

STAVERTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2016-2034

Statement of Consultation

February 2023

Prepared by Staverton Neighbourhood Plan Group

<https://www.staverton.org/neighbourhoodplan/>

for Staverton Parish Council

<https://www.staverton.org/staverton-parish-council/>

Summary

The Statement of Consultation accompanies the Staverton Neighbourhood Plan as submitted at Regulation 15 stage to South Hams District Council as the local planning authority.

It meets the requirements laid down in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (herein referred to as “the Regulations”) and sets out:

- details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the plan;*
- an explanation of how consultation was carried out;*
- a summary of the main issues and concerns raised through the consultation; and*
- a description of how those issues and concerns have been considered and addressed in the plan.*

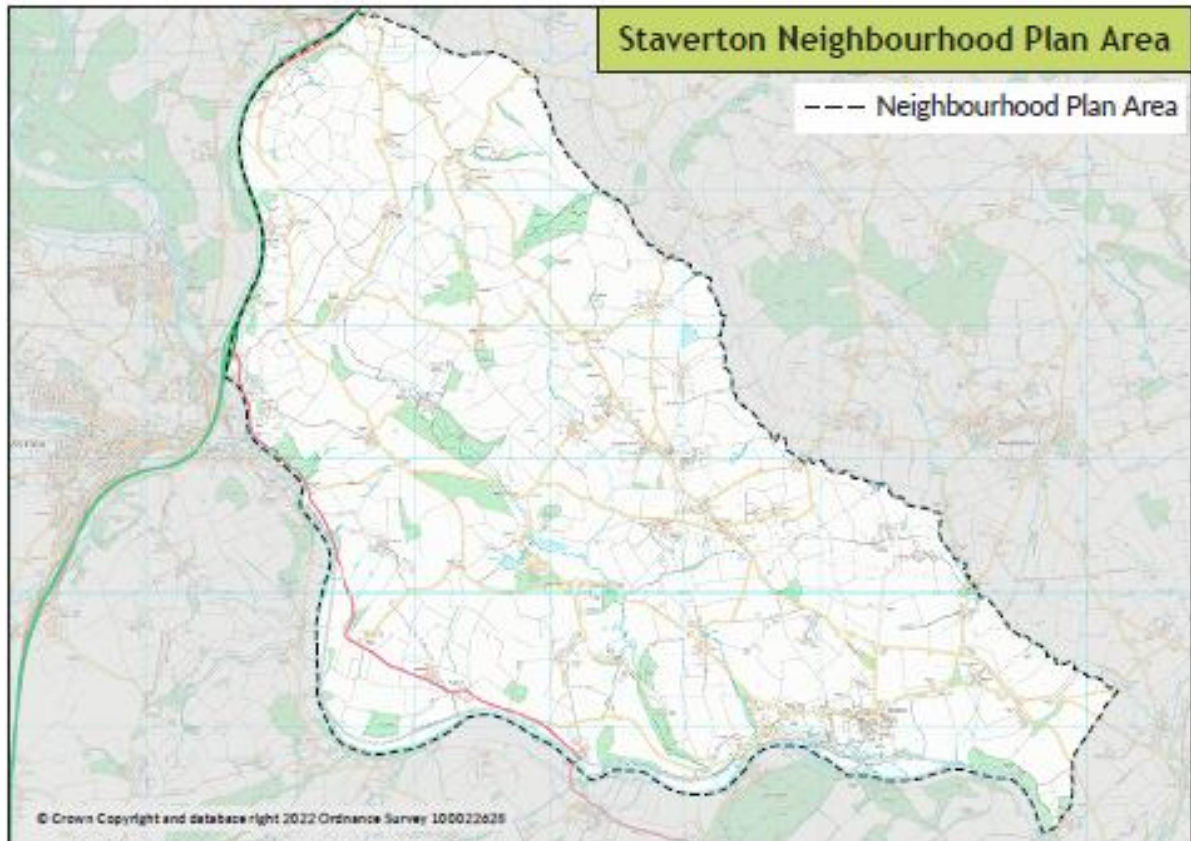
The group is grateful to the district council, other bodies and the local community for their help and involvement in shaping the plan.

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INTRODUCTION

1. This statement sets out the way in which the consultation undertaken as part of the Staverton Neighbourhood Plan meets the requirements of the Regulations.
2. Staverton Parish Council is the qualifying body responsible for the preparation, consultation and submission of the neighbourhood plan. It has been assisted in the process by a steering group whose terms of reference are at <https://www.staverton.org/download/draft-terms-reference-steering-group/> and also Appendix A.
3. The Staverton Neighbourhood Plan area has been designated as the whole of Staverton parish.



LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

4. art 5, paragraph 15 of the Regulations sets

out the requirements for the qualifying body (Staverton Parish Council) to submit the plan to the local planning authority, thus:

15 — (1) Where a qualifying body submits a plan proposal to the local planning authority, it must include –

- (a) a map or statement which identifies the area to which the proposed neighbourhood development plan relates;*
- (b) a consultation statement;*
- (c) the proposed neighbourhood development plan; and*
- (d) a statement explaining how the proposed neighbourhood development plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act.*

This document fulfils requirement (b).

5. Section 15(2) of Part 5 of the Regulations sets out what a consultation statement (such as this one) should contain:

- *details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the plan;*

- *an explanation of how consultation was carried out;*
- *a summary of main issues and concerns raised through the consultation; and*
- *a description of how those issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the plan.*

6. This statement meets those requirements.

7. The plan must also have regard to national planning policies and be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area, which is the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (the JLP).

THE CONTEXT FOR THE STAVERTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

8. Staverton parish lies on the north bank of the River Dart in south Devon, about 3 miles upstream from Totnes. Although the busy A38 trunk road and A384 pass along its western and southern boundaries, with Ashburton, Buckfastleigh and Totnes nearby, it is a deeply rural parish spread over some 2,100 hectares and at the 2021 Census was home to 806 people.

9. The parish is rich in history with a fine medieval bridge which still carries traffic across the Dart. The villages of Staverton and Woolston Green/Landscope are the main centres of population with many farmsteads and hamlets distributed across the parish.

10. The parish experiences the social, economic and environmental pressures and challenges commonly associated with an attractive rural location. The local economy rests primarily on agriculture and tourism. Job opportunities are few and house prices are high which can make it hard for local people, especially the young, to afford to stay in the parish. To address such issues the community has decided to produce a neighbourhood plan which aims to protect and enhance local assets and to foster a vibrant, healthy and prosperous future for Staverton.

11. The plan recognises that addressing **Climate Change** is of paramount importance and all policies have been written with this in mind. There will be a need to adapt and take on board more stringent guidelines as they are brought forward by government.

12. Based on the questionnaire survey and local events the following objectives and vision have been established for the plan:

- **Healthy Communities** – to provide facilities that promote a peaceful harmonious community spirit with healthy opportunities for all whilst maintaining the essence of a quiet rural environment.
- **Housing** – to deliver a varied and balanced mix of high quality homes that meet the needs of current and future residents in a manner that complements the character and identity of this rural parish.
- **Business and enterprise** – to deliver new and improved employment opportunities to help sustain a vibrant parish community with a balanced demographic profile that attracts and retains young people and working age families.
- **Design and heritage** – to deliver high quality development and encourage innovative design that is locally sympathetic with due consideration of the heritage of the parish as a whole.
- **Natural Environment** – to conserve and enhance the natural landscape and biodiversity of the parish, whilst improving green links and access to our green spaces for the enjoyment of current and future residents.

- **Transport** – to provide an infrastructure that supports both homes and business to thrive and to encourage the development of free flowing, safe and appropriate transport networks.
- **Energy efficiency and flooding** – to deliver new development with high energy efficiency and to encourage the production of energy from a range of appropriate renewable energy sources.

Vision for Staverton

A vibrant, resilient and sustainable community that enables all generations to flourish in work and leisure, committed to conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the natural environment of the parish and to becoming net zero carbon by or before 2030

13. The local community has shaped the plan, as is described below, and its policies and priorities respond to the issues and aspirations they have raised.

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

14. Following designation of the plan area by South Hams District Council in September 2016 (<https://www.neighbourhoodplanning.swdevon.gov.uk/staverton>) a neighbourhood plan steering group was formed to guide the process locally.

15. Surveys and consultations were carried out during 2017-18 as the plan began to take shape. In particular, a community questionnaire survey was undertaken in early autumn 2017 and community consultation days took place in January 2017, May 2018 and September 2020. A housing needs survey was also conducted early in 2019.

16. A draft version of the plan was published for consultation in January 2022. Local publicity included the parish website, parish magazine, local newsletters and notice boards. Statutory bodies were also consulted as required (Appendix B).

17. The statutory 6 weeks consultation period ran from 29th January to 12th March. Q&A days took place on 29th January in Staverton Courtroom and 30th January at Victory Hall, Landscope.

18. There was a good level of local response to the plan, including an extensive response from South Hams District Council. Separate response reports were prepared, one to deal with the district council's comments and the other to cover all other representations.

19. The plan has been amended in light of representations received and is now submitted to South Hams District Council together with associated documents including

- this Statement of Consultation,
- the Basic Conditions Statement,
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA),
- Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA),
- a Monitoring Report, and
- a schedule of evidence.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

20. South Hams District Council will consider whether the plan is fit to proceed and, if they consider it to be so, will arrange for its examination by an independent examiner and (subject to a satisfactory examiner's report) the subsequent referendum.

21. Providing the referendum supports the plan it will become part of the local development plan for Staverton (alongside the JLP) and will be used to help make planning decisions in Staverton.

APPENDIX A: Constitution / Terms of Reference

STAVERTON PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Purpose

1. The main purpose of the Staverton Parish Steering Group is to oversee the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan for Staverton Parish in order that this will then progress to Independent Examination and a successful community referendum and ultimately be adopted by the planning authority to become planning policy.
2. The Steering Group will engage the local community to ensure that the Plan is truly representative of the ambitions of the Parish. The Group will maximise support for the approach taken in the Neighbourhood Plan by ensuring high levels of community engagement throughout the plan-making process.

2. Principles

1. That the Steering Group will undertake the process in a democratic, transparent and fair fashion, encouraging widespread participation and giving equal consideration to opinions and ideas from all members of the community.
2. All decisions made shall be fully evidenced and supported through consultation with the local community.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

In order to achieve this, the Steering Group will carry out the following roles:

- Be accountable for steering and providing strategic management of the Neighbourhood Plan for Staverton Parish
- Produce, monitor and update a project timetable;
- Produce a consultation and engagement strategy, showing how the public will be involved throughout the process;
- Regularly report back to the Parish Council for endorsement of decisions taken;
- To undertake analysis and evidence gathering to support the plan production process;
- Actively support and promote the preparation of the Staverton Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan throughout the duration of the project;
- Identify sources of funding;

- Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations to make the plan as effective as possible.
- Gather data from a wide range of sources to ensure that the conclusions reached are fully evidenced and that the aspirations and issues of all residents are understood.
- Consult as widely and thoroughly as is possible to ensure that the draft and final Neighbourhood Plan is representative of the views of residents.
- Agree, subject to ratification by the Parish Council, a final submission version of the Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan.

4. Membership

1. The Steering Group will be made up of a cross-section of volunteers from the parish, including Parish Councillors. Effort will be made to seek representation from under-represented sections of the community.
2. Membership of the Steering Group will be open to the public indefinitely, up to a maximum of 12 members.
3. District and County Councillors, as well as other agencies appointed by the Council to support the process, cannot be voting members of the Steering Group but are able to attend meetings and contribute to the discussions as required.
4. A person shall cease to be a member of the Steering Group upon notifying the Chair in writing of the wish to resign.

5. Decision Making

1. The Steering Group has fully delegated authority from the Parish Council to deliver its plan-making functions up to and including publication of the Consultation Draft Plan. The Group will report monthly to the Parish Council setting out progress on its work. The Parish Council will approve the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan prior to publication for consultation and independent examination.
2. The plan-making process remains the responsibility of the Parish Council as the qualifying body. All publications, consultation and community engagement exercises will be undertaken by or on behalf of the Parish Council with appropriate recognition of the Parish Council's position given in all communications associated with the project.

6. Meetings

1. Steering Group meetings will take place as and when necessary.
2. Where possible, all meetings will be held within the Parish. The dates of future meetings will be made publicly available via the parish website.
3. Meetings will be informal and will usually be open to members of the public. It will be rare for meetings not to be open to members of the public and, when they are not (for example when contractual matters are discussed), an explanation will be given.
4. The Steering Group will elect a Chair, Treasurer and Secretary from its membership to remain in those positions until the project is completed. If these positions should become vacant, the Group will elect an alternate.
5. The Secretary shall keep a record of meetings and circulate notes to Steering Group members and the Parish Council in a timely fashion. Minutes shall be made publicly available on the parish website.
6. At least 72 hours' notice of a meeting will be given to members by email and such notice shall detail the matters to be discussed. Shorter notice for urgent matters may be given if agreed by a majority of members.
7. Decisions made by the Steering Group should normally be by consensus at Steering Group meetings. Where a vote is required each member shall have one vote. A simple majority vote will be required to support any motion. The Chairman shall have one casting vote.
8. The Steering Group is quorate provided all the following apply:
 - a minimum of four members are present
 - at least one officer is present
 - at least one parish councillor is present
 - there is at least one community member
 - the meeting has been properly convened

7. Working Groups

1. The Steering Group may establish working groups, made up of volunteers from the community to aid them in any Neighbourhood Plan related work.
2. Each working group should have a lead person from the Steering Group.
3. Members of the community will be encouraged to participate in the process at all stages.

8. Finance

1. All grants and funding will be applied for and held by the Parish Council, who will ring-fence the funds for Neighbourhood Development Plan work.
2. The Steering Group will notify the Parish Council, advising them of any planned expenditure before it is incurred.
3. Steering Group members and volunteers from any working groups may claim back any previously agreed expenditure incurred during any Neighbourhood Plan related work.

9. Conduct

1. All Steering Group members must abide by the principles and practice of the Parish Council Code of Conduct including declarations of interest.
2. Whilst Members as individuals may be accountable to other organizations, the Steering Group as a whole is accountable to the wider community for ensuring that the Plan reflects their collective expectations.
3. The Steering Group will achieve this through applying the following principles:
 - i. Be clear and open when members' individual roles or interests are in conflict;
 - ii. Treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or religion and belief; and
 - iii. Actively promote equality of access and opportunity.
4. All members of the Steering Group must declare any pecuniary interest that may be perceived as being relevant to a decision of the Group. This may include membership of an organisation, ownership of land or a business, or any other matter that may be considered to be relevant. Such declarations are to be recorded and be publicly available. Having declared an interest, that member shall not take part in a discussion or vote on the related issue. In the event of disagreement, the decision of the Chair shall be binding.
5. Organisations and businesses may assist in the production of the Neighbourhood Plan and may contribute to the cost of producing it. Details of any donations or assistance must be made publicly available and must not influence the recommendations of The Plan.
6. Behaviour that is causing a disruption to any meeting will result in the Steering Group members being given the option to vote to remove the individual Member. This will be by simple majority vote by the Members of the Group present at that time.

10. Changes to the Terms of Reference

This constitution may be amended with the support of at least two-thirds of the current membership at a Steering Group Meeting and with the approval of the Parish Council.

11. Dissolution

1. The Steering Group will be dissolved once its objectives have been attained and/or when at least two-thirds of its members and the Parish Council consider its services are no longer required.
2. The Steering Group will then dispose of any remaining funds held in accordance with any conditions imposed by the grant funders and in the best interests of Staverton Parish.

APPENDIX B: List of bodies and organisations consulted on the plan

REG 14 list of “consultation bodies”	SNP consultee list
(a) where the local planning authority is a London borough council, the Mayor of London;	NA
(b) a local planning authority, county council or parish council any part of whose area is in or adjoins the area of the local planning authority;	South Hams District Council Devon County Council Adjacent Parish Councils
(c) the Coal Authority(a);	✓
(d) the Homes and Communities Agency (b);	✓
(e) Natural England (c);	✓
(f) the Environment Agency (d);	✓
(g) the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (now known as Historic England) (e);	✓
(h) Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (company number 2904587);	✓
(i) the Highways Agency (now known as Highways England);	✓
(j) the Marine Management Organisation (f);	✓
(k) any person— (i) to whom the electronic communications code applies by virtue of a direction given under section 106(3)(a) of the Communications Act 2003; and (ii) who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus situated in any part of the area of the local planning authority;	Mobile Operators Association Mobile UK British Telecom Open Reach
(l) where it exercises functions in any part of the neighbourhood area— (i) a Primary Care Trust established under section 18 of the National Health Service Act 2006(a) or continued in existence by virtue of that section; (ii) a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 6(1)(b) and (c) of the Electricity Act 1989(b); (iii) a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 7(2) of the Gas Act 1986(c); (iv) a sewerage undertaker; and (v) a water undertaker;	NHS PCT Devon County Council Public Health Western Power Distribution Wales and West Utilities South West Water New Devon CCG
(m) voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities	South Hams CVS

benefit all or any part of the neighbourhood area;	West Devon CVS
(o) bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the neighbourhood area;	Dart and Avon mission Community
(p) bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the neighbourhood area; and	N/A
(q) bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the neighbourhood area.	South Hams CVS West Devon CVS Devon County Council
Other bodies	South Devon AONB Devon Wildlife Trust Housing Associations Landscape C of E Primary School St Christopher's School