

MARKET LAVINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2 — STEERING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE – As approved at Parish Council Meeting 15/10/24 (Minute number 24/25-99ii)

Market Lavington Parish Council is the qualifying body for the preparation and subsequent review of a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the civil parish. The current Neighbourhood Development Plan was “made” (assumed legal status in planning terms) in May 2021.

In May 2024, the Parish Council agreed to conduct a formal Review of the Plan. The Council has formed and delegated authority for the Review to a Steering Group. The Group has subsequently determined that this should be Market Lavington Neighbourhood Plan 2 (MLNP2), given the volume of new housing for which land will need to be allocated and other anticipated material changes.

The Steering Group will be responsible for guiding, preparing and agreeing the content of the Plan and all associated evidence and analysis through the requisite processes, including to consultation, independent examination and referendum as required by law. The Group is a sub-committee of Market Lavington Parish Council.

MLNP2 will be delivered as a short, clear, easily read and understood document that the whole community can relate to with distinct policy statements, proposals, constraints and opportunities.

VISION:

To provide a planning framework and policies that will stimulate appropriate and sustainable development for the community, especially for both young families and older residents, and to enhance the community facilities, local economy and services while also celebrating and upholding the village’s heritage and its countryside environment.

OBJECTIVES:

- **To ensure that the Plan upholds and strengthens core community values and aspirations.**
- **To provide representative input as to the appropriateness of sites identified for development, taking into account the current village fabric and boundaries.**
- **To prepare proposals and action plans that support the economic development of the parish through development of business, commercial opportunities and employment.**
- **To promote ideas for the improvement of transport and communications serving the village including bus services, community and school transport, access to rail services, speed regulation and parking provision.**
- **To review existing policies, and make proposals, to conserve and enhance the environment of the village and Parish countryside – including biodiversity, landscaping, access to open spaces, footpaths, quality of watercourses and the encouragement of green infrastructure and initiatives.**

1. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide a locally accountable and representative lead for plan-making, accountable to the Parish Council while acting as a focal point for MLNP2 for those living and/or working in the Parish.
- Prepare and agree a project plan with timetable, together with a communication, consultation and engagement strategy, including website.
- Agree the initial scope of the Plan prior to early public engagement.
- Confirm, subject to consultation with the Parish Council, the scope of the Plan following analysis of early and subsequent community engagement.
- Gather the views and opinions of as many individuals, groups and organisations across the community as necessary to meet requirements for consultation and engagement.

- Undertake analysis and evidence-gathering as required, from a wide range of sources to ensure that the conclusions reached are fully evidenced and that the aspirations and issues of all residents are understood.
- Identify and apply for sources of funding and support.
- Liaise with relevant authorities/organisations to enable delivery of the Plan as required.
- Work positively with Wiltshire Council, as the Planning Authority, to ensure the Plan is in conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted development plan.
- Agree, subject to ratification by Market Lavington Parish Council, a final submission version of MLNP2.

2. MEMBERSHIP

- The Steering Group should include a cross-section of volunteers including parish councillors, local residents, representatives of local community organisations and local business owners.
- The Steering Group will elect a Chair and Vice Chair from its membership to remain in those positions until the project is completed. If either position should become vacant, the Group will elect an alternate. The election of a Chair will require ratification by the Parish Council.
- Membership of the Steering Group will be open to the public indefinitely, up to a maximum of 12.
- Members will be expected to agree to and uphold these Terms of Reference, with particular regard to any conflict of interest (see 7 below).

3. DECISION-MAKING

- The Steering Group has full delegated authority from the Market Lavington Parish Council to deliver its plan-making functions up to and including publication of the Consultation Draft Plan. The Group will report monthly to the Council setting out progress on its work. The Group will require written approval from the Parish Council for submission of the draft MLNP2 prior to publication for consultation and independent examination.
- Decisions made by the Steering Group should normally be by consensus at Steering Group meetings. Where a vote is required, each member shall have one vote. A minimum of 60% of members shall be present where matters are presented for decisions to be taken. A simple majority vote will be required to support any motion. The Chairman shall have one casting vote.

4. MEETINGS

- Steering Group meetings will take place monthly or more often as required. Notice and associated papers will normally be dispatched to members seven days before the date of the meeting. Notice of meetings and agendas will be carried on the MLNP2 website.
- A Steering Group meeting will only take place if there are five or more members present.
- From 29 October 2024, all meetings will be open to the public, although some parts of meetings may be held in closed session for reasons of confidentiality. These sessions will be identified in advance in published agendas.
- A record of meetings and minutes will be circulated to Steering Group members and the Parish Council in a timely fashion and will be made publicly available on the Plan website.

5. WORKING GROUPS

- The Steering Group may establish working groups, made up of volunteers from the community to aid them in any Neighbourhood Plan related work.
- Each working group should have a lead person from the Steering Group.
- Members of the community will be encouraged to participate in the process at all stages.

6. FINANCIAL

- All grants and funding will be applied and held by the Parish Council, who will ring-fence the funds for Neighbourhood Plan work.
- The Steering Group will advise the Parish Council of any planned expenditure before it is committed to or incurred.
- Steering Group members and volunteers from any working groups may claim back any previously agreed expenditure incurred during any Neighbourhood Plan related work.

7. CONDUCT AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

- It is expected that all Steering Group members shall abide by the principles and practices of the Parish Council Code of Conduct including declarations of interest. A copy of the Parish Council Code of Conduct to be provided to all Steering Group members.
- Steering Group members should declare an interest where there is a potential financial or pecuniary benefit to themselves, their family and/or their company/organisation arising from the recommendations or decisions of the Group.
- Members of the Group are asked at all times to be cautious in conversations about the work of the Steering Group with colleagues, relations and friends, particularly in the use of social media. Some items discussed at meetings may need to be regarded as confidential – particularly in the early stages of the Group's work – and this will be flagged as appropriate.
- Members of the Steering Group will:
 - Be clear and open when their individual roles or interests are in conflict.
 - Treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or religion and belief.
 - Actively promote equality of access and opportunity.

8. DATA PROTECTION

Requirements of the Data Protection Act are to be met having regard to both the relationship with the Parish Council and also the need to provide Wiltshire Council with a list of consultees at the Submission stage of the process. It should be clear who is responsible for overall data control for the neighbourhood plan process.

9. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT/ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION REGULATIONS

Transparency in decision-making at all stages of the Plan is essential. Any material that is used (either positively or negatively) or collected to inform the neighbourhood plan (in particular consultation material) must be available for public inspection in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act/Environmental Information Regulations.

10. CHANGES TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

These Terms of Reference can be amended with the support of at least two thirds of the current membership of the Steering Group and with the approval of the Parish Council.

11. DISSOLUTION

- The Steering Group will be dissolved once its objective has been attained and/or when at least two thirds of its members and the Parish Council consider its services are no longer required.
- The Steering Group in conjunction with the Parish Council will then dispose of any remaining funds held in accordance with any conditions imposed by the grant funder and in the best interests of Market Lavington Parish.