



Planning Policy Department
TVBC

26th March 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

**SOS RESPONSE TO SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY REVIEW
APPENDIX 1 SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY ASSESSMENTS
TEST VALLEY LOCAL PLAN 2040
Regulation 18 Stage 2**

I write as Chairman of SOS, Save Our Stockbridge, and on its behalf to comment on the Settlement Boundary Assessments for the Settlement of Stockbridge at pages 95-97 of Appendix 1. SOS will be submitting other comments in respect of the Local Plan 2040 but we felt that this submission could stand alone as indeed does Appendix 1.

The Assessed Stockbridge Settlement Boundary (Page 95)

Our main concern is that the assessed Stockbridge Settlement Boundary is, as drawn on the map at Page 95, incorrect. The Settlement Boundary as drawn includes a considerable area which belongs wholly to the Parish of Longstock, and is therefore inaccurate. We believe that maps emanating from TVBC and its Planning Department should be as accurate as possible so that there is no question of members of the public being misled.

The two Parishes are separated physically by the River Test and are completely distinct from one another. The current assessment of the Stockbridge Settlement Boundary as covering not only Stockbridge but also a considerable part of Longstock gives a completely false impression of the actual position. We strongly urge that the Stockbridge Settlement Boundary is confined to the Parish of Stockbridge.

Furthermore we are aware that Longstock Parish Council is currently preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). As we understand it NDPs are designed to reflect the views of parishes about future development. If a significant part of Longstock lies within the Stockbridge Settlement Boundary

then does any Longstock NPD override that or how is it to be dealt with? Or would Stockbridge have an overriding interest?

If the Stockbridge Settlement Boundary includes a significant part of the Parish of Longstock it will lead to uncertainty and no doubt friction. Therefore we submit that the Stockbridge Settlement Boundary should be drawn so as to truly and accurately reflect the position on the ground, and that it should lie wholly within the Parish of Stockbridge.

The Assessed Longstock Settlement Boundary (Page 92)

We note that an assessed Settlement Boundary for the Parish of Longstock is shown on the map at Page 92 of Appendix 1. However it only includes part of the Parish of Longstock as it is drawn as though the Parish ends at Bottom Road. In fact the Parish of Longstock continues for some way on both sides of the Longstock Road southwards from Bottom Road to the crossroads with Stockbridge (by the bridge over the River Test), and beyond towards Houghton. We submit that in order for the Longstock Settlement Boundary to be accurate the whole Settlement Boundary for that Parish should be shown on the map at Page 92 probably as two separate Settlement Boundaries. This would reflect the true position that there are apparently 2 different Settlement Boundaries within the Parish of Longstock and would obviate the wrongful inclusion of the southern Settlement Boundary of Longstock on the Assessed Settlement Boundary for Stockbridge at Page 95.

Other Inaccuracies on the Assessed Stockbridge Settlement Boundary (Page 95)

On the current Stockbridge Assessed Settlement Boundary there are the also the following inaccuracies:

1. The road from the bridge over the River Test from Stockbridge towards Salisbury is described on the map as the High Street. It is no such thing. Stockbridge High Street ends at the bridge over the Test and the road from the bridge westwards is actually called Salisbury Hill which is, of course, in the Parish of Longstock. We urge TVBC to correct this inaccuracy.
2. The placing of the name 'Stockbridge' on the map at Page 95 is situated wholly outside the Stockbridge Parish boundary and is placed wholly

within Longstock Parish boundary. This is inaccurate and misleading. We urge TVBC to correct this inaccuracy.

Stockbridge Settlement Boundary Assessments (Pages 96-97)

Stage 1 Allocations - Criteria A

Our only comment is that this area described as '237 land west of Test Valley School' is completely outside the Parish of Stockbridge and should therefore be removed from the Settlement Boundary for Stockbridge. We note that there are no revised boundary recommendations for the site west of Test Valley School.

Stage 2 The Built Up Area – Criteria B and C (Page 96) *Shown as No. 1 on the map at Page 95 Fishmore House*

SOS notes that part of the house has been built outside the existing Settlement Boundary. To reflect the actual position we agree that the Settlement Boundary should be drawn at the edge of the existing building, but we submit that it should not extend further into the garden of the property.

Stage 2 The Built Up Area - Criteria C (Page 96-97)

Cottages at Salisbury Hill (A 30). Shown as No. 2 on the map at Page 95

We note that TVBC and the planning department have correctly referred to these cottages as being on Salisbury Hill not on Stockbridge High Street. They are however wholly within the parish of Longstock and, as we have submitted above, this area should not be included within the Stockbridge Settlement Boundary, but should be properly included within that for Longstock.

Land and dwellings east and west of Longstock Road. Shown as No.3 on the map at Page 95

This large area, which includes what are currently large fields and water meadows, is also wholly within the Parish of Longstock and should not in our submission be included within the Stockbridge Settlement Boundary at all. It is asserted that the dwellings within the No.3 area further along the Longstock Road 'closely relate to Stockbridge and should be brought within the [Stockbridge] Settlement Boundary'. We do not accept that assertion. The few

existing buildings along that part of the Longstock Road are situated to the west of the part of the River Test which has diverged a considerable distance to the west from the main bridge, and thus is at a considerable distance from Stockbridge itself. On any view it cannot properly be described as 'closely related' to Stockbridge. If the Settlement Boundary is to be drawn to include the area No.3 then in our view it should properly be included on the map at Page 92 for the Longstock Settlement.

Our further concern is that if the map is redrawn area to include all the land edged as No. 3 it would suggest to any member of the public that this whole area might be suitable for development as it would be within the Longstock Settlement Boundary. This ignores the fact that the area is on a flood plain, right by the SSSI River Test and includes some of the local historic water meadows. Were the whole site to be developed it would impinge greatly on the character and charm of Stockbridge, on its infrastructure and on the views from the Longstock Road towards Stockbridge. It would also greatly increase the risk of flooding. We therefore urge TVBC either to retain the current, existing Settlement Boundary in this part of Longstock, or draw it much more tightly around the existing buildings AND include it on the Longstock Settlement map at Page 92.

Gardens to rear of Prego Dining and Deli. Shown as No. 4 on the map at Page 95

SOS agrees that this land should be drawn within the Stockbridge Settlement Boundary for the sake of clarity and consistency.

Land and buildings at the Pellet Shed (Page 97). Shown as No.5 on the map at Page 95

SOS accepts that the Pellet Shed itself (a concrete or breeze block structure), which has been in situ for some considerable time, should be brought within the Stockbridge Settlement Boundary as it is near to and closely linked to the main urban area. We do not agree however that the multiple wooden sheds to the south of the Pellet Shed and up to the bridge over the carrier should be within the Settlement Boundary. The plan at Page 95 is so small it is difficult to assess the difference that will potentially be made if the area is to be included within the Settlement Boundary, unless one actually looks at the site. All the sheds are just that – a number of wooden, garden type sheds with no permanence whatsoever and if they are brought within the Settlement Boundary it will only be a matter

of time before the owner of the land seeks permission to remove the sheds and build one or more large houses on the site. There is absolutely no need or reason to include the site, which currently holds a number of wooden sheds beyond the Pellet Shed, within the Settlement Boundary. We urge TVBC to redraw the revised Settlement Boundary closely round the Pellet Shed.

Land and buildings at the Old Police Station. Shown as No.6 on the map at Page 95

SOS notes that this area is ‘behind’ the Old Police Station, rather than ‘at’ the Old Police Station. We would urge that for accuracy in this as in all matters relating to the revised Settlement Boundary. However we agree that this built development should be within the Settlement Boundary as it is closely linked to the main urban area. We note that the revised boundary has been drawn closely round the existing building.

Meadow Gate Cottage. Shown as No.7 on the map at Page 95

Now that Meadow Gate Cottage has been built and lived in, SOS agrees that it should be included within the Stockbridge Settlement Boundary but would urge that the boundary should be drawn closely round the Cottage so that the rest of the land to the north is clearly shown to be outside the Settlement Boundary.

Boundary Recommendations (Page 97)

We have already commented above, but for the avoidance of doubt we submit that it is wrong to include the land that is situated wholly within the Parish of Longstock, as being within the Stockbridge Settlement Boundary. It is our submission that the cottages at Salisbury Hill and the Land and dwellings east and west of Longstock Road should be excluded from the map on Page 95 and properly included within the Longstock Settlement Boundary on a complete map of the Longstock Settlement at Page 92.

Stage 2 The Built Up Area - Criteria D (Page 97).

The Football Ground (North of the High Street). Shown as No 1 in red on the map at Page 95 and described as part of the Adopted Local Plan Settlement Boundary.

We point out that to describe this area of land as the Football Ground is inaccurate. It is correctly described as the Stockbridge Recreation Ground (SRG) where members of the public may go for recreation and take their children to play on the playground. It is of course also used as a football ground by Stockbridge Football Club but they do not have exclusive use of the ground and it is, in our submission, incorrect to describe it as the Football Ground. The land was in fact purchased from donations in 1976 and was placed in Trust 'for the purposes of a Recreation Ground or Park for the use of the inhabitants of the Parish of Stockbridge in the County of Hampshire with the object of improving the conditions of life of the said inhabitants' (to quote from the Trust Deed).

We would ask that it is accurately described as the SRG when the final Settlement Boundary map is drawn up. However we agree with TVBC that this area should be removed from the Settlement Boundary.

Need for accuracy in assessing Settlement Boundaries

We have already set out why the currently assessed Stockbridge Settlement Boundary, shown at Page 95, is incorrect and we hope that the new Local Plan and Settlement Boundary Assessments will be amended so that an accurate representation of the true position is provided in respect of both the parishes of Stockbridge and Longstock. We would also ask TVBC to take our other comments into account when determining the final assessment of the Stockbridge Settlement Boundary.

Yours faithfully

Jean Boney

Chair of SOS, Save Our Stockbridge.



Stockbridge has a delicate relationship with its environment and particularly with regard to flooding. It is situated on a floodplain and is historically susceptible to flooding such that over centuries (from the Roman times) much work has been done to protect it.

We have the river Test, currently very high, and ancient water meadows which, apart from being of great historical interest and importance, continue to work well by holding the water table and surplus ground water within the carriers and ditches.

We are moving into a different climate era. Warmer, wetter winters, and dryer, hotter summers.

Post the 2014 floods, Stockbridge has been protected by two flood relief devices, one above the town and the other below. The spillway is installed on the river system above the Greyhound. The carrier here, in normal conditions, will be approx. 2 ft above the level of the main river opposite. The spillway ensures that should the level of water rise it can be directed out, across the meadow to the main river. Nothing should impede this.

Further down, alongside the Kingsmead Wier, and about 200 yards below the bridge is the bypass sluice which was installed at the same time as the spillway. This sluice is 8 feet wide and consists of boards that fill the width of the sluice and stretch down to the riverbed. In emergencies, all these boards can be pulled out directing water coming from upstream to flow away onto the flood plain, lowering the level of water in the river up to and above the bridge.

Should development be allowed outside the settlement boundary of Stockbridge, the land that might be considered could be these historic water meadows, already under stress, which would therefore remove this flooding defence and leave Stockbridge and its residents once again vulnerable to floods.

The work currently undertaken by the river keepers in Stockbridge and up and down the Test should not be underestimated. They keep a keen eye on and protect the biodiversity and the general health of the river and do valuable work to prevent flooding by keeping the carriers running freely and clearing ditches so that groundwater is collected and floods avoided.

Should land, other than the water meadows be suggested for development then great care and attention should also be given to potential flood risk to Stockbridge which, already present, will worsen.

Even now, drainage needs to be improved, as well as ongoing maintenance to the drainage system, including clearing of road side drains.

The current plan includes the following statement at Para 5.43 :

The policy includes criteria in relation to setbacks from watercourses that links to environmental permitting requirements for main rivers and ordinary water courses. An environmental permit may be required for activities that could pollute the air, water, or land; increase flood risk; or adversely affect land drainage.

In SOS's submission TVBC should firm up this policy and in regard to Stockbridge take great care to follow it to the letter when considering any suggested development for the village. Given the sewage currently being pumped into the Test by Southern Water which flouts this policy, SOS urges TVBC to ensure that this applies strictly to any developers or companies involved in potential development of the area.