



WOLVERCOTE NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM STEERING COMMITTEE

**Meeting on Friday 22 October 2021: White Hart
7.30 pm**

Apologies were received from Cllr Andrew Gant; Katherine Kaye; Steve Roberts.

Present: J. Bleach; M. Brown; P. Buckley; T. Dale; C. Hardman; R. Lawrence-Wilson; D. Stone.

Non – voting members: Cllr S. Goddard; Cllr E. Wade.

The Committee thanked Steve Roberts and John Bleach for organising the application process. Steve Roberts was also thanked for his work on the canal steps proposal.

The meeting discussed in detail the proposals from local residents for recommending expenditure from the Community Infrastructure Levy (Round 1: Sept. 2021) and the comments on the proposals received from local residents.

In accordance with the Regulations, recommendations supported by the WNF have to be made to the City Council by local City Councillors, because CIL is public money. Recommendations do not necessarily result in the approval of expenditure, nor is there any timetable for the availability of approved funds.

Applicants, especially those whose projects cannot at this stage be recommended, may well want, and benefit from, feedback. Feedback can be arranged from an appropriate member of the Committee by emailing the chair of the WNF (cbhardman@virginmedia.com).

The decisions and recommendations set out below are the unanimous decisions of the Steering Committee at the meeting on 22 October 2021.

1. Canal Steps.

In view of the repairs by the landowner, WNF assumes this application is withdrawn.

2. Cutteslowe Park Woodland Trail.

Recommended. This project meets all the necessary conditions. All that is needed is an assurance in writing from either Oxford City Council or FoCSP that the information board (the vandal-proof board) will be maintained in future either by the City Council or by FoCSP.

3. Five Mile Drive notice board.

Recommended. This is recommended, subject to planning permission and the written agreement of the landowner, if the board is on the corner of Five Mile Drive and Linkside. A written statement of the organisation responsible for the board is required. There are two quotations from ODS and clarity is required as to which is proposed.

4. John Rowland's portrait and clock.

Recommended. This application is recommended subject to a written confirmation from the applicant that the items will be placed securely on public display at a specified location. The estimate for the restoration of the clock was based on photographs so is only indicative. The recommendation is limited to the amount in the proposal.

5. Tree Planting on Nixey's Field.

Recommended. This application is recommended subject to the written assurance from the landowners, Cala Homes, that they approve of the project, and to justification of the choice of a non-local tree-guard supplier.

6. The White Hart furniture.

Recommended. This application is recommended subject to a written assurance that all the tables would be stored, maintained and insured by the White Hart, and available at no cost to the market and other community groups when requested. There was concern that the non-folding pub tables might impede activities in the garden. Assurance in writing and a plan to demonstrate that this is not the case is required

7. Lower Wolvercote Playground Improvements.

Not Recommended. This application cannot be recommended at this stage because it does not provide sufficient information about the equipment proposed, where equipment might be sited and the cost. It does not provide a written assurance that it has the support of Oxford City Council that would need to approve and maintain the equipment. It was agreed that there is a pressing need for improvements to the Lower Wolvercote playground and indeed for a review of all facilities for children and young people, especially with the new housing on Wolvercote Mill. A more detailed proposal is needed.

8. Davenant Road traffic calming proposal.

Not Recommended.

This application cannot be recommended at this stage because (1) the amount of funding required is unclear and could exceed £10k; (2) the proposal has not yet received TRO approval from the Highway Authority (Oxfordshire County Council). The excellent application should form the basis for an application when the approvals and the amount of funding are clear.

9. Blandford Avenue area traffic calming proposal.

Not Recommended.

This application cannot be recommended at this stage because (1) the amount of funding required is unclear and could exceed £10k; (2) the proposal has not yet received TRO approval from the Highway Authority (Oxfordshire County Council). The excellent application should form the basis for an application when the approvals and the amount of funding are clear.

10. Harbord Road traffic survey.

Not Recommended. This application cannot be recommended because it does not fulfil the requirement that CIL funding is to provide infrastructure to benefit the community. See para 7 of the WNF Guidance Notes: 'Funds can only be used for capital expenditure'. However, the Committee recognises that there is a real problem that is likely to get worse when events are approved in the Park. It urges the Council to address the issue.

11. Defibrillator for Five Mile Drive, Lakeside, Linkside.

Not Recommended. This application is not recommended because it does not fulfil the requirement for consultation with the community, and, in particular, there is no support provided from medical opinion. It also fails to justify the provision of a telephone box, at considerable cost, to house a defibrillator and there is no evidence of approval from the Highways Authority to place a telephone box on land for which it is responsible.

12. A 34 traffic sound survey.

Not Recommended. This application cannot be recommended because it does not fulfil the requirement that CIL funding is to provide infrastructure to benefit the community. There is no assurance that the proposed survey would lead to noise-abating infrastructure to benefit the Wolvercote Community. See para 7 of the WNF Guidance Notes: 'Funds can only be used for capital expenditure'.

However, there is no doubt that the neighbourhood is badly affected by noise pollution from the A34 and there is overwhelming support for measures to reduce its effect. Everything must be done to support the achievement of this objective. We are looking at the noise modelling for this area and know that Oxford is one of the worst places in the country. Nevertheless, DEFRA and the Highway Agency have stated that they will not accept any surveys but their own as evidence and they say that their most recent survey indicates that there is no need for attenuation measures. We are pursuing this with our MP and local Council members, all of whom are supportive and we continue to develop our understanding of the modelling.

Even though CIL money cannot be used, as explained, there is a small possibility that a survey might be accepted to influence the Highways Authority in undertaking another survey themselves and so we naturally support a local survey. We will also try to engage the support of CALA Homes and Oxford North whose developments will be seriously affected by noise from the A34. We will also try to support interim measures, such as extending the speed restriction on the A34, which could satisfy the conditions for a future CIL proposal.