



Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Meeting of Lapley, Stretton & Wheaton Aston Parish Council held on Thursday 25th September 2025 at Lapley and Wheaton Aston village hall

In attendance:

CLlr W Millington - **Wheaton Aston (Chairman)**
CLlr D Hodgkiss– **Stretton**
CLlr J Hodgkiss- **Wheaton Aston** Cllr
V Renfrew – **Lapley**
CLlr R Nelson -**Wheaton Aston (Vice Chairman) and South Staffordshire District Council**
CLlr Sue Whittingham - **Wheaton Aston**
CLlr. M. Griffiths – **Lapley**
CLlr M Smith – **Wheaton Aston**
CLlr C Robinson- **Stretton**
CLlr J Ford – **Wheaton Aston**

(arrived 6.20pm) Also in

Attendance:

Mrs A Watson – **Parish Clerk**
14 members of the public **Apologies:**
CLlr D Weate- **Wheaton Aston**

Absent:

Acronyms:

LSWA PC: Lapley, Stretton and Wheaton Aston Parish Council
SSC: South Staffordshire council
SCC: Staffordshire County Council
CLlr: Councillor
CPD: Continuous professional development
SPCA: Staffordshire Parish Councils Association
PCSO: Police
Community Support

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Officer
 SLCC: Society of local
 Council clerks
 NALC: National association of local councils
 CMDR: Commander
 WACFR- Wheaton Aston Community First Responders
 FOM: Forest of Mercia
 VO: Village Orderly
 BKV: Best Kept Village
 PSPO: Public Space Protection Order
 NP: Neighbourhood Plan

Public forum

One member raised a concern about the proposal- will the access for this one development lead to a proposal for further developments on other fields.

One member the public outlined the proposal for the development

One member raised concern that when St Marsy School was built that was to be the boundary of the village and this development will change this. In addition, the road is not the width that highways have speculated as being appropriate.

The close proximity to the canal will result in a high visual impact of the property

Standing orders implemented at 6.10pm

57. To consider apologies

No apologies and reasons for absence received from Cllr D Weate

58. Declaration of Interests

None to declare

59. Planning application 25/00623/FUL Proposal: Erection of 1 no. dwelling Location: Magazine Field Magazine Lane Wheaton Aston STAFFORD ST19 9NF

Question - is there any known connection between the developer that approached the PC about the land sale of Primrose play area

Resolved **LSWA Parish Council objects to application 25/00623/FUL for the following reasons:**

1. Inappropriate Design and Materials

The proposed development is not in keeping with the existing character of the area. The design, aesthetics, and choice of materials are out of style with surrounding properties and would harm the visual cohesion of the locality.

2. Isolated Positioning

The building appears isolated and detached from the established settlement pattern. Such positioning risks creating an incongruous and intrusive feature in the landscape.

3. Impact on Canal Users

Canal boats and homes are moored at the site, and the development would adversely affect both the setting and enjoyment of these residential and recreational uses.

4. Public Right of Way Concerns

It is understood that the access lane may constitute a public right of way. Clarification is being sought from Staffordshire County Council, but until confirmed, the application should not proceed on the basis of potentially infringing public rights of access.

5. Unproven Legal Access

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The landowner has not provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate a legal right of access along the lane in question. Without clear and enforceable rights of access, the proposal is not viable.

6. Inadequate Road Width

The access road serving the site is narrower than highways standards recommend. This raises serious concerns about safety, access for emergency vehicles, and the ability of the road to accommodate increased traffic generated by the proposal.

Policy concerns

1. Conflict with the Adopted Spatial Strategy

- **Core Policy 1 (Core Strategy 2012)** directs growth to the most sustainable locations in accordance with the settlement hierarchy, while protecting the natural and historic environment.
- Wheaton Aston is identified as a **Local Service Village**, where only *limited and proportionate* growth is supported, within or adjoining the defined settlement boundary.
- The application site, Magazine Field, lies **outside the settlement boundary** (SAD 2018 Village Map; SHELAA mapping). Development here would constitute **unplanned housing in the open countryside**, contrary to Core Policy 1 and the adopted spatial strategy.

2. Inconsistency with the Site Allocations Document (2018)

- The **SAD (2018)** defines the settlement boundary and identifies land for housing growth. Fields off Magazine Lane is **neither allocated nor safeguarded** for housing.
- Permitting ad hoc residential development in this location would undermine the **plan-led system** by encouraging piecemeal growth contrary to the adopted plan.

3. Absence of Exceptional Circumstances or Local Need

- Residential development outside settlement boundaries is only supported in **exceptional cases** (e.g. rural exception sites for affordable housing, agricultural/forestry workers' dwellings).
- This application is for **market housing** with no exceptional justification or proven local housing need. It therefore conflicts with Core Strategy and SAD 2018 policies. (Cllr Ford arrived)

4. Harm to Historic Landscape and Local Character

- The **Historic Environment Assessment (HEA)** identifies the site as part of the historic fieldscape associated with Wheaton Aston's medieval settlement.
- Infill development here would **erode the historic hedgerow pattern and rural setting**, contrary to the HEA and Core Strategy objectives on local distinctiveness.
- The proposal is inconsistent with **NPPF (Chapter 16)** requirements to conserve and enhance the historic environment.

5. Unsustainable Location and Transport Impacts

- **NPPF paragraphs 104–111** require development in sustainable locations with safe, suitable access for all users.
- Magazine Lane is narrow, poorly served by pavements, and would increase **car dependency**.
- The application lacks **robust highway safety evidence**, raising concerns for both vehicular and pedestrian safety, contrary to NPPF paragraph 111.

6. Amenity, Design and Visual Impact

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- **NPPF paragraphs 130–134** require visually attractive development that respects local character and secures amenity for residents.
- A dwelling on this site would be **visually intrusive**, harmful to the open countryside setting, and detrimental to neighbouring amenity.

7. Environmental and Flood Risk Concerns

- The site lies adjacent to the **Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal corridor**, which functions as part of the district's **blue/green infrastructure** (Core Strategy Policy HWB2).
- Policy HWB2 requires the **protection and enhancement of canal corridors**, with undeveloped buffer zones maintained along watercourse banks.
- The proposal fails to provide:
 - A sufficient **Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)** or sequential/exception test despite potential flood risk.
 - Evidence on **surface water drainage**, contrary to SFRA requirements and NPPF paragraphs 167–169.
 - Adequate **ecological assessment**, biodiversity net gain, or SuDS proposals, contrary to NPPF paragraphs 174–180 and local green infrastructure policy.
- Development here would therefore conflict with both the **NPPF** and **South Staffordshire SFRA/Local Plan** requirements for flood resilience, water quality protection, and biodiversity enhancement.
- There is a 400 year old oak tree on the rear side of the proposed roadway, the root protection area of this tree would be affected by the road

8. Conflict with Canal Towpath Policy and Public Amenity

- The **canal towpath** is a valued public amenity, forming part of South Staffordshire's sustainable transport and recreation network.
- Development that encroaches upon or visually degrades this corridor would conflict with HWB2 and NPPF policies on healthy, inclusive places (NPPF para 92).
- No evidence has been provided that the scheme would **retain a buffer zone, protect views, or enhance towpath access** in line with Canal & River Trust consultation requirements.

9. Prejudice to the Emerging Local Plan Review

- The emerging Local Plan Review reinforces that **development outside settlement boundaries** should be limited to defined exceptions.
- Approval of this proposal would **prejudice the new plan**, undermine the Council's ability to manage growth through a plan-led system, and set an undesirable precedent.

The proposal is **contrary to the NPPF, Core Strategy 2012, SAD 2018, and SFRA/Local Plan policies** on sustainable development, spatial strategy, historic landscape, biodiversity, flood risk, and blue/green infrastructure.

It would cause **material harm** to the countryside setting of Wheaton Aston, the historic canal corridor, local character, biodiversity, and public amenity, while undermining the plan-led approach to growth.

Mottey Meadows Consideration:

Mottey Meadows, a designated **Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)** and **Special Area of Conservation (SAC)**.

Mottey Meadows is one of the finest remaining examples of **species-rich lowland hay meadows** in the UK, protected under both national and European legislation and has rare black poplar trees at Mottey Meadows

The proposed development poses several serious risks to this irreplaceable habitat:

1. Ecological Impact

The development may lead to:

- **Habitat degradation** through increased human activity and land use intensification.
- **Introduction of invasive species** or garden escapees.
- **Disturbance to protected flora and fauna**, including rare species such as *Fritillaria meleagris*.

2. Water Pollution and Nutrient Runoff

The meadows are highly sensitive to **nutrient enrichment** and **diffuse pollution**. The Site Improvement Plan (SIP) for Mottey Meadows identifies **water pollution** as a key threat. The proposed development could:

- Increase **surface runoff** containing pollutants.
- Alter the **nutrient balance** critical to maintaining biodiversity.

3. Hydrological Disruption

Mottey Meadows is **groundwater dependent**. Any changes to local drainage, water abstraction, or floodplain dynamics could:

- Disrupt the **natural hydrology**.
- Undermine the ecological integrity of the site.

4. Lack of Adequate Buffer Zones

Natural England recommends **buffer zones** with low or no nutrient input adjacent to SSSIs. The application does not appear to include sufficient mitigation measures or ecological safeguards.

5. Policy Non-Compliance

The proposal may conflict with:

- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** Paragraphs 179–182.
- **Habitats Regulations 2017**, requiring an **Appropriate Assessment** for developments near SACs.
- **Natural England's Site Improvement Plan**, which is a material consideration in planning decisions.

Vote: Does the PC wish to object using the above comment yes:10 no: 0 abstain: 0

Resolved to object to the application

An agent has been in touch with the clerk to advise that a pre app has been submitted to SSC for a development on the field at Fentonhouse Lane. The agent advised that there will be a public consultation within the next few weeks

Signed..... Chairman.....

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Meeting closed at 6.45pm

Council Attendance

Date	RN	JH	MS	WM	DW	DH	Sue W	JF	CR	VR	MG	Total Attendance
22/5/245	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	11
10/7/245	X	X	Ap	X	X	X	X	Ap	-	X	Ap	7
4/9/25	x	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	9
25/9/25	X	X	X	X	AP	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
16/10/25												
6/12/25												

Crime and Disorder Implications

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on local authorities to consider the crime and disorder implications when exercising its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions and to do all that is reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area. Where relevant any decisions made at the Parish Council meeting have taken this duty of Care into consideration

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