

Neighbourhood Plan News Update – April 2015

The Steering Group has been hard at work on preparatory stages of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Draft visions and objectives and potential sites and site selection criteria were recommended to and agreed by the Parish Council on 17th March. At that stage just the sites around the centre of Longwick village shown by the Wycombe District Council Longwick Capacity Report of February 2015 were agreed for the consultation stage of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Initial engagement with the hamlets within the Parish was completed during March and April, as these settlements were not within the scope of the District Council's Capacity Study.

Questionnaires were distributed by contacts within each hamlet. Overall, 37 questionnaires were returned: 12 from Ilmer; 12 from Owlswick, 7 from Meadle and 6 from Little Meadle. No responses were received from Horsenden.

From those that responded, there was general agreement on infrastructure issues, such as traffic, drainage and flooding, power outages and broadband speed. Similarly, wildlife and landscape, and peace and tranquillity were important in all hamlets. The Conservation Areas were valued highly and respondents wished their characters to be preserved.

Regarding the potential for growth, responses varied as may be expected. However some respondents in Ilmer, Owlswick and Little Meadle were prepared to accept a small amount of new housing. In Meadle, residents wished to see only sympathetic conversions of existing buildings, and no new-build dwellings.

Further engagement will take place to establish whether there are any specific sites suitable for development, subject to the comments made already and assessments by Wycombe District Council.

In addition, meetings with 15 key interested 'Stakeholder' parties have been held with Steering Group members. These include Longwick Church of England Combined School, Longwick Pre-School, Scouts, Women's Institute, Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators, Tea at Three and 9 businesses in Longwick.

Responses from these meetings mirrored those comments received at the District Council's consultation in October last year: concerns on car parking, traffic and speeds, road junction and footway improvements, better cycling routes, public transport, flooding and drainage, importance of the Post Office and shop, retention of character including views from existing properties to the open countryside and Chiltern Hills, separation from Prince Risborough, preservation and protection of landscape and wildlife, development not to be approved at high density, electricity and broadband services improvements, school capacity and catchments, increased demand for doctors, dentists, affordable housing and mixture of housing types, and better recreation and sports facilities such as tennis, netball and basketball.

The new email account lciparishnp@gmail.com now has over 50 subscribers to the Consult Group. If you have not received this News Update by email directly, you can register your interest by request.

A new Neighbourhood Plan page on the Council's website: <http://www.longwickcumilmer.org.uk/> should be set up during May. Look out for this as it will hold an expanding list of documents and relevant material for the plan process. Notes of meetings will continue to be posted on the Longwick notice boards.

Councillors and Steering Group members will be available at a Parish Council stall at the Fete, 2nd May, on the Recreation Ground. You can ask questions and see maps of the existing planning policies and constraints for the Parish, and the Longwick potential development sites.

Drafting the Neighbourhood Plan itself is about to start. If all goes well, formal consultation should follow in June and July. The next few months will be a very important time. Once again, the Parish Council encourages you to get involved in this process, to help guide the development of our community.