

MINUTES of the Parish Council Meeting of North Leigh Parish Council (NLPC) held on Thursday 13th July 2023 at 7:30pm in the Turner Hall, Church Road, North Leigh

Councillors Present: Andy Clements (Chairman), Robert Gunn (Vice Chairman), Councillors Susie Cusick, Carol Frost (CF), Fran Jeffes (FJ), Julie Minch (JM), Malcolm Shead (MS), Kevin Swann (KS) and Sarah Veasey (SV)

In attendance: Allison Leigh, Clerk, Members of the public

62/23. Apologies for absence: District Councillor Harry St John, County Councillor Liam Walker

63/23. Declarations of interest: None.

64/23. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 8th June 2023 and the Neighbourhood Plan Committee meeting of the 12th June 2023: The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 8th June 2023 and the Neighbourhood Plan Committee meeting of the 12th June 2023 were approved and signed.

65/23. Public Forum

- A member of the public was in attendance to note the following Definitive Map Modification Orders have been made with the allowance of comments:
 - The Oxfordshire County Council, Hailey Unrecorded Restricted Byway and North Leigh Unrecorded Restricted Byway, Public Path Extinguishment Order 2023
 - The Oxfordshire County Council, North Leigh Restricted Byway No. 44 and Bridleways Nos. 45 & 46 and Hailey Bridleway No. 35, Public Path Creation and Definitive Map and Statement Modification Order 2023
- A member of the public was in attendance to note there is an issue with parked cars on Common Road and Common Close due to lack of staff parking at Estelle Manor. The Council asked the Clerk to contact Estelle Manor about this.
- A member of the public was in attendance to express their disappointment with the 20mph survey as they had wanted to see a yes or no option rather than an additional zonal option.
- A representative from Stop Botley West was in attendance to note that the deadline to give feedback to the Planning Inspectorate on the scoping report is due the 13th July.

66/23. Reports from the County Councillor and District Councillor: The County Councillor and District Councillor sent their apologies and did not send reports.

- **20mph survey results:** The Council reviewed the 20mph survey results (for the results see Attachment 1). Following a discussion, the Chairman proposed to proceed with a blanket 20mph limit in North Leigh, FJ seconded the motion. The Council resolved to proceed with blanket 20mph limit in North Leigh.
- **Rights of Way:** A discussion was had about the maintenance of rights of way. The Council considered having a rights of way working group but would like to understand more about groups who may be currently carrying out some of these works, such as the Ramblers. MS will contact OCC to discuss a way forward.

The Council would like the Clerk to compile a list of landowners whose land crosses a rights of way.

67/23. Action items and Clerk's Report:

- The Council reviewed the councillors' action list. The following was noted:
 - SV confirmed that Thames Water has not adopted the sewers at the Bellway development.
- The Council acknowledged the Clerk's Report.

68/23: Finance:

- **Finance report:**

Payments authorised

Date	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
09/06/2023	Defibrillator pads	First Rescue Training and Supplier		13.47	80.80
09/06/2023	Office supplies	WH Smith		4.96	29.77
09/06/2023	Paper	Appleton Community Shop		0.76	4.55
09/06/2023	Postage	Post Office Ltd			1.60
09/06/2023	Office supplies	WH Smith		1.17	7.00
09/06/2023	Office supplies	Amazon		3.91	23.48
09/06/2023	Lloyds monthly fee	Lloyds Bank			3.00
30/06/2023	Unity Bank service charge	Unity Bank			18.00
31/07/2023	Clerk salary	Allison Leigh			1,050.54
13/07/2023	Clerk mileage and home allowance	Allison Leigh			100.70
31/08/2023	Clerk salary	Allison Leigh			1,050.34
01/08/2023	Clerk mileage and home allowance	Allison Leigh			26.00
13/07/2023	Web hosting and WordPress updates	Dark White Digital			30.00
13/07/2023	OALC Training	OALC		16.00	96.00
13/07/2023	OALC Training	OALC		16.00	96.00
13/07/2023	Training course	National Assoc. Local Councils		6.54	39.22
13/07/2023	Training course	National Assoc. Local Councils		6.54	39.22
13/07/2023	Bus shelter cleaning	Multi Hands			110.00
13/07/2023	Staining of Bus Shelter at Cuckamus Green	Eve's Helping Hand			120.00
13/07/2023	Notice board repair	Eve's Helping Hand			30.00
13/07/2023	Windmill Heights grass cutting June 2023	BGG		41.50	249.00
13/07/2023	Cutting of Cemetery and Churchyard June 2023	BGG		50.00	300.00
13/07/2023	OALC Training	OALC		6.00	36.00
13/07/2023	Council laptop	Cloudy IT		180.64	1,083.84
13/07/2023	Cemetery bin management	Grundon		14.38	86.28
		Total		361.87	4,711.34

Receipts since the last meeting

Date	Description	Supplier	Total
22/06/2023	Cemetery fees	Greens Funeral services	375.00
22/06/2023	Cemetery fees	Greens Funeral services	125.00
21/06/2023	S106 Monies	WODC	10,367.94
30/06/2023	Cemetery fees	Peter Smith and Son	500.00
30/06/2023	Bank interest	Unity Bank	116.17
		Total	11,484.11

- **2023/2024 Budget against spend:** The Council acknowledged the 2023/2024 budget against spend through 30th June 2023.
- **Donations:** This item was moved to this stage in the meeting.

- **Donation Policy:** The Council resolved to move this to the next meeting.
- **North Leigh Youth Project:** The Council resolved to donate £2000 to North Leigh Youth Project. The Council would like the Clerk to make the North Leigh Youth Project aware that the Council is working on a new donation policy/application to assist for future donations.
- **1st North Leigh Scout Group:** The Council resolved to donate up to £6000 to the North Leigh Scout Group for a new container. The Council asked that the Scout Group provide a copy of the invoice.
- **Tree survey quotes:** The Council resolved to move this item to the next meeting.
- **Training:** The Council resolved to fund the Roles and Responsibilities training course for MS.
- **Internal Controls Policy:** This item will be moved to the next meeting.

69/23: Committees:

- **Staffing Committee:** The Council resolved to have SC as Chairman of the Staffing Committee.
- **Committee Reports:**
 - **Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Committee:** The NP Committee submitted a report. See Attachment 2. KS noted the Committee had discussed the possibility of having a consultant involved. The Committee has reviewed quotes and the cost is approximately £600. It was noted that the Council should see a financial plan/budget for the NP prior to agreeing this cost. The Council resolved to hold an August meeting to discuss NP finance.
 - **Staffing Committee:** There was no report. It was noted that the Staffing Committee needs to have a formal meeting. The Council offered congratulations to the Clerk for passing Units 1 and 2 of CiLCA and encourage her on her continued work on the course.
 - **Planning committee:** There was no report. SV noted that the planning application for Land South of New Yatt Road North Leigh is on the agenda for the Lowlands Planning Committee on the 14th August. The Council resolved to ask for an extension of the planning committee date. If the date cannot be changed, the Council resolved for the Chairman to speak.

70/23: Planning Applications:

<u>Planning number</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Proposal</u>	<u>NLPC Response</u>
23/01162/HHD	Belclose Cottage Witney Road North Leigh	Demolition of existing garage, porch and back extension. Erection of single storey side and rear extensions and addition of windows	North Leigh Parish Council has no comments on this planning application.
23/01288/HHD	36 Common Road North Leigh	Erection of front porch and 2 dormer windows, proposed new drive way and access to highway, alterations including block up various windows, remove chimney	North Leigh Parish Council has no comments on this planning application.
23/00794/OUT	Land South Of New Yatt Road North Leigh	Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except for means of access) for the erection of up to 43 residential dwellings, including affordable housing, public open space, landscape planting, sustainable drainage system and new access arrangements from New Yatt Road	See Attachment 3

Planning Decisions:

<u>Planning number</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Proposal</u>	<u>NLPC Response</u>
21/03503/FUL	26 Park Road North Leigh	Demolition of existing bungalow. Construction of a two storey dwelling	The Planning Inspectorate concluded the appeal should succeed.
21/01887/FUL	26 Park Road North Leigh	Demolition of existing bungalow. Construction of a two storey dwelling	The Planning Inspectorate concluded the appeal should succeed.

- **Botley West Solar Farm:** Botley West Solar Farm has developed a Scoping Report along with Photo Volt Development Partners. The Council resolved to submit a response of objection to this which was prepared by RG with MS. This response will be sent to the Planning Inspectorate as well as WODC.
- **Hailey Solar Farm –** It was noted that the Parish Council’s comment on this solar farm is on WODC’s website. See attachment 4.

71/23: Commemorative Benches: The Council resolved to research artists who might be able to create a bench to commemorate the King’s Coronation.

72/23: Newsletter: The Council would like to circulate the next newsletter by the 21st August. KS will circulate a draft by the 24th July to include the following information:

- Speed survey results
- Adventure Playground refurbishment

The Council would like to see if the Scouts could deliver the newsletters. The Clerk will look into any insurance issues.

The Council reviewed the quotes for the printing of the newsletter and resolved to proceed with The Flying Press.

73/23: Traffic:

- **Speed Indication Devices (SIDS):** The Chairman noted that the meeting to review the sites for the SIDS hasn’t taken place as of yet. The Chairman asked for additional councillors to review the sites. FJ, CF and SC will work with the Chairman for locations for SIDS in North Leigh.

Speedwatch: The Chairman noted that a resident has offered to take on speedwatch in East End. For the immediate future the Chairman will continue to coordinate the North Leigh sessions.

74/23. Matters for report:

- CF reported that several residents had contacted her about increased helicopter noise surrounding Estelle Manor. FJ will explore this further.
- JM reported that the Cuckamus Green bus shelter has been damaged and needs repair and some additional staining.

- JM reported that the Perspex on some of the bus stops has come loose and needs repair.
- JM reported she has contacted OCC again regarding the payment for the bus shelters with no response. She will draft a letter for the Clerk to send indicating a deadline by which the funds will no longer be available.
- JM reported there is damaged fencing in the Children's Playground.
- JM noted that the website needs to be changed to note that meetings are now held in the Turner Hall.
- Correspondence was received.

Date and time of next meeting: Thursday, 10th August 2023 at 7.30pm at Turner Hall.

The meeting closed at 9:30.

Attachment 1

OCC 20mph survey results

Online via the survey:

76 voted for a 20mph zone

121 voted for a blanket 20mph change.

174 voted for no change.

In the post:

10 voted for a 20mph zone.

11 voted for a blanket 20mph change.

8 voted for no change.

Totals:

20mph zone: 86

Blanket 20mph: 132

No change: 183

Attachment 2

North Leigh Neighbourhood Plan Committee Update for Parish Council Meeting of 13th July 2023

Meetings

- Since the last Parish Council met, the North Leigh Neighbourhood Plan (NLNP) Committee held a full committee meeting on 12th June.
- The next full committee meeting will be on 10th July 2023.
- The committee meeting agendas and minutes are being posted on the North Leigh Parish Council website.

Membership

Chair: Sherard Veasey

Vice Chair: Kevin Swann

Secretary: Steve Legg

Committee Members:

Robert Gunn, David Painter, Kevin Swann, Judith Wardle

Questionnaire sub-group:

David Painter, Kevin Swann, Judith Wardle

Questionnaire

The current focus is the production of a questionnaire, which it is hoped can be distributed to the entire village in the early autumn. The committee spent most of the last meeting carrying out a detailed review of the remaining sections of current draft of the questionnaire. At the next meeting it is planned to review the questionnaire in the format in which it will be published. It is also hoped to begin considering quotes for professional consultancy assistance, and to formulate a plan for financing the next stages.

ADDITIONAL COMMENT BY NORTH LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL ON ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED

In addition to the original North Leigh Parish Council comment posted on 9th May 2023, we would like to add an additional comment in response to further documentation submitted for this application.

Firstly we repeat our original conclusion that this is an opportunistic and ambitious application proposed at a highly inappropriate location on a greenfield site, which would result in a 40% increase in the housing stock of the village in the last 6 years, which would cause the coalescence of 2 separate villages, and where inadequate sewage treatment capacity and sewerage network can be demonstrated. The residents and Parish Council of North Leigh strongly believe that this application should be REFUSED both at the Lowlands Committee and again at the inevitable appeal hearing.

Sewerage treatment

In Thames Water's letter dated 27th April, they state:

"Thames Water has identified an inability of the existing SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS infrastructure to accommodate the needs of this development proposal. Thames Water has contacted the developer in an attempt to agree an infrastructure and phasing strategy for sewage treatment but has been unable to do so in the time available and as such Thames Water request the following condition be added to any planning permission. "No development shall be occupied until confirmation has been provided that either:- all sewage works upgrades required to accommodate the additional flows from the development - which is currently scheduled for completion in March 2025 - have been completed; or - a development and infrastructure phasing plan has been agreed with the Local Authority in consultation with Thames Water to allow development to be occupied. Where a development and infrastructure phasing plan is agreed no occupation shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed development and infrastructure phasing plan. Reason - Sewage Treatment Upgrades are likely to be required to accommodate the proposed development. Any upgrade works identified will be necessary in order to avoid sewage flooding and/or potential pollution incidents."

We note that Thames Water's future is uncertain, and as of end June 2023 it was in urgent talks to secure urgent funding. It seems highly likely that the March 2025 deadline for the upgrade of the Church Hanborough Sewage Treatment Works will be deferred and therefore Thames Water will not have capacity to service this new development. The Parish Council insists that under the Grampian Clause, a phasing plan is NOT AN OPTION, but ONLY that there is no occupation until such time as the upgrade of the Sewage Treatment Works have been completed. This would bring the development in line with the Grampian Clause agreed earlier this year at the local Rectory Rise development.

Water Mains Pipes

In Manor Oak's Design & Access Statement they state: *"An existing water main runs across the site from the southeast corner to the western boundary. This has an easement that would significantly affect the viability of development. As such, the decision has been taken for this water main to be diverted around the periphery of the site, allowing development to take place unconstrained."* and *"An existing water main and easement runs diagonally through the site which will be re-routed to avoid the developable area. Our drainage engineers have discussed the proposals to divert the water main with the water company who have not raised any objections."*

There is no evidence in this planning application that Thames Water has even considered, let alone approved, the diversion of the water main. In the one document so far submitted by Thames Water, they state "the proposed development is located within 5m of a strategic water main. Thames Water do NOT permit the building over or construction within 5m, of strategic water mains. Thames Water request that the following condition be added to any planning permission. No construction shall take place within 5m of the water main." And they invite the developer to submit information on how this issue might be addressed for the consideration of the LPA/Thames Water.

As Manor Oak themselves say "this easement would significantly affect the viability of development", we calculate that to comply with the 5m margin approximately 15 of the 43 houses as currently aligned could not be built. There is also no information given on how any sewage, fresh water or other utility pipes would be aligned to avoid building over or construction within 5m of the water mains. There is no information given on how a rerouting of the water mains would allow the appropriate margins required next to the footpath and significant trees on the boundary of the site. This very important issue must be explained in full before the application can be evaluated

Foul water sewerage network

We note that there have been problems with over 100 blockages, leakage into surface water channels and also ground and surface water flooding into the sewer networks in North Leigh in the last couple of years and most notably in the adjacent Masons Grove and Shepherd's Walk developments and also the Marlborough Gardens development none of which have yet been adopted by Thames Water. The sewer network North of Green Lane (which possibly has been adopted) and sewers in the Church Road area have all be subject to frequent blockages in the last 5 years. We do not believe that Thames Water will be able to provide suitable sewage capacity for this new development until Thames Water has given evidence that these problems have been rectified, and also that the sites have been adopted by Thames Water. Otherwise it will put additional pressure on an already flawed existing infrastructure.

Surface Water

In the Flood Risk Assessment commissioned for Manor Oak by MAC in Mar 2023 (and updated in Jun 2023), it states that the Risk of Surface and Ground Water Flooding is "very low". However these and the adjacent fields have long been known

as the “Fields of Springs” where underground water channels run through the clay and arise as springs especially in the winter months and periods of heavy rainfall. Robert Courts MP wrote to the Environmental Agency in Spring 2023 to determine the responsibility for permitting building on the adjacent development at Breakspear Way where the houses have subsidence and damp problems caused by the underground springs, and the resident comments submitted on this application provide many anecdotal cases of this. Thames Water has also expressed concerns that surface water should not be discharged to the public sewer network and to do so would be a material change to the proposal requiring an amendment to the application. Currently surface water from these fields spills out regularly over the ditch at the northern edge of the site and floods onto the New Yatt Road. Despite the SUDS strategy and now enlargement of the proposed attenuation basin, the built surfaces and urban creep will exacerbate the ground and surface water being displaced into the ditch, into the local sewer network and also into the road which will exacerbate an already dangerous situation and possible pollution for road users and local residents alike.

Fresh water

Thames Water undertakes to provide a good pressure and flow rate of water to this new development but there have been many instances where this has not been the case in the village. Most recently in 2021/22 residents in the Marlborough Gardens development experienced very low water pressure and slow rate of water supply. Additional housing capacity at this Manor Oak site will just put additional pressure on an inadequate clean water supply network locally. Thames Water needs to demonstrate how they will address this situation.

Connecting Footway on south side of New Yatt Road.

The current footpath proposal requires pedestrians heading from the site into the centre of North Leigh, to cross to the North side of the New Yatt Road and then cross back to the South side further East. This is dangerous and unnecessary. The ditch running along the South side of the New Yatt Road could be culverted and a pavement built over it funded by the developer, this should be embodied in the S278 Agreement to be entered into prior to implementing development. The S106 amount of £15,000 for Public Rights of Way should be increased and used for this purpose. We had also requested an S278 agreement that the safety and efficacy of the “pinch point” further East on the New Yatt Road be reviewed by OCC in light of the additional traffic that will be generated in the construction of this development (and the numerous HGV vehicles using this route if the Hailey Solar Farm is approved) and by the additional residents of the development in due course. Anecdotally this is felt to be a very dangerous junction, with poor visibility and no mirror or signalling where there have been a number of near-accidents.

Bus Service

We note in the OCC submitted documents that an S106 contribution of £48,719 has been allocated to the maintenance and improvement of the bus service in North Leigh. This proposed development is beyond a “desirable distance” to the nearest bus stops. The bus route should be adjusted to accommodate residents if this location is developed.

Construction Management Plan

A robust plan must be put in place given the difficulties experienced by local residents for the last 4 years during the construction of the Shepherds Walk developments.

S106 requests by Parish Council

In our original comment, we requested S106 funding for:

- 25 allotments on the development site – we would like to see a proposal submitted by Manor Oak for where these would be situated
- Funding for the development of car parking elsewhere in the village
- A contribution of £50k towards the construction of the MUGA on the Rectory Rise site in the village

We request written acceptance of these requests and an indication of their willingness to include these terms specifically in an S106 agreement by the developer in advance of the application being considered.

North Leigh Parish Council

Response to: 23/00760/SCREEN | Screening Opinion (Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for proposed solar farm and Battery Stations together with all associated works, equipment and necessary infrastructure at University Farm, Hailey Witney OX29 9UH | Land (E) 436583 (N) 212489 New Yatt Oxfordshire

We note from the information supplied by the applicant in their Screen Request letter dated 23 March 2023 that the proposed route for construction traffic is via the A4095, Common Road, Park Road and finally New Yatt Road. We also note that the applicant deems this route to be both suitable and ideal as the roads involved utilise the shortest route from the Application Site to the Strategic Highways Network.

North Leigh Parish Council estimates that the construction of the solar farm would generate at least 4,000 additional HGV journeys and would like to contest the suitability of the proposed route for the following reasons.

1. Common Road. This is a residential road which already experiences a significant volume of commercial traffic. The road itself is in a poor state of repair and any increase in HGV traffic will only serve to further its deterioration.
2. The junction of Park Road and New Yatt Road. This too is a residential road and at this point there is a narrowing of the carriageway causing a pinch point which only allows for vehicles to pass in one direction at a time. This is a dangerous section of road and any increase in HGV traffic will only increase the risks to pedestrians and other road users. Further, there are three domestic properties, Hill View, Paddock House and Gable Cottage, which have their walls and foundations particularly close to the highway and might be subject to damage resulting from both direct impact and ground vibration as a result of additional lorry movements.
3. New Yatt Road from the junction of Green Lane to Masons Grove. This section of road is particularly dangerous and has traffic calming, in the form of speed humps and a chicane, in place. This provides for the traffic travelling west away from the centre of North Leigh to have right of way over those entering the village. In practice these measures have been only partially successful and, as a Parish Council, we have received a number of reports of near misses, both vehicle to vehicle and vehicle to pedestrian. It is considered that any additional HGV movements are likely to increase the risk of accidents occurring.
4. New Yatt Road from Masons Grove to New Yatt. The carriageway between these two points is showing signs of serious deterioration with potholes, dips, damaged cambers and collapsing road margins. More importantly this length of road does not have a footpath and is used by parents walking their children to the village school, other pedestrians, cyclists and horses as well as cars

and HGV's. As with the other sections of the route discussed above any additional HGV movements are likely to increase the risk of accidents occurring.

It is the view of the Parish Council that proposed route would create unacceptable risks to other road users as well as causing additional severe damage to the carriageways of the roads in question. While it is understood that materials have to be delivered to the construction site the Parish Council believes that directing HGVs via the B4022 would prove to be a safer and more suitable route.

In addition to our comments on HGV traffic, North Leigh Parish Council also opposes a solar park at this location. This will have a severe impact on the views of from the New Yatt Road and Footpath 15 and will require new site roads to be built in this area also which will cause disruption. Biodiversity concerns seem to have been addressed in a very superficial way. In addition North Leigh is currently under threat from the enormous Botley West Solar Farm (apparently the 4th largest in the world) to the other side of our village, this will literally result in North Leigh becoming an island surrounded by solar parks. It is clearly not appropriate that WODC views each one on a case by case basis without considering the impact as a whole on a small rural village such as ours:

1. Due to having solar panels in fields immediately adjacent to either side of the road and
2. It being most likely that all construction traffic will be using the New Yatt Road via North Leigh and New Yatt.