



Decision Statement – Stonesfield Neighbourhood Plan

- I.1 In line with Regulation 18 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, West Oxfordshire District Council have produced this 'Decision Statement' in relation to the Stonesfield Neighbourhood Development Plan which has been submitted to them by Stonesfield Parish Council.
- I.2 Following an independent examination of written representations, West Oxfordshire District Council confirms that the Stonesfield Neighbourhood Plan will now proceed to a neighbourhood planning referendum.
- I.3 In accordance with the examiner's recommendation, the Stonesfield Neighbourhood Plan will proceed to a public referendum scheduled for 12th November 2026, based on the Stonesfield Neighbourhood Area as approved by West Oxfordshire District Council on 17th November 2021.
- I.4 The Decision Statement and Examiners Report are posted on the District Council's website at: [Stonesfield Neighbourhood Plan - West Oxfordshire District Council](#)

Background

- 2.1 In November 2021, Stonesfield Parish Council submitted an application to West Oxfordshire District Council for the designation of the Parish of Stonesfield as a Neighbourhood Area. The approval of the Neighbourhood Area Designation was given on 17th November 2021.
- 2.2 Stonesfield Parish Council completed the Draft Stonesfield Neighbourhood Development Plan in March 2025. The Parish Council ran the 6-week Regulation 14 pre-submission consultation from 15th March – 3rd May 2025.
- 2.3 The Submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan was completed in November 2025 and submitted to the District Council who ran the 6-week Regulation 16 pre-submission consultation from 12th January – 9th March 2026.
- 2.4 An independent examiner was appointed in January 2026 to undertake the examination of the Submission version of the Stonefield Neighbourhood Development Plan and this was completed with the examination report sent to both the Parish Council and the District Council on the 22nd July 2026.

West Oxfordshire District Council's Head of Planning, under delegated powers, has determined that the recommended modifications (see Appendix 1) to the Stonesfield Neighbourhood Development Plan meet the 'basic conditions', as set out in section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. West Oxfordshire District Council have agreed with Stonesfield Parish Council that the recommended modifications made by the independent examiner be included and revised in the original Neighbourhood Plan in order for it to proceed to public referendum.

All recommended modifications are accepted in full except for two minor changes to the Examiner's recommended modifications to Policies SEA1 and SEL3.

Specifically, the following minor changes have been agreed by West Oxfordshire District Council and Stonesfield Parish Council as being necessary to enable the plan to proceed to referendum:

Policy SEAI - Protecting and enhancing retail, employment and services

Correction of the following typographical error:

*'Where land is already being used for employment purposes and it is possible for such use to continue, the loss of space through development will only be supported if it can be demonstrated that the site is **not** capable of being redeveloped for employment use, or where the site is unsuitable for employment on environmental and amenity grounds, or where substantial community benefits can be demonstrated.'*

Policy SEL3 - Protecting the Evenlode Valley and the adjacent dip-slope lowland

The opening paragraph of the policy to be amended as follows to reflect the fact that neither the Stonesfield Neighbourhood Plan nor the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 include defined settlement boundaries:

'Development proposals located south-west, south or south-east of the existing building line that defines the settlement boundary along Brook Lane, Churchfields, Church Street, Boot Street, Combe Road and Witney Lane will be supported only where they meet the following criteria:'

Based on the above, in order to meet the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, a referendum which poses the following question will be held on the 12th November 2026.

'Do you want West Oxfordshire District Council to use the Neighbourhood Development Plan for Stonesfield to help it decide planning applications in the Stonesfield Neighbourhood Area?'