

**Wolston Neighbourhood Plan  
Minutes of Steering Group meeting 26<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

NUM		Action
<b>Open Forum</b>	No matters were raised by members of the public. Clare Malyon commented that she had been handed a petition from Lammas Court residents requesting Local Green Space designation for a small area at the end of Lammas Court. A notice was given about a farm walk on Richard Postlethwaite's farm, 4.30pm on Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> April, to see wildflowers and trees. Please contact Caroline Payne to book for this.	
<b>18.49</b>	<p><b>Apologies and acceptance of reasons for absence:</b> Apologies were received from Tracie Ball, Caroline Payne, Roger Ingles (SG) (post-operative rest) and Jessica Ramsay.</p> <p><b>Present:</b> Jock Rainey (SG chair), Lesley Blay (SG), John Church (SG), Sonya Cross (SG), Wendy Gilsean (SG), Clare Malyon (SG), Dave Smith (SG), Graham Tyler (SG), Laurie Wright (SG), Tim Willis (SG) (project manager), Linda Barratt, Bob Grainger, Tim Harvey-Smith, Alan Hawker, Michael Horswill, Paul Jennings, Kevin Payne, Debbie Pritchard, Denise Taylor, Gillian Waddilove.</p>	
<b>18.50</b>	<b>Declarations of interest in items on the agenda</b> – None were made.	
<b>18.51</b>	<b>Minutes of the last meeting</b> of the Steering Group held 26 <sup>th</sup> February 2019 were circulated: it was proposed by LW, seconded by Bob Grainger and agreed unanimously that this was a true record, and signed.	
<b>18.52</b>	<p><b>Progress against the Project Plan:</b> JR ceded the chair to CM, vice-chair. TW, Project Manager, gave brief details of the deadlines the NDP team is working to, and asked working group leads to give brief updates.</p> <p><b>Housing:</b> RG: Local Call for Sites: RG reported work in the month had included developing Vision and Objectives statements, and the Local Call for Sites. A pleasing number of responses were received which will be examined by Neil Pearce of Avon Planning Services, and assessments carried out. This should be completed by the end of April.</p> <p><b>Economy &amp; Infrastructure:</b> DS thanked all those who had helped distribute the Business Survey. Around 30 responses had been received, which is a usual response rate, and work on analysing responses should be completed by 8<sup>th</sup> April.</p> <p><b>Built and Natural Environment:</b> CM reported there is plenty of interest in helping with character assessments, and the work is ongoing. A competition will be opened on the Facebook page shortly, asking for pictures of favourite views and aspects of the village. Interest in the wildlife and trees continues to grow. There is ongoing work on logging significant trees in the NDP area, and recording wildlife sightings.</p> <p>TW concluded by stating that the team is on target to produce a draft plan by the summer, for consultation.</p>	
<b>18.53</b>	<b>Visit from RBC Senior Planner Development Strategy Team</b> , Sophie Leaning & colleague Martin Needham. SL introduced herself and her role in supporting Neighbourhood Plan development in the Rugby Borough Council area. She gave a little of the history of NDPs, including a comparison of Parish Plans with NDPs : a Parish Plan was advisory, whereas a NDP is binding on the local planning authority. SL brought copies of several useful documents for attendees to take away, including the Locality Roadmap guide to creating a Neighbourhood Plan and some made plans	

for villages around the region.

In the RBC area, one plan is 'made' so far, Coton Forward; another 10 or so are in various stages of development.

It is important to have a timetable and to work to it; there are processes that must be followed; SL gave examples a) RBC has to do a Strategic Environmental Assessment for our Plan, and the consultation period for that is 3 weeks; and b) the consultation period for a Draft NDP is 6 weeks. SL was satisfied that our Project Timetable contains all the necessary steps, and Wolston NDP team is making good progress with the work.

Any NDP must follow the RBC Local Plan; the planning inspector's final report on the amended RBC Local Plan is due shortly, so will not cause any delay in our draft. Two parishes, Willoughby and Ryton, are awaiting the report to confirm that their draft NDP conforms to the Local Plan.

SL raised the issue of Data Protection, and assumes correct procedures are followed by the Wolston NDP team.

SL liked what she heard about the organisation of the NDP team and the separation of areas of work.

SL responded to a query about the longevity of NDPs – although these are written for 10 – 15 years forward, in 5 years from adoption the RBC Local Plan will be reviewed; if an NDP is more than 2 years from a review, then a planning application challenging it would be viewed differently than if the NDP had been reviewed within the past 2 years. Therefore the recommended review period is 2 years; it is expected that the Parish Council will arrange for the review, which will be carried out against a checklist provided by SL's team at RBC.

Question: how will RBC assist PCs in facing possibly unwanted applications for development? RBC will be robust in supporting the NDP, and in encouraging the PC to keep the NDP under review.

Question: how has the removal of the Lodge Farm proposal from the RBC Local Plan affected the 5-year supply of land for development in Rugby? Due to changes in national planning policy, and the fact that Lodge Farm would have only contributed in a small way in that time frame, the RBC 5-year land supply is sufficient and that is confirmed in a letter from the Inspector.

Question: you are officers of RBC, we are lay-people; how is review to be handled by a voluntary group? JR responded that we discussed early in our process that review must be regular and be the responsibility of the PC. SL added that part of her role is to support Neighbourhood Development Planning throughout the Borough, and support of the review process is included in that.

Question: what of what we are doing can be improved to keep us on track? SL – at the moment, nothing; Wolston NDP team seems to be progressing very well. If we are concerned, then consult her & her colleagues. An example - Brinklow have recently gained some work from a consultant through Locality, on local design of housing, rather than grant money to carry out that work.

LW welcomed the opportunity for self-build plots, which SL had mentioned. Martin Needham elaborated – the government introduced a self-build and custom-build act in 2015. RBC is stuck, because they don't have plots available, though it does keep a register of people who want to self-build, and a form can be completed online to

join this list. That helps RBC to assess demand. From the floor – how many self-build plots have been approved? None as yet.

One way to satisfy some self-build demand is to include in developments. There is some demand in the village – how can we include this in the NDP? Martin Horswill said that Stratford DC send a list of individual plots having planning permission that are not yet built.

JR asked about level of turn-out for referenda – he feels we need to be building interest from early on to get the Plan through.

John Church asked about the proposed development on the North side of the allotments – SL said that swathe of land is defined as Open Space in the Rugby LP, so as soon as the LP is passed, that will give additional protection.

RG – aware of the process of the LP being reviewed every 5 years, and NDPs the same; if we review in 2 years and want changes, what does that involve? SL – if not major, can be agreed between PC and RBC.

**18.54**

**Vision and Objectives:** CM introduced the paper circulated with draft Vision and Objectives, and read them out. LW queried where transport fits into the Vision and Objectives. TW responded that Transport can be the subject of aspirations in the NDP, not of policies.

With no further queries or amendments, JR proposed and JC seconded that the Vision and Objectives be accepted for the Plan. 9 SG members voted for, none voted against, so the motion was carried.

**18.55**

**Any Other Business:**

There was a query about the use of the woodland between the river and Manor Estate – CM responded that we are trying to get this listed as an asset of community value. It is too large to be designated Local Green Space. There is a lot of information about the historical use of the wood, and there are protected species of plants in there too.

The meeting closed at 8pm.

**Next meetings:** CG 16<sup>th</sup> April, 7pm, Parish Council office at the Baptist Church.  
SG 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019, 7pm at the St Margaret's Church Rooms.

**Response from Sophie Leaning**, Senior Planner, RBC with further information:

Good Afternoon Bob,

Many thanks for your email. We were really pleased to be there and hope everyone felt that we were able to answer their questions to their satisfaction. If there are any follow up queries or anything we missed please feel free to send over any further questions.

There were two points that I am aware of that we said we would come back on and I have provided responses to these below:

- In terms of the allotment site, having spoken with colleagues in Development Management I understand that the potential developer has had discussions with people who have allotments on the site about their plans to submit an application. We haven't received any application here as yet. Although I can't make any comments on this specific case I can say that in order for an allotment site which is designated as open space to be built on they would need to meet national policy on open space, which requires them to prove that either the site is surplus to requirements or for them to find a suitable alternative site. There is scope for this alternative site to be within the Green Belt as national policy allows this. Any application would still have to be acceptable against all other policies and issues such as highways impact and school places would be considered.
- Secondly I promised some information on success rates at Neighbourhood Plan referendum. All the material around Neighbourhood Plans, particularly that from Locality advocates engaging the community as early as possible to so awareness of the plan and the work going into it is widespread and people feel involved. I would certainly reiterate that Wolston are doing this very well so far. The numbers turning up to the Steering group meeting are testament to this. There have only been three neighbourhood plans nationally where a no vote was the outcome of the referendum. Over 500 have gone to referendum which will help to put this into perspective. Each of these three no votes were attributed to different reasons; one proposed very large scale housing development, one was recommended for refusal by the examiner and one was produced very separately from the community who only found out when poll cards were posted through doors. All being well none of these will apply to Wolston.

Just as an update for you, Martin has secured himself the role of Senior Planner while I am off on maternity leave and so, as discussed, he will remain your main contact for Neighbourhood Plans from mid-May this year.

Kind regards,

Sophie