

MINUTES of the meeting of the Planning Committee of North Leigh Parish Council (NLPC) held on Monday 26th February 2024 at 7:30pm in Turner Hall, Church Road, North Leigh

Councillors Present: Sarah Veasey (Chair), Councillors Julie Minch (JM), Kevin Swann (KS),

In attendance: Allison Leigh, Clerk, Harry St John (District Council), Liam Walker (County Councillor), Chairman of North Leigh Parish Council Andy Clements (AC)

AC noted the only agenda item is to consider the "Land West of Bridewell Close". He noted the Manor Oak Appeal will be discussed at a meeting in the near future and the meeting will be publicised..

7/23. Apologies for absence: None

8/23. Declarations of interest: SV declared an interest in agenda item 10/23.

SV noted the following:

- This is not a planning application for the "Land West of Bridewell Close". West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) is creating the West Oxfordshire Local Plan (WOLP) 2041 and has invited people to put forward sites for allocation. WODC will be evaluating the sites received onto a short list. NLPC is holding this meeting to hear residents' views on this site that has been put forward and subsequently to resolve how to comment on this site.
- It is unknown how many houses would be on this site, but could expect 120-140 houses.
- This is a completely unsuitable site to be put forward due to many key planning factors.

9/23. Public Forum:

More than 55 concerned residents attended the meeting and raised a variety of issues with regards to agenda item 10/23:

- A member of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee noted the Committee is looking to designate green spaces and protected views.
- The junction and access to the proposed site would be very dangerous. The increase in the number of cars from the development would aggravate the traffic issues in that area. It was noted that the village doesn't have its own amenities and employment so residents need to leave the village to get to work. There is minimal public transport available in the village.

- It was noted that when it rains, a wash of water from springs comes across the road near the Woodman Pub and freezes down Green Lane.
- It was noted there are rights of way – footpaths (only people walking can use) – through this area. For this reason they would recommend objecting to this site.
- The District Councillor reported to that the WODC Executive itemised a list of sites put forward under WOLP 2041 across the district. There have been 4,400 acres put forward which is far more than is required. He noted that there were certainly other sites that were far more suitable for development than this site.
- In 2000 there was a planning application submitted for one house to be built on the access way to this site. A planning application was submitted to WODC to build a single dwelling (planning application reference W2000/0197). Planning permission was refused. The highways engineer objected due to access issues.
- A questions was raised as to the ownership of the piece of land in front of entrance.
- Several comments were made about the sewage and flooding issues in the area.
- The issue of power was raised as there is currently an electrical line across the field which could be costly to move.
- It was noted that the destruction of the view is felt to be an act of vandalism and would change the character of the landscape.
- It was noted that many families use this field to walk and it is many residents' way to have a recreational space. We owe it to the village to keep it as it is.
- It was noted the field is build on Oxford blue clay which is unstable to build on.
- It was noted there are natural springs in the field. Building on this site would be problematic due to flooding.
- It was noted that there is an environmental impact to building on the suggested site. There has already been a reduction to wildlife after recent development and this could cause future reduction to bats, newts, owls and wildflowers. Biodiversity legislation must be considered.

- A concern was raised that the housing line of the village continues to be extended creating a merging of communities and the District Councillor noted that backland development is frowned upon.
- It was noted that there is an archeological asset in southeast site of the field.
- The issue of the possible impact on school places was raised.
- It was noted there are no street lights down Green Lane and lighting from this development would not be welcome.
- A query was raised as to whether Estelle Manor has a view on this site.
- A query was asked about whether Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funds had been given for the Shepherds Walk development. The District Councillor noted there was not as WODC does not use the CIL scheme, but that there were monies allocated to the village via a S106 agreement. These funds contributed to school, secondary school, towards bus, road works (s278 agreement) and recreation contribution. The District Councillor believed the amount to be around £1,000,000.
- It was noted that the site would cause traffic issues around the pinch point on New Yatt Road.

SV noted the Planning Committee will be writing a response and will put this on the website and Facebook page, mailing list.

10/23. Planning:

- Land West of Bridewell Close: The Committee resolved to object to the proposed land site put forward in North Leigh for West Oxfordshire's Local Plan 2041 when asked for comment.

11/23. Matters for report: The Committee plans to have the Manor Oak appeal on the March agenda of the Parish Council.

Date and time of next meeting: The date and time of the next meeting of the Planning Committee as Wednesday the 20th of March at 7pm in the Turner Hall

The meeting closed at 8:45pm.