

Normanby by Spital and Owmbly by Spital Parish Joint Neighbourhood Development Plan (NOBSPlan) Steering Group Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

1.1 The main purpose of the NOBSPlan Steering Group is to oversee the preparation of the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for Normanby by Spital and Owmbly by Spital. The aim is for the plan to proceed through Independent Examination, gain community approval via referendum, and ultimately be adopted by West Lindsey District Council as planning policy.

1.2 The Steering Group will engage the local community to ensure the plan genuinely reflects the ambitions of both parishes. High levels of community engagement will be maintained throughout the plan-making process to secure widespread support.

2. Principles

2.1 The Steering Group will operate in a democratic, transparent, and fair manner, encouraging inclusive participation and giving equal weight to all community views.

2.2 All decisions will be fully evidenced and informed through meaningful consultation with the local community.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Steering Group will:

- Provide strategic direction for the Neighbourhood Plan;
- Produce, manage, and update a detailed project timetable;
- Develop and implement a public consultation and engagement strategy;
- Report regularly to the Parish Councils for endorsement of key decisions;
- Conduct evidence gathering and analysis to support the plan;
- Promote the NDP throughout its preparation;
- Identify and secure appropriate sources of funding;
- Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations for plan effectiveness;
- Ensure decisions and conclusions are evidence-based and reflective of all resident input;

- Conduct inclusive consultation to ensure that the draft and final versions of the NDP represent community views;
- Agree, subject to Parish Council ratification, the final submission version of the NDP.

4. Membership

4.1 The Steering Group will consist of up to 10 members, drawn from the community, including Parish Councillors. Every effort will be made to ensure representation from underrepresented groups.

4.2 Membership will remain open to eligible members of the public for the duration of the project.

5. Decision Making

5.1 The Steering Group is granted delegated authority by the Parish Councils to carry out its plan-making functions up to and including the publication of the Consultation Draft Plan. It will provide monthly updates to the Parish Councils.

5.2 The Parish Councils, as the qualifying bodies, will retain overall responsibility for the plan. They will approve the Submission Draft Plan before consultation and Independent Examination. All community engagement will be conducted on behalf of, or in partnership with, the Parish Councils and will clearly reflect their role.

6. Meetings

- Meetings will be held as needed, usually monthly.
- Future meeting dates will be published on the respective Parish websites.
- The Steering Group will elect a Chair and Secretary from its membership. Vacancies will be filled by election.
- The Secretary will record minutes, circulate them to members and Parish Councils, and ensure they are published online in a timely manner. Minutes will be shown as “DRAFT” until such a time as they can be approved.
- Members will receive at least seven clear days’ notice of meetings via email.
- Decisions will be made by consensus where possible. If a vote is required:
 - Each member present will have one vote;
 - A quorum will consist of 50% of members;
 - Decisions require a simple majority;
 - The Chair will hold a casting vote if necessary.

7. Working Groups

- The Steering Group may form working groups consisting of community members and stakeholders.
- Each working group will be led by a Steering Group member.
- The public will be encouraged to participate in all stages of the process.

8. Finance

- All funding and grants will be managed and held by the Lead Parish Council and ring-fenced for NDP use.
- Planned expenditure must be communicated to the Parish Councils in advance.
- Pre-approved expenses incurred by Steering Group or working group members will be reimbursed.

9. Conduct

All Steering Group members are expected to:

- Abide by the Parish Councils' Code of Conduct, including declaration of interests;
- Acknowledge individual accountability to their parent organisations, while recognising collective accountability to the wider community;
- Adhere to the following principles:
 - Declare any conflicts of interest clearly and promptly;
 - Treat all individuals with dignity, courtesy, and respect, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, belief, or sexual orientation;
 - Promote equality of access and opportunity at all times.

10. Amendments to the Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference may be amended with the approval of at least two-thirds of the current Steering Group and the approval of the Parish Councils.

11. Dissolution

11.1 The Steering Group will be dissolved when its objectives have been met or when two-thirds of its members and the Parish Councils determine that it is no longer required.

11.2 Any remaining funds will be used in accordance with the conditions set by funders and in the best interests of the parishes.