

AVON AREA COMMUNITY COMMITTEE
3 November 2005

Item No: 8
Subject: Snitterfield Parish Plan
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Beese
Lead Officer: Colin Staves
Contact on 01789 260333

SUMMARY	To consider the assessment of the Snitterfield Parish Plan 2005	
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Snitterfield Parish Plan 2005 (Final Draft – August 2005)	
CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN		
CONSULTEE	✓	DETAILS AND DATE OF CONSULTATION
WARD MEMBERS	✓	Councillor Hobbs 5/10/05 – Fully supports the Plan and its adoption by the Council.
COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN	✓	Councillor Seaman on 5/10/05
PORTFOLIO HOLDER	✓	Councillor Beese on 5/10/05 Councillor Giblin (Shadow) on 5/10/05
LEGAL SERVICES	✓	Peter Cruden on 5/10/05
FINANCIAL SERVICES	✓	Richard Burrell on 5/10/05
PERSONNEL SERVICES		
OTHER	✓	Paul Ogden, Head of Leisure and Business Services on 23/9/05 – comments incorporated in the proposed response. Warwickshire County Council (WCC) on 23/9/05 Warwickshire Rural Community Council (WRCC) on 23/9/05 – comments incorporated in the proposed response.
CORPORATE STRATEGY/EMAS	✓	Paul Chapman 23/9/05
Summary of RECOMMENDATION		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Parish Plan is adopted as a local information source. 2. That the Parish Plan is adopted as a material consideration. 3. That the Parish Plan steering group, Parish Council and the residents of Snitterfield be commended and encouraged to implement their Action Plan.
FINAL DECISION SOUGHT ?	Yes	

1. Introduction and Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 This report sets out the assessment of the Snitterfield Parish Plan 2005, which was formally adopted by Snitterfield Parish Council on 15 September 2005.

2. Background Information

- 2.1 Parish Plans are community-led projects identifying and surveying the assets, needs, opportunities, problems and solutions of a community. Through 'Capacity' and 'Consensus Building', Parish Plans provide communities with a framework to take stock of the present and to plan for the future.
- 2.2 The momentum for Parish Plans is continually increasing with half of the communities in the District having completed or in the process of undertaking detailed Parish Plan or Appraisals with associated recommendations and Action Plans. Further background information on the process is included in Appendix B.

3. Submitted Parish Plan – Snitterfield

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 The local community in Snitterfield has a strong track record in community planning. This is evidenced by the Parish Appraisal which was approved in 2002 and by the Village Design Statement which was adopted as supplementary planning guidance in 2001. The Parish Appraisal, which had a response rate of over 75% provided a clear starting point for the development of the Parish Plan.
- 3.1.2 The Steering Group identified a range of key issues based on the findings of the Appraisal and Village Design Statement. A 'findings and recommended actions' questionnaire was distributed to all households in Spring 2005 to seek the communities views on the issues and recommended actions. The key stages of the process have been reported back to the community through the Parish newsletter 'The Snipe', and an open day was held in June to share the results of the survey.
- 3.1.3 The Parish Plan presents a clear picture of the needs and issues facing the community. It provides an Action Plan to address them over a ten-year period from 2006 – 2016. The actions have been prioritised and the Parish Council has agreed to take the lead in delivering many of the actions. There is also a clear recognition that the Parish Plan will need to be monitored and reviewed in the light of changing circumstances.

3.2 Parish Plan findings

- 3.2.1 The findings of the Parish Plan, which have informed the Action Plan cover:

- Facilities
- Infrastructure
- Employment
- Environment
- Development of the Village
- Other issues

- 3.2.2 The Parish Plan has drawn on the range of community participation techniques employed in the preparation of the Appraisal, including questionnaire survey, community open days and a transparent process of reporting back to the community on progress. The process has generated a range of statistical data and qualitative material, that has informed the Action Plan and which provides a useful local information source.

3.2.3 **Suggested Response: Endorse** – That the above be endorsed as a true representation of the topics addressed by the Parish Plan.

3.3 Action Plan

3.3.1 Analysis and responses to the Action Plan are provided in Appendix C, and should be read in conjunction with the Parish Plan Action Plan.

3.3.2 Overall the action plan is comprehensive in its scope and based on sound and valid information collected through the Parish Plan process. The policy position in the Local Plan Review is generally supportive of the Action Plan points relating to the environment and development. There is a slight inconsistency with planning policy at para 6.9 where the third bullet point refers to 'the recommended infill policy'. This policy no longer applies and it is suggested that the word 'infill' should be replaced with 'local needs'. It is apparent from elsewhere in the document that the local community have understood the restriction on housing development to meet local needs only.

3.3.3 It should be noted that the Action Plan identifies the District Council in tackling a number of matters. These actions have been brought to the attention of the relevant services within the Council through consultation on this report.

3.3.4 Transport related matters are given particular prominence and it is essential that the County Council as Highway Authority looks at these matters thoroughly. The County's Stratford Area Team and the Rural Transport Officer have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

4. Corporate Strategy/Environmental/Financial/Legal Implications

4.1 The following general observations on the Parish Plan are based on responses from internal consultation with the Directorates within the District Council.

4.2 The Parish Plan is a useful source of information about the local community perception of their locality. The Community Plan and Corporate Strategy for the District support the range of topic areas and policies in the Action Plan. The Parish Plan also complements and helps to move the District Council's Local Agenda 21 Strategy forward.

4.3 Projects developed through this Parish Plan may require funding to take them forward, and the recommendations within this report should be contained within existing budgets. The District Council operates an Appraisal Capital grants scheme, aimed at funding these types of project. It is hoped that the Parish Council and local residents will consider and pursue funding in order to develop the relevant identified action points.

5. Conclusion

5.1 The Parish Plan steering group, the Parish Council and residents of the Parish of Snitterfield should be commended and congratulated for completing their Parish Plan and are encouraged by Stratford-on-Avon District Council to implement and periodically review the Action Plan.

5.2 The Snitterfield Parish Plan is an excellent example of how a rural community can prepare a Parish Plan that is both a good source of local information, and provides a sound basis through the Action Plan to address the needs and aspirations of the community.

RECOMMENDED:-

- (1) That the Avon Area Community Committee adopts the Snitterfield Parish Plan, as a local information source to offer advice to the relevant Departments of Stratford-on-Avon District Council.**
- (2) That the Avon Area Community Committee adopt the Snitterfield Parish Plan as a material consideration in processing planning applications, in accordance with Policy ENV22 of the Stratford-on-Avon District Local Plan and Policy COM1 of the Local Plan Review.**
- (3) That the Parish Plan steering committee, Parish Council and residents of the Parish of Snitterfield be commended for preparing their Parish Plan and they are encouraged to implement and review the Action Plan.**

PAT REID
Head of Planning and Building Control

Appendix A - Guidance for the Assessment of Parish/Town Plans

- 1.1 In assessing Parish Plans, the following considerations should be taken into account:

**Evidence and extent of research work to justify conclusions.
Evidence and extent of analysis related to conclusions.
Public involvement and endorsement at local level.
Level of implementation available to District Council services, (e.g. the District Council Planning Authority, Leisure and Arts etc.).
Conformity with District Council's policies, (e.g. Planning policies etc.).**

- 1.2 The above five criteria will enable the production of recommendations regarding the acceptance of each of the Parish Plan's detailed conclusions and Action Points.

- 1.3 A response to each of the detailed conclusions and Action Points will be one of the following:

(A) ENDORSE

The specific recommendation will be accepted and taken into account on the decision making of the District Council. (For example, "Small scale development with a 'craft' emphasis should be looked at sympathetically").

(B) ACTION

The specific recommendation will be accepted in principle and, subject to financial, procedural and legal constraints, implemented by or with the support of the District Council. (For example, "A social housing scheme of ten units on land next to the Green should be provided").

(C) INVESTIGATE

Further information to be obtained by the Parish/Town Council or other agency may be required in order that the District Council may establish if the specific recommendation can be supported. (For example, "An existing Conservation Area should be extended").

(D) SUPPORT

The specific recommendation relates to a matter which is not the responsibility of the District Council. However, the proposal is supported and will be forwarded to the appropriate authority. (For example, "Traffic calming measures are required and the County Highway Authority should prepare a scheme").

(E) NOT SUPPORTED

The specific recommendation relates to a matter which is in contrary to the policy of the District Council or is beyond the powers of the authority or that insufficient and/or unsatisfactory information has been submitted to substantiate the recommendation. (For example, "No development of any kind should take place within the settlement").

Appendix B – Further Background Information

- 2.1 Communities produce Parish Plans for a number of reasons:
- To increase the awareness of community issues, foster community spirit and encourage a sense of pride;
 - To act as a strong basis for local action (the Appraisal Action Plan);
 - To collectively represent the views of residents, to positively influence others to the benefit of the community.
- 2.2 In the 1980s the concept and practice of Village Appraisals first emanated nationally from the Rural Development Commission in conjunction with the Countryside Commission.
- 2.3 Nationally, Parish Plans have a role to play within the 'modernising Local Government' agenda, for example, shaping local services, public participation, decision-making and greater democratic legitimacy.
- 2.4 One of the aims within Chapter 12 of the Rural White Paper (Our Countryside: the future – A fair deal for rural England) includes involving people living in rural areas in developing their community, safeguarding its valued features and shaping the decisions that affect them – developing a vision for the future. Parish Plans are a recognised method of achieving this aim.
- 2.5 In line with guidance from the Countryside Agency issued in August 2000 ('Planning tomorrow's countryside', advice to local planning authorities, government and developers on how the planning system should operate and evolve), Parish Plans are a recognised community planning method to help achieve key objectives. In March 2003 the Countryside Agency produced detailed guidance for parish and town councils on the preparation of Parish and Town Plans.
- 2.6 In Planning Policy Guidance Note 7 *Countryside* (1997), the Government recognises that Parish Plans can inform development plans by identifying a local community's needs and priorities for the future.
- 2.7 Policy RA3 in the Warwickshire Structure Plan 1996-2011 encourages local planning authorities to use 'Appraisals' when establishing the views of local communities and when identifying local housing and industrial development need.
- 2.8 Stratford-on-Avon District Council is committed to the encouragement of Parish Plans as a means of identifying local issues and will respond to them positively. Much faith has been placed by the Government, the County and the District Council on local appraisals and their role in assisting the formulation of strategic policy.
- 2.9 Parish Plans can now play a broader role within the production of the statutory Community Plan for Stratford District.
- 2.10 The recommendations and Action Plans can both inform and help deliver the Rural Strategy for the Stratford-on-Avon District.
- 2.11 Policy ENV22 of the Stratford-on-Avon District Local Plan states:
- " The District Planning Authority, in determining planning applications and assessing priorities for environmental enhancement will have regard to parish and

village appraisals prepared by the Parish/Town Councils or local amenity bodies, which have been endorsed by the District Planning Authority."

"When an appraisal is received by the Council it is carefully considered and assessed against consistent criteria. The assessment of appraisals includes the identification of those issues of appraisals which are planning matters and therefore relevant to development control. It is only when the assessments have been completed and the relevant aspects endorsed by Committee, that appraisals will be afforded the status of a material consideration."

- 2.12 Policy COM1 of the Stratford-on-Avon District Local Plan Review (Revised Deposit Draft) states:

"The views of local communities reflected in Parish Plans (and their equivalents) adopted by the District Council will be fully assessed in the planning process. In particular they will be used:

- To help assess the merits of schemes promoted by communities to meet needs which they have identified;
- As a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and to assist in identifying the scope and nature of associated planning obligations which might be sought; and
- To identify opportunities for environmental and other forms of enhancement.

In the case of Main Rural Centres and Local Centre Villages only, as defined in Policy STR1, small scale schemes which meet housing (particularly affordable housing) and employment needs will be encouraged..."

- 2.13 Nationally, Parish Plans are broad, holistic documents addressing local issues at a local level. Whilst in this District 'appraisals' have had a close association with planning, they are no longer 'planning-led'. Parish Plans address both planning and non-planning related matters and this is reflected in their assessment at Committee.
- 2.14 Parish Plans can and do act as a tool to assist in giving many of the services provided by the District Council greater community focus. Vice versa, many of the services provided by the District Council can and do feed into the Parish Plan process creating more informed Action Plans.

Appendix C
Summary of key action points

Recommended Action	SDC Proposed Response
<p>Facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider modernising or relocating the village hall. 	<p>Support - The Council's capital grants scheme could provide financial support. The Planning Service can provide advice on suitable sites for relocation if required.</p>
<p>Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 action points are identified under the heading of Transport and Roads. • Applications for new development to comply with Village Design Statement guidelines. 	<p>Support – All the action points are supported in principle by the District Council, but will require the support of the County Council as the relevant highway and transport authority to implement them. Some of the actions will as require the support of the Highways Agency where they involve the A46 Trunk Road. These actions will be brought to the attention of both WCC and the Highways Agency.</p> <p>Endorse – The Village Design Statement retains its status as supplementary planning guidance.</p>
<p>Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve and protect the conservation area. • Ensure maintenance of open spaces. • Maintenance of Bell Brook to reduce the risk of flooding. • Protect hedgerows, trees and wildlife habitats. • Encourage good hedgerow management. • Promote recycling of garden waste. • Recycling of all plastic, cans, glass, paper and cardboard. • Encourage alternative transport to the car. 	<p>Endorse / Action / Support – the Council's planning service will support these actions by ensuring compliance with its statutory duties in respect of conservation areas and protected trees and hedgerows.</p> <p>The action points in respect of the Bell Brook have been brought to the attention of the relevant service areas with Operational Services.</p> <p>The County Council's Rural Transport Officer can provide advice and support to encourage alternative modes of transport to the car.</p>
<p>Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All new development to comply with the needs of the Parish and the Village Design Statement. • Extensions to existing buildings to follow the VDS guidelines. • The prime need in the Parish is for affordable housing and small family homes. 	<p>Endorse/Action – These action points are consistent with Policy COM.1 of the Local Plan Review. The Village Design Statement retains its status as supplementary planning guidance.</p> <p>The District Council will work with the Parish Council to develop a clear picture of local need and recommends that the Rural Housing Enabler at Warwickshire Rural Community Council is also involved. WRCC should be identified as a partner in the action plan. In doing so, the Parish Council are encouraged to seek the views of residents as to the location for new development.</p>

Recommended Action	SDC Proposed Response
<p data-bbox="177 232 384 264">Other Issues</p> <ul data-bbox="240 264 823 427" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="240 264 632 295">• Improve police coverage. <li data-bbox="240 295 799 360">• Communications – keeping the parish informed. <li data-bbox="240 360 823 427">• Car parking – improve availability of safe parking in key areas of the village. 	<p data-bbox="863 232 1366 360">Support – The District Council supports these action points in principle and will bring them to the attention of the relevant authorities.</p>