

MINUTES of the meeting of the Planning Committee of North Leigh Parish Council (NLPC) held on Tuesday 19th March 2024 at 7:30pm in Turner Hall, Church Road, North Leigh

Councillors Present: Sarah Veasey (Chair), Councillors Andy Clements (AC) and Robert Gunn (RG)

In attendance: Allison Leigh, Clerk, Harry St John (District Council)

12/23. Apologies for absence: Kevin Swann, Julie Minch

13/23. Declarations of interest: None

14/23. Public Forum: Approximately 60 members of public were in attendance.

SV noted the sites to be discussed are not planning applications, but sites put forward for allocation to West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) for the Local Plan 2041. The amount of land put forward in West Oxfordshire will be more than is needed, so these won't necessarily go through. The Parish Council will be asked to comment on these sites in approximately April. WODC will then narrow down the list and in the summer timeframe an invitation will be extended to residents to comment on the short list.

SV presented a background on the sites and then opened the meeting up to the public.

A –COMMON ROAD SITES

Site 1 – 44 Common Road

Site 5 – Land West of Common Road

Site 10 – Land West of Common Road

The issues raised in relations to the Common Road sites were:

- Concern about increased traffic on Common Road by construction vehicles, and the Estelle Manor minibuses. Increased traffic on Common Road is a real concern as well as the traffic that would be generated from the new developments.
- Estelle Manor minibuses start at 1am and restart at 5am which is excessive. They also reverse into Common Close causing issues.
- It was noted the area around the 44 Common Road site where the house has been demolished is currently in a terrible state with temporary fencing, etc.
- There is surface water/springs in site number 5: the Land West of Common Road and adjacent gardens are unusable for 6 months of the year.

- The access to Site 5 is through the 20 Common Road site. This is directly opposite the Windmill Road/Common Road junction. With the additional traffic from the new housing this would be very dangerous.
- The provision of offloading of materials was an issue with the Bellway development and there is a concern as to the same issue with these sites.
- With every new development water pressure has decreased.
 - 4,500 acres of land have been put forward for development under WOLP 2041, there are many more sites that would be more suitable than this for inclusion in the plan and North Leigh has already absorbed the entire windfall planning for the Eynsham-Woodstock sub area in the last local plan and doesn't need any more.

B – FOOTBALL CLUB RELOCATION

The issues raised in relations to the Site 7 – Existing Site & Proposed Site Football Club relocation were:

- It was noted that the football club management is broadly supportive of the club being moved, but is not aware of further development in conjunction with this.
- There is a concern about access – at least 100 cars park at the current football club, so it is unknown if this number of cars would be at new site.
- There is a concern that if the development isn't done to enhance the club facilities, this development may prevent the club from gaining funding for upgraded facilities eg a 3G pitch.
- There is a concern of surface water from springs runoff at the new site.
 - OCC stated that the current access to the club was dangerous in 1991 when a drive nearby was moved.
 - There was concern that the football club would be moved from the old site and not reinstated at the new site.
 - There were concerns about what use the existing football club site might be put to.
 - There were concerns about helicopter use by Estelle Manor at this location.

C – SOLAR PARK

RG reported this proposal is right next door to Quarry Farm Solar Park which was turned down last year but is being reconsidered now. NLPC put in objection due to construction management plan.

The issues raised in relations to the Site 9 – Osney Solar Park were:

- Unknown where power grid connection would be.
- Taking reasonable land out of food production is a bad idea.
- When it has run its course, what will happen with the site? Will it revert to greenfield or remain as brownfield land suitable for development ?
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- Access off of A4095 would be dangerous.
- Recycling of solar panels is difficult and technology may change soon
 - Why put solar panels on greenfield sites when there are no solar panels on newbuild houses around Witney?

D – OTHER SITES

The following issues were mentioned in relation to Site 8 – Osney Business Park:

- Flooding is an issue. Water seeps across the road. There is no visibility over the brow of the hill and it is a dangerous blind spot on the road especially when the water freezes in winter.
- Will this be for things that benefit the village?
- Not all units at current business park are being used.
- It was noted that it is unknown about springs in area and no survey has been undertaken to date.
- Can't build units without building infrastructure such as sewerage, parking, etc.
- The site is mostly greenfield currently.
- Employment sites already exist.
- Not connected to sewer

The following issues were mentioned in relation to Site 6 – Eynsham Saw Mill:

- The verbiage around the site says it could be extended for leisure, business or tourism. How does that benefit the village?
- Cuckoo Lane is a rough road and can't take more traffic.
- When Estelle Manor was built, a village amenity was lost for dog walking, archery ground and the gym facilities.
- The plans refer to footpath links. It was noted there are no footpaths there, so unsure what links they are referring to. This implies these will be footpaths to the main hotel and therefore not for the benefit of village residents.
- Danger of coalescing with Long Hanborough (Freeland)
 - Adjacent to North Leigh Common and development will disturb the habitat

The following issues were mentioned in relation to Site 3 – Common Farm:

- Extra houses in an area already stretched.
- Concern if the plan increases from 5 to 8 then could developer come back and propose 12, etc.

Other notes:

It was noted that WODC has turned down some applications and then the inspector has approved them at appeal. If sites are not included in the WOLP 2041 then they are less likely to be approved either as applications or at appeal.

SV noted residents/the PC have until the 28th of March to respond to the Manor Oak appeal.

15/23. Planning:

The Committee resolved the following:

- To oppose 3 Common Road sites.
- To raise objection points based on residents' comments on other areas.

SV will prepare comments for circulation to the Planning Committee.

The meeting closed at 8:45pm.