## **Wootton Wawen Neighbourhood Development Plan**

# Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Consultation (Neighbourhood Planning (General)

### Regulations, 2012

#### **Appendix 1 - Comments from Stratford-on-Avon District Council**

#### **Policy related comments:**

Section	Reference/page	Comment
Contents Page	List of contents, p.2	Create a more detailed list of all the policies, similar to the Core Strategy. This will help readers of the Plan to quickly navigate around the document to find the relevant Section/Policy much easier. For example:  Section 2.0: Neighbourhood Housing  Village Boundary (Policy H1) p.7  Affordable Housing (Policy H2) p.9  Use of Brownfield Land (Policy H3) p.10  Use of Garden Land (Policy H4) p.10  Etc
1.0 Introduction	The Rationale, p.3	The second paragraph of this section could be more positively worded: neighbourhood planning is about taking responsibility for managing new development and shaping the future of the community, not about preventing development.
1.0 Introduction	The Village, p.4	The final sentence of the first paragraph of this section states that the village of Wootton Wawen lies within the Arden Special Landscape Area (SLA). However, whilst the SLA is a proposal under Policy CS.12 of the Core Strategy, this has yet to be adopted and as such, the NDP should be re-drafted to take account of this.  The second sentence of the last paragraph on p.4 of the NDP states that the Core Strategy "recognises the need to restrict development in the village" and suggests that development should be limited to in-fill within the village boundary. However, whilst it is assumed this is a reference to the village being washed over by the West Midlands Green Belt, it is not implicit. Suggest replacing the words "the village" with "Local Service Villages located within the West

		Midland Green Belt such as Wootton Wawen" in order to make it clearer to the reader where the reference to in-fill comes from.
		The first paragraph on p.5 of the NDP refers to the Local Plan, but elsewhere reference is made to the Core Strategy. It is considered a distinction should be made between the Local Plan and the Core Strategy. Whilst going forward the NDP will sit alongside the Core Strategy, the NDP will be assessed at Examination against the current Local Plan.
1.0 Introduction	Background to the Plan, p.5	Paragraph two of this section discusses the housing targets for LSVs in previous iterations of the Core Strategy but does not describe subsequent changes to the target housing figures as set out in the proposed modifications to the CS and then link to the provisions of CS Policy CS.10. This section should be updated to provide the most up-to-date position.
1.0 Introduction	Key Issues Guiding Plan Preparation, p.5	Point 1 refers to no expansion of the village of Wootton Wawen beyond the current developed land and natural boundaries. Should this include a caveat to refer to schemes to meet local housing need that may be appropriate beyond the settlement boundary?
1.0 Introduction	The Vision, p.6	Remove one set of the words "and seeking" on third line, due to duplication.
1.0 Introduction	Strategic Objectives table, p.6	For consistency throughout the NDP, replace "Amenities" with "Facilities" as a sub-heading and replace "assets" with "facilities" in the associated text.
2.0 Neighbourhood Housing	Strategic Objective, p.7	The second paragraph talks about the re-development of brownfield sites where "the openness of the Green Belt is not compromised". It is considered it would be more appropriate to align with the NPPF in discussing Green Belt harm by replacing the existing phrase with the following wording: "the new building(s) or activities involved would not have a materially greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing or previous development or activity on the site".
2.0 Neighbourhood Housing	Policy H1, p.7	The two paragraphs cover the same point but not in a consistent manner in that the first paragraph says there may be instances where some forms of new housing may be appropriate outside the Village Boundary but the second paragraph says this will not be supported. It is suggested that the second paragraph is deleted.
		The proposed Village Boundary includes within it the Wootton Hall Residential Park. The character of that park is, of course, very distinct from the permanent housing in other parts of the village within the Village Boundary. It is noted that there is no policy dealing with the future use and development of that park, notwithstanding (as the Plan acknowledges) that about 50% of the population of the parish live there. The effect of the inclusion of the site within the defined Village Boundary would, in principle, be to facilitate its redevelopment for permanent dwellings. Given that a large part of the site falls within the Environment Agency's Flood Zones 2 or 3, this could conflict with other policies. The Parish Council may wish to consider whether the inclusion of a separate policy dealing with this site would be appropriate

		for the reasons given above.
2.0 Neighbourhood Housing	Policy H1 Explanation, p.7	The end of first sentence in third paragraph should read "will be restricted to limited infilling and redevelopment within the village boundary (see Figure 2) in accordance with paragraph 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework".
2.0 Neighbourhood Housing	Figure 2, p.8	It is not clear why the isthmus of undeveloped land just below the village name running in an east-west orientation has been included within the village boundary. Also, it's not clear why the properties to the east of the southernmost area have not been included within the proposed village boundary.
2.0 Neighbourhood Housing	Policy H2, p.9	The first two paragraphs of Policy H2 would appear to provide a framework to enable additional schemes to come forward, should a further unmet need be identified in the future. This is welcome, but it might be helpful to identify "preferred locations" for any future schemes (effectively, reserve sites only for release in the event of a local housing need being confirmed).
		Because the funding environment for affordable housing schemes is presently subject to significant change, it is increasingly likely that any future scheme might require the cost of any affordable homes to be cross-subsidised from profits generated from the sale of market housing to make it financially viable. There are also other forms of provision, for example self-build housing, that merit consideration. For this reason alone, it is important that the scope of the Policy should not be confined exclusively to affordable housing; rather it should embrace any housing (whether affordable or market) required to meet an identified local need. In this respect it should be noted that corresponding policies in the emerging Core Strategy (notably CS.10(a) and CS.15-7 (August 2015)) allow scope for both local affordable and market housing needs to be met via small-scale schemes. There seems little real utility in summarising to the findings of the 2011 Survey in the Policy itself since, firstly, that need will be met by the scheme referred to above and, secondly, will the need inevitably differ as a result of any subsequent survey.
		As written, the policy appears to only support the provision of affordable housing outside of the village boundary on rural exceptions sites as opposed to within the village boundary. It is noted the explanatory text explains that this is because affordable housing is unlikely to be provided on market schemes because their small size will make them not liable for such provision. However, there is nothing to prevent a 100% or majority % affordable housing scheme being promoted on an infill site? The policy should surely support this eventuality.
		It is queried whether the 2011 housing needs survey is still relevant given its age and whether the policy needs to be based on more recent evidence.
		For the above reasons, it is recommended that Policy H2 should be revised. Possible

		alternative wording is suggested below for consideration, with changes highlighted in italics and underlined. Some consequential changes to the explanatory text would also be appropriate. The issue of identifying "preferred locations" noted above should be considered separately.  "Policy H2 – Housing to Meet Local Need  This Plan supports the provision of small scale community-led housing schemes on sites within or adjacent to the defined Village Boundary to meet the needs of the local community as identified through a local housing needs survey.  All development proposed must demonstrate how the latest local housing needs survey or other relevant and reliable local evidence has been taken into account when designing the scheme, including the overall number of homes together with the mix of stock and its tenure profile.  Any new homes (whether affordable or market) provided in this way must be subject to a planning obligation to restrict their occupancy to people with a local connection consistent with the ability of the scheme to effectively meet the identified local need".
2.0 Neighbourhood Housing	Policy H2 Explanation, p.9-10	The end of first sentence in first paragraph should read "will be restricted to limited infilling and redevelopment". The first sentence in second paragraph should read "on land within and adjoining existing villages"
2.0 Neighbourhood Housing	Policy H3, p.10	Whist the policy accords with a core planning principle in the NPPF to encourage the effective re-use of previously developed land (PDL), the policy does not recognise that PDL can be of high environmental value and sometimes that value might exceed that of a greenfield site.  Additionally, the final paragraph of the policy introduces a presumption against the development of greenfield land, requiring 'exceptional circumstances' to be demonstrated in order for development to be regarded favourably. This goes against the grain of the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the NPPF and as such does not have regard to national policy.  There is a need to clarify whether reference to 'greenfield land' in last paragraph covers such sites inside the Village Boundary. Policy H4 states that garden land within the Village Boundary may be permitted, but gardens are greenfield. So there is potential inconsistency here. It seems to me that the brownfield component of Policy H3 refers to sites inside and outside the Village Boundary whereas the final paragraph covers land outside the boundary, but this needs to be made clear by adding the words "outside the Village Boundary" at the end of the first

		sentence in this paragraph.
		In view of the above comments, the following amendments to the policy are suggested:
		Insert the words "to create new homes" after "brownfield land" and before "will be supported" in the first sentence of the policy.
		Add to the end of criterion c) "and would not result in the loss of any land of high environmental value".
		Insert the words "would be provided to serve the new use" after "parking arrangements" and "; and"
		Delete the final paragraph of the policy.
2.0 Neighbourhood Housing	Policy H3 Explanation, p.10	The first paragraph of the explanatory text does not accord with the full definition of Previously Developed Land. Amend to ensure text meets NPPF definition.
2.0 Neighbourhood Housing	Policy H4, p.10	Is criterion c) too onerous and restrictive? Suggest rewording: "Do not significantly affect the amenities of neighbouring properties".
2.0 Neighbourhood Housing	Policy H5, p.11	Is this policy covering all forms of development? If so, should this be within the housing section of the Plan? This policy has some overlap with Policy H3 re: use of PDL.
		It is unclear what is meant by "commensurate with a viable scheme and infrastructure capacity" in relation to density. This required clarification/explanation/clearer drafting.
2.0 Neighbourhood Housing	Policy H5 Explanation, p.11	In relation to density, the third paragraph of explanatory text seems to introduce a density range, whereas the policy itself focusses on the context of the site. As well as being inconsistent, it is inappropriate to introduce what might be construed as policy in the supporting text. Therefore, the sentence "Densities would not normally be above 25-30 dwellings per hectare" should be deleted.
3.0 Neighbourhood Economy	Policy ECON1, p.12 and Appendix 2, p.26	This policy strikes a balance between flexibility and support for employment providing applicants with an opportunity to demonstrate why there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for employment purposes, in line with the NPPF, subject to the following recommended amendments:
		Add the words "or where there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for employment uses" at the end of criterion b) before the "or".
		At the end of the policy, add a new paragraph: "Where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, planning applications for alternative uses will be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for

		different land uses to support sustainable local communities".
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		It would be helpful to map the employment sites. NB: typo in last sentence of accompanying explanation (i.elist of employment sites).
3.0 Neighbourhood Economy	Policy ECON2, p.13	It may be appropriate to list and map existing tourism sites as per employment sites.
Economy		Suggest inserting the wording "new or improved" between the words "Proposals for" and "leisure and tourism"
		Consider re-wording the final paragraph of the policy along the lines of Policy ECON1 (i.e. "change of use will not be supported unless" with a list of appropriate criteria) for consistency and clarity of purpose.
3.0 Neighbourhood Economy	Policy ECON4, p.14	It is suggested that the second line should read "and" instead of "or" as they are not mutually exclusive.
		As written, this policy appears aspirational and it is unclear how it would be implemented as it would involve land under 3rd part ownership. It may be more appropriate to couch the policy in terms of supporting proposals for new parking provision in the village, particularly in respect of the general store and station. If the policy cannot be 'land-use' based, it will need to be removed from the main body of the NDP and included in an appendix.
3.0 Neighbourhood Economy	Policy ECON5, p.14	The space suggested in the first part of this policy relating to home-working could be the ability to convert a room to an office, a loft conversion or space within a garden. It is considered that the policy should encourage such changes rather that it being a requirement in order that it is flexible, rather than being over prescriptive. It is suggested that the words "must include" should be replaced with "are encouraged to provide" and the words "where appropriate" should also be added after "and" and before "incorporate cabling"
		The second part to this policy should specify which types of commercial uses are appropriate for live/work units (i.e. they are typically restricted to B1 offices). The policy also appears to conflate live/work with mixed-use development. Mixed-use is typically separate commercial and residential units and this is different from live/work units which are residential units with dedicated office space attached. The policy could of course support provision of both mixed-use developments and live/work developments. It is not clear what criteria f) means, or is trying to achieve. It is suggested that criteria f) is deleted.
		On the basis the first paragraph of the policy would apply equally to affordable as to market housing, it is important to recognise the need for flexibility over the way this policy is applied in relation to affordable housing so as to avoid problems with what might be deemed 'under-occupation' in the wake of the introduction of the 'bedroom tax'.

4.0 Neighbourhood Environment	Policy ENV1, p.16	For clarity, suggest replacing "green energy" with "renewable energy" in the first sentence of the policy.
4.0 Neighbourhood Environment	Policy ENV2, p.17	Suggest adding "All new" to the start of the first paragraph of the policy.  Although the second paragraph is clearly worded, the statement is quite permissive and potentially would allow the removal of trees and hedgerows of value simply because it was not 'possible' to retain the. Suggest this part of the policy is reworded to ensure that every effort is made to retain trees and hedgerows of value before mitigation is considered. Proposed alternative wording, below:  "Development should retain and protect existing trees and hedgerows which are important for their historic, visual or biodiversity value unless the need for, and the benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh any loss. Where it is not possible or feasible to retain such trees or hedgerows in these circumstances, replacement trees or hedgerows of an equivalent or better standard will be required in an appropriate location on the site".
4.0 Neighbourhood Environment	Policy ENV3, p.17	Suggest adding "new" between the words "All" and "developments" at the beginning of the first paragraph of the policy.  It is suggested that this policy could be strengthened by mapping existing blue infrastructure which would warrant protection There may also be an opportunity to look at local areas which could be improved.
4.0 Neighbourhood Environment	Policy ENV4, p.18	Suggest re-wording the Policy Title to read: "Flooding and Surface Water Drainage" since it does not incorporate foul drainage.  The NPPF states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas of high risk and it advocates a sequential, risk based approach to the location of development to avoid where possible flood risk to people and property. This policy should align with national policy.  The re-use and recycling of water falls within the performance of new dwellings only. Additionally, it is not appropriate to include sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) in all types of new development. A Written Ministerial Statement of 18 December 2014 indicated that SuDS were applicable only to developments of 10 or more dwellings and to major commercial development and given the Green Belt context for the village, this threshold is unlikely to be triggered. In order to align with NPPF, the following re-worded policy is offered for consideration:  "Development should not increase flood risk. Planning applications for development within the Plan area must be accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment in line with the

		requirements of national policy and advice, but may also be required on a site-by-site basis on locally available evidence. All proposals must demonstrate that flood risk will not be increased elsewhere and that proposed development is appropriately flood resilient and resistant.  Information accompanying the application should demonstrate how any mitigation measures will be satisfactorily integrated into the design and layout of the development.  The use of sustainable urban drainage systems and permeable surfaces will be encouraged, where appropriate.  All development proposals should demonstrate high levels of water efficiency. All residential development should incorporate water efficiency measures to achieve the enhanced technical standard for water usage under the building regulations".
4.0 Neighbourhood Environment	Policy ENV6, p.19	The policy is looking to cover landscape as well as views/vistas/skylines. Should these be dealt with via separate policies? The Policy is looking to protect the distinctive character of the Neighbourhood Area and refers to the Character Assessment at Appendix 1. However, the Character Assessment relates only to the village of Wootton Wawen. Should the words "the Neighbourhood Area" be replaced by "Wootton Wawen"?  The policy states that regard must be had to historic landscape features, important landmarks, skylines and viewswhat are they and where are they? Are they views into or out of the village? It is suggested that these features and views are mapped spatially and it must be ensured that evidence is available to indicate why particular views are important and must be protected.

4.0 Neighbourhood Environment	Policy ENV7, p.19	Suggest title is amended to read "Preservation of Designated Heritage Assets"  The Policy makes no mention of the Conservation Area, although it is a heritage asset mentioned within the explanatory text associated with the Policy.  Remove the words "as a minimum" from the third paragraph of the policy.  Paragraph four of the Policy indicates that development within and adjacent to heritage assets will be strictly controlled. Is this consistent with standpoint of NPPF? How is development to be controlled and in what circumstances? It is considered this paragraph needs re-wording.  It would be useful to cross-reference to Figure 3 (map of heritage assets).  Need to ensure that Policy ENV7 is consistent with national policy which relates to the importance of the heritage asset and the potential significance of any harm that development may cause.
4.0 Neighbourhood Environment	Figure 3, p.20	It would be helpful to annotate Figure 3 with the SAM references and show the listed buildings.
4.0 Neighbourhood Environment	Policy ENV8, p.21	Paragraph two of the policy – insert "where necessary" between "expected" and "to demonstrate". Add an additional sentence to the end of this paragraph to read: "Proposals which fail to satisfactorily create a safe and secure environment will not be supported".  First bullet point under paragraph three of the Policy should read 'public views'. These should be linked to views mapped spatially through Policy ENV6 of the NDP. How will the space between buildings be measured in terms of potential harm?  Policy principle 3 is overly prescriptive and could prevent high quality modern design development proposals from coming forward.  The final sentence of the Policy could be reworded so that it is a positive statement that supports high quality development, rather than resist poor inappropriate design. Alternatively, the word "necessarily" could be removed.
4.0 Neighbourhood Environment	Policy ENV8 Explanation, p.21	Point No. 2 should read 'south east'.  Should the final paragraph on p.21 of the NDP beginning "The overall design" be included within the policy itself?

4.0 Neighbourhood Environment	Policy ENV9, p.22	What are the 'important landscapes, natural features and areas of biodiversity' mentioned in the first paragraph of the Policy? Are they/should they be recorded spatially? How have they been assessed to be 'important' and what would this mean in practice?  In the third line of the first paragraph, suggest "permitted" should read "supported".  Is there any unnecessary overlap/duplication with this policy and Policy ENV3?
5.0 Neighbourhood Amenities	Strategic Objective, p.23	The Strategic Objective as written supports the retention of community facilities where appropriate and promotes new community facilities. As such, it is considered that the Strategic Objective should be included within the NDP as a Policy (AM1?).  This will necessitate the drafting of a new Strategic Objective for this section of the Plan and the re-numbering of all subsequent policies.
5.0 Neighbourhood Amenities	Policy AM2, p.23	Suggest second paragraph is placed in explanation. Suggest final paragraph is restructured to read better along the lines of "For access and safety reasons, a review of transport arrangements for secondary school pupils travelling outside of the Neighbourhood Area is supported". This issue should be covered in the explanation.  This policy perhaps lacks the clarity of many of the other policies in the plan and raises a number of questions: Is the second sentence of the second paragraph aspirational – how exactly does the NDP achieve this aim? Would clarity be provided by identifying the school site on a map? How consistent would the provision of a replacement school be with Green Belt policy? Should this plan identify a preferred site and set out the exceptional circumstances to help justify such provision?
5.0 Neighbourhood Amenities	Policy AM2 Explanation, p.23	The second sentence in first paragraph should be included in the policy with the final phrase replaced with something along the lines of "is sought and will be supported".
50. Neighbourhood Amenities	Policy AM3 (Promoting Walking and Cycling), p.24	The wording of paragraph two is too onerous. Replace "All new development" with "As appropriate, development"  Suggest clarifying what is meant by "public routes" (is it public rights of way or highways, or both?).  The policy could be further strengthened by including a map of existing cycle routes and public footpaths which the community wish to protect and enhance.
5.0 Neighbourhood Amenities	Policy AM3 Explanation, p.24	In the final paragraph it should read "Stratford-upon-Avon Canal".

5.0 Neighbourhood Amenities	Policy AM3 (Neighbourhood Community Assets), p.24	The title of this Policy should be "Neighbourhood Community Facilities" to avoid connotation with Community Assets which has a more formal status – unless all the community assets listed in Appendix 3 have been registered as such. Appendix 3 and reference to it in the explanation should also be renamed "Community Facilities" if that is not the case.  It is suggested the first paragraph of the policy would be better placed in the Explanatory text.  It would be helpful to map the community assets.
Appendices	Appendix 1, p.25	This assessment is welcomed and clearly a lot of work has been done to prepare this document along with the NDP itself. The following comments in particular are intended to be constructive to help strengthen this work:  It would be useful to insert a map with key street names perhaps in the layout, roads, routes and spaces section to assist with interpretation. It could also identify features/assets referred to in the assessment e.g. the River Alne (as this is an important feature), Listed Buildings, Conservation Area, SAMs, public footpaths, important trees, landmark buildings etc. The identification of distinct character areas should reflect identified key differences in the built form, and this assessment should seek to ensure that new development responds to and reflects those key features.  It would be useful to have a short descriptive summary for each area that captures the sense of place. I would query how coherent Area 1 is and whether Wootton Hall (and even the Church and open land) should be identified separately from the Stratford Road area as there is a clear difference in the built form between the two.  In area 1 the reference to "a complete mishmash of period styles" is perhaps open to misinterpretation and could be used to justify any form of development. Whilst there is a range of materials, is there a dominant or recurring theme to the built form along the Stratford Road (e.g. pitched roofs, gable ends, buildings sitting close to the road), features that new development should respect? What is the intrinsic feel of this part of the village? (There is reference to pitched roofs in the NDP itself, but it isn't explicit in the assessment).  In area 3, what is it about the car sales garage that makes it a local landmark, what are its important landmark features? Is it the building or the site itself? If the site were to be redeveloped, is there anything about it of intrinsic value that be reflected in the new design? It is also queried why the built form on Pennyfold Lane that has been included w

Appendices	Appendix 1: Wootton Wawen NDP Character Assessment	In the second paragraph under the heading 'Topography and Land Use', the document states that there are several farms within the village boundary. Given the proposed village/settlement boundary as proposed under Policy H1 is very tightly drawn, should this document be referring to farms within the <i>Parish</i> boundary?
		This document should be integrated into the NDP document, not kept as a 'stand-alone' document. This will, of course, necessitate the re-numbering of all subsequent appendices as necessary.