

MINUTES of an **Informal Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Committee of North Leigh Parish Council (NLPC) held on Monday 10th March 2025 at 6:00 pm in the Turner Hall**

Committee Members Present:

Paul Evans - PE
David Harris - DH
Steve Legg (Secretary) – SL
Suzanne Millar – SM
David Painter - DP
Kevin Swann (Vice Chair / PC Rep) – KS
Judith Wardle – JW
Adrian Watts - AW

Others in Attendance

Tom McCulloch – TM - (Community First Oxfordshire)

NP235. Apologies for absence

Malcolm Shead (PC Rep) - MS
Sherard Veasey (Chair) – SV

KS chaired the meeting as SV was absent.

NP236. Declarations of Interest

None.

NP237. Public Forum

Not applicable.

NP238. To Consider Actions of Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 3rd March recorded the following actions:

NP228 – KS – to inform Parish Council that the NP committee will attend the Annual Parish Meeting - Done.

NP229 – SL, CFO, SV – to carry out edits to the “Character Assessment” and to the Neighbourhood Plan document – SL & SV – Done, **CFO - editing actions continue.**

NP239. Consider status of the drafting work on the various parts of the Neighbourhood Plan

TM explained the status of the drafting of the various parts of the Neighbourhood Plan and its appendices.

Baseline Evidence appendix (BE) – this is complete but CFO will do some final tidying of the text.

Character Assessment appendix (CA) – ditto. The CA will be used by CFO in drafting the Design Code. The CA is still in MSWord format, but eventually CFO will import it into Adobe Acrobat and pass to a graphic designer to format the text and photos to best effect.

NP240. Consider the programme of work over the coming months in order to submit the Reg 14 draft to WODC

The main Neighbourhood Plan document now contains the various sections provided by the Committee.

The Policies are the main content yet to be created, and this will be done by CFO over the next three months, up to the middle of June, based on the current document and further information and guidance provided by the committee.

CFO will pass policies they draft to the committee on a regular basis for comment.

There may be a need for further input from the committee during this process to confirm or provide further evidence for what CFO has drafted.

There will be around ten policies in the final document. These will be circulated to the committee one by one for comment. When a number of policies have been circulated and commented, there will be a face-to-face meeting with CFO to discuss what has been drafted.

When the drafting of the policies has completed (some time after mid-June), we will have a village meeting to get feedback on the policies and the draft Design Code. This event would be comprehensively advertised for maximum attendance, including a general email to all Parish Council contacts.

SL will make enquiries about booking the Memorial Hall for a Saturday morning at the end of June or beginning of July.

ACTION: SL

We may also contact WODC at about this time to seek informal feedback on the policies and design code. DH will facilitate this when appropriate.

ACTION: DH

TM was asked about the blank table in the Themes section of the plan (page 16). TM explained that CFO will populate this table after the Policies have been drafted.

TM was asked to confirm that they would incorporate the document updates listed in the minutes of 3rd March. TM confirmed they will.

TM was asked a number of further questions:

- Is the somewhat flowery language used in some sections of the Character Assessment OK? TM confirmed that in this section such language was fine. Other sections would be more formal, such as the Policies and Design Guide.
- Page 4 of the NP document – refers to European Regulations – is this correct? TM said that this is still OK.
- NP page 8 – “East End Farm” -> “Holbrook Farm” – CFO to update.
- NP page 7 – Current phrasing...
The Roman Villa at Shakenoak is close to North Leigh Lane. It has been excavated several times but remains covered over. As it is covered later the historical significance of the Shakenoak Roman Villa is perhaps not yet fully recognized;

Suggested new phrasing...

The Roman Villa at Shakenoak is close to North Leigh Lane. It has been excavated several times but remains covered over. The historical significance of the Shakenoak Roman Villa is perhaps not yet fully recognized;

- NP page 13 – the text describing the football club is not strictly relevant to this section on “Amenities and Services”. KS will consider how to relocate this text or rewrite it. (Later note: It is possibly more relevant to the section of Community Assets in the Background Evidence appendix page 30, where it is already mentioned and the description could be expanded).

ACTION: KS

How should we flag document edits submitted by committee members? TM said that all edits should be sent to SL in the form of a change request such as “Page 19, para 2, 3rd sentence – replace “Northleigh” by “North Leigh”. SL will collate the change requests and forward to CFO for action. CFO will retain control of the master copy of the documents. Any local copies held by committee members will be non-definitive.

TM said that the most sensitive area of a Neighbourhood Plan is where it designates sites for development. Since none will be designated by our plan, this problem will not arise. However, there is a potential issue if we wish to designate any privately owned land as a “Green Space”. Usually in such cases there is a requirement to demonstrate regular public access to the green space. DH will obtain the Land Registry title deeds to the Windmill field.

ACTION DH

TM was asked about the relationship between the WODC Design Guide and ours. He said that the former is quite generic, while ours would be more detailed and specific.

TM stated that he is confident that we would be ready to submit our plan to WODC for the initial “Reg 14” review by September. WODC will forward this to all standard consultees and there would be a 6-week consultation period, following which the committee would be able to deal with comments received from consultees. The committee need not accept all of these, but can refuse consultee changes with good reason.

TM was asked about the timing of our public event and the Reg 14 submission in relation to the likely timetable for the hearing of the Lioncourt planning proposal for over 100 houses by the junction of Common Road and the A4094. The Lioncourt hearing is likely to be considered in the June or July WODC planning meetings. By this stage we will have assembled a substantially complete draft plan and this could prove to be useful evidence at the hearing.

TM mentioned that the question had arisen whether we would be justified in introducing a policy for 25% “Biodiversity Nett Gain” into our plan. The statutory requirement for developments is 10%. TM thought it may be possible to justify 25% based on certain local factors such as the relatively large number of SSSI’s in the parish. TM to discuss with Wild Oxfordshire.

ACTION TM

NP241. Agree Actions to be carried out prior to next meeting.
See above.

NP242. Date of Next Meeting

The next Neighbourhood Plan committee meeting will be at the Turner Hall at 6 p.m. on a Monday evening to be confirmed by CFO, whose representatives will attend to respond to comments on the emerging draft Policies and Design Guide.

ACTION: TM – set the date

Meeting closed at 19:00