Minutes of the Additional Ordinary Meeting of Stapeley & District Parish Council held at Stapeley Community Hall on Monday 23rd June 2025

Attendance

Chairman:	Cllr A Jacobs
Councillors:	Cllr J Hillman, Cllr M Aspaturian, Cllr J Dickinson, Cllr M Docker, Cllr S Ford, Cllr J Gibbs, Cllr I Lurcock, Cllr Y Orungbemi, Cllr C Sirigou
Clerk:	Mr Wayne Salisbury
Other:	None
Apologies:	Cllr B Astbury
Not in Attendance:	Cllr R Carter
Public:	2

Meeting started at 8:15pm.

1. **To receive apologies for absence**
   Apologies for absence were received from Cllr B Astbury.

2. **Declarations of Interest**
   No interests declared.

3. **Public Participation.**
   Members of the public who were in attendance did not make any statements or ask any questions but expressed interest in the process. The Chair provided an explanation of what the Council was considering at this meeting.

4. **Planning**
   a) To consider the following planning applications.

Reference	25/2138/EIA
Type of Application	EIA screening / scoping
Location	Land At Broad Lane, Nantwich,
Proposal	EIA Scoping request.
Deadline for Comments	7th July 2025
Cheshire East | pa.cheshireeast.gov.uk | Application | 400494	

RESOLVED: to submit the following comment to Cheshire East Planning Authority.

Stapeley and District Parish Council strongly believes that a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for the proposed development at Land at Broad Lane, as detailed under application 25/2138/EIA.

Parish Location Clarification

Although the scoping document refers to the site as “Nantwich South”, the development is wholly located within the parish of Stapeley and District, not within Nantwich itself. This distinction is important in considering local context, and cumulative impact of other developments within Stapeley Parish.

1. Clear Schedule 2 Thresholds Trigger EIA Requirement

The scoping report itself confirms the site area is approximately 20 hectares and will "include more than 150 dwellings," directly triggering Schedule 2, Category 10(b) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. Once this threshold is breached, an EIA is required where significant effects are likely.

Planning Practice Guidance is clear that authorities must consider "existing environmental problems relating to areas of particular environmental importance likely to be affected." As demonstrated in the sections below, the likely significant effects are multiple and unavoidable. Hence a full EIA is required.

2. Substantial Cumulative Environmental Impacts

The cumulative impact of this scheme alongside other approved and emerging development is critical. Local Plan Policy PG 7 allocated "in the order of 2,050 new homes" to Nantwich in the 2010–2030 period. That figure has already been exceeded, with over 2,000 homes consented or constructed in the Nantwich Key Service Centre.

Phase 1 of the development already includes 189 dwellings, a local centre, employment space, a care home, and retirement living. These constitute material "existing and/or approved projects" under the EIA Regulations and must be considered cumulatively.

The ability of the local infrastructure and environment to support further development is in question, especially without additional funding or delivery plans for critical amenities.

The scoping report proposes two "In-Combination Assessment Scenarios," acknowledging cumulative impacts across each chapter.

However, the immediate environment remains a live construction zone with constantly shifting baseline conditions. Ignoring this unsettled baseline would breach NPPF paragraphs 185-186 requirements to consider cumulative impacts.

Any Environmental Impact Assessment should, in addition to the developments named in the scoping document, consider the recently submitted plans with respect to the proposed development on Nightingale Land off Broad Lane as this places incremental pressure on the environment, infrastructure and in particular traffic.

3. Inappropriately Narrow Proposed Scope

The developer proposes to "scope out" several environmental topics without proper justification:

- **Landscape and Visual Impact**: The proposed development will result in complete transformation of agricultural land, with significant effects on local landscape character and visual experience, especially for neighbouring residents and users of public rights of way. The assessment needs to take into account how the development may alter this.
- **Water Resources**: While the scoping report notes "pockets of low to high surface water flood risk," it fails to address the potential impact on approximately 30 ponds within and near the site, which may be impacted upon by changes to drainage in the area resulting from the development.
- **Cultural Heritage**: The area is noted as having medium to high potential for Medieval archaeological deposits. Deferring assessment to a planning condition is inadequate where significant heritage impacts may arise.
- **Noise and Vibration**: The report downplays cumulative traffic impacts, yet there is already significant anecdotal evidence of noise and vibration from existing residential areas. The impact on these nuisance levels from the completion of phase 1 is yet to be felt. These concerns and impacts on the local environment should not be dismissed based solely on incremental increases.
- **Material Assets**: No consideration is given to infrastructure capacity, resource consumption or life-cycle impacts.

- **Daylight and Lighting**: The development will impact daylight to properties on London Road, Broad Lane, Phase 1, and Bishops Wood. The lighting impact on sensitive ecology such as bats also needs to be considered.
- **Accidents and Disasters**: This topic is proposed to be omitted, despite increased traffic volumes and road safety concerns.
- **Socio-economic**: There is no consideration of the fastest-growing demographic of the over 65's. Independent accommodation needs and alignment with local housing demand should be assessed.
- **Public Health, Infrastructure Capacity and Accident Risks**, all of which are required under modern EIA standards.

4. Sensitive Ecological Receptors and Incomplete Baseline Data

The scoping report acknowledges:

- The presence of a "large population of great crested newts" on and beside the site, with breeding ponds of "high conservation status"
- The need for ongoing spring/summer survey work for bats, reptiles, priority farmland birds, and invertebrates

Under NPPF-184 and Local Plan Policy SE 3, the absence of complete baseline data means the precautionary principle must be applied. The correct mechanism is a full EIA, not a pared-back assessment.

Cumulative effects must also consider:

- Habitat fragmentation resulting from multiple developments
- Loss of agricultural land and green corridors
- Disruption of species movement and behaviour across the wider landscape

5. Traffic, Air Quality and Public Health Impacts

Local Plan Policy SE 12 requires developments to "minimise and mitigate the effects of possible pollution arising from the development itself or as a result of the development (including additional traffic)."

The Scoping Report itself notes:

- Need to assess extra vehicle trips and junction performance at six problem nodes.
- Potential Moderate or Major adverse traffic effects
- Local AQMA status and Strategic Road congestion concerns

It fails to specifically address:

- The proposed new access onto Broad Lane, which appears to be uncontrolled
- The implications of linking Phase 1 and 2, potentially creating a 'rat run' through unclassified and unsuitable residential roads not designed for through traffic.
- The adequacy of local public transport integration.
- Impacts on pedestrian safety are expected along the narrow pavements of London Road and Broad Lane, particularly regarding school access. Increased traffic loads will affect pedestrian safety on these pavements and highlight the need for safe crossing provisions, as the roads serve three nearby schools.
- School peak-time traffic on Audlem Road/Wellington Road, Peter de Stapleigh Way, Pear Tree Field, and Hawksey Drive already results in significant queuing and congestion.
- Arrangements for monitoring and enforcing any future travel plan

Only a full EIA with integrated chapters on transport, air quality, and health can demonstrate compliance with SE 12 and NPPF paragraph 188.

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6. Infrastructure and Service Capacity

The scoping report gives limited attention to the cumulative pressure this development will place on:

- Local road network capacity taking into consideration the current and ongoing developments.
- Water supply and sewerage infrastructure.
- Local road infrastructure (beyond site-specific impacts)
- Community facilities and services
- Healthcare and school provision, including funding for additional capacity
- Waste management

These omissions are particularly concerning given the scale of recent and ongoing development in the parish and Nantwich.

7. Climate Change and Agricultural Land Loss

The applicant acknowledges the likely loss of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land. There is a presumption that such land should be protected. There does not appear to be any consideration of this.

A full EIA is required to evaluate:

- Greenhouse gas emissions from construction and operation
- Permanent loss of carbon-sequestering agricultural land
- Changed drainage patterns affecting remaining farmland

8. Public Interest and Transparency

Given the transformative scale of change to the local environment, residents have a right to:

- Full understanding of cumulative impacts
- Comprehensive mitigation measures
- Robust monitoring arrangements
- Opportunity to comment on all environmental effects.

Conclusion

A full Environmental Impact Assessment is clearly warranted and must be required. The Environmental Statement must:

1. Include all environmental topics without unjustified scoping out
2. Address cumulative effects from both Phase 1 and nearby developments
3. Establish accurate baseline conditions, including incomplete ecological data and adverse effects from developments under construction.
4. Set out robust mitigation and monitoring proposals
5. Explore alternative phasing or designs to allow for environmental recovery

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a) To consider any planning applications which have been received since the publication of this agenda.

Reference	25/2144/HOUS
Type of Application	Householder
Location	126 London Road, Stapeley, Nantwich, Cheshire East, CW5 7JN
Proposal	Demolition of existing garage, erection of two storey extension to the side elevation and erection of partial two storey and single storey extension to the rear elevation.
Deadline for Comments	10th July 2025
Cheshire East | pa.cheshireeast.gov.uk | Application | 400551.	

RESOLVED: to submit the following general comment to Cheshire East Planning Authority.

- Stapeley & District Parish Council has no comments to make on this application.

Meeting concluded at 9:29 pm.

Chairman…… Date……

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