

# STOKE ORCHARD & TREDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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## Draft Minutes of Stoke Orchard and Tredington Extraordinary Parish Council held on 13 September 2023 at 7.00pm at Stoke Orchard Community Centre

**Present:** Cllrs. A. Macdonald (AM) – Chairman, G. Fairbairn, (GF), G. Ferguson (GF), T. Jukes (TJ), S. Shorrocks (SS) and A. Troughton (AT).  
**Attendants:** 64 members of the public attended.

Minute Reference	Detail
13.9.23.1	<b>The Chairman will formally ask if anyone is intending recording or filming the meeting</b> There were no requests.
13.9.23.2	<b>To receive comments from the public on agenda items below - no decisions will be made on issues raised. Any items requiring decisions will be added to the agenda for the next meeting (NB Councils cannot lawfully decide items of business that are not specified on the agenda (LGA1972 Sch 12, paras 10(2)(b) and Longfield Parish Council v Wright (1918) 88 LJ Ch 119)</b> Non were made other than what the meeting was called for. Two emails were received on the day following the meeting – see Appendices.
13.9.23.3	<b>To receive and approve apologies for absence</b> Apologies were received and accepted from Borough Cllr. McLain and J. Gilder.
13.9.23.4	<b>To receive declarations of interest for items on the agenda below, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Parish Council’s Code of Conduct and to consider any prior requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e) (NB this does not preclude any later declarations)</b> No declarations were disclosed or recorded.
13.9.23.5	<b>To allow residents to comment on the recent development application for 136 houses in Stoke Orchard and agree actions – Application No. <a href="#">23/00755/FUL   Full planning application for the erection of 136 dwellings and associated vehicular access, public open space, landscaping and other infrastructure. The proposed development also involves the demolition of the existing property known as Roseleigh along with associated outbuildings and the agricultural building located to the north of Banady Lane   Roseleigh Stoke Road Stoke Orchard Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL52 7RU (tewkesbury.gov.uk)</a></b>  The Chairman outlined the parameters for the meeting. An explanation was given that the Parish Council (PC) knew as much as the residents, and that this meeting was to listen to their concerns only. The developer was Harper Crewe Limited. The ‘post it notes’ on the wall would be collected and used for discussions with the developer.

The PC could not just say it does not want more houses or what about the traffic, as it would not achieve anything with Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) or the national government. The Chairman explained that the PC would create a wish list so that it maximised benefits e.g. speed cameras, etc., should the development go ahead.

#### **Amenities and wider impact**

1. Are they building anything else, or is it all houses? Doubling the village with nothing been given back. The whole development looks like it's just houses. Highlighted Bloor's have done a lot for Stoke Orchard (SO) with the Community Centre, funding for the MUGA etc.
2. The development needs Public Open Space (POS) for children on that side of the village as Pennycress LEAP is only suitable for small children. Nothing for the older children.
3. The size of gardens doesn't look very big on new houses. This will affect residents' wellbeing.
4. Is there a plan to increase the electricity substation to support all the houses with EV charging points, as we already have a high no. of power cuts.
5. Residents are concerned about S106 money disappearing and SO not getting anything as this has happened before. (The Chairman explained that S106 money can have stipulations on what and when it must be used by).

#### **Parking and roads & transport**

1. Lot of lorries already that shouldn't be passing though as the weight limit isn't enforced. What is the delivery route and will there be a weight limit on these vehicles, as residents don't want more heavy lorries passing through the center of the village.
2. Concerns that there are 2 developments under one application. Roseleigh makes sense, the other one is on green belt land and could be seen as just landowner greed.
3. Other developments have been paused until M5 jct has been completed. Until then we have no idea of the impact on our local area. The road Survey was performed in April 2022 as we came out of covid. A new survey should be done to reflect current traffic levels. (SS explained that Community Speedwatch is very effective and is working with the police, to tackle weight limit breaches and regular speed watch sessions).
4. Concerns about current speeds though the village. Average speed cameras needs to be on the top of the wish list.
5. Are the developers obligated to create a risk assessment of the risks around the local roads for pedestrians and vehicles and cyclists?
6. The reports that were done state there are sufficient pathways and cycle routes (where are they going to and from) how can you commute to the local schools without a car? Apparently, you can walk to Cleeve and Treddington schools safely. We know this is not the case as there is a school bus that isn't big enough to deal with the current demand as it stands. Are there plans to increase the bus size or put on an extra bus?
7. Buses. Additional bus timetables but not increased the size of the public transport. Where is the plan for an all-weather bus stop? Why doesn't the bus go to Cheltenham? The current bus route is not utilized fully as it takes 2 hours to get to Cheltenham by the time you have gone to Cleeve and waited for the Cheltenham bus.
8. The map shows a straight road onto the development, but the road has a blind bend. What speed controls are going to be put in place to prevent speed/accidents as the current entrance proposal is an accident waiting to happen.
9. During construction of the new development how are they going to access the site. From the Roseleigh entrance or Banady Lane?

10. Pedestrians will naturally go the quickest/direct route. Not zig-zagging though the small lanes. They will walk down the main road. The path is already dangerous. You can't pass a pedestrian on that path as it already. As it's so narrow and can't be widened due to stream and the road. One resident mentioned how they have been hit by a car wingmirror along the stretch of footpath between Pennycress and Bloor's estates.
11. Could the developers not build a path over the ditch to make a wider safer pathway between the development and the community center/play park/Muga
12. The infrastructure needs to be in place before development moves in to make it safe for everyone.
13. Is there any way the developer would attend a public event to answer questions?

#### **Flood risk and water management**

1. They are building on flood plain. That will feed into a balance pond that feeds into Dean brook and then into Bloor's development. Creating a bigger risk to Bloor's development and SO as whole.
2. Could rainwater not be harvested for use of toilet flushing etc.?
3. Sewers - Severn Trent have said both pumping stations are not fit for purpose (This is worth noting that this has been said by on site engineers to residents NOT by Severn Trent directly). What are the plans to improve them? Raw sewage is already an issue when there is heavy rain fall as the pumping stations can't cope.
4. Blocked drains at Windrush house due to pumping station not been able to cope but no one wants to take responsibility (The Chairman has asked if members of the public are having issues like this to let the PC know so that we can help resolve issues where the PC is able to).

#### **Impact on ecology and environment**

1. Farmers are struggling with wildlife as they are being pushed out of their natural habitat and into farmland to feed.
2. Bats on Banady lane. Are they roosting in the barn that is going to be knocked down? What is going to be put in place for the bats to roost in? Have they considered something like Bloor's did around Feddon Close?
3. No mention of the otters in the reports has anyone got any evidence? As we know there are otters as people have had fish stolen from ponds near to the new development.
4. Consideration for a wildlife path to allow the wildlife to move more freely. Collect evidence to shrink the development rather than try and stop it.
5. Report sighting of crested newts to help agencies investigate.

#### **Impact on neighboring houses**

1. Air quality due to increased traffic
2. Light pollution is a concern.
3. No provision for bungalows with an older population. These should have been considered.
4. Is there any first-time buyers support?

#### **Education**

5. A footpath to Tredington school is a must to reduce the number of cars using the road for a very short trip.
6. Tredington school is a small school. Only has 60 pupils. Currently has Surplus of 99 places. School could be at risk of closing without more numbers.

	<p>7. Cleeve does not have enough school places for the no of children. even with the new school being built. Even with Tredington surplus capacity there is not enough spaces in the local area for additional children.</p> <p>8. What provisions are there for secondary schools once the kids grow up. Cleeve High School is at capacity.</p> <p><b>Additional comments from the public</b></p> <p>1. 5 houses were refused by TBC a few years back approx. 2017 on the greenfield site. Why will this be allowed now given how big this new proposal is. They were refused on the grounds of not been in keeping with the local area. How are these going to be in keeping of the local area.</p> <p>2. Bloor's spent £1.5m on SO what is the developer going to bring to SO given this is the same size of development as Bloor's development?</p> <p>The Chairman thanks everyone for coming and explained that all the 'post it notes' would be kept so that the comments can be shared with the developer and help form the PC's response to the planning application.</p>
<b>13.9.23.6</b>	<b>To note agenda items for the next full Parish Council meeting</b> None noted at this time.
<b>13.9.23.7</b>	<b>Date of next meeting:</b> 7 November 2023

The Chairman closed the meeting 20:15pm

### Appendix 1

Many thanks for hosting the session Wednesday, I found it extremely useful. I didn't get chance to add any items to the post it notes board but below are a list of my thoughts on the proposed planning application for Roseleigh. I will also provide a copy to TBC, but hopefully you may find the below useful, and articulate it better than I ever could.

1. The density of the development appears to be far too great. Any greenspace has been pushed to the outside of the development, and is minimal in proportion to the size of the development. Furthermore the majority of houses are located close to the front of the property boundary near the road/footpath with no front garden/stand off. A good example of proportionate layout for a new build development can be seen round the corner on Pennycress. If this development were to be approved, it should be in similar proportions to Pennycress.
2. Due to the density of the development, the highways and footpath widths only meet the absolute minimum requirements. As seen on similar new build developments (e.g Preston north) this approach has led to significant issues with on street double parking, preventing access. If this development were to go ahead, footpath and road widths should be increased.
3. Many of the documents refer to the ability for residents of the new development to make us of existing facilities within Stoke Orchard e.g. Church, community centre, shop, MUGA. However, the only pedestrian access round is a very narrow strip of path between Dean Lane and the bridle path. This stretch of footpath is very narrow and extremely close to traffic on the very busy Stoke Road. It is not wide enough for people to pass in opposite directions, nor safe to do so with a child on a scooter, dog, pram or similar. If the development was to go ahead, this stretch must be widened or alternative pedestrian access provided.

4. Stoke Orchard has been subject to multiple power cuts over the last several years. Given the age of the village there is a substantial amount of aging infrastructure which has likely resulted in two power cuts over the last year, namely the blown transformer only a couple of hundred metres from the development site and faulty unground cabling which required extensive investigation to resolve, digging up Banady Lane whilst our property plus several others had to be placed on a generator. None of the planning application documents consider in any detail impact on the existing power network. This must be resolved before a significant further load (including all the proposed electric car charging points) is added.

5. I strongly object to the claim made in 3.12 of the transport assessment that Bishops Cleeve and Cheltenham "provides a good opportunity for people to travel for work or leisure by bicycle". As a very competent cyclist I consider Stoke Road as one of the most dangerous I have ever cycled down as it is narrow, with steep verges, blind corners, heavy speeding and traffic, including HGVs. I will only attempt it in the summer, in daylight hours and I would never consider letting my children cycle down there. If the weather or light is poor I would not attempt it under any circumstance. Therefore to claim Cleeve and Cheltenham is accessible by bicycle is laughable - I suggest the author of the report cycles down Stoke Road and considers updating the report. TBC and the developer should consider installing a footpath and cycle path down the length of Stoke Road, connecting to the 'Cheltenham to Bishops Cleeve Cycleway'.

6. None of the documentation provided discusses the provision for Ultrafast broadband or mobile phone connectivity being connected to the development. This is an essential requirement in the 21st century and must be provisioned for at the build stage, rather than being retrofitted several years down the line causing significant further disruption. Given the distance from the local exchange at Coombe Hill, this may be a significant undertaking and have an impact on current village residents. However, there is the opportunity for the wider village to benefit if Ultrafast connections can be made available to **ALL**, particularly the orphaned users such as those south of Stoke Road who have not been connected to the Ultra fast network available to some properties in the village. Furthermore, any cell tower that may be installed to handle the increase in capacity must be done tastefully and in keeping with the local area.

7. A previous planning application 19/00995/OUT on part of the proposed development site was rejected only a few years ago as it

"Would result in an unwarranted and significant intrusion into the landscape which would harm the rural character and appearance of the area."

"fails to demonstrate that future residents of the proposed dwellings would not be adversely impacted by noise".

"fails to demonstrate that a viable and sustainable method of drainage could be provided"

"fails to demonstrate that European Protected Species would be safeguarded in accordance with the law, and fails to demonstrate that biodiversity would be conserved"

No evidence has been provided by the developer to how the development mitigates the criteria for previous rejection.

8. The results of the ecology report provided by the developer are in stark contrast to the results of the ecology report from 19/00995/OUT on the same area of land. For example

From the 2019 application

“The barn approximately 70 m northwest of the site was surveyed by All Ecology in 2015 for bats which found a peak count of three Common Pipistrelles using the barn as a day roost, and also recorded Soprano Pipistrelles foraging around the barn, and also recorded *Myotis* species.”

From the proposed development application

4.2. No buildings within the Application Site are deemed to hold potential for roosting bats. The majority of buildings within the Application Site are open to the elements and without loft voids, leaving them unsuitable for roosting bats.

As such, an independent assessment must be undertaken before any development commences to establish the ground truth and mitigate against any biased reporting.

9. No details of the proposed LEAP have been made available. Any facilities provided for child should be suitable for children of multiple ages, with substantial variance and capacity. As seen on the Bloor (pre-upgrade) and Pennycress estates, the developers provided the absolute bare minimum to meet the LEAP requirement. This should not be acceptable.

10. The accident survey results claims only 1 accident has been reported in Stoke Orchard since 2017. I have only lived in the village since 2020 and can immediately recall at least 4 incidents where accidents have occurred, either involving other vehicles or being ditched in hedges/verges. Speed, volume and type of traffic is of grave concern through the village, and this will only get worse. The traffic surveys and predictions have not taken into account the impact on Stoke Orchard of the changes to J10 of the M5, or all the additional housing being built in Fiddington, Spitfire homes further down Stoke Road, or in Gotherington. This is going to result in unprecedented pressure on the already busy Stoke Road. Further mitigations must be considered if this development is approved, such as average speed cameras to slow down the traffic through the village.

11. Checklist for New Housing Developments (appendix F of Transport Plan) contains inaccurate scoring, leading to painting a favourable view of public transport options. Namely

“3. Greenery as part of the design, not just left over spaces = 1” - this should be scored 0, as mentioned earlier, it is only left over greenspace at the edge of the development.

“6. Major employment reachable within 30 minutes without a car = 2” - as mentioned earlier, this cannot be achieved safely by bicycle and even with the proposed temporary changes to the bus route of every 30 minutes, this is not possible to get to Cheltenham within 30 mins. This should be scored 0

“ 6. All new homes have access to super fast broadband = NA” - no provisions made for an essential service

“ 8. Safe and attractive cycle paths = 1” this should be 0. Cycling to/from Stoke Orchard is not safe

“ 10. Parking only in defined spaces or purpose built bays” this should be 0 as even though parking spaces are provided, given the dependency on a car to live in Stoke Orchard, this will not provide sufficient capacity and therefore result in significant on street parking.

## Appendix 2

I know from last night’s meeting of the Stoke Orchard and Tredington Parish Council that many of the issues I had in mind to raise will shortly be covered in the Council’s response. I will therefore make only 7 points in this letter, some of which will be in amplification: others that were not specifically discussed at the time:

### a. Local Facilities:

- (i) The surgery at Stoke Road is already significantly over-stretched and the gradual occupation of the Spitfire Homes development will only make matters worse. Even if the final approval for Roseleigh is less than 136 (as I would strongly suggest!) then the

developers should be required to provide a suitably-sized medical practice. The exact location of this should be subject to the approval of the PC.

- (ii) A new traffic survey must be carried out to replace the atypical one of 2022, at which time COVID reductions were still being felt. Furthermore, the new survey needs to reflect the changing traffic levels at various times during a normal working day – IN TERM TIME.
- (iii) Long-overdue pavement improvements, new bus shelters, etc must be provided at the developers' expense BEFORE CONSTRUCTION STARTS.

**b. Environmental Considerations.**

- (i) I am no expert and cannot offer photographic evidence, but my back garden is visited almost every summer's night by bats. I strongly suspect they roost in the barn at the end of our lane. Before this is demolished, an expert assessment of the type that the Bat Conservation Trust could arrange must be paid for – **and its results published and recommendations adhered to** – before any construction begins. You will, I am sure, be aware that this cannot not now begin before Spring 2024 at the earliest.
- (ii) Otters, on the other hand, have been photographed raiding the fishpond in the back garden of 2, Wards Hay Close and I have the owners' permission to say that this evidence will be submitted separately.

**c. Responsibility Chart.** I know from many years' experience just how difficult it can be to pin down local government's responsibilities, and I therefore strongly endorse the suggestion that a Responsibility Chart be provided should the project be approved.

**d. Meeting With Developers.** For similar reasons, I strongly endorse the idea of a pre-construction public meeting with the developers.

Signed: ..... Date: .....  
Chairman

The draft minutes will be approved at the next Parish Council Meeting