

**SUBJECT: MORETON MORRELL PARISH PLAN**

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**LEAD MEMBER/  
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### **SUMMARY**

This report sets out the assessment of the Moreton Morrell 2006 Parish Plan and Village Design Statement. Moreton Morrell Parish Council will formally adopt the document at their meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2007.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- (1) That the Parish Plan is adopted as a local information source to offer advice to the relevant departments of Stratford-on-Avon District Council.**
  - (2) That the Parish Plan is adopted as a material consideration in processing planning applications, in accordance with Policy COM.1 of the Local Plan Review.**
  - (3) That the Parish Plan steering committee, Parish Council and the residents of Moreton Morrell Parish be commended for preparing their Parish Plan and that they are encouraged to implement and review their Action Plan.**
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## **1 BACKGROUND/INFORMATION**

- 1.1 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.
  - 1.2 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.
  - 1.3 **Background to the submitted Moreton Morrell Parish Plan**
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- 1.4 In July 2004 a Parish Plan Steering committee was formed consisting of 2 Parish Councillors and 8 volunteers representing all ages and parts of the village. Volunteers were invited via the Parish Magazine. The project was funded by a Countryside Agency Vital Villages grant, the Parish Council and contributions in kind from many volunteers. A questionnaire was sent to all 267 households in the Parish, asking for views on a variety of social, economic and environmental issues. 84 households (31%) responded representing the views of 174 (25%) people, including children over the age of eleven. The Consultation Officer advises that a higher response rate of at least 250 individuals would be required to make the results of this survey statistically credible. The Moreton Morrell Steering Committee recognised the limitations of the survey findings and have sought to address them with further public events and through a sensible use of the data when compiling the Action Plan.
- 1.5 A Parish Plan Presentation Evening was held to present the results of the survey, and to obtain further input. Over 80 people attended and their comments and ideas added to the information gathering stage of the process. A Planning Open Morning was held to gather further input on village design principles and guidelines for future development, which was attended by over 70 people. A draft action plan was drawn up based on the information gathered, and was reviewed with the Parish Council. Throughout the process the community was kept informed through the Parish Magazine.
- 1.6 The final document incorporates an Action Plan and a Village Design Statement, as well as an A-Z with useful information about the Parish and consultation results. It has been distributed to every household in the district. The ongoing Action Plan has been handed over to the Parish Council to continue implementation. Updates on progress will be provided by the Parish Council on a quarterly basis via the Villager magazine and the village website.
- 1.7 **Moreton Morrell Parish Plan findings**
- 1.7.1 The findings of the Parish Plan, which have informed the Action Plan, cover:
- Village values
  - Social activities and communication
  - Environmental actions
  - Council actions
  - Village design guidelines
- 1.7.2 The Parish Plan has been prepared employing a range of community participation techniques, including questionnaire surveys, public forums 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 information source.
- 1.7.3 Suggested response: Endorse – that the findings of the Moreton Morrell Parish Plan be endorsed as a true representation of the topics addressed by the Parish Plan.
- 1.8 **Moreton Morrell Parish Plan Action Plan**
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- 1.8.1 Analysis and responses to the Action Plan are provided in Appendix C, and the following analysis and comments should be read in conjunction with the Parish Plan Action Plan.
- 1.8.2 The policy position of the Local Plan Review is generally supportive of the Action Plan points relating to planning, the environment and land use. The District Council can offer assistance in taking forward action points such as increasing the use of flexible transport schemes and supporting funding searches for community projects. Many of the actions identified can be undertaken entirely by the village itself, and several actions have already been implemented such as the setting up of a village website and the development of various clubs and societies.
- 1.8.3 Some actions may be eligible to apply to the Area Community Committee for a Community Grant. The parish should be aware, however, that any grant application might need additional proof of community support to the fairly low survey response rate.
- 1.8.4 3 respondents to the questionnaire expressed a need for alternative accommodation in the Parish. Consideration of the sample size of the survey, and the higher number of locally connected households on the Housing Waiting List, suggests that there may be higher levels of unmet housing needs within the community. Both SDC Housing Team and Warwickshire Rural Community Council therefore encourage the local community to consider undertaking a local housing needs survey. The Rural Housing Enabler and SDC can provide help in this area.
- 1.8.5 It is considered that the points in the Village Design Statement section discouraging groups of houses and expansion on the edge of the village could cause problems if a local 'exception' scheme to provide affordable housing to meet local need was required. Applying these criteria is likely to make any affordable scheme unviable.

## **2 OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO THE COMMITTEE**

- 2.1 A) Adopt the Parish Plan fully: This is a good, well-prepared Parish Plan that would be a valuable local information source and material consideration.
- 2.2 B) Adopt parts of the Parish Plan: If there are any concerns with certain aspects of the Parish Plan, this option would allow the District Council to use selected aspects of the Plan in its decision making and as a local information source.
- 2.3 C) Not adopt the Parish Plan: The District Council would miss the opportunity to adopt a useful source of local information, and a material consideration to aid planning decision-making.

## **3 IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL**

### **3.1 Financial**

- 3.1.1 Projects developed through this Parish Plan may need funding to take them forward and the recommendations contained in this report should be contained within existing budgets. The District Council operates a Community Grants Scheme aimed at funding these types of projects, and the Community Grants team may be able to help search for appropriate funding sources. It is hoped that the Parish Council and local residents will consider and pursue funding in order to develop their identified

action points.

### **3.2 Environmental**

- 3.2.1 Several of the actions within this Parish Plan aim to improve the local environment of the village and its surroundings. Other actions could increase the environmental sustainability of life within the Parish by reducing local people's dependency on the private car.

### **3.3 Corporate Strategy**

- 3.3.1 The Parish Plan is a useful source of information about 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 move forward the District Council's Agenda 21.

## **4 RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 The actions recommended in this report are to commend those involved in the preparation of the Plan, adopt the Parish Plan as a local information source, and adopt it as a material consideration. There are no identified major risks associated with these actions.
- 4.2 Choosing to not adopt the Parish Plan would risk losing the chance to adopt a valuable source of local information and a useful material consideration to aid planning decision-making.

## **5 CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 The Parish Plan Steering Committee, the Parish Council and residents of Moreton Morrell 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 Moreton Morrell Parish Plan is a good 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.

HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES

### **Background papers:**

Moreton Morrell Parish Plan 2006

Stratford District Community Plan; the future to 2015

Stratford-on-Avon Local Plan Review 2006

Stratford-on-Avon District Statement of Community Involvement, April 2006

## **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 their commendation. (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 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. 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.
- 2.7. 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 Council and the District Council on local appraisals and their role in assisting the formulation of strategic policy.
- 2.8. Parish Plans can now play a broader role within the production of the statutory Community Plan for Stratford District.
- 2.9. The recommendations and Action Plans can both inform and help deliver the Rural Strategy for the Stratford-on-Avon District.
- 2.10. Policy COM.1 of the Stratford-on-Avon District Local Plan Review 2006 states:

"The views of the local community as expressed preferably in a Parish Plan (or equivalent) or in its absence an alternative source of reliable evidence, will be fully taken into account 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 in this way..."

- 2.11. 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.
- 2.12. 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

Abbreviations WCC= Warwickshire County Council

SDC= Stratford District Council

PC= Parish Council

Parish Plan action	SDC Proposed Response
Investigate fishmonger service and improve publicity. Investigate mobile fruit and veg supplier. These actions have been achieved.	<b>Support</b> – these actions contribute to the Community Plan’s aim to improve people’s access to services.
Explore potential option to use village hall for Post office. Further investigation suggested that there was insufficient demand to support the project.	<b>Support and Endorse</b> – the Community Plan includes a target to improve ease of access to key services. Policy COM.3 of the Local Plan Review 2006 encourages the provision of new shops and services which meet the needs of local communities. This action point could therefore be supported in principle if in future it is considered to be a viable project.
Investigate provision of a free bus service to nearby Post Office in Wellesbourne.	<b>Support and action</b> – this action point would contribute to the aims of the Community Plan including supporting individuals and providing transport to meet needs.  SDC is a partner of the Community Links scheme which may be able to provide transport, or advice and support. See response to Voluntary Driver action for details.
Village website under construction. This action has also now been achieved.	<b>Support</b> – This action point can be supported.
Improve communication about existing clubs at evening presentation, and communicate the high interest in new clubs within the parish.	<b>Support and Action</b> – the Community Plan aims to increase the percentage of people joining local clubs.  The District Council Community Grants Team offer help locating funding, and can advise if a scheme may be eligible for the Council’s Community Grant scheme.
PC to investigate footpath improvements	<b>Support</b> – The Community Plan aims to support a healthy environment.

<p>PC to take questionnaire responses into consideration when replacing street lights (that 31% would like to see improved street lighting and 24% would like to see more environmentally friendly street lights).</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – The Community Plan aims to improve public confidence and safety, and improve energy efficiency in the district.</p>
<p>PC to raise funds for improvement of Playing field facilities (e.g. youth shelter and skate ramp). A Community Trust Fund and fundraising activities have been initiated to fund this.</p>	<p><b>Support and Action</b> – the Community Plan aims to increase the percentage of young people participating in leisure and recreational activities.</p> <p>The District Council Community Grants Team offer help locating funding, and can advise if a scheme may be eligible for the Council’s Community Grant scheme.</p>
<p>Investigate use of college sport facilities</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – the Community Plan seeks to maximise the use of existing facilities for community use.</p>
<p>Document discussions on speeding concerns in village.</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – the Community Plan aims to improve road safety.</p>
<p>Set up voluntary driver scheme. Advertise in village</p>	<p><b>Support and Action</b> – The Community Plan seeks to develop a range of flexible transport initiatives to help people access services.</p> <p>SDC is a partner of the Community Links scheme which may be able to provide transport, or advice and support. The current transport scheme is available 9.30am to 2.30pm to help those who are 'stuck for transport'. Phone Community Links 9am to 4pm weekdays on 01789 264491 for details.</p>
<p><b>Village Design Statement</b></p>	
<p>The views of the community on future development are set out in the Village Design Statement section</p>	<p><b>Endorse</b> – In general the Parish Plan and the community views expressed within it will be used as a material consideration when determining planning applications, as laid out in Policy COM.1 of the Local Plan Review.</p> <p>The VDS sets out a number of guidelines. Whilst District planning policy is generally very restrictive about development in the village, there is some concern that certain</p>

	guidelines could be very restrictive and there may be a situation if a local exception scheme is required where a small group of houses on the edge of the village would be needed to meet local need for affordable housing.
<b>Design Guidelines for Future Development:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future development should show a variety of housing sizes.</li> <li>• Restrict future development to individual houses within the existing boundaries of the village.</li> </ul>	Under current policy it is very unlikely that new housing would be permitted in the village. The only exception would be an affordable housing scheme to meet identified local need under Policy CTY.5 of the Local Plan Review. There is concern that the wording of these guidelines could prevent the implementation of such a scheme if a need was identified.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be a variety of styles, design and building materials blending with current village diversity (some further analysis provided in VDS section of Plan).</li> <li>• Preserve existing views and incorporate open spaces and trees within the design.</li> </ul>	<b>Endorse</b> - Policy PR.1 on landscape and settlement character states that consideration will be given to the guidance adopted by the District Council including Village Design Statements.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain Public house, school and village hall in their current use</li> </ul>	<b>Endorse</b> - COM.2 seeks to retain shops and services serving the needs of local communities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage conversion of old and redundant buildings where it enhances the village.</li> </ul>	<b>Endorse</b> - CTY.2 generally supports sensitive conversion of existing rural buildings to commercial, tourism, industrial or recreation uses of a suitable scale. Conversion to residential is only acceptable with specific justification.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industrial or major commercial expansion should be discouraged within the village. Small scale commercial in keeping with rural character is acceptable.</li> </ul>	<b>Endorse</b> - Moreton Morrell is not considered a suitable location for general new developments in the current Local Plan Review 2006. Conversions for commercial schemes may be acceptable as above.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any development of Warwickshire College should be carefully considered.</li> </ul>	<b>Support</b> – can be supported.

<b>Design Guidelines – Environment:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain mature trees and hedgerows and encourage new planting</li> <li>• New and replacement street furniture to be natural materials in keeping with rural character.</li> <li>• Street lighting to be sufficient for safety while minimising light spillage and energy usage.</li> <li>• Underground cabling to be investigated.</li> <li>• Additional footpaths to be encouraged.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Endorse</b> - The views of the community as expressed in Parish Plans and Village Design Statements are taken into account in planning decisions through policies COM.1 and PR.1.</p>
<b>Design Guidelines – Roads and Traffic:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parish Council to review identified junctions for potential traffic safety measures.</li> <li>• Any new development should provide off-road parking.</li> <li>• Roads leading to the village should not be widened.</li> <li>• Warwickshire College should not increase volume of traffic through village and should continue to discourage commercial traffic via Little Morrell.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Support</b> – the Community Plan aims to improve road safety.</p>

### REPORT INFORMATION SHEET

Please complete and submit to Committee Services with draft report

COMMITTEE/DATE	STOUR AREA COMMUNITY COMMITTEE – 23 <sup>RD</sup> JANUARY 2007	
ITEM NO/TITLE OF REPORT	MORETON MORRELL PARISH PLAN	
<b>CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN</b>		
<b>CONSULTEE</b>	✓	<b>DETAILS / DATE OF CONSULTATION / COMMENTS RECEIVED</b>
WARD MEMBERS	✓	CLLR DAVID CLOSE/ 18 <sup>TH</sup> DEC 06/ NO FURTHER COMMENTS CLLR SUE MAIN/ 18 <sup>TH</sup> DEC 06 CLLR ROGER WRIGHT/ 18 <sup>TH</sup> DEC 06
COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN/ PORTFOLIOHOLDER * <i>*Required</i>	✓	CLLR STEPHEN GRAY/ 18 <sup>TH</sup> DEC 06 CLLR STUART BEESE/ 18 <sup>TH</sup> DEC 06
FINANCIAL SERVICES * <i>*Required</i>	✓	RICHARD BURRELL/ 18 <sup>TH</sup> DEC 06/ NO FURTHER COMMENTS
LEGAL SERVICES * <i>*Required</i>	✓	SERINTHER ATKAR/ 18 <sup>TH</sup> DEC 06
OTHER SERVICES	✓	HOUSING/ 7 <sup>TH</sup> DEC 06/ ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY TO UNDERTAKE A HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY. POLICY AND PR/ 7 <sup>TH</sup> DEC 06 LEISURE AND LOCAL COMMUNITY/ 7 <sup>TH</sup> DEC 06
OTHER ORGANISATIONS	✓	MORETON MORRELL PARISH COUNCIL/ 18 <sup>TH</sup> DEC WARWICKSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL/ 7 <sup>TH</sup> DEC 06/ ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY TO UNDERTAKE A HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY. WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL/ 7 <sup>TH</sup> DEC 06
FINAL DECISION BY THIS COMMITTEE OR RECOMMENDATION TO ANOTHER COMMITTEE/COUNCIL ?		FINAL DECISION RECOMMENDATION TO : EXECUTIVE / COUNCIL ..... COMMITTEE <i>Delete as appropriate</i>
DOES THIS REPORT CONTAIN EXEMPT INFORMATION? IF SO, UNDER WHICH PARAGRAPH(S) ?		No YES, PARAGRAPHS : <i>Delete as appropriate</i>
DOES THIS REPORT RELATE TO A KEY DECISION (REFERRED TO IN THE EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN)		No YES, FORWARD PLAN ITEM – SCHEDULED FOR ..... (date) <i>Delete as appropriate</i>

