itself (Crown Hill). The demolition and redevelopment of the cluster of c.1950s buildings at Mulberry Farm does offer the opportunity to enhance the character of the area, however its redevelopment with standard residential development (in terms of scale, layout, design etc.) would not be considered to respond to the site context with the character of the site and area generally being rural and agricultural. If this part of the site were to be redeveloped, I would expect to see a design that reflects this context, such as a range and complex of converted agricultural buildings. It is therefore possible in my opinion that the principle of a well-designed redevelopment of the 'improvement area' (based on the footprint of existing development) can be established, subject to other material considerations such as an archaeological survey, and such a redevelopment would have a positive impact that would enhance the significance of the battlefield.

Criteria 4 of policy SG2 also states:

4. Development proposals should be supported by a Heritage Statement including an appraisal of the likely impact of the design, materials, layout, scale, height and mass of the proposal on the Registered Battlefield, Stoke Golding Conservation Area, Church of St Margaret, the Grade I listed Church of St Margaret, Grade II listed The Birches and other designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting. The development should seek to enhance the significance of heritage assets and their setting.

7. Archaeological Implications of the Battlefield Site to be Evaluated

Criteria 5 of policy SG 2 states:

5. As a site potentially containing heritage assets of archaeological interest, developers should submit an appropriate desk-based assessment.

8. The Mix of Housing on the Site should comply with the Neighbourhood Plan

Policy SG4 on Housing Mix states:

New housing development of more than four dwellings shall provide for a mix of housing types that will reflect the recommendations of the Housing Needs Study 2019 (see table at paragraph 4.26). Variations in the housing mix will be supported where justified by viability evidence or by more up-to-date local housing need evidence.

The table at 4.26 is shown below:

	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4 bedrooms
Market housing	5%	30%	45%	20%
Affordable home ownership	10%	50%	30%	10%
Affordable housing (rented)	25%	40%	30%	5%

9. The Development must allow Sufficient Affordable Housing

Policy SG5 requires affordable housing to be a criteria for development:

For developments of 10 or more homes, or if the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more, the minimum affordable housing provision is 40%. This may be negotiated on a site-by-site basis taking into account identified local need, existing provision, characteristics of the site and viability. All affordable housing will be subject to conditions, or a planning obligation will be sought, to ensure that when homes are allocated or sold, priority is given to people with a local connection to Stoke Golding Parish (i.e. including living, working or with close family ties in the Parish).

10. Existing Trees and hedgerows should be retained, and new trees integrated into the development

Policy SG2 has a specific criteria as follows:

7. The hedge along the western boundary of the site shall be retained or replaced.

In addition, policy SG12 on trees and hedgerows should be considered - this states:

New and existing trees should be integrated into new developments. Development that damages or results in the loss of ancient trees, hedgerows or trees of good arboricultural and amenity value will not normally be supported unless this is demonstrated not to be possible. Proposals should be designed to retain ancient trees, hedgerows or trees of arboricultural and amenity value.

11. to promote relationships with neighbouring properties

Criteria 8 and 9 of policy SG2 require mitigation measures to promote relationships with neighbouring properties:

8. The residential amenities of existing and planned properties on the west side of High Street are protected;

9. Suitable mitigation measures should be in place to ensure that the residential amenities of future occupiers are protected from business activities associated with the White Swan PH.

12. Satisfactory Ecological and Environmental Measures are undertaken

Criteria 6 of policy SG2 covers ecological measures criteria 11 covers environmental measures as follows:

6. As there is a reasonable likelihood of a protected species being present, developers should submit an appropriate Ecological Assessment (including protected species) Survey;

11. The site shall be cleared, and any contamination present safely remediated prior to the commencement of any development.

13. Surface Water Discharge and Sustainable Drainage Systems

Criteria 12 and 13 specify measures for this as follows:

12. Development shall demonstrate that all surface water discharges have been carried out in accordance with the principles laid out within the drainage hierarchy, in such that a discharge to the public sewerage systems is avoided, where possible; and

13. Development shall ensure that Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) for the management of surface water run-off are put in place unless demonstrated to be inappropriate. All schemes for the inclusions of SuDS should demonstrate they have considered all four aspects of good SuDS design, Quantity, Quality, Amenity and Biodiversity, and the SuDS and development will fit into the existing landscape. The completed SuDS schemes should be accompanied by a maintenance schedule detailing maintenance boundaries, responsible parties and arrangements to ensure that the SuDS are maintained in perpetuity.

I trust all of the above is clear but if any clarification is required, please contact me. The Parish Council looks forward to receiving your response to our neighbourhood plan design requirements as soon as possible.