

The Hamlets' Voice

Staploe, Duloe, Honeydon, Upper Staploe,
Bushmead and Begwary

Issue 36—April 2025





Staploe Parish Neighbourhood Plan Consultation

Summary – What is the Staploe Parish Neighbourhood Plan?

The Neighbourhood Plan is a community-led framework for guiding the conservation and any future development of the parish. It defines policies that influence planning decisions, ensuring that any future development reflects the specific needs and priorities of the community. Once the plan is adopted, any future planning application will have to be assessed against policies contained within the Neighbourhood Plan as well as Bedford Borough's Local Plan.

Neighbourhood planning provides local people with a say on how land use and buildings can develop over time, such as protecting green spaces and improving local character. A Neighbourhood Plan cannot be used to prevent future development, but it can guide development to the right places and ensure that it is the best it can possibly.

- This plan deals with the important land use and environmental qualities of the Parish that have been identified by the residents during various consultation events.
- It sets out a clear vision for the Parish over the plan period, from 2025 to 2035.
- It refers to the issues raised and suggests how they can be approached through planning policies and aspirations.
- It contains policies to protect the Parish and to guide appropriate development.
- It acknowledges that some development might be appropriate, provided it meets the policies in this plan and the current strategic plan for the whole area.
- It contains maps of the Area (both in the Neighbourhood Plan and within associated documents) showing the features protected for various reasons for

example, important local views and Local Green Spaces.

- It is accompanied by the 'Staploe Parish Design Codes and Guidance' and the "Staploe Housing Needs Assessment" (the latter covers the whole Parish), background technical documents supporting the Neighbourhood Plan, produced by AECOM for the Parish Council.

Vision: We aim to retain and enhance the sustainability of our Parish and protect our thriving rural community and visual landscape such that we:

***retain three distinct, peaceful, rural hamlets
maintain our thriving natural environment and protect biodiversity
meet the housing, economic and infrastructure needs of its residents.***

Any future development must therefore be sensitive, proportionate and respect the rural character of the hamlets which make it so special.

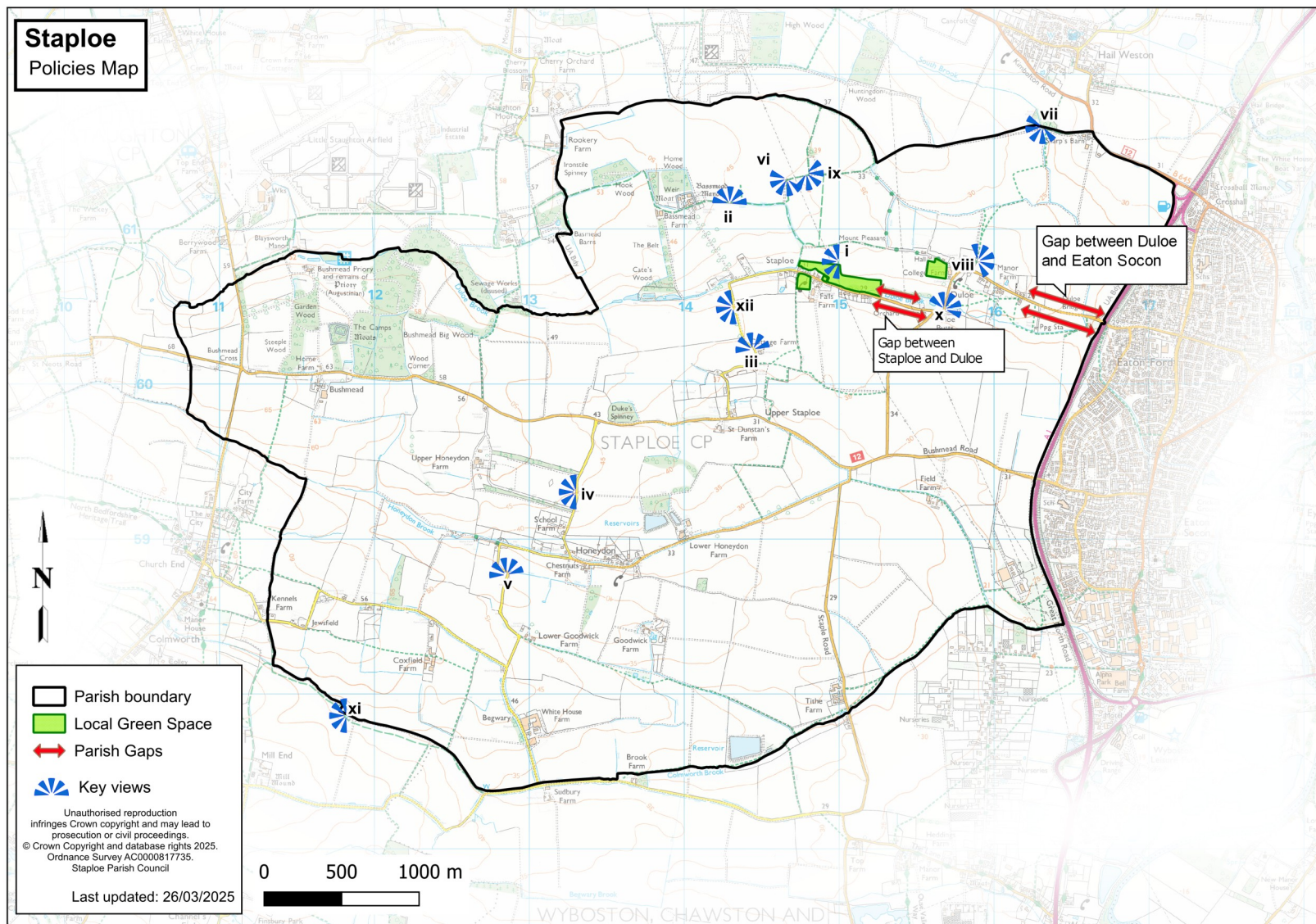
It designates important Local Green Spaces and local heritage assets, but it does not allocate land for new housing, commercial or community uses.

You can view the Neighbourhood Plan and its supporting documents (Design Codes, Green Infrastructure Plan, Green Space Plan, and Housing Needs Assessment) on our website <https://staploe-pc.gov.uk/our-parish-council/staploe-parish-council-neighbourhood-plan/neighbourhood-plan-consultation/>. Printed copies are available to borrow from the red telephone box "Hamlets Exchange" in Staploe. Please sign these in and out and return them within 3 days. Or they can be viewed by appointment at 33, Staploe PE19 5JA. E-mail or phone the Parish Clerk to make an appointment. clerk@staploe-pc.gov.uk 01480 471 526 / 07779 237 947.

Please send your comments to the Parish Clerk using the contact details and Staploe address above. The consultation opens on 12th April and the deadline for comments is 5pm on Monday 31st May 2025.



Neighbourhood Plan Aims		Policies
Environment		
Rural environment	To retain and enhance the rural character of the Parish	RC1: Strategic Gaps, RC2: Rural Character and Landscape
Historic Environment	To protect and conserve all structures of historical importance and their environs	HE1: Protecting and enhancing local Heritage Assets, HE2: Protecting and enhancing understanding of Archaeology
Natural Environment	Protect and enhance important green spaces, woodlands, rights of way and the agricultural landscape	NE1: Hedgerows, Trees and woodland, NE2: Biodiversity
	Promote biodiversity and protect wildlife	NE1: Hedgerows, Trees and woodland, NE2: Biodiversity
Sustainable Development		
New development	To deliver housing which sustains the current and meets the future needs and demographic of the community	SD1: New Housing Development
	Development should be of high quality, designed to maximise efficiency, respect the character of the hamlets and the countryside and have a positive impact on the existing biodiversity of the countryside.	RC2: Rural Character and Landscape, NE2: Biodiversity, SD2: High Quality Design, SD3: Provision of energy efficient Buildings, SD4: Water Issues and Management
	The three hamlets should remain distinct from one another and from surrounding settlements such as Eaton Socon.	RC1: Strategic Gaps, SD2: High Quality Design
	Protect views and street scenes of value to local residents	RC2, SD2: High Quality Design
	Ensure the Parish benefits from sufficient infrastructure, facilities and services	C1: Community Facilities
Community		
Facilities	Parish facilities and services will be supported, enhanced and retained	C1: Community Facilities
	Important green spaces will be protected, retained and enhanced	C2: Local Green Spaces
Business	Support the local economy, sustain existing businesses and support opportunities for new, suitable small businesses.	C3: Supporting Local Employment and Agriculture
Traffic and Transport		
Traffic	Vehicular traffic will be encouraged to drive safely through the Parish.	T1: Provision for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders
Transport	Enhance sustainable transport provision and safe provision for active travel	T1: Provision for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders
Rights of Way and pavements	Provision for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders will be retained and extended	T1: Provision for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders





Litter Pick

There will be a litter pick on Saturday 5th April and Sunday 6th April starting at Duloe Playing Field car park. Following a short briefing we will provide you with equipment and you can then litter pick in an area of the parish of your choice. We look forward to seeing you there.

A Summary of the Report by Duloe & Staploe Village Hall Committee on the outcome of the Village Hall Questionnaire November 2024

The Village Hall Committee would like to thank everyone who responded to the questionnaire – its findings:

A total of **160** questionnaires were circulated.

A total of **32** questionnaires were returned.

21 wanted a village hall.
10 did not want a village hall.
1 was unsure.

2 people offered to be Village Hall Committee Trustees
15 people offered to volunteer to support the Village Hall Committee

The responses to the questionnaire also showed that the nearer to Duloe, where the village hall would be built, the more interest was shown in it. The further away the less interest was shown.

The Village Hall Committee also reminded itself of the fact that the land, which the village hall would be built on, was gifted to the parish by the estate of Thomas George Noel Bates, with the object of improving the conditions of the life of the inhabitants of the parish.

Taking into consideration the findings of the questionnaire, comments made and reflecting on the spirit of the gift, the Village Hall Committee agreed that it would continue to work towards developing a facility, albeit a more long term goal and that it needed to be a facility which would be more acceptable to the whole parish.

The full report is available on Staploe Parish Council's website, including a list of comments made and the conclusion, in full, made by the Village Hall Committee.

<https://staploe-pc.gov.uk/village-hall-reports/>

Average Speed Cameras (ASCs) and Speed Limit Survey

The survey was conducted in January 2025 to ask whether parishioners wanted ASC's in Staploe and Duloe and whether they were happy for us to use Parish Council funds to pay for the maintenance. We also asked whether parishioners were happy to extend the speed limit down the hill from Duloe towards Staploe.

We received 50 responses. There was more support for average speed cameras in Duloe (54%) than in Staploe (40%) but the majority of residents (54 – 70%) did not want parish funds to be used to maintain them. The majority of residents (54%) did not want the 30mph in Staploe to revert to 30mph (necessary in order to install speed cameras). However, there was a lot of support (72%) for extending the speed limit in Duloe beyond Orchard Cottage.

Concerns were raised about the high cost of maintenance of the cameras by many, a perception that the Borough Council should be providing them / maintaining them for us or that they should be funded by fine revenue, concerns that they might not be effective at reducing speeds and a perceived lack of need by some. Many were reluctant to sacrifice the 20 mph limit in Staploe and many wanted this limit extended throughout Staploe and in Duloe. A small number thought 20mph limits were unnecessary. Some suggested that measures such as chicanes or road humps would be better and others that projects such as a new village hall or road repairs were more important.

The Parish Council have decided not to apply for grant funds for average speed cameras. However, we are keen to proceed with extending the speed limit down the hill from Duloe to Orchard Cottage and to request 20mph throughout Staploe and in Duloe. There will be a formal Bedford Borough consultation on this before it is implemented.

The full results are available on our website:

<https://staploe-pc.gov.uk/results-of-the-average-speed-camera-survey/>



New Councillors Urgently Needed

The Parish Council has two vacancies and one Councillor with a dispensation for a long term absence. We are keen to recruit new members. At present we often find it difficult to hold meetings because we are barely quorate. If you would consider serving on the Parish Council please contact the Parish Clerk Lucy Crawford on clerk@staploe-pc.gov.uk

Keep in Touch

Please subscribe to our website to receive regular updates about what is happening in the parish. We have 98 subscribers to our website—which is a third of the population of the parish. It is the main means of communication in the Parish.

E-mail *

Subscribe

Go to www.staploe-pc.gov.uk and look for the “subscribe” box. Enter your e-mail address and you will receive updates of new posts to the website daily (but only if there are new posts).

In addition there is a Parish Council Facebook Page, a Three Hamlets Facebook group and a 3 Hamlets Watch Group on Whatsapp.

To join the Whatsapp group send your name and mobile number to 07930 718 749. You can report suspicious behaviour, lost pets etc.

For further information about anything in this newsletter please contact the Parish Clerk Lucy Crawford on clerk@staploe-pc.gov.uk or telephone 01480 471 526

The Hamlets’ Voice | Issue 36 | April 2025

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