**NORTH LUFFENHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**1. Background:**

1.1 North Luffenham Parish Council (NLPC) has resolved to produce a Neighbourhood Plan (The Plan) and has determined that The Plan shall cover the area of the North Luffenham Parish

1.2 NLPC, while retaining full responsibility for The Plan, recognises that the content of The Plan must be driven by the community and draw on skills and expertise from outside the Council.

1.3 A Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has been created to lead the project to successful completion.

**2. Name:**

2.1 The name of the group shall be the North Luffenham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG)

**3. Purpose:**

 The purpose of the NPSG is the preparation of The Plan and associated tasks leading to its adoption. In undertaking this, its further objectives will be to:

3.1 Consider the options and develop policies to inform the future development and use of land in the neighbourhood area

3.2 Be aware of the development areas identified in the Local Plan, including establishing of further development areas if they are required

3.3 Ensure The Plan is supported by an effective on-going programme of communication and consultation with the community, businesses, Rutland County Council District Council, developers, adjoining parishes and other key third parties

3.4 Identify sources of funding

3.5 Liaise with statutory and other relevant authorities and organisations to ensure The Plan is as comprehensive and inclusive as reasonably practical

3.6 Identify ways of involving the whole community and gather the views and opinions of as many groups and organisations in the community as reasonably practical

3.7 Determine the types of consultation and information gathering to be used

3.8 Be responsible for the analysis arising from such consultation and the production and distribution of the Plan and associated documents as appropriate

3.9 Liaise with, and direct the work of, consultants and specialists engaged to further The Plan as appropriate

3.10 Conform to national policies and Rutland County Council District Council’s Local Plan and with EU and Human Rights legislation

3.11 Report back regularly to NLPC on progress, significant issues and budgetary implications

3.12 Present key documents and the draft Plan for consultation with NLPC, local residents and businesses, Rutland County Council District Council and the Independent Examiner, and assist in arrangements for the Referendum

3.13 Present recommendations for the implementation of The Plan

**4. Membership and Conduct:**

4.1 The NPSG shall be formed from current North Luffenham Parish Councillors and local members of the community and shall include not fewer than 5 and up to 8 members (no more than 4 from the Parish Council in any capacity), to be ratified by NLPC. The Parish Clerk, or a representative from NLPC office, can be present in an ex-officio, non voting capacity at all meetings.

4.2 The NPSG may co-opt additional support to carry out specific tasks for as

short or long a period as necessary.

4.3 The NPSG will elect a Chair from the members present at the inaugural meeting.

**5. Supporting Officers and Administration:**

5.1 Administrative support for the group may involve appointing officers, as required, including a Secretary, which will be appointed by a simple majority of the NPSG.

**6. Meetings:**

6.1 The NPSG shall arrange its own meeting schedule and shall meet as required. At least 72 hours’ notice of a meeting will be given to members by email and such notice shall detail the matters to be discussed. Shorter notice for urgent matters may be given if agreed by a majority of members.

6.2 Matters requiring a vote shall be decided by a simple majority of votes of the NPSG members present. The Chair of the meeting has a casting vote.

6.3 The NPSG is quorate provided all of the following apply: a minimum of 3 members of which at least one must be a Parish Councillor and one must be a community member; the meeting has been properly convened.

6.4 The Secretary shall keep a record of meetings and circulate minutes to NPSG members and the Clerk of the NLPC not more than 7 days after each meeting. In the absence of a Secretary, the NPSG shall elect a member present to keep the record.

6.5 NPSG meetings and activities shall follow good practice. The NPSG may seek, and shall follow, the guidance of the Parish/Town Clerk in regard to any procedural matters.

6.6 The NPSG may form sub-committees

**7. Affiliations, Interests and Contributions:**

7.1 The NPSG shall not itself be affiliated to any political party. It is recognised that parish councillors and community members may have such affiliations which shall be declared where relevant.

7.2 The Localism Act and Parish Council's Code of Conduct will apply to all members of the NPSG. All members of the NPSG must declare any pecuniary interest that may be perceived as being relevant to a decision of the NLNSPG. This may include membership of an organisation, ownership of land or a business, or any other matter that may be considered to be relevant. Such declarations are to be recorded and publicly available. Having declared an interest, that member shall not take part in a discussion or vote on the related issue. In the event of disagreement, the decision of the Chair shall be binding.

7.3 Organisations and businesses may assist in the production of The Plan and may contribute to the cost of producing it. Details of any donations or assistance must be made publicly available and must not influence the recommendations of The Plan.

**8. Reporting and Communication:**

8.1 The NPSG is established having full-delegated authority from NLPC to deliver its plan-making functions up to and including publication of a Draft Plan (including preferred options). The Group will report to each meeting of NLPC setting out progress on its work. NLPC will approve the Draft Plan prior to publication for consultation and independent examination.

8.2 The plan-making process remains in the control of NLPC as the qualifying body. All publications, consultation and community engagement exercises will be undertaken by or on behalf of Parish Council with appropriate recognition of NLPC’s position given in all communications associated with the project.

**9. Freedom of Information and Access to Information:**

9.1 As an extension of NLPC, and in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (2000), the NPSG will make available to the public: minutes of meetings, policies and procedures, details of its organisation and structure and information on budget, expenditure and allowances.

9.2 Meetings will be informal and will usually be open to members of the public. However, formal minutes will be kept. It will be rare for meetings not to be open to members of the public and, when they are not so (for example when exempt information is discussed), an explanation will be given.

**10. Finance:**

10.1 The NPSG will apply for grant assistance with costs and submit a budget proposal to NLPC for support financing.

10.2 The NPSG shall not have its own bank account. NLPC shall be responsible for all budgetary matters, expenditure, monitoring and reporting.

10.3 All items of expenditure shall be referred to NLPC for approval and action.

**11. Changes to these Terms of Reference:**

11.1 Should any amendments be required to these Terms of Reference; the changes must be ratified by NLPC.

**12. Dissolution of the NPSG:**

12.1 The NPSG shall continue to operate for two years or until the adoption of The Plan, whichever is the sooner.

12.2 Upon dissolution of the NPSG, any remaining resources will be passed to Parish Council.