

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Planning Policy \(WODC\)](#)
Subject: Stonesfield Neighbourhood Plan
Date: 26 February 2026 17:24:29

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We're writing **in support** of the Stonesfield Neighbourhood Plan which is currently at the Regulation 15/16 stage, prior to going for Independent Examination.

The Plan has been in production for a little over four years. During this time the Parish Council and their Steering Group have informed village residents of every stage in the process via open meetings in the village hall, nearly monthly updates in the Stonesfield Slate (the village newsletter delivered to every household), updates on the village website and via social media outlets. There have also been poster campaigns and direct mail shots advertising events and promoting participation in the survey and the Regulation 14 consultation.

The Plan is primarily based on the results of the village survey conducted in 2023. The survey was delivered to every household in two parts: a household survey and an individual survey (for those over 16). The response rates were 62% for the household survey and 45% for the individual. We believe these results show a high level of engagement of village residents and therefore they are representative of what the village wants.

The Plan is consistent with the NPPF and conforms with the existing Local Plan 2031 and to the best of our knowledge the emerging LP 2043.

At the Regulation 14 stage, 116 out of 157 total responders said they were satisfied or fairly satisfied with the draft Plan. Only 37 residents were fairly dissatisfied or dissatisfied. The Steering Group have taken on board as many of the constructive criticisms as were valid and within the scope of what an NP can contain. Mending potholes and providing additional bus services, for example, however desirable, are not within the scope of an NP.

Stonesfield is a village with almost no employment opportunities and, with the exception of a small shop, a hairdresser and a garage (no fuel sales), very limited facilities. Development in the village inevitably results in private car usage to get to health services, shops, further education, employment, and entertainment, using minor roads. There is an hourly bus service to Woodstock and Oxford six days a week, but nothing else to any other service centres, most notably Witney.

The NP and its associated Appendices make it quite clear what development residents want in the village, to ensure the surrounding countryside is protected as is required because we are in the CNL. In 2018 the village campaigned against a major development by Cala Homes, having the site removed at a public enquiry on the WOLP 2031, and eventually at the High Court when Cala persisted with their planning application. The NPPF states that great weight must be given to protecting the CNL. It states major development should only be permitted where exceptional circumstances are proven to exist i.e. Housing Need must be assessed for the settlement only and not the wider district (Insp Normington's CALA decision upheld by the High Court) and is in the public interest.

Nothing has changed since then and the Stonesfield NP reflects this.

We commend this Plan for acceptance.

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