

Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum
Steering Committee
Meeting of Wednesday 24th February
7.45 at 141 Godstow Road



Present: Christopher Hardman (Chairman), John Bleach, Mary Brown, Cllr Jean Fooks, Cllr Steve Goddard, Graham Jones, David Stone, Jenny Attoe (Secretary).

Apologies: Angela Goff, Richard Lawrence-Wilson

1. **Minutes of Meeting on Wednesday 20th January 2016.** Corrections to those minutes: p1 "Our latest aim is for the Plan to be ready for the referendum in 2016". "2016" was changed to "2017". P1 3. "it" changed to "that". P2 8. "early next year" was changed to "in the coming months".
2. **Report. Meeting** with Savills at Botley on Friday 11th March. A pre-meeting is required to decide what is to be discussed with them. **Brookes** students are presenting their projects at the University on Friday 26th February at 1.00 pm in Gibbs 538. Inform Sue of intended attendance. **Facebook.** David Stone has volunteered to post items and statements with a link to the website where items and statements should also be posted. **Funding.** CH said he was not sure what to do about funding. RL-W will be asked for ideas. **Press Release.** It was thought that a press release about a Facebook page would not be printed and even an announcement about a funding appeal was unlikely to be printed. **Questionnaire.** AC has produced several pages of analysis in graphs and charts of the whole area. It needs to be summarised and clarified in key points. It shows that we have been consulting and have analysed the results. **Flooding statement.** This was approved and is to go onto the website and on Facebook with a link. It was now too late for the next edition of the Flying Goose. It sets out concerns and shows what needs to be looked at. JB said the "conditions" need to be in italics or bullet points to highlight them. The Flooding statement should be sent to the press because of the concerns over the Mill site and pointing out the government insurance indemnity. We need to make contact with the Flood Alliance. Concern was expressed about the current plans for a local Flood Alleviation Channel. **Godstow Abbey.** The provisional date for unveiling the board is Saturday 21st May. The final draft of the information board is complete and the design was accepted as very favourable. English Heritage will decide the exact location of the board.
3. **Matters Arising.** There is a meeting of Cherwell Council on Friday 26th February. Cherwell District Council has an adopted Local Plan which provides for growth to meet Cherwell's housing needs, but it also commits the Council to helping Oxford meet its housing needs, as required by Government policy. They are now undertaking a 'Partial Review' of their Local Plan. The Partial Review will focus specifically on how to accommodate additional housing and associated infrastructure in the Cherwell District in order to help meet Oxford's needs.
4. **The Timetable for the Plan.** We concluded that there were too many areas and some should be grouped together and addressed by working parties rather than by full committee. Each working party would have a leader and be open to any member of the Steering Committee. Also, we should advertise the existence of these working parties to local residents, especially those with relevant experience, to encourage them to contribute and showing our continued involvement of the community. Subjects to be addressed in turn. The working parties identified would be: **Built Environment:** JB. Draft policies to be presented by end of March. JB set up several meetings over following weeks and agreed them with members. **Green Spaces and Biodiversity:** MB. Draft policies to be presented by end of April. **Heritage:** GJ. He has been working on this and we need to gather the rest of the material other than the Godstow Abbey project. It will interconnect with the two working parties above. **Local Retail, Employment and Business:** Not yet been given much

attention, but as the plan will have to last beyond development of the Northern Gateway it is important we do so now. It was suggested at the AGM that these ideas be presented at public Drop-In sessions. MB asked if the people who left email addresses should be contacted for specific comments. It was thought that information put on the website should be sufficient. They can then make contact if they have anything more to say. GJ said that he was in contact with Mary Kinnear of Mere Road and was happy to do on-site work with her. Education would become an issue once there are houses at the Mill site and the Northern Gateway.

5. **Proposal from the Director of Oxfordshire Community Land Trust.** This informed us that a number of different groups have an interest in combining efforts and resources to make a credible bid possibly for the whole of the Paper Mill site. Our view was requested. CH JB and MB met with representatives from this group. Many features of the proposal coincided with the known views of local residents but we did not have a mandate to give the proposal formal support. CLT and Oxford Cohousing are not-for-profit organisations whereas developers would need to make a profit of 20-25%. We support the principles of affordable housing, keeping down car ownership and lower volume of traffic. There should be a variety of accommodation and total units of *accommodation* should be counted not units of *housing*. We are interested in and support the advantages of this type of development and need to know the success and failures of past projects to see if this is a viable project. GJ asked when the site is likely to go up for sale. CH to ask for more information.
6. **Godstow Abbey** – already covered.
7. **Meeting with Savills.** We need to be clear what is to be said when we meet the architect and see the overall plan. It is felt that the site is currently unsuitable for 500 houses because of the traffic, flooding and pollution issues. The infrastructure needs to be in place before any building starts and we need to be convinced of the suitability of the location for a school.
8. Cherwell Council invited us, plus Summertown and St Margaret's, to meet officers on Wednesday 2nd March at 3.00 pm at the City Council offices regarding their revision of their local plan. CH, DS, JF, JB, and GJ agreed to attend.
9. **Commenting on planning applications** other than large developments. Bob Colenutt has said that Summertown are considering this. JF said that WNF has no mandate to do this. CH asked where did the line for comments fall. GJ said we should comment on large and significant plans such as the Old School House which impacts on heritage and location. The application for 105 Godstow Road was not commented on but it was felt that we could have flagged up concerns on the website. There was a question of whether it was in the Conservation Area. It was agreed that we should be cautious about commenting on planning applications, which is more in the domain of the Wolvercote Commoners' Committee, and concentrate on the Neighbourhood Plan.
10. **Wolvercote and Wytham Midsummer Festival.** Saturday 18th June on Goose Green. It was decided that we should have a stall (although some members would be there on other groups' stalls) to display all the newly completed policies.
11. **Treasurer's Report.** There was no report as RL-W was not present.
12. **Any Other Business.** JF reported that WNF has been recognised as a qualifying area for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). She will supply more information as soon as it becomes available. GJ said that Jordan Hill is of no interest at the moment for housing in that area.
13. **Date of the next meeting.** Wednesday 6th April. Venue tbc.