WOLLASTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
STEERING GROUP MEETING
7.00pm, Monday 9th March 2026
Village Hall, Wollaston

Present: Cllr Steve Atkinson (Chair), Cllr John Mitchell, Cllr Mike Goldsmith, Cllr Lindsay Alvis, Cllr Naomi Farman, Cllr Paul Jones, Mr. Ian Johnson, Mrs. Sharon Toyer and Mr. Suzanne Grant (Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer for Wollaston Parish Council).

Apologies: Cllr Dan Gay, Cllr Greg Carter, Mr. Harvey Sansome.

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1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Carter, Cllr Gay and Mr. Harvey Sansome.

2. Matters arising from the previous minutes

None.

3. Declaration of Interests

None relating to business on the agenda. However, going forward as the process continues, various members will be required to declare their interests.

4. **Update from the ONH online seminar held on January 20th / Update on the new planning system**

Members noted that representatives of the Parish Council attended the ONH online seminar in January.

It was reported that the new Local Plan is not expected to be available until December 2028 and will cover the period up to 2045 (a 20-year plan). Members noted that the plan discussed at the NNC Executive reflects new Government planning processes.

Members were advised that rural villages may be targeted for development, as smaller schemes of 50–100 dwellings are generally delivered more quickly than larger urban developments of 500–1,000 dwellings.

The Call for Sites is expected to take place in May 2026. It was reported that approximately 40,000 homes will be required across North Northamptonshire, equating to around 2,005 homes per year.

Members noted that a five-year housing supply is a government requirement and that there is currently a shortfall of approximately 800 homes, meaning additional development will be required to meet this target. It was also noted that the development of flats can accommodate higher numbers of dwellings while using less land.

Members discussed the need for Wollaston Parish Council to progress work on its Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) and agreed that the Council must not become complacent. The

NHP was noted as a community-led project sponsored by the Parish Council, which provides the village with greater influence in planning matters.
It was agreed that the appointment of a Planning Consultant would be required to assist with the review of the NHP. While the cost is not yet known, Members noted that much of the groundwork for the existing plan has already been completed, and the work required will largely involve reviewing existing policies and updating them where necessary.
Members were provided with the names of potential consultants and agreed that their current Neighbourhood Plans in progress should be reviewed.
Members further noted that Wollaston's current NHP runs until 2031, but as the plan approaches its end date its influence in planning decisions may diminish.
It was also noted that Wollaston has already exceeded previous housing expectations, including the 18 additional dwellings at Summers Grange.

5. **Review of WNHP Policies/Statement of Modifications**
   Cllr Farman reported that she had run the current Neighbourhood Plan policies through AI software, which produced stronger and more up-to-date policy wording. It was agreed that Cllr Farman would run the entire NHP through AI and circulate the revised document to the Steering Committee as a starting point for review. This version would also include updated visuals and reflect the changes within Wollaston over the past 10 years. Cllr Atkinson reported that he had produced a three-year timeline to include meetings, policy reviews and the Call for Sites process.
   Call for Sites - Cllr Mitchell advised that in 2013 a letter had been sent to all landowners in Wollaston asking whether they wished their land to be considered for inclusion within the NHP. Members noted that North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) will be undertaking a Call for Sites in May 2026. It was agreed that the Parish Council would review the outcome of this exercise and consider undertaking its own follow-up Call for Sites if necessary. Members noted that submitted sites are assessed using a traffic light system, which is the same approach used by planning authorities when preparing the Local Plan. It was further noted that a Call for Sites exercise was also undertaken in 2022, which is available to view online. In Wollaston, two sites were submitted. Members also noted that the Duchy owns approximately 80% of the available land within Wollaston. Cllr Mitchell also referred to the resident questionnaire circulated in 2013, which received an approximate 20% response rate. Members agreed that it is important for the village community to be engaged in the process and to have a clear understanding of what the Neighbourhood Plan is seeking to achieve for Wollaston over the next 20 years.

6. **Date of next meeting**
   To be confirmed – May/June after the call for sites.

Signed …….. Date ……

DRAFT