

Local Green Spaces Assessment

A number of green open spaces are proposed for designation. The proposed extent of the possible Local Green Spaces is shown on Figure 4. The locations of important views are indicated on Figure 6.

As indicated in the responses from the Choices for Change and subsequent consultations, if these sites are designated they will help to allay the fears of the parishioners regarding over-development, so hold a special value to the community of Stoke Fleming.

- A. **Each potential site has been evaluated against Paragraphs 76 and 77 of the National Planning Policy Framework (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>).**

All these potential sites are:

- ✓ Are in reasonable close proximity to the village
- ✓ Are local parcels of land, not extensive tracks
- ✓ Their significance to the parish is, namely;
 - Beauty and tranquility,
 - Historic significance,
 - Passive and active recreational value,
 - High environmental quality, the richness of habitats and wildlife
 - Safeguard local food production;
 - To maintain the open character of the parish;
 - The historic landscape setting of settlement is retained;
 - Strategic views across the parish are safeguarded;
 - Prevent coalescence of different parts of the village.

- B. **Reference has also been made to South Hams Landscape Character Assessment, see:**

http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/devon-character-areas/dca-south-hams/dca-53.htm

This states that the overall strategy for South Hams, (of which Stoke Fleming is a part) is:

“To protect the high scenic quality associated with the South Devon AONB, and to sustain the area’s important nature conservation sites, and historic settlement. The shingle beach, and freshwater lagoon are well managed and their resilience to climate change is enhanced where feasible. Recreation is encouraged, but a good balance between recreation and conservation is retained. The wider plateau landscape and gentle combs are actively managed and hedge banks sensitively protected and repaired. Development of villages and nearby urban areas, notably Dartmouth, is sensitively designed and sited to minimise its intrusion and to protect historic character and form of settlement.”

Amongst concerns highlighted in this Landscape Character Assessment are:

1. Linear development along the A379 undermining the distinctive identity of villages.
2. Growth of historic villages resulting in loss of nucleated form and character e.g. Stoke Fleming.
3. Potential development pressures associated with villages and nearby urban areas, notably Dartmouth.

Specific objectives mentioned were to:

- Protect the undeveloped character of Slapton Bay (beach, and freshwater lagoon and surrounding combs and hills) ensuring that any limited new development in the area respects the scale and horizontal emphasis of the landscape.
- Protect the settlement pattern of nucleated villages, hamlets, farms and houses.

Designation of these sites would help to meet these objectives.

C. Reference has also been made to the ANOB Management plan (see www.southdevonaonb.org.uk/.../aonb-management-plan)

This plan states that:

“Plan/P1 Plan-making

Planning policies will give great weight to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty and special qualities of the South Devon AONB; while supporting small scale development that is appropriate to its setting, is in keeping with its character, and meets the economic and social needs of local communities”.

D. An additional reason for designation of these sites is that all future development within the parish must also demonstrate that it will not affect the integrity of the South Hams Special Areas of Conservation “SAC”, both current and future designations:

“Development that results in the loss of these green spaces or that results in any harm to their character, setting, accessibility, appearance, general quality or amenity value would only be permitted if the community would gain equivalent benefit from the provision of suitable replacement green space or gain significant social, economic or environmental benefits from an alternative facility.”

Designation of these site would therefore offer protection from future inappropriate development.

E. All potential sites have been included in the consultation process for the parish. Additional qualities and reasons for proposed designation of the Local Green Spaces identified are:

1. Recreation Ground / Playing Fields. This site is central in the village and is currently used by the Football and Petanque clubs on a regular basis, dog and recreational walkers, and contains the children’s playground.
2. Bowling Green. Currently used by the Bowling Club, so safeguards current and future recreational activity, strong amenity value.
3. School Playing fields. Provides existing and future amenity value for pupils, improves health and wellbeing, and maintains open character of the parish.
4. Wildlife Corridor by the new School Road development. This existing corridor provides a safe haven and passage for a variety of both ground and tree dwelling creatures in what is a primarily a developed area.

In addition to these sites the NP considered 5 additional sites in the parish for potential designation, all for the reasons previously stated. However, the NP Steering Group was unable to persuade the relevant landowners of the value to the parish of designation so these sites are included here for information and completeness only as they all formed part of the consultations that have taken part with the parish.

5. Land west of School Road between Mill Lane and the school. This site is

currently pasture and the green use prevents coalescence with previous and current development in this area. It provides a sense of an open area in what otherwise is urban development. It also protects locally important views west of the Parish. Parishioners who stated a preference are against additional development in this area of the village.

6. Field above Overseas. This site is currently pasture and is situated at the entrance to the village from the East so will help maintain the open character of the parish. It will also protect important views west of the Parish.

7. Field SW of proposed new car park. This site provides beautiful views over Start Bay and beyond, and maintains the historical landscape setting of the parish.

8. Cricket Field. Currently used by the Cricket Club so an existing amenity and safeguards current and future recreational activity.

9. Allotments. Currently used by a number of parishioners so an active recreational asset and small but important food production area