

HONEYBOURNE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW
Steering Group Meeting Minutes
Date: Tuesday, 28th April 2026
Time: 6:45pm
Venue: Honeybourne Village Hall (hybrid meeting)

Present:

Cllr Heath Jobs (Chair – Steering Group and Parish Council), Cllr J Mellor, Mr T Askew, Mr I Mellor, Mrs M Bent, Mr Martin Clark and Mr Stuart Nimmo

In attendance:

Mr Nick Pellegram (Andrea Pellegram Ltd – Planning Consultant) (Virtual)

Mrs Linda Stanton (Clerk) (Virtual)

Apologies for Absence:

Mrs Wendy Pickler

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received as noted above and accepted by the Steering Group.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Approval of Previous Minutes (25th February 2026)

Resolved: The minutes of the Steering Group meeting held on 25th February 2026 were approved as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters Arising – Outstanding Actions

The Steering Group noted the status of outstanding actions from the meeting of 25th February 2026:

- i)** Flood Prevention & Infrastructure – The Planning Consultant reported that he had reviewed local social media for reported flooding incidents. No significant flooding incidents had been identified. The item was noted.
- ii)** Employment Sites (Policy H14) – The Planning Consultant confirmed that he would review and assess the existing employment policies and update them accordingly. See item 8.
- iii)** Train Station Parking Survey – Mr T Askew reported that he had commenced the parking survey and intended to conduct observations on different days and at different times of day to provide a more representative picture. Mr Askew confirmed he would update the Steering Group at a future meeting.
- iv)** Updated Housing Needs Survey (2021 Census) – The Planning Consultant confirmed that he would set aside a day to work on the updated Housing Needs Survey using 2021 census and local house price data and would bring the findings back to a future meeting.
- v)** Mill Mound – The written summary and photographs prepared by Mr Martin Clark had been forwarded to the Planning Consultant. The Planning Consultant confirmed that he had not yet reviewed the material but would do so and report back.
- vi)** Locally Native Species and Hedgerows – The information provided by Mrs Wendy Pickler had been forwarded to the Planning Consultant. The Planning Consultant confirmed that he had sufficient information to progress both the tree and native species policy and the Mill Mound assessment and would update the Steering Group at the next meeting.

ACTIONS:

Planning Consultant to progress tree and native species policy and Mill Mound assessment and update the Steering Group at the next meeting.

Mr T Askew to continue the train station parking survey across different days and times and update the Steering Group at a future meeting.

Planning Consultant to complete the updated Housing Needs Survey using 2021 census and local house price data and report to a future meeting.

5. Direction of Travel – NPPF Alignment

The Steering Group noted that, following advice from the Planning Consultant, the Steering Group had previously recommended to the Parish Council that the Neighbourhood Plan Review be aligned with the updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024). The Parish Council resolved to approve this recommendation at its meeting on 10th February 2026. The Steering Group confirmed this remained the agreed direction of travel for all policy development.

6. Community Survey – Results Overview

The Planning Consultant presented an overview of the Honeybourne Community Survey results. The survey had been conducted between 9th and 31st March 2026, with physical copies distributed to every household via the Village News and an electronic survey also available. A total of 96 responses were received: 77 physical copies and 19 online.

The Planning Consultant clarified that the community survey was not a legal requirement of the neighbourhood plan process but had been carried out for information gathering purposes to inform policy development.

The Planning Consultant reported that he was very encouraged by the volume of responses received. He noted that, should a further survey be required in the future, consideration should be given to prioritising an online survey, as the manual analysis of hard copy returns is significantly more time-consuming.

A Steering Group member suggested that future surveys should also make use of banners around the village, as not all residents use Facebook or social media. The Clerk noted that the survey had been advertised in the village newsletter and on the Parish Council's noticeboards, in addition to the Parish Council website and social media channels.

The Steering Group noted the results overview.

7. Consultation Summary Report

The Planning Consultant presented the Engagement Report (Honeybourne Community Survey, Version 1, April 2026) and ran through the detailed results and findings. The report set out the responses to each survey question together with the policy implications arising from each.

The key findings presented were as follows:

- All existing Neighbourhood Plan objectives received overall community support and can be carried forward into the review. The most mixed responses related to promoting small homes, bungalows and affordable housing, and allocating sites for housing development.
- 67% of respondents supported the Neighbourhood Plan allocating housing sites, with a further 18% responding 'maybe'.
- The most supported housing types were bungalows and accessible homes, followed by 1–2 bed and 3-bed homes. There was very little support for 4+ bed homes.
- The strongest demand for a new facility was for a local medical facility or GP surgery.
- Parking at the railway station was the most frequently identified improvement needed to existing facilities, raised by 49 respondents.

- 55 respondents raised concerns about pedestrian safety, with vehicle speed the most common issue cited.
- The most valued views were those towards St Egwin’s Church and from Leys Park towards the Cotswold escarpment.
- Strong support was expressed for policies on trees, biodiversity and locally distinctive materials including Cotswold stone.
- Existing Local Green Spaces were broadly supported for re-designation.

The Steering Group received and noted the Engagement Report.

8. Employment Policy Review – Policy H14 (for information and noting)

The Steering Group noted the Employment Policy Review Note (Policy H14) prepared by the Clerk and submitted to the Planning Consultant and Chair in advance of the meeting. The note set out the current status of all six named H14 employment sites in the parish, changes to employment uses since adoption in 2020, and matters for the Planning Consultant’s consideration when revising the policy.

The Planning Consultant confirmed that he would review the current policy and update it accordingly. The Planning Consultant noted that under the revised policy, takeaway establishments would not be considered an appropriate employment use, as the NPPF does not support uses that are contrary to healthy lifestyles.

The item was noted for information.

9. Housing Site Allocations – Discussion

The Steering Group considered in detail whether the Neighbourhood Plan Review should include the allocation of housing sites, in light of the community survey results and the advice of the Planning Consultant.

Housing Need Position

The Planning Consultant explained that the current housing requirement of ‘zero’ for Honeybourne in the SWDPR was based on older housing figures predating the December 2024 NPPF and did not reflect the updated national method. A new local plan is expected to begin within the next year, creating a risk that a higher housing requirement could emerge before the Neighbourhood Plan is adopted.

The Planning Consultant advised that it would be important to allocate a sufficient number of sites to ensure the plan would meet housing needs for the duration of the plan period. Allocating too few homes risked the plan not fully meeting its housing need at adoption, which could affect the protection afforded by Paragraph 14 of the NPPF. The Planning Consultant noted that while a minimal allocation may technically trigger Paragraph 14 protection, in practice this is becoming a weaker form of protection, as decision-makers at appeal are increasingly testing whether a plan makes a meaningful contribution to housing need rather than simply meeting a technical threshold.

The Steering Group also noted that if the Parish Council decided not to include allocations at this stage, adding them later would constitute a material modification to the plan, requiring a full public consultation and a further referendum.

SHELAA Sites and the Principle of Allocating Sites Without Existing Permission

A Steering Group member raised the question of why the existing SHELAA sites could not simply be allocated. The Planning Consultant explained the key principle: sites with existing planning permission should not be allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan. The Steering Group discussed this in the context of a number of known sites, including the Bretforton Road site (which has outline planning permission for up to 24 dwellings, ref. W/25/01580/OUT) and a site on Stratford Road which also has outline planning permission.

The Planning Consultant set out two reasons why allocating sites with existing permission would be inadvisable. First, such sites risk being built out before the Neighbourhood Plan is adopted or shortly

after, which would leave the parish without a future supply of housing land for the duration of the plan period. Second, allocating a site that already has permission does not introduce new housing commitments beyond those already included in Wychavon's Five Year Housing Land Supply and therefore adds no meaningful weight to the plan.

The Steering Group agreed that the focus should be on identifying and allocating new sites without existing planning permission. This approach would give the plan greater weight and longevity and provide more robust protection against speculative development throughout the plan period. The Steering Group noted that a formal Call for Sites would be needed to identify suitable and deliverable sites for this purpose, given the constraints affecting the sites already assessed through the SHELAA process.

Examination Costs

A question was raised about who would meet the cost of the independent examination if the Parish Council proceeded with site allocations. The Clerk confirmed that Wychavon District Council would meet the full cost of the independent examination and the referendum. The Planning Consultant noted that he was uncertain whether the cost of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening reports would also be met by Wychavon.

Options Considered

The Planning Consultant set out three options for consideration:

Option 1 – Allocate a minimum number of sites. Technically, a single dwelling allocation could satisfy the test at paragraph 14 of the NPPF under the current SWDPR requirement. However, this does not reflect the new national method or national housing requirement and in practice provides increasingly limited protection, as decision-makers at appeal are testing whether plans make a meaningful contribution to housing need rather than simply meeting a technical threshold.

Option 2 – Proceed with a formal Call for Sites and allocate housing sites proactively. This would give the plan greater weight and longevity, reflect the clear community support for site allocations shown in the survey (67% in favour), and provide more robust protection against speculative development throughout the plan period.

Option 3 – Pause the review pending the new Wychavon Local Plan. The Planning Consultant did not recommend this option. A paused plan offers significantly reduced protection against speculative development, there is no certainty as to when Wychavon will publish a new Local Plan or housing requirement, and any grant funding already received would be repayable in full to Wychavon District Council if the review were paused or abandoned.

Following a lengthy discussion, the Steering Group resolved as follows:

Resolved: That the Steering Group recommends to Full Council that the Parish Council proceeds with housing site allocations as part of the Honeybourne Neighbourhood Plan Review 2026, and that the Planning Consultant be authorised to proceed with a formal Call for Sites process, the costs of which will be met from within the approved Neighbourhood Plan Review budget.

ACTIONS:

Clerk to prepare report to Full Council recommending Option 2 for the meeting of 12th May 2026.

Planning Consultant to prepare revised programme and timeline following Full Council approval and circulate to the Steering Group.

Planning Consultant to design and issue the formal Call for Sites, subject to Full Council approval.

Planning Consultant to seek informal steer from Wychavon District Council on the appropriate level of housing to plan for.

10. NDP Document Framework

The Planning Consultant presented the outline structure and policy framework for the Honeybourne Neighbourhood Plan Review document. The Steering Group noted that the proposed plan title would be the Honeybourne Neighbourhood Plan 2026–2041, with the plan period aligned to the end date of the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review.

The Planning Consultant explained that the plan would comprise three elements: a main document containing the planning policies and justification; appendix documents providing supporting material for specific policies; and evidence documents providing the legal and technical justification for the plan.

The proposed plan structure would include a foreword, an introduction and background section covering the parish setting, history, community facilities and planning context, a vision and objectives section drawing on the community survey results, and a planning policies section. The policies would be grouped under five themes as follows:

- Housing – housing mix and housing tenure policies.
- Design – policies for all development and for new development specifically, with reference to the local design SPD and conservation area appraisal.
- Infrastructure – policies protecting community facilities, local green spaces and railway station capacity.
- Travel – policies addressing public footpaths and cycle lanes.
- Environment – policies covering flooding, trees and hedges, valued landscapes (including views of St Egwin’s Church and from Leys Park), and agricultural development.

The framework also identified a number of additional policies to be confirmed, including housing allocations, speeding and pedestrian safety, bus services, and ecology and nature recovery. The plan would conclude with a monitoring and delivery section and a glossary.

The Steering Group noted and agreed the proposed framework as the basis for progressing the plan drafting.

11. Programme and Timeline

The Steering Group noted that the programme and timeline for the review would be directly dependent on the outcome of the Full Parish Council meeting on 12th May 2026. Subject to Full Council approving the recommendation to proceed with housing site allocations and a formal Call for Sites, work would commence on that process without delay. The Planning Consultant confirmed that a revised programme and timeline would be prepared and circulated to the Steering Group following Full Council approval, taking into account the document framework agreed under item 10.

ACTION: Planning Consultant to prepare and circulate a revised programme and timeline to the Steering Group following Full Council approval on 12th May 2026.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 2nd June 2026 at 6:45pm at Honeybourne Village Hall. The consultant and Clerk will attend virtually.

Meeting closed at 9:00pm

Background Papers: The following background papers were circulated to Steering Group members prior to the meeting:

- Appendix A: Minutes of the Steering Group Meeting, 25th February 2026
- Appendix B: Community Survey – Headline Results

- Appendix C: Engagement Report (Honeybourne Community Survey, Version 1, April 2026) and NDP Document Framework (Andrea Pellegram Ltd)
- Appendix D: Employment Policy Review Note – Policy H14 (April 2026)

Signed: *H M Jobs*
H M Jobs (Jun 6, 2026 14:21:51 GMT+1)
(Chair)

Date: 06/06/2026

Members of the Steering Group: Cllrs H Jobs (Chair), J Mellor, S Walsh, S Sidwell, Mr T Askew, Mr M Clark, Mrs M Bent, Mrs W Pickler, Mr S Nimmo and Mr I Mellor







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Final Audit Report

2026-06-06

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