

STURTON LE STEEPLE PARISH COUNCIL SUPPORT FOR THE PUBLICATION CORE STRATEGY

Sturton le Steeple Parish Council has not been able to examine the LEGAL COMPLIANCE of the Core Strategy and makes no comment thereupon, neither for, nor against.

With regard to the SOUNDNESS of the Core Strategy, Sturton le Steeple Parish Council is in broad agreement with the document, and welcomes its approach in particular towards maintenance of the historical, ecological, visual and topographical quality of the rural environment. Sturton le Steeple Parish Council also welcomes that the document recognises the value of tourism and recreational facilities in the rural setting.

Particular note has been taken of the following detailed points;

Policy DM1- Rural Economic Development

1st Indent of 5.1.1 - New facilities should be located and designed to minimise the impact on the character and appearance of the countryside

Policy DM4- Design and Character

2nd Indent of 5.6 A – proposals should complement and enhance the character of the built, historical and natural environment

3rd indent of 5.6A – proposals should be of a scale appropriate to existing settlements and surrounding areas

Policy DM9

B – Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Proposals should not adversely affect or result in loss of features of recognised importance including trees and hedgerows

C – Landscape character

Proposals should be sensitive to their landscape setting.

Policy DM10 – Renewable Energy

A-Carbon Reduction

1st indent - Proposals must be compatible with policies to safeguard the built and natural environment, including heritage assets and their setting.

4th indent – Proposal must not result in unacceptable impacts in terms of visual appearance, landscape character, noise, shadow flicker, watercourse engineering and hydrological impacts, pollution, traffic generation, or loss of features of recognised importance for biodiversity.

These and other statements in the document point to a common objective throughout ie that of maintenance and enhancement of the rural environment. Sturton le Steeple is unquestionably a rural environment and therefore should be maintained as such. This is further emphasised by the inclusion of Sturton le Steeple in policy zones for which conservation, and conservation and reinforcement of the environment is foreseen (Landscape Character Policy Zones map Fig 5.2 refers).

These issues are, by definition, subjective. They are not matters which can be resolved by reference to legal texts. They are objectives which bear on the quality of life of the residents of the locality, and therefore should be judged by those directly affected by any proposed development.

The test of soundness as indicated in the documents provided by BDC makes reference to the need for the strategy to be JUSTIFIED . To be justified, the document states *inter alia* that the Strategy must involve “evidence of participation by the community and stakeholders”. Sturton le Steeple Parish Council considers that the phrase should read as follows; “ **involving evidence of participation and acceptance by the community and stakeholders**”. It is insufficient to simply involve the community. We have several examples where we have been consulted on planning issues, but our comments have been ignored. We have a statutory right to be consulted. However, if our comments are dismissed without as much as an acknowledgement, let alone a reasoned opinion, this makes the consultation a hollow and pointless exercise.

Sturton le Steeple Parish Council therefore, in order to meet the objectives of the Localism Bill, and the Parish Charter agreed with BDC, considers that the text of the document should include a formal mechanism for the consultation of communities affected by proposed developments. Mechanisms for the resolution of disputes should give due force to the needs and views of the affected community. Where subjective issues are considered, it must be the local residents whose view takes precedence. Developments should not be imposed on the community by outside agencies in the pursuit of political expedience rather than consideration for the physical effects of the development on the quality of life of the local residents.

