

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the

Lowlands Area Planning Sub-Committee

Held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB
at 2.00 pm on **Monday, 14 October 2024**

PRESENT

Councillors: Michael Brooker (Chair), Andy Goodwin (Vice-Chair), Joy Aitman, Julian Cooper, Rachel Crouch, Nick Leverton, David Melvin, Andrew Prosser, Sarah Veasey, Adrian Walsh, Alistair Wray and Stuart McCarroll.

Officers: Phil Shaw (Business Manager - Development Management) and James Nelson (Senior Planning Officer), Curtis Badley (Planning Officer) Andrew Brown (Business Manager, Democratic Services) and Anne Learmonth (Democratic Services Officer).

Other Councillors in attendance: None.

51 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Michele Mead, Andrew Lyon and Phil Godfrey.

Councillor Stuart McCarroll substituted for Councillor Andrew Lyon.

52 Declarations of Interest

19/00472/OUT Westbourne, Shilton.

Councillors Nick Leverton, Julian Cooper and David Melvin declared an interest due to knowing the applicant, Mr Handley who was a former Councillor at both District and Town councils. All Councillors agreed there were no pecuniary or prejudicial interests.

23/00028/FUL Little Willow, Oxford Road, Eynsham.

Councillor Julian Cooper declared an interest due to knowing Mr Chattoe, a former Deputy Chief Planning Officer. Councillor Cooper agreed there were no pecuniary interests.

24/00563/HHD and 24/00564/LBC The Laurels, Filkins Road.

Councillor Nick Leverton declared an interest due to knowing the applicant and agreed to leave the Chamber when the application was heard.

24/01101/FUL West Oxfordshire District Council Office, Woodgreen.

Councillor Julian Cooper declared an interest regarding a corporate declaration due to the property ownership by West Oxfordshire District Council.

Councillors Andrew Prosser and Rachel Crouch agreed to leave the Chamber due to their positions on Executive.

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24/01713/FUL and 24/01714/LBC The Old Courthouse, 28 Bridge Street, Witney.

Councillors Prosser and Crouch agreed to leave the Chamber due to their positions on Executive.

53 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Councillor Nick Leverton proposed that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 9 September 2024, be agreed by the Sub-Committee as a true and accurate record. This was seconded by Councillor Adrian Walsh, was put to the vote and was unanimously agreed by the Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

- I. Agree the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Monday 9 September 2024 as a true and accurate record

54 Applications for Development

55 19/00472/OUT Wsetbourne, Shilton

Phil Shaw, Business Manager for Planning and Sustainability, introduced the application with all matters reserved except for access for the erection of three dwellings and associated works.

Mike Gilbert addressed the Sub-Committee on behalf of the applicant which raised clarification points regarding the length of the legal agreement for keyworker affordable housing, highway safety for pedestrians, access to bus stops and amenities, and if the caravan and camping business on the site was still in use.

The Business Manager's presentation clarified the following points:

- The application was before the Sub-Committee as the applicant was a former town and district councillor. The Parish Council had also objected to the application.
- The District Council did not claim a 5-year land supply however the site had already been built on and was established. The site would provide a sustainable development.
- The scale and size of the proposed development would not result in over development. The development would be built to a high ecological/ environmental standard.
- The development would provide affordable housing in a rural area. The number of units would be restricted and would meet national space standards regarding size of rooms.
- Landscaping and hedgerows would be maintained ensuring continued biodiversity net gain.
- The application was recommended for approval subject to legal agreement.

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The Chair then invited the Sub-Committee to discuss the application, which raised the following points:

- Clarification regarding the mile per hour limit as the site was just on the village curtilage, and there were no footpaths. The Business Manager confirmed that the road to the site was on the straight and the speed limit of 20MPH started at the village signs. There were no objections from Oxfordshire County Council Highways.
- When looking at the current house prices in the village, would the housing be affordable. The housing would be offered to keyworkers and the neighbourhood plan included the provision for affordable housing within the village.
- Affordable housing in rural areas resulted in limited access to services without use of own transport. The site was close to Carterton which could be accessed by bus or on foot. Most keyworkers rely on own transport due to work roles such as teacher or NHS worker.
- The site had potential for further development, could a condition be added to the legal agreement to ensure further properties be allocated for affordable housing for continuity of the site.
- Clarification on the discount market housing or affordable rent housing. The Business Manger advised that it would be [possible to include a clause in the 106 that achieved a similar end and that the properties would be discount market housing and not for rent or subletting.

Councillor Wray proposed that the application be approved in line with Officer recommendations, with an added requirement to include a legal agreement for any future applications for housing development to the site to be affordable.

This was seconded by Councillor Cosier and was put to a vote. There were 9 votes for the proposal, 1 against the proposal and 2 abstentions.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

1. Approve the application in line with Officer recommendations with an additional requirement to include a legal agreement for any future applications for housing development to the site to be affordable.

56 23/00028/FUL Little Willow, Oxford Road, Eynsham

Councillor McCarroll left the meeting at 3.03pm.

Chris Wood, Senior Planner, introduced the application for the siting of 2 additional single unit caravans to accommodate existing residents on an approved Gypsy caravan site at present limited to 3 caravans involving a change in the degree of use of the site as a caravan site.

Mark Chattoe, agent, spoke in support of the application.

The Senior Planner presentation clarified the following points:

- The clarification of the flood zone and risk of flooding to the site. Officers concluded from the history of flooding in the area that the site was in flood zone 2 and the sequential test would still apply.
- More work would need to be done in assessing the flood risks and further reports obtained.
- The site's height level had not changed from an assessment provided in 2010, however policy had been updated and there was a better understanding of the impacts of climate change.
- Provisional approval was proposed as some merit was seen in the case put forward.
- A proposal had been put forward to raise the caravans on the site as a precaution. However there had not been an extreme flood event, the site was next to the river Thames and the flood zone boundaries had not been determined.
- All points had been put before the Environment Agency however further information was needed to assure assumptions were correct.
- The recommendation was for the application to be granted provisional acceptance subject to addressing the key points.

The Chair then invited the Sub-Committee to discuss the application, which raised the following points:

- Delegation of the application back to officers once all reports have been received. The members raised concerns of safety for the families living on the site due to flood risk.
- Clarification was sought for the numbers of caravans on the extended site, it was confirmed these were associated vehicles. Accommodation had to be of a high standard with access to community rooms to support families.
- Clarification was sought on the red outline of the site which indicated that the site was probably in flood zone 2, however the Environment Agency had responded and stated that the sequential test would still have to be met even if the site was in flood zone 2.
- Loss of planting alongside river. The unauthorised development has brought the site closer to the river. In winter months this could be seen. Planting would be required alongside the river within the red line area.

Councillor Cosier proposed that the application be delegated back to officers to determine application once all reports were received.

This was seconded by Councillor Leverton and was put to a vote and was unanimous.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

1. Delegate the application back to officers to determine application once all reports were received.

57 24/00563/HHD and 24/00564/LBC The Laurels, Filkins Road, Langford

Councillor Nick Leverton left the Chamber.

Curtis Badley, Planner, introduced the application for alterations to include erection of a single storey extension and orangery with basement beneath. (Part retrospective) and the Planner introduced the application for internal and external alterations to include erection of single storey extension and orangery with basement beneath and replacement of three, first floor rear windows. (Part retrospective).

Andrew Miles, agent, spoke in support of the application, which raised the following clarification points regarding the removal of the lime tree and the impact to the foundations of the house. The tree had been removed by a specialist. The replacement of the windows had been due to the weathered window frames.

The Planner's presentation clarified the following points:

- The application was before the Sub-Committee due to the Parish Council's objection regarding the impact on the street scape, the removal of a mature tree and drainage concerns.
- A Design and Access Statement and Heritage Impact Assessment had been submitted as part of the application.
- Grade II listed building set within Langford Conservation area and part of the application was retrospective as the work on the site had commenced in April 2022.
- The windows were to be replaced with like for like as the existing windows were modern additions. The replacement windows were not considered to harm the character or appearance of the grade II listed building.
- The basement would not harm the character or appearance of the property due to being below ground level. The structure of the building had been assessed.
- The single storey side extension would not harm the significance of the building due to adjoining the late 20th century extensions.
- The Officer's recommendation was to approve the application.

The Chair then invited the Sub-Committee to discuss the application, which raised the following points:

- Replacement of the Lime tree- it was not proportionate to require a replacement of the tree, however the provision of bat boxes within the garden had been suggested.

24/00563/HHD The Laurels, Filkins Road, Langford.

Councillor Walsh proposed that the application be approved in line with Officer recommendations. This was seconded by Councillor Cosier and was put to a vote and was unanimous.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

- I. Approve the application in line with Officer recommendations.

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24/00564/LBC The Laurels, Filkins Road, Langford.

Councillor Walsh proposed that the application be approved in line with Officer recommendations. This was seconded by Councillor Cosier and was put to a vote and was unanimous.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

- I. Approve the application in line with Officer recommendations.

Councillor Nick Leverton return to the Chamber.

58 24/01101/FUL West Oxfordshire District Council, Woodgreen, Witney

Councillors Crouch and Prosser left the Chamber.

James Nelson, Senior Planner, introduced the application for the installation of rooftop solar panels on council offices.

The Senior Planner's presentation clarified the following points:

- The application was before the Sub-Committee due to the property ownership by West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC).
- The property was located in the Witney and Cogges conservation area and the front portion of the building was locally listed.
- WODC had declared a Climate Emergency and a strategy for addressing this was to support the appropriate siting and development of strategic solar photovoltaics and renewables.
- The solar panels would be positioned behind mature trees and would not impact the neighbouring residential properties.
- The application was considered to accord with the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, policies OS2, OS3, OS4, EH9, EH10 and EH16, the National Planning Policy Framework and the West Oxfordshire Design Guide. The Officer recommended the application for approval.

The Chair then invited the Sub-Committee to discuss the application, which raised the following points:

- The Senior Planner did not have the total number of solar panels to be installed. However, the application was in accordance with policy OS3. Reduction on reliance of older methods of energy supply in place of well-established newer methods supported strategy.

Councillor Leverton that the application be approved in line with Officer recommendations. This was seconded by Councillor Veasey and was put to a vote and was unanimous.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

- I. Approve the application in line with Officer recommendations.

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59 24/01713/FUL and 24/01714/LBC The Old Courthouse, 28 Bridge Street, Witney

Curtis Badley, Planner, introduced the application for internal and external alterations to include erection of single storey extension and orangery with basement beneath and replacement of three, first floor rear windows. (Part retrospective). The Planner introduced the application for internal and external alterations to replace existing lead flat and rooflight together with repairs to the existing pitched roofs.

The planner presentation clarified the following points:

- The application was before the Sub-Committee due to the property ownership by West Oxfordshire District Council Facilities Management Department (WODC).
- The Grade II listed building needed localised repair works to the roof.
- The stone parapet wall would shield repair works when done and the protected trees would act as a screen to the building.
- Both applications were for approve in line with Officer recommendations.

The Chair then invited the Sub-Committee to discuss the application, which raised the following points:

- Clarification on the ownership and use of the building which was confirmed as providing housing for homeless people.

24/01713/FUL The Old Courthouse, 28 Bridge Street, Witney

Councillor Veasey proposed that the application be approved in line with Officer recommendation. This was seconded by Councillor Leverton and was put to a vote, and was agreed unanimous.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

1. Approve the application in line with Officer recommendation.

24/01714/LBC The Old Courthouse, 28 Bridge Street, Witney

Councillor Veasey proposed that the application be approved in line with Officer recommendation. This was seconded by Councillor Leverton and was put to a vote, and was agreed unanimous.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

1. Approve the application in line with Officer recommendation.

Councillor Prosser returned to the Chamber.

60 Applications Determined under Delegated Powers

The report giving details of application determined under delegated powers was received, explained by Planning Officers, and noted by the Sub-Committee.

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61 Appeal Decisions

The report giving details of appeals decision was received, explained by Planning Officers, and noted by the Sub-Committee.

APP/D3125/W/23/330918 The Newlands Inn, Eynsham.

Councillor Cooper requested a copy of the appeals decision to be sent to him by Senior Planner, James Nelson.

The Meeting closed at 4.11 pm

CHAIR