

Representation to the Stratford-upon-Avon Neighbourhood Development Plan

Response from Stratford-upon-Avon Society

I am writing to you on behalf of The Stratford Society in respect of your consultation draft for The Stratford upon Avon Neighbourhood Plan. I acknowledge that this submission is late but would wish it to be considered as a part of the overall consultation. The General Committee of The Society have considered the development of The NP over the past couple of years as has meetings of the membership of The Society. The Society supports both the objectives and approach taken by The Management Group of The NP under the guidance of The Town Council. We have considered the observations made by other bodies in Warwickshire, including The County Council and The Stratford District Council. We understand the process currently under way by SDC in the preparation of the next Core Strategy and we believe that the current NP (subject to consultation) takes fully into account the draft proposals contained therein. We do not see any significant issues between SDC proposals and those within The NP; particularly, given that The NP relates only to The Town. We do not believe that The NP could realistically be different in scope, approach and content than currently subject to consultation due to the extensive involvement of people from The Town and the need to balance the ambitions of such people with the remit contained in government guidance. It is surely correct The NP contains both land use proposals and aspirations towards which The Town moves over time.

We are pleased that The NP contains ambitious proposals for zoning development going forward and that the need for 'fit for purpose' infrastructure investment is recognised. It is not, in our view, the role of The NP to identify how the proposals should be financed as this responsibility rests with both County and District Councils once The NP is adopted. In the view of The Society, it is the role of The Town Council to make relatively minor investments within the sufficiency of the funding available from the precept on local community tax and from the share of the CIL produced for application towards The NP.

The Society believe that there must continue to be a focus on the prosperity of Stratford Town Centre as this is a substantial employment centre, economic driver and reputation – 'Brand' asset. We strongly encourage all representative bodies to continue to invest time, money and effort into improving traffic management and distribution measures which we see as a significant risk to the continued prosperity of The Town. To date, the proposals contained within The NP are the only coherent group of proposals we have seen; having been drawn from the involvement of local people.

We further suggest that the strong beginning within The Plan to making The Town friendly to cyclists and pedestrians, as well as more efficient to traffic movements, should continue forward over The NP period. We support the continued development of all modes of public transport and greater cross modal capacity.

Whilst there will be some changes as a result of this consultation we believe that the involvement of the people of Stratford upon Avon and the expectations raised should encourage a rapid movement towards a local vote on adoption of the plan as it is, in our view, ready now for that next stage.

We in The Stratford Society remain willing and able to continue to support The NP process.

On behalf of The Stratford Society.
Dr Kevin Bond, Chairman.