

MARKET LAVINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2
STEERING GROUP MEETING 4 February 2025/002 – MINUTES

1. **PRESENT:** Gerald Milward-Oliver (GMO) - Chair, Jacky Macqueen (JMac) – Vice-Chair, Ian Macqueen (IM), Penny Shearcroft (PS), Duncan Poole (DP) – Market Lavington Parish Council, Chloe Stevens (CS) – Chair, Market Lavington Parish Council, Vaughan Thompson (VT) and Lisa Thompson (LT) - Place Studio – Planning Consultancy, and Carol Hackett (CH) - Clerk, Market Lavington Parish Council, secretarial support.

Twelve members of the public (one arrived at 7.01pm, two left at 8.45pm).

APOLOGIES: Tony Archer (TA), Jack Mason (JM), Trys Negus (TN), and Vicky Goddard (VG – apologies received after meeting).

GMO welcomed everyone to the meeting, including representatives from Place Studio, the newly appointed Planning Consultancy, who would be supporting the Steering Group and Parish Council with preparation of the new Neighbourhood Plan.

2. **Conflicts of Interest declared by those present**

Those members who had previously declared an interest confirmed that their interests remained the same: PS (owns SHELAA site 3627 off Drove Lane (5.5 acres).

3. **Minutes of Steering Group**

The minutes of the Steering Group meeting held on the 15th of January, having been previously circulated to members, were approved and signed as a correct record (CS abstained having not been present at the last meeting).

4. **Adjournment for Public Participation (1) – 7.02pm to 7.12pm**

Member of the public present made reference to the January Steering Group minutes, asking for clarification regarding the roles of Place Studio - consultancy and AECOM – for technical support, and questioned the due diligence of AECOM based on the site assessment report produced by them for the original Neighbourhood Plan. Reference was also made by the same member of the public to a letter they had sent to the Parish Council on the 28th of January regarding surveyors who had been in attendance in the Spin Hill / Canada Rise area. GMO noted that he had seen a copy of the letter, and if necessary he would take it up with anybody who might be involved. He also noted that details of the 'call for sites' process was remaining confidential for the time being. Another member of the public also raised concerns regarding the performance of AECOM and questioned when details of the 'call for sites' would be published. GMO referred to the timescales with regard to approval and actioning of Technical Support to carry out the formal 'Site Assessment' process which could take up to approx. 20 weeks. He noted that details of the sites would be published at the appropriate time, not least as a duty of care to landowners, and in order to protect the details of the sites put forward, until such times that the validity and suitability of the sites had been assessed. It was questioned whether there was a record of the number of SHELAA sites (Strategic, Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment). GMO noted that the last detailed report published by Wiltshire Council was in 2017, with a simplified updated map produced in April 2024. Wiltshire Council would be approached to provide updated information to the Parish Council. Another member of the public noted a 'duty of care' to residents with regards to information about the 'Call for sites' process, and a possible request under the 'Freedom of Information Act'. GMO noted his understanding of the comments raised and confirmed that he would seek guidance regarding this matter, and report back at the next meeting. It was noted that there would be public consultation with regards to any sites put forward.

5. Matters arising from Market Lavington Parish Council (MLPC) meeting on 21 January 2025:

1. Planning Consultancy – GMO reported that the Parish Council had approved the appointment of Place Studio as Planning consultancy to MLNP2.

- 5.2 Contact with Locality/Groundwork – GMO reported that the Parish Council had given their approval for the Clerk to contact Locality to seek approval for the change of consultants, and to apply for Technical Support (nil cost to Parish Council) to carry out the ‘Site Assessment Report’ a ‘Housing Needs Survey’ and for help with ‘Design Codes’. He noted that AECOM were the Locality appointed consultants, and the Parish Council therefore had no choice but to accept this, other than paying for a different consultant, which was not an option. He noted the importance of a third party carrying out the ‘Site Assessment’, however noted that the Steering Group / Parish Council would have the opportunity to check the factual details in the draft report and provide other background information prior to it being finalised. GMO referred to the letter presented by a member of the public at the last Steering Group meeting which raised concerns regarding the legality of the Steering Groups Terms of Reference and implications for the Parish Council’s Standing Orders. The letter was more properly addressed to the Parish Council, so was passed to them. The letter was acknowledged at the January Parish Council meeting and would be more fully considered at the February Parish Council meeting.

6. Any other business

There was none.

7. Adjournment for Public Participation (2)

There were no comments or questions from members of the public.

8. Date of next meeting/s

4th March 1st April, and 6th May.

9. PART TWO – WORKSHOP WITH PLACE STUDIO

GMO explained that future meetings would be in this same format, with administration matters first and then a ‘workshop’ after. Members of the public present would be welcome to listen to the workshop, but not actively participate in it. If there were any questions arising during the workshop from members of the public GMO invited them to raise their hands. He then handed over to Vaughan Thompson (VT) from Place Studio to address members and facilitate the workshop.

- a. Welcome – Vaughan (VT) introduced himself, Lisa and other members of the team working for Place Studio and explained their individual roles.
- b. Position re: budget & scope for work before 31st March – GMO noted that under the terms of the Locality funding already received by the Parish Council (£9,893.00), any unspent money at the 31st of March would need to be returned. There was no confirmation yet as to availability for future funding for 2025/26, and it was therefore unlikely that further funding could be applied for and obtained before July 2025.

VT referred to slide 1 below which provided information on the scope of work that Place Studio anticipated being able to complete before the 31st of March. Work had already begun on Task 2, with a review of the existing Plan to determine what elements of it were still up-to-date and relevant, and what elements needed updating, or improving etc. A key task for the Steering Group to undertake was the **first Community Engagement exercise, which had been scheduled to start on Saturday the 1st of March with an Open Day at the Community Hall and run throughout March with other activities.** Place Studio would play a significant role in actively supporting and

helping the Steering Group with the planning for this. With the proposed 'Site Assessment' report unlikely to be received until June/July, Place Studio would need to take a back-step on this until such time that further funding was approved. With the time restraints identified it was therefore acknowledged that it was likely that some of the Locality money already received by the Parish Council would need to be returned at the end of March.

GMO noted that if the funding process were to continue as it had in previous years, the Parish Council would be able to re-apply for the difference between the actual amount spent by 31/3/25 and £10,000. There could also be the opportunity to apply for an additional £8,000 due to the Plan allocating housing development sites.

JMac asked whether the review of the original Plan being undertaken by Place Studio would be ready by the 31st of March. VT confirmed that the initial draft desktop review of the Plan would be finished by the start of March in readiness for the Community Engagement events. The second part of the report will be produced following the first Community Engagement event, after which Place Studio can incorporate the community input regarding vision and objectives etc.

During the interim period from April to when any further grant is approved, VT noted that Place Studio would provide Tool Kits for the Steering Group to continue their work with the new draft Plan and were happy to provide advice on an informal basis.

VT encouraged members to start work on producing the new Plan during the interim period, thinking about the distinctiveness and specific features of the village, which would help personalise the Plan.

SLIDE 1; Table 1 Jan-April Tasks and Fee

Task Breakdown	Time (days)	Fee
Task 1 – Project Management		
Inc; Preparation for, and attendance at Steering Group Meetings (4)	2	£1,140
Task 2 – Reviewing the First Edition of the Neighbourhood Plan		
Undertake Desktop Work	1	£570
Facilitate Steering Group / Wiltshire Council Meetings	1	£570
Prepare Review Report & Project and Consultation Strategy	1.5	£855
Task 3 – Building the Review Evidence Base		
Assistance; Appointment of Technical Support	0.5	£285
Support Engagement 1 Planning Evidence Toolkits	2	£1140
Engagement 1 Materials Design (exc printing)	2	C£1140
Task 4 – Site Allocations		
Support; Initial Sites Assessment (Tech Support)	0.5	£285
Task 5 - Policy and Plan Development 1		
Support Overall Plan Support Overall Plan Update/Drafting (Lead by Steering Group)	0.5	£285
Sub Total; 2024-25	9	£5,130
With Engagement 1 Materials	11	£6,270
Expenses such as printing / travel		+£500

- c. Priorities over next two months – VT then referred to slide 2 below which provided information on the work that the Steering Group would be expected to undertake over the coming months. He noted that whilst the Community Engagement was due to take place during March, if after this period it was felt there were certain people in the community that had not had the opportunity to participate, informal consultation could continue through April to try and specifically engage with these harder to reach members of the community, to seek their comments and opinions.

SLIDE 2; Table 2 MLNP2 Jan-July Process

MLNDP; Review Process Planning Stage 1 Jan-April 25							
	January	February	March	April	May	Jun	July
TASK 1; Project Manage	SG	SG Engagement 1 Planning	SG Engagement 1 Launch	SG S1 report	SG	SG	SG New Grant?
TASK 2; St 1 Report				Scoping, V&Os			
Project and Engage Plan				Whole review			
Tech Support Apps	3x tech support	1.Sites, 2.Design 3.HNA	Potential Support Awards				Deliver
TASK 3;. Evidence Engage 1		Comms and Prep' for engage 1	SG to lead Potential to go into April	Collate feed into ST1 report			
Evidence Gathering				PS Toolkits			
TASK 4 Sites Assessment							Assess
TASK 5 Plan Drafting (Structure)		Resolve structure and style					
Plan Drafting Non-Policy Text			SG to lead non-policy text				

- d. Detailed discussion – VT took with opportunity to focus on the first Community Engagement exercise. He noted that this initial informal Community Engagement was important in building the community’s awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan review and getting the public engaged and talking about it. It was therefore vital for the Steering Group to actively publicise this in advance.

This Community Engagement should give people in the community the opportunity to have their say on the key issues for Market Lavington, what they think the village should be like by 2038, to inform the vision, and what some of the things are that can make that happen i.e. the aims and objectives. This information can then be used to start building the Plan.

The Community Engagement can also provide the opportunity to recruit new Steering Group members, or for people to offer their knowledge, or help with practical things.

In terms of the engagement itself the purpose is to inform the Plan with the key issues, some of which may already be in the current Plan, and can be refreshed, and others that will be new ones, or ones that now have a higher priority i.e. Climate Change and Design quality etc.

With regards to the ‘Vision’ for the new Plan, VT suggested that the Steering Group members review the ‘vision’, ‘issues’, and ‘objectives’ in the current Plan and start considering how the ‘vision’ could be improved on, highlighting what the ‘key issues’ could now be, and looking at the ‘aims and objectives’ for deliverables that could come forward to achieve this. This could then be made available during the Community Engagement and the community asked to consider, to add to, to criticize, and to have their say. The vision can then be changed, the range of issues can be added to, things that are priorities can be brought to the top, and the objectives can be refined or added to or even some of them taken away through the consultation process. This will help move the plan forward and get to the point where the Steering Group can start writing the policies etc.

VT then suggested some homework for the Steering Group members, and referred to a series of slides (example of one below) which provided a template for reviewing the ‘Vision Statement’,

‘Objectives’, and ‘Policies’ in the current Plan, broken down into five suggested topic areas (Development, Infrastructure & Housing / Community Facilities / Environment, historic, built, natural & green infrastructure / Economy, the village centre and tourism / Transportation). This exercise provides the opportunity to review the ‘vision’ and ‘objectives’, and to also think about whether the policies in the current plan, in terms of what they do, are actually doing the right things.

As an example - In this slide, the Vision Statement of the current plan has been dissected, detailing specific references to housing and infrastructure. Consideration then needs to be given as to what is out of date?, what is missing?, and what might be needed that is new?

VT noted that in his opinion, the gap with the current Neighbourhood Plan was that it doesn’t follow through into a set of policies, and the topics which are expressed in the Neighbourhood Plan’s vision and objectives don’t express themselves clearly in the structure of the Plan. He therefore suggested that it would be advantageous to think about the structure of the Plan and how it is going to look and feel and be able to be read, and to consider what those chapters and topics might be.

VT then referred to the Policies in the current Plan and suggested that there may be some gaps i.e. with regards to the identification and designation of local Heritage Assets.

VT noted that if the homework could be completed by mid-February then it would be feasible to transfer the work to the production of graphics that could be used at the Open Day event on the 1st of March.

SLIDE 3 X5 Table 3 Market Lavington Neighbourhood Plan
Review of Linking Vision, Objectives and Policies

MLNP1		
VISION STATEMENT	OBJECTIVES	POLICIES
1 Development, Infrastructure & Housing		
<p><i>Market Lavington will develop at a moderate rate consistent with its status in the Wiltshire Core Strategy as Local Service Centre yet retaining the friendly village character that many residents enjoy. Development will take place on sites of appropriate location and scale to ensure that existing infrastructure – especially transport – can cope.</i></p> <p>Housing will be provided for all sections of the community including one- and two-bedroom homes for those wanting to get on the housing ladder and 3-bedroom homes for growing families.</p>	<p>1. To provide the housing the community wants and needs in developments of moderate size in the locations it approves, in particular to meet the needs of first-time buyers and growing families.</p>	<p>Policy 1: Housing (General)</p> <p>Policy 2 Housing Site Allocations</p>
Out of date/Missing/New?		
<i>Climate change & sustainability</i>	<i>Climate change & sustainability</i>	<p><i>Development Boundary Review</i></p> <p><i>Site Allocation for Other Uses</i></p>

VT then referred to possible questions that could be asked during the first stage of engaging with the community, either via a questionnaire or at the Community Engagement event. He noted that asking some simple non-identifiable personal questions was also important i.e. with regards to age, relationship with village, and where live etc. A judgement can then be made as to how effective this engagement has been in obtaining information from a cross section of the community, and those who have a different relationship with Market Lavington. Any identifiable gaps in this i.e. employment information, or young people, can then lead to extra efforts being made to consult directly with those members of the community.

Question from member of the public – When the consultation is undertaken whose remit will it be to collate the information received? – GMO noted that the Steering Group will collate the

responses, and send to Place Studio, who will extract key findings etc. Details of responses and comments made form part of the formal 'Consultation Document' submitted alongside the Neighbourhood Plan.

There then followed further discussion between Steering Group members, with some input from members of the public, regarding preferred methods of communication and logistics of delivering and returning paper questionnaires, and use of on-line options etc.

Question from member of the public – Will the site allocations be disclosed before the questionnaire goes out? – GMO noted that the results from the 'Site Assessment' process, which will form the basis of which sites might be considered for allocation will not be available in time. When those sites have been identified they will be consulted on with the community.

GMO noted the hope that a draft Plan could be ready by the end of the year, however this would be dependent on a number of factors and statutory requirements. It was noted that the current Plan would remain in force until 2026, however it is in the best interest of the village to press forward with the support and engagement of the community to have a new Plan in place as soon as practically possible to prevent any unwanted development in the village.

VT referred back to the questionnaire and the suggested questions encouraging 'community contact'. This could be as simple as providing an email address to be kept updated on progress with the Neighbourhood Plan, or offering the opportunity to join the Steering Group, or offer other help.

VT confirmed that Place Studio would support the Steering Group with finalizing the content of the questionnaire.

JMac noted the need to ensure that the questionnaire is quick and easy to respond to, ideally with drop-down menus etc. alongside the opportunity for additional comments to be made. The opportunity for completing the questionnaire online will also be encouraged.

- e. Next steps and allocation of tasks – GMO confirmed that he would circulate the slides and presented information to all the Steering Group members, along with some dates and details of tasks to be completed in the next couple of weeks.
- f. Miscellaneous – No further matters.
- g. Conclusion – No further matters.

10. Closure of meeting

The meeting was closed at 8.53pm.