

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the  
**Lowlands Area Planning Sub-Committee**  
Held in the Council Chamber at 2.00 pm on **Monday, 27 March 2023**

PRESENT

Councillors: Richard Langridge (Chair), Michael Brooker (Vice-Chair), Joy Aitman, Harry Eaglestone, Colin Dingwall, Ted Fenton, Andy Goodwin, Nick Leverton, Elizabeth Poskitt, Andrew Prosser and Alaric Smith and Dan Levy

Officers: Esther Hill (Planner), David Ditchett (Principal Planner), Michelle Ouzman (Democratic Services Officer), and Max Thompson (Democratic Services Manager).

**118 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 27 February 2023 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Councillor Fenton observed that Pages 9, 10 and 11 of the minutes looked verbatim of text in the original report followed by a few bullet points for the debate, and queried if this was a new way of recording the minutes. The Principal Planner David Ditchett confirmed that because of the strategic large scale nature of the application and that it may be appealed, David Ditchett's opening speech to Members is in the minutes. This ensures that if the minutes are passed to the inspectorate, it is clear that members had the full picture before making a decision.

The Chair added that it would be more useful to include more of the debate in future minutes.

**119 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors Lysette Nicholls and Charlie Maynard.

Councillor Dan Levy substituted for Councillor Charlie Maynard.

**120 Declarations of Interest**

Declarations of Interest were received as follows:

Pages 17 to 33, 22/01593/FUL Kilkeny Lane Country Park, Elmhurst Way, Carterton, The Chair declared a corporate declaration as members of the Committee knew the applicant.

Pages 113 to 118, 23/00291/FUL Carterton Football Club, Swinbrook Road, Carterton. Councillor Levy declared that the Chair of Carterton Football Club is known to the Liberal Democrat members of the Committee as he is a candidate for this year's local elections.

Councillor Nick Leverton declared an interest in Carterton Football Club as it is owned by Carterton Town Council, of which he is a Councillor, the Town Council were renegotiating a new lease. Councillor Leverton deemed it was appropriate to abstain from voting and taking part in that application.

Councillor Joy Aitman also declared an interest in Carterton Football Club, as through her role as Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities, she knew of the applicant.

Applications determined under delegated Powers:

Councillor Ted Fenton declared an interest in Delegated Decision 27 on page 124, as he knew of the applicant.

Councillor Andy Goodwin declared an interest in Delegated Decision 44 on page 127, as he knew of the applicant.

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**121 Applications for Development**

The Chair advised that both applications relating to Filkins Methodist Chapel Filkins, would be presented and debated together, then voted on as separate applications.

The Chair also stated that as there were public speakers on some of the applications he would change the order in which the applications would be heard to reflect the following order:

1. 22/03232/FUL Filkins Methodist Chapel, Filkins, and 22/03233/LBC Filkins Methodist Chapel, Filkins.
2. 22/03370/FUL Land West Of Colt House, Aston Road, Bampton.
3. 22/03544/OUT Land South Of Main Road, Curbridge, Witney.
4. 22/01593/FUL Kilkenny Lane Country Park, Elmhurst Way, Carterton.
5. 23/00291/FUL Carterton Football Club, Swinbrook Road, Carterton.

22/03232/FUL Filkins Methodist Chapel, Filkins, and 22/03233/LBC Filkins Methodist Chapel.

Esther Hill, Planning Officer introduced the application for the conversion of former Methodist Chapel to a dwelling with associated works. Internal works to include changes to floor layout and construction of a Mezzanine floor. External works to include the insertion of roof lights.

14:10 Councillor Brooker left the meeting.

Andrew Miles spoke on behalf of the applicant in respect of both applications, adding that the premises had been vacant for 5 years. A copy of the speech is attached to the original copy of the minutes.

Esther Hill continued with the presentation which covered both applications. The Planner confirmed that the officer recommendation is to grant permission to both applications subject to the conditions set out in the Committee Report.

Councillor Poskitt stated that the parking space for two cars looked narrow, and that the applicants would have to Tandem Park. The Planning Officer confirmed that the parking spaces had been measured and were compliant, and that Highways had made no objection.

Councillors requested clarity on the roof lighting and the positioning of windows in terms of neighbouring amenity impacts. The Planning Officer drew the Councillors attention to the relevant slides and pointed out where the roof lights would be, and the direction of where the windows overlooked, towards the allotments, street, and neighbours.

Councillor Leverton remarked that the building had been empty for the past 5 years and subsequently proposed approval of application 22/03232/FUL as per the recommendations in the Officer's report, this was seconded by Councillor Ted Fenton, was voted on and carried. The vote was unanimous.

**Committee Resolved to:**

1. Approve application 22/03232/FUL as per officers recommendations in the original report.

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Councillor Dingwall asked where the sewage connection would be. The Planning Officer showed Councillors on the map where the sewage connection would be and confirmed it would be underground sealed with a hatch, next to the neighbour.

Councillor Leverton proposed approval of application 22/03233/LBC as per the recommendations in the Officer's report, this was seconded by Councillor Ted Fenton, was voted on and carried. The vote was unanimous.

Committee **Resolved** to:

- I. Approve application 22/03233/LBC as per officers recommendations in the original report.

22/03370/FUL Land West Of Colt House. Aston Road, Bampton

David Ditchett Principal Planner introduced the application for the erection of six single storey, age restricted dwellings (55 years) for older people with access, landscaping and associated infrastructure.

Roger Preston spoke in objection to the application, explaining that he was a chartered civil engineer. A copy of the speech is attached to the original copy of the minutes.

Simon Tofts spoke on behalf of the applicant, a copy of the speech is attached to the original copy of the minutes.

Councillor Fenton asked for clarity the drainage scheme. Simon Tofts confirmed the drainage scheme would be contained on site, discharged slowly to the south, and that in summary it would be contained , controlled and restricted.

The Principal Planner continued with the presentation, drawing Councillors attention to the late representation report. There was one third party objection, a comment from the contaminated land officer which suggested a condition and a comment from the drainage engineer. The drainage engineer was not entirely satisfied with the drainage solution proposed. However, this matter can be dealt with by condition.

David Ditchett continued with the presentation and reminded Members that the LPA cannot demonstrate a five year housing land supply. David Ditchett explained that the proposed development would harm the setting of Bampton Conservation Area. However, was satisfied, on balance, that the public benefits would outweigh the less substantial harm found to the setting of Bampton Conservation Area.

David Ditchett then set out the benefits and adverse impacts of the scheme as explained in the Committee Report, concluding that approval was recommended.

Councillor Fenton informed the Committee he knew the site, and thought it would be of benefit to members if they went to visit the site. Councillor Fenton proposed to defer the application and attend a site visit to look at the connection to Bampton. This was seconded by Councillor Alaric Smith, was voted on and carried. The vote was unanimous.

Councillors agreed that they wanted:

- The formal position of Thames Water;
- The formal position of the Environment Agency; and

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- Solar panels to be included in the scheme

Committee **Resolved** to:

1. Defer the application pending a site visit;
2. Arrange a site visit to look at connections from site connection to Bampton.

The Chair requested that the site visit be arranged for 24 April at 10am.

22/03544/OUT Land South Of Main Road, Curbridge, Witney.

David Ditchett, Principal Planner, introduced the outline application, with some matters reserved, for the provision of up to 20 dwellings (including affordable housing and self-build housing) with access, parking, amenity space, open space, landscaping, drainage and associated works. The Principal Planner drew the Councillors attention to late representations from the LLFA received at 1.00pm on the day of the Committee, which raised no objections to the scheme, and requested two conditions to be placed on the approval.

The Democratic Services Officer read out a prior submission from Curbridge and Lew Parish Council. A copy of the speech is attached to the original copy of the minutes.

Jake Collinge spoke on behalf of the applicant. A copy of the speech is attached to the original copy of the minutes.

Councillor Prosser enquired on what standard the making would be towards a move to net zero.

Jake Collinge confirmed the Developers intent was to move towards a net zero build, and at this outline stage the exact detail is unknown but would be detailed at the reserved matter stage.

Councillor Leverton enquired as to how many bedrooms each home would have.

Jake Collinge said the mix would be decided at the reserved matters stage, but would be in line with the policy requirements at the time.

David Ditchett continued with the presentation and reminded Members that the LPA cannot demonstrate a five year housing land supply. David Ditchett explained that the proposed development would harm the setting of Thatched Cottage by virtue of the loss of the agricultural setting. However on balance, was satisfied that the public benefits would outweigh the less substantial harm found to the setting of Thatched Cottage

David Ditchett then set out the benefits and adverse impacts of the scheme as explained in the Committee Report. David Ditchett also set out the reasons why approval was recommended for the current scheme for 20 homes when the previous scheme for 25 was recommended for refusal.

Councillors discussed the similarity to the last application, and were concerned that the nature and the character of the village would be changed. Councillors believed that the bus route was only every two hours was limited and not sustainable.

There is a verbal agreement with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) for cars to park at the proposed site when using the Village Hall. Councillors were concerned where would the cars be parked in the future, and queried if this could be addressed, ensuring that the Parish

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Council were included with any proposals. Councillors did note the refusal from the last application, and they referred to the report before them, read through the refusal reasons, and then agreed that they did not believe anything had changed.

Councillors discussed Section 106 monies, the play area in the village lacking upkeep and concerns about the village hall parking area, which OCC had an informal agreement with the Parish Council.

Transport links were also a concern, and the effect the development would have on the character of the village, which was deemed to be unsustainable. More houses would mean more commuters and more pollution.

In conclusion Councillors did not feel that the development had changed much since the last application.

Councillor Fenton proposed refusal for the same reasons as the previous application and referenced page 94 in the original report. This was seconded by Councillor Leverton, was voted on and carried.

Committee **Resolved** to:

I. Refuse the application as per previous refusal reasons, being:

A. The proposed development does not respect the village character and local distinctiveness. It would not form a logical complement to the existing scale and pattern of development or the character of the area; would not protect the local landscape or setting of Curbridge; and would involve the loss of an area of green space that makes an important contribution to the character and appearance of the area. While the development would provide some economic benefits, would add up to 20 homes to West Oxfordshire Housing stock, would meet some of the affordable housing need in West Oxfordshire, would provide three self-build plots; and would create biodiversity net gain, as directed by paragraph 11 of the NPPF, the adverse impacts identified would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The proposed development is not considered to be sustainable development and conflicts with policies H2, OS2, OS4 and EH2 of the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, the West Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016, and the relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021; and

B. The applicant has not entered into a legal agreement or agreements to secure the provision of affordable housing, self-build plots, or contributions to public transport services and infrastructure, Public Rights of Way, play equipment, education, or waste. The proposal conflicts with West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 Policies H3, T1, T3 and OS5.

22/01593/FUL Kilkeny Lane Country Park, Elmhurst Way, Carterton.

David Ditchett Principal Planner, introduced the application for extension of car park, which was deferred in November to seek the following:

1. Costs of materials
2. Disabled parking spaces (location and method of construction)
3. Bike parking numbers

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4. Biodiversity
5. EV charging points
6. Reduction of parking spaces

David Ditchett elaborated on each point noting how all but the EV charging points had now been satisfactory resolved as set out in the Committee Report and Officers were recommending approval, subject to conditions.

There were no public speakers.

Councillor Leverton enquired about a fence between the footpath and the car park, the Principal Planner confirmed that a knee high rail would be placed round the car park to prevent cars and pedestrian colliding.

Councillor Goodwin enquired if there was scope to extend the car park at a later date. The Principal Planner confirmed there was scope to extend the car park. Councillor Prosser remarked that there were no EV charging points but the car park was close to the Leisure Centre where there were EV charging points.

Councillor Dingwall thought this application was a wonderful example of working together and proposed that the application be approved. This was seconded by Councillor Leverton, was voted on and carried. The vote was unanimous.

Committee **Resolved** to:

- I. Approve the application as per Officers recommendation in the report.

23/00291/FUL Carterton Football Club, Swinbrook Road, Carterton.

David Ditchett the Principal Planner introduced the application for the installation of 6 x 15m LED floodlight masts, to replace existing floodlights. The Principal Planner explained that all flood lights over 6metres and above are required to go to Committee.

Planning Officers were recommending approval of the application.

There were no public speakers.

Councillors enquired if the lights switched off automatically, the Principal Planner confirmed that the lights were on a timer mechanism.

Councillor Eaglestone proposed approval, this was seconded by Councillor Prosser, was voted on and carried. The vote was unanimous.

Councillor Leverton did not take part in the deliberation of this application and did not vote.

Committee **Resolved** to:

- I. Approve the application as per Officers recommendation in the report.

**122 Applications Determined under Delegated Powers and Appeal Decisions**

The report giving details of applications determined under delegated powers was received and noted.

David Ditchett, the Principal Planner outlined the Appeal Decisions report and provided an update on the current position with each application.

The Meeting closed at 3.50 pm

CHAIR