

Present: Christopher Hardman (Chairman), John Bleach, Mary Brown, Cllr Jean Fooks, Angela Goff, Graham Jones, Richard Lawrence-Wilson David Stone, Jenny Attoe (Secretary).

Apologies: Cllr Steve Goddard

1. **Minutes of Meeting on Wednesday 24th February 2016** (previously circulated). It was requested that paragraphs be split up to make them easier to read. It was pointed out that this would increase the number of pages but it was agreed to trial this. Actions should also be more clearly indicated.
 - In 3. “Matters Arising” Cherwell Council should read “Cherwell *District* Council”. “They are now undertaking a ‘Partial Review’ of their Local Plan” was changed to read “They are now undertaking an *additional review* to help Oxford City Council with local planning”.
 - 7. No new school is planned so omit “and we need to be convinced of the suitability of the location for a school.”
 - 9. WNF has no mandate to do this. It was agreed, however, that we do have an obligation to comment where appropriate.

2. **Matters Arising.** Mid Summer Festival. Stall on the Green to display draft policies and seek comments . To be discussed in more detail at the next meeting plus other ideas for the stall. It will be shared with the Wolvercote Commoners’ Committee. JB reminded the committee that Mark Dean, a printer, was available to print papers and also maybe items for the Festival display. (See 10 below)

3. **Meeting with Savills on Friday 11th March.** Those who attended were impressed with the appointed architect. He did seem to be trying to answer concerns and will stay in touch. A letter, which had been delivered to every household in the affected area that day, stated that two companies: Thomas White Oxford Ltd and Pear Tree Oxford Ltd, both wholly owned by St John’s College with the same directors, are now responsible for managing the development of the Northern Gateway.

There is to be a public exhibition on Thursday 14th April and Saturday 16th April at Jury’s Inn. There is also a presentation to councillors and others on Monday 11th.

There is concern about the delay to the A40/A44 link road that is now not planned to be started until the summer of 2018. Nothing should be done until this road and the infrastructure is in place. Whatever road building takes place there should be no housing development in areas where pollution levels are dangerous to health.

The name “Northern Gateway” for the development is likely to be changed .

Social housing of 50% is normally required in developments by the City Council. The university may want this to be reviewed to provide accommodation for their own employees.

4. **Mill Site sale.** The site was due to go on sale from 4th April but the sale did not yet appear on the Savill’s website. *JB would inform Oxford Cohousing.*
5. **Meeting with Officers from Cherwell on 2nd March** concerning the review of their Local Plan. Although Bob Price wants to keep the “gap” between Oxford and Kidlington several sites are being examined. An urban extension north and south is seen by the City Council as the answer to Oxford’s

housing crisis. It was thought that WNF should comment to Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, Kidlington Parish Council, the press and on the website that we wished to preserve the gap to prevent urban sprawl and to keep the wildlife corridor. *CH to draft a letter.*

6. **Planning application for Old School, First Turn, Wolvercote.** It was felt that the new application was better than the last but it was still not good or in keeping with the building. The garage doors that are proposed were described as “hideous” and the canopy across the front is inappropriate and out of keeping with the building. There will be one ground floor and two upper floor flats. Approval of some sort is likely in the future so we should comment on the details and the materials to be used. It was felt that two separate statements were stronger than a joint comment with the Wolvercote Commoners’ Committee who will also comment.

7. **Godstow Abbey.** The launch date will be Saturday 21st May. GJ is in the process of sending out invitations to representatives from WNF, WCC, Wolvercote History Society, Wytham, OU Estates etc. There will be two talks, one on the history of the site and one on the conservation. These will be followed by a reception (for around 40) hosted by the Trout. RL-W questioned the bill for the information board; he had not yet received it. *GJ to chase this up.*

8. **Community engagement: Facebook, Media Communications.** It was thought that there should be a consistency of communications and that Facebook should be linked to the website. DS agreed to deal with this as he knows something about websites but there was a question of what is to be put on. Facebook also should be linked to issues on the website. AG said this would generate a conversation but it would need to be monitored as some content may require an answer. *JA offered to monitor the Facebook page* but would need support in what to put on or how to answer if questions were asked.

The Festival dates, our stall, that there would be people to talk to about the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum, all need to be highlighted on both the website and Facebook, as well as other things we are involved in: e.g. the Cherwell Local Plan and the letter from Thomas White Oxford (which it was thought might have been discarded by some as junk mail). There is an email list but it was not regularly used. *Members should be emailed to alert them to the website, Facebook and other issues.*

9. **Draft policies for plan – Built Environment.** JB had previously circulated his document. It was a substantial amount of work and would take some time to discuss in committee *therefore comments and other suggestions were to be sent by email to JB and copied to the Committee.* The character of streets was thought to be more Heritage rather than Built Environment. Davenant Road residents have already provided an assessment of the character of their street. Assessments of different streets are needed to find examples of differing characteristics to be preserved. GJ has someone who is willing to help with assessment surveys. These would give strength to objections to out-of-character developments. We will decide which roads are to be assessed. Harbord Road and Templar Road were suggested and a sub-committee will be needed to carry out the surveys possibly in June or July. The changing character of areas was exemplified where several houses or blocks of flats are built in place of large houses. This was a particular concern as was the extra traffic that would be generated. Item 10 (1) gives the full text of OCC’s Sites and Housing Policy HP9. It was noted that it was “quite impressive and detailed” which is fine but it needs to be rigorously enforced and monitored to make sure that it is being carried out. JB was thanked for the producing the document.

10. Green Spaces and Biodiversity – The timetable for developing this was provisionally set and an initial report expected at the May meeting.

11. Treasurer's Report. RL-W reported a total of £2630,20 (which included £500 from Cllr Steve Goddard) of which £1037 was ring-fenced for the Godstow Abbey project. CH has a list of organisations for potential funds and grants but needs help with making applications and filling in the forms. *RL-W said he had no experience in this but would assist.*

12. Any Other Business. None.

13. The Date of the Next Meeting. Wednesday 11th May at Rosamund Road (tbc)

The meeting was closed at 9.40 pm