

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting held at Methodist Church Hall, Mortimer on Tuesday 17 June 2025 19:30

Attendees

Joanne Emberson-Wines – Meeting Chair (JW); Tennant Barber (TB); Graham Bridgman (GB); Bob Coe (BC); Neil Kiley (NK); Doug Overett (DO); Jayne Todd (JT); Sallyann Taylor (ST – Minute Taker)

1. Apologies

Nick Carter (NC); Mark Hillyer (MH); Clare Stafford (CS); Amanda Marsden (AM)

2. Declarations of Interest

None were reported.

3. Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of 20 May 2025 were agreed with no amendments.

4. NDP - Reserved Land

DO reported that we are still waiting on the planning application for the reserved land.

5. Neighbourhood plan

Policies

TB reported that of the 5 themes the Climate Change and Resilience, and Community Energy policy themes have been updated. Six criteria have been applied to the updates

1. Consideration of the AECOM EBPD suggestions and recommendations
2. Conformity with the WBC policies
3. The policies are additional to WBC policies
4. Policies are specific to the Mortimer situation
5. Focus on the critical 'musts'
6. Good evidence to support the policies.

If possible, the key elements will be discussed with WBC on Friday 20 June to get their first reactions. A good target would be to sign off these policies at the next SG in July.

JW reported that a thorough piece of work had been completed by TB and the policies read clearly. It was agreed by everyone at the meeting to proceed with the 2 policies prepared by TB.

The Environment theme policies are being reviewed by CS and MH. They are also reviewing the HNA report to identify the key statistics that should inform the design codes. One important element to check is the density and see whether we can include a different density than 30 dwellings per hectare (dp) in a rural area. (set by WBC)

Actions: CS, MH

A review of the design codes policies has yet to be completed.

No work has been done yet on the Highways or the Employment, Facilities and Services themes.

JW mentioned that the Highways one is quite an important one as it includes active travel and connectivity of the community to other services.

BC offered to review Highways.

TB will take a look at the Facilities and Services theme and see what we want to carry over.

For the Employment theme TB said we probably want to carry over from the current NDP that businesses should be concentrated in the centre of the village.

GB and JT to prepare a general style template for the policies.

DO mentioned that CS had offered to write the general text for the new NP. To confirm with CS.

TB explained the process once the policies are ready. First, we should take them to an informal community consultation. Then NPSG would run a formal regulation 14 consultation and then it goes to WBC for the final sign off and they run a regulation 16 consultation.

Actions: TB, BC, GB, JT

Facilities and Services – Internet connectivity

There was a discussion whether the new NP should strengthen the requirements for Broadband as Tower Gardens doesn't have gigabit broadband. This should be added to the Design codes.

The current NDP policy is:

IS1 Telecommunications

A superfast broadband strategy statement will be expected with all planning applications. The statement shall outline how the developer will provide a development which provides the maximum broadband speed currently feasible in Mortimer, show how predicted future speeds will be obtained and explains what discussion have taken place with the operators in advance of submitting a formal planning application

WBC LPR final states:

Policy DM41

Digital Infrastructure

The roll out and continued improvement of digital infrastructure serving all parts of the district will be supported. This includes full-fibre gigabit-capable broadband, 4G and 5G technologies.

Applicants will be required to actively demonstrate that they have considered gigabit-capable broadband and mobile connectivity within their proposals for new residential, employment, and retail developments. Adverse impacts on the successful functioning of existing digital infrastructure shall be avoided. Where this is not possible, appropriate mitigation shall be provided.

We should check that the reserved land, Windmill Court and Perrins farm satisfy these policies

Actions: SMPC Planning & Highways Committee

6. AOB

JW thanked TB for all his hard work.

JW, TB and BC are attending a meeting with West Berkshire Council on 20 June to discuss next steps and timeframes.

Actions: JW, TB, BC

Close

Meeting ended 21:15

Next meeting 15.07.2025 at 19:30 at Methodist Church Hall, Mortimer