

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting held at Methodist Church Hall, Mortimer on Tuesday 31 March 2026 19:30

Steering Group Attendees

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

1. Apologies

Neil Kiley (NK).

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the meetings held on 17 February 2026 were approved without amendment.

4. Neighbourhood Plan – Progress Update

- Before progressing to Regulation 14, consultation with the community is required regarding the Assets of Community Value list. The list should identify assets that the community may be willing to take on or manage. DO will prepare the list. It was suggested that consultation could be carried out via Facebook.

Actions: DO

5. Bell Cornwell – Progress Update

- BC has provided feedback on the West Berkshire Council (WBC) comments on our draft policies. BobC and TB agreed to review these, along with the previously circulated comments on the Design Codes supporting text.
- BC has advised that we need to provide evidence of Mortimer’s commercial centre. DO will prepare a map identifying Use Class E businesses around St John’s Church.
- TB and BobC will ask BC to prepare a statement for WBC explaining why a Strategic Development Assessment is not required for our Neighbourhood Plan. If WBC determines that one is necessary, it is expected to take approximately five weeks for WBC to complete the screening assessment. This assessment must be completed before progressing to Regulation 14.
- GB advised that the Neighbourhood Plan policy on building height should be reviewed carefully to avoid ambiguity. The Design Codes should clearly state that buildings may be two storeys, with a potential third storey only within the roofline for aesthetic reasons. TB and BobC will raise this with BC, particularly in relation to permitted development.
- BC will be asked to draft an objective for each policy.
- BC will prepare the final consolidated (“wrap-around”) version of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Actions: TB, BobC, DO

6. Regulation 14 tasks and timescale

BobC reported that the final draft should be ready in June for approval at the next SMPC Full Council meeting, enabling progression to Regulation 14

Actions: DO

7 AOB

There was a brief discussion about the latest update from Basingstoke and Deane regarding the Local Plan and the lack of water in the borough to support some of the proposed sites. Reference was made to South East Water; however, our understanding is that Thames Water is facing similar constraints.

Close

Meeting ended 20:50

Next meeting 21-04-2026 at 19:30 at Methodist Church Hall.