



L&Q Estates - Northfield Minutes from Stakeholder Forum

List of attendees:

Dan Sames – Lecturer in Planning, Oxford Brookes University – Meeting Chair
Tim Moxham – Chelgate Local (Secretariat)
Mike Hardware – Chelgate Local (planning communications consultants)
Adrian Townsend – Garsington Parish Council
Beverley Oakley – Chair, Horspath Parish Council
Martin Harris – Planning Advisor to Horspath Parish Council
Claire Parker – Resident, Guyden’s Hamlet
Anthony Church – Blackbird Leys Parish Council
Sam James-Lawrie – Ward Councillor, Garsington and Horspath
Mark Luck – Stantec (planning consultants)
Robin Bennett - County Councillor, Berinsfield and Garsington
Chris Wright – Chair, Garsington Parish Council
Stuart Field – L&Q Estates (land promoter)
Ben Cook – Stantec (planning consultants)
Darren Mace - L&Q Estates (land promoter)

1. Chair and stakeholder introductions

The session commenced with introductions of the above attendees. There were apologies from Brasenose College (Philip Parker), and Oxford Preservation Trust, both of whom intend to attend the next meeting in February.

2. Review of the Terms of Reference

Wright – The terms of reference to include a statement on ‘solutions’ being provided to issues raised by Garsington [and other stakeholders].

Chair – While there ought to be a reference to solutions being implemented, *where possible*, it should not fall on the developers alone to come up with these solutions; other stakeholders should also contribute to resolving issues. To change the phrasing of Point 2: *Forum to propose solutions which will then be discussed and responded to*. This was agreed.



Bennett – How does this forum fit into the planning process? Will other authorities need to be consulted?

Hardware – The stakeholder forum will run alongside normal planning process. There will still be engagement and consultation with residents outside of this. Other authorities will be invited to talk at the forum and discuss specific issues.

Parker – Referred to the forum being our responsibility to making sure the future residents are happy. The onus is upon us to make the best of this development.

Chair – Agreeing to this, was insistent on collaboration between the stakeholders in order to achieve positive outcomes.

Townsend – Made reference to the Northfield Vision document produced by GPC in 2022. He has said he will distribute this as several stakeholders had not viewed the document. He also expressed his disagreement to Oxford YIMBY being invited, while CPRE had not been invited.

James-Lawrie – Also supported this and went further to express disagreement with Oxford City Councillors being invited to the Stakeholder Forum on the grounds that this did not concern them – being out of their jurisdiction. He also suggested that other bordering South Oxfordshire District Councillors should be invited if this is the case.

Moxham – Made the case that the invitation was sent out to the Oxford City Ward Councillors as they bordered Garsington Parish and the development site itself.

Field – Highlighted that engagement with Oxford City Council was required according to the STRAT12 which stipulates: *The masterplan must be prepared in collaboration and agreed with the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council.*

Chair – Suggested as a compromise to invite Oxford City Council Representatives, rather than specific ward councillors. An invitation should also be put out to CPRE to be invited to meetings. An invitation should also go out to Oxfordshire County Council Officers for Estates, and Planning. Chair further suggested that there should be a maximum of 2 absent meetings without apologies before the stakeholder is no longer invited. No disagreements.

Harris – In reference to points 5.2.2 and 5.2.3, requested a longer advancement for documents to be emailed to stakeholders – thereby giving everyone ample time to read through its content. Harris also asked at what point in the day we should hold the meeting, and how often the meetings will take place.



It was agreed that Minutes would be sent to all stakeholders within 4 weeks of the meeting. It was also agreed that the meetings will take place between 3-5pm on the selected day. As suggested by the Chair, information and documents would be circulated 10 working days in advance of the meeting.

Harris – Wanted to outline the definition of confidentiality as there were concerns [also noted by Townsend] that the meetings themselves could not be confidential as they are public representatives.

Chair – Suggested that the assumption is all information is free to pass on, *unless otherwise specified*.

3. Project overview

Field and Cook gave an overview of the project so far, sighting the PPA agreement with various stakeholders over Policy STRAT 12. There had been two meetings with SODC and OCC, first being to outline the format structure, the second being a visioning workshop. After engagement with the PPA parties, a draft masterplan will be created, and this will be discussed at the next stakeholder meeting. The intention is to submit the outline application in Q2/Q3 2024.

Bennett asked about the inclusion of the Create Streets Foundation. Field outlined the roll of create streets being a ‘critical friend’ to the project. They will consult on the project and make recommendations that may have gone amiss within the development. Parker asked whether the concerns and issues raised at the stakeholder forum would be passed on to create streets/ will they be invited to the stakeholder forum to hear the stakeholder concerns.

Luck further elaborated on Create Streets role in the site’s development, stating where the ethics are coming from. Luck said that Create Streets are critical and review a projects sustainability amongst other things. When Harris asked Luck when the master plan can be brought forward, Luck outlined that a lot more information is needed before a masterplan draft can be created.

It was proposed by Bennett and agreed amongst stakeholders that the next stakeholder forum will be interactive with the masterplan. Using tracing paper, stakeholders will input their recommendations and changes to the draft masterplan. It was also mentioned that the group Community First Oxfordshire should be invited as they have experience helping communities engage in the masterplan process.



4. Stakeholder discussion

In the discussion, each stakeholder was given up to two minutes each to raise their concerns and ideas about the Northfield development.

Townsend –

Townsend expressed a concern over the sewage and water supply, stating that documentation given to him by Thames Water says it won't be able to cope with an additional 1800 units. [This document has been requested to be circulated to all stakeholders].

Harris –

Harris raised the concern that close to the site is an area of scientific importance and there are many animals in the area that use the Northfield brook as an access point to other parts of the countryside.

For Horspath, biodiversity enhancement is essential along with flooding attenuation ponds along the brook to create a wildlife corridor.

Oakley –

Oakley expressed her concern about the site encroaching onto the buffer zone. She also mentioned a concern that OCC officers are inclined to have a 'car-free' site, but this will mean there will be a spill-over into neighbouring areas to park cars and significantly impact the surrounding villages. Oakley also stated that the house designs must be similar to each other. She also expressed that the site should not be like the recent Barton Development, that has drawn criticism from a wide pool of actors.

Parker –

Parker outlined several of her concerns about the development. First, the height of the buildings. There is concern that anything above 2 stories will overshadow the Gydens Farm Hamlet. Like Horspath, Parker also mentioned a desire to retain and increase the wildlife in the surrounding area, establishing a biodiversity net-gain. Parker also highlighted the desire for social housing to be integrated across the site, rather than in one concentrated area, and the site itself should be integrated within the Garsington community. Parker also mentioned a desire to see a footpath that goes all the way up to Garsington.



After the meeting, Parker emailed the Secretariat with an outline of all her concerns. This can be found attached to the document.

Church –

Church urged the development to keep Garsington Parish Council as a whole, and not let it get divided. Church also mentioned his disapproval of the Barton Park Development and reflected on some of the issues that had occurred during the development of Blackbird Leys. He also wanted to review the construction management plan for the project, given its heavy impact on the surrounding area.

Bennett –

Bennett also mentioned parking policy and the need to have discussions around this issue. Also spoke about possible parking zones. Bennett expressed an importance on landscaping, views from Garsington, and impact on wildlife and boundary corridors. Bennett also raised the idea of Stewardship/Community Stewardship. Other concerns mentioned were the phasing of housing and development as well as the sustainability of the housing.

Wright –

Wright referred to a letter outlining the issues raised by Garsington Parish Council previously. He ran over some of the main concerns. This included the impact of a three-form primary school on Garsington Primary School; they are concerned the school will be undermined. There is also a concern as driving through Garsington is the quickest route to the local hospital and, hypothetically, people living on the development will work at the hospital. This will increase the traffic flow through the village. Wright also mentioned a concern for high density housing, sewage and investment, and additional burdens on social clubs, burial grounds and local healthcare facilities.

After opening ideas and concerns:

A discussion took place about the traffic flow of Garsington which was described as ‘critical’. Following from this, Wright said he would be happy to provide the Garsington data on traffic flow. Another discussion was on the monetary contributions [Section 106]. Several stakeholders were disappointed that no money would be given to the local parish council as they could develop infrastructure and ease parish burdens. Cook pointed out that unfortunately, legally the monetary contribution will be to facilitate the future development. Nonetheless, discussion took place about considering what contributions could be made and how the stakeholders could help facilitate the community and surrounding area.



5. Closing remarks

At the next meeting, it is hoped that the draft masterplan will be available for discussion. This will likely take place in February. The attending stakeholders have also been invited to a virtual meeting in December/January to discuss the stewardship/legacy model. More details and information will follow. The minutes will be sent to all stakeholders, along with an updated version of the terms of reference, within four weeks of 8 November 2023.

Outstanding information required by Stakeholders:

- Northfield Vision document (to be provided by Adrian Townsend)
- Redacted pre-Planning Performance Agreement (to be provided by Stuart Field)
- Thames Water Garsington information (to be provided by Adrian Townsend)
- Garsington traffic flow information (to be provided by Chris Wright)

Meeting ended at 16:47.

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