**Stoke Golding Neighbourhood Plan**

**Consultation Response – Stoke Golding Heritage Group**

**Protection of Areas of Significance to Our Community**

No development should be permitted within the Registered Bosworth Battlefield Area.

The Stoke Golding Conservation Area was created to ensure development was appropriate, to preserve the character of the area and to ensure key buildings, green areas and vistas are protected. The Conservation Area should be supported and any developments should be in line with HBBC Policies.

There is major concern that the separate identities of Stoke Golding and Dadlington would be lost if development is permitted on green spaces between the two villages. The existing green space between the two settlements should be maintained and development should not be permitted

All existing designated green spaces within the Neighbourhood Plan area should be retained and no development should be permitted. For example The Recreation Ground, Land off Bennett’s Close, Allotment Areas etc.

Stoke Golding existed in the medieval period and the land around the village core was predominately ridge and furrow Changes in farming practice, housing developments in the twentieth century and more recently have led to virtually all ridge and furrow being lost. To retain this unique heritage asset, priority should be given to other areas before development should be permitted on the remaining ridge and furrow.

As Stoke Golding continues to grow there will be an increasing demand for outdoor recreational activities. Fields adjacent to the existing recreational facility should not be used for development purposes to enable expansion at a later date.

Within the settlement boundary trees are an important feature that creates the rural ambience, Trees within the conservation area are protected, Trees outside this area but within the settlement boundary should be given similar protection. The appointment of a tree warden would be a considerable asset to the community.

The landscape character of the rural area around the village is of irregular fields with hedges and trees forming the field boundaries. (Stoke Golding Vales) Hedgerows and trees should be maintained and no developments should be permitted that had a significant impact on this basic characteristic. In particular the hedges and trees that line the roads leading to and from the village are a major factor that create a rural feel. Consideration should be given to protecting this natural asset both for the village and as a wildlife habitat that creates bio diversity. Similarly the wildlife corridor that is adjacent to and includes the canal should be widened to include fields adjacent to the existing strip and this principle should be applied to the Conservation Area in the new cemetery

**Suitable Areas for Development**

The Heritage Group would not wish to specify any specific location as being a preferred location for development. However we would comment that post war and more recent developments haves skewed the village away from its central medieval heart. On this basis we would comment that development adjacent to Hinckley Road, and behind the houses along Station Road (the Higham side) would correct this and ensure easier access to communal facilities at the centre of the village

**Suitable Types of Development**

**Housing**

It is believed that along with the country in general, Stoke Golding’s population is skewed toward a predominately older generation. However, in Stoke Golding and the immediate area there are limited facilities specifically for the elderly. On this basis the provision of developments such as sheltered housing, a retirement complex, care homes etc would meet an area and local need. For a development of this nature priority should be given to local residents or their relatives when allocating spaces.

At the other end of the age spectrum, house prices in the village are now beyond the reach of single people and young couples So a range of low cost housing to meet this need would ensure the village would be self sustaining in supporting local schools and a broad based community. A community dominated by elderly residents is not viable or sustainable. Again in allocation of spaces priority should be given to people who have strong links with the village

**Commercial**

The only area of significant employment is Willow Park Industrial Estate. It would be logical to identify land immediately adjacent to this area for development of low impact commercial activities.

**Numbers of Houses**

Many of the long-standing residents of the village believe that the village character has been irrevocably destroyed and are strongly against any further development. This position cannot be supported. It is widely acknowledged that for a variety of factors there will be a need for additional housing into the future. Stoke Golding must take its “share”. The key factor is how many.

For the last planning period, 2002 to 2026, the Borough Council assessed that Stoke Golding’s contribution to the overall need was 60 houses. Approximately 3/annum. On this basis up to 2036, for a 10 year planning period 30 would appear to be the relevant figure. However, in the current planning period up to 2026 approximately 155 houses are either planned are being built or have been built. A surplus of 95 houses over the requirement is a clear indicator the no more houses are required as the original target of 3/annum, if replicated in the new planning period has been met.

As stated previously despite this logical and powerful argument it is highly unlikely that the Borough Council would agree to no housing. However it is a powerful argument for only limited small scale development that could be achieved through “windfall” These are small scale developments that occur through infill, barn conversions etc.