

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOWLANDS AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

Date: 14th July 2025

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING



Purpose:

To consider applications for development details of which are set out in the following pages.

Recommendations:

To determine the applications in accordance with the recommendations of the Head of Planning. The recommendations contained in the following pages are all subject to amendments in the light of observations received between the preparation of the reports etc and the date of the meeting.

List of Background Papers

All documents, including forms, plans, consultations and representations on each application, but excluding any document, which in the opinion of the 'proper officer' discloses exempt information as defined in Section 1001 of the Local Government Act 1972.

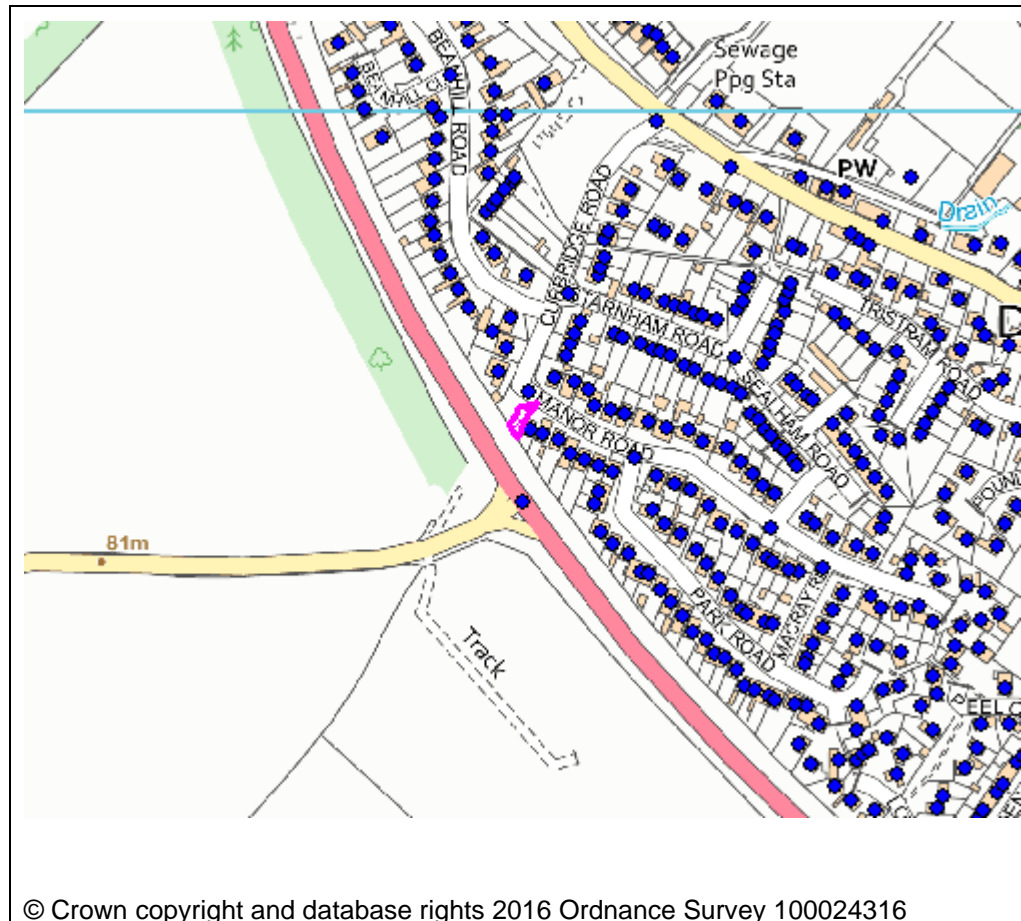
Please note that:

- I. Observations received after the reports in this schedule were prepared will be summarised in a document which will be published late on the last working day before the meeting and available at the meeting or from www.westoxon.gov.uk/meetings

Item	Application Number	Address	Officer
1	24/03154/FUL	2 Manor Road, Ducklington	Clare Anscombe
2	24/03277/FUL	Land (E) 441191 (N) 205720, Blackditch, Stanton Harcourt	James Nelson
3	25/01071/ADV	First Floor Unit 1, Des Roches Square, Witney	George Matthews
4	25/00800/FUL	Windrush Leisure Centre, Witan Way, Witney	James Nelson

Application Number	24/03154/FUL
Site Address	2 Manor Road Ducklington Witney Oxfordshire OX29 7YA
Date	2nd July 2025
Officer	Clare Anscombe
Officer Recommendations	Provisional Approval
Parish	Ducklington Parish Council
Grid Reference	435346 E 207790 N
Committee Date	14th July 2025

Location Map



Application Details:

Erection of a bungalow and creation of a new access (amended description and plans)

Applicant Details:

Mr Alan Townsend
2 Manor Road
Ducklington
Witney
Oxfordshire
OX29 7YA

I CONSULTATIONS

Parish Council	Initial comments dated 25th February 2025: Objection. Overdevelopment and incongruous to the street scene.
OCC Highways	Initial response: No objection, subject to conditions.
WODC Drainage	Initial response: No objection, subject to conditions.
District Ecologist	Initial response: Objection.
Thames Water	Initial consultation - no response received.
Environment Agency	No comments.
Conservation And Design Officer	No Comment Received.
Env Health Contamination	<p>The proposal does not involve disturbing land that has been identified as being of potential concern with respect to land contamination. However, given the proposed residential development please consider adding the following condition to any grant of permission as a precaution:</p> <p>I. In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development, it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Environment Agency's Land Contamination: Risk Management (LCRM), and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared, to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risks to human health, buildings and other property, and which is subject to the approval in</p>

writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Env Health Noise And Amenity

Initial response:

Prior to a decision being made, I would like to request the following piece of additional information:

I. a site-specific Noise Impact Assessment (NIA), conducted by a suitably qualified acoustic consultant, accredited by the Institute of Acoustics (IOA) or the Association of Noise Consultants (ANC). The NIA must comprehensively evaluate the existing noise environment, assess the potential noise impacts arising from the proposed development, and propose mitigation measures to ensure full compliance with relevant noise standards. The NIA must explicitly demonstrate that the development will meet the BS 8233:2014 noise criteria without relying on the building envelope as the primary means of achieving compliance. Alternative noise mitigation strategies, including but not limited to site layout optimization and the installation of external noise barriers, should be thoroughly explored and justified within the NIA.

Professionally accredited acoustic consultants can be sourced using the weblinks provided:

IOA (<https://www.ioa.org.uk/find-acoustics-specialist-or-supplier>)

ANC (<https://www.association-of-noise-consultants.co.uk/sound-testing-member-companies/>)

District Ecologist

Reconsultation comments dated 7th April 2025:

Amended BNG information required.

Parish Council

Reconsultation comments dated 11th April 2025:

Objection.

The proposed development will negatively impact on neighbouring properties insofar as it is disproportionate and out of scale with the surrounding area, failing to maintain the character and visual amenity of the location (overshadowing or overbearing) and is therefore considered to be overdevelopment and incongruous to street scene.

OCC Highways

Reconsultation response dated 28th March 2025:

No objections, subject to the following conditions:

G28 parking as plan

G11 access specification

WODC Drainage

Reconsultation - no further comments.

District Ecologist

Reconsultation comments dated 27th March 2025:

Amended BNG information required.

An area of "Introduced Shrub" has been added to the metric as part of the amendments and the BNG report describes this as an area of shrub planting around the parking area. This planting is considered to form part of the private garden of the proposed dwelling and whilst private gardens can make a positive contribution to biodiversity, there is no mechanism available to secure appropriate planting and on-going management. The biodiversity metric recognises and accommodates for this in its scoring of gardens. As a result, individual habitats within the residential curtilage should not be recorded as separate habitats but rather as "vegetated garden", this includes the newly planted shrubs. In accordance with statutory guidance the "Introduced Shrub" planting needs to be grouped as part of the "Vegetated Garden" habitat and this amendment is required before a positive determination and an amended metric and ecology report is therefore needed.

Thames Water

Reconsultation comments dated 20th March 2025:

Waste:

Thames Water recognises this catchment is subject to high infiltration flows during certain groundwater conditions. The scale of the proposed development doesn't materially affect the sewer network and as such we have no objection, however care needs to be taken when designing new networks to ensure they don't surcharge and cause flooding. In the longer term Thames Water, along with other partners, are working on a strategy to reduce groundwater entering the sewer networks.

Thames Water recognises this catchment is subject to high infiltration flows during certain groundwater conditions. The developer should liaise with the LLFA to agree an appropriate sustainable surface water strategy following the sequential approach before considering connection to the public sewer network. The scale of the proposed development doesn't materially affect the sewer network and as such we have no objection, however care needs to be taken when designing new networks to ensure they don't surcharge and cause flooding. In the longer-term Thames Water, along with other partners, are working on a strategy to reduce groundwater entering the sewer network.

With regard to SURFACE WATER drainage, Thames Water would advise that if the developer follows the sequential approach to the disposal of surface water we would have no objection.

Thames Water would advise that with regard to WASTE WATER NETWORK and SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS infrastructure capacity, we would not have any objection to the above planning application, based on the information provided.

Water:

On the basis of information provided, Thames Water would advise that with regard to water network and water treatment infrastructure capacity, we would not have any objection to the above planning application. Thames Water recommends the following informative be attached to this planning permission. Thames Water will aim to provide customers with a minimum pressure of 10m head (approx. 1 bar) and a flow rate of 9 litres/minute at the point where it leaves Thames Waters pipes. The developer should take account of this minimum pressure in the design of the proposed development.

Env Health Noise And Amenity

Reconsultation comments dated 4th April 2025:

I have reviewed the Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) and have the following initial comments to make:

1. There is a discrepancy between the proposed acoustic fence in the site plan and Noise Impact Assessment. Please can I get clarification as to which is accurate? (The NIA states that it is a 2m high fence, whereas the most recent site plan says 1.8m)

2. I am unclear on the orientation of the development. Please can you point out on the site plans where the bedroom is located?

3. I find the Noise Impact Assessment to be rather lacking. For example, there is no mention of the meteorological conditions or equipment used during the assessment. These factors are usually standard practice for an assessment of this nature. I request that the Acoustic Consultant amend the report, making sure that it includes all of the necessary detail.

4. (For the Planning Officer specifically) The desirable noise level in the outdoor amenity area is being exceeded. Please can I get your thoughts on whether the following statement is applicable to this development?

"However, it is also recognized that these guideline values are not achievable in all circumstances where development might be desirable. In higher noise areas, such as city centres or urban areas adjoining the strategic transport network, a compromise between elevated noise levels and other factors, such as the convenience of

living in these locations or making efficient use of land resources to ensure development needs can be met, might be warranted". - BS8233:2014

2 REPRESENTATIONS

2.1 None received.

3 APPLICANT'S CASE

3.1 The submitted Design & Access Statement states that the proposed dwelling fits comfortably within the street scene and will not have an adverse impact on highway safety, neighbours or the wider environment. A modest, low cost accessible dwelling in this location will be a positive contribution towards the provision of housing in the district.

4 PLANNING POLICIES

OS1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development

OS2 Locating development in the right places

OS3 Prudent use of natural resources

OS4 High quality design

H1 Amount and distribution of housing

H2 Delivery of new homes

H4 Type and mix of new homes

H6 Existing housing

T1 Sustainable transport

T2 Highway improvement schemes

T3 Public transport, walking and cycling

T4 Parking provision

EH2 Landscape character

EH3 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

EH7 Flood risk

EH8 Environmental protection

NPPF 2024

DESGUI West Oxfordshire Design Guide

WIT6NE Witney sub-area strategy

The National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) is also a material planning consideration.

5 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

5.1 The application sites comprises an existing residential garden associated with 2, Manor Road in Ducklington. The proposed development is for the erection of a 1-bedroom, single-storey bungalow located within this garden, to the west of 2 Manor Road. The proposal also includes the creation of a new access onto Manor Road. The site lies on the corner of Curbridge Road and Manor Road.

Relevant Planning History

W77/0827 - Erection of log lap fence panels on side garden. Approved.

W77/0711 - Extension to kitchen. Approved.

5.2 Taking into account planning policy, other material considerations and the comments of interested parties, Officers consider that the key considerations of this application are:

- Principle of development
- Siting, design and scale
- Impact on amenity
- Impact on highway safety and parking
- Impact on ecology and biodiversity
- Impact on flood risk
- Paragraph 11d ii) planning balance

Principle of development

5.3 Policy OS2 of the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (WOLP) sets out the overall strategy on the location of development for the district. It adopts a hierarchical approach, with the majority of new development focused on the main service centres of Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton, followed by the rural service centres.

5.4 The site is located in Ducklington which is classed as a village within the settlement hierarchy of the WOLP. Based on the definition of previously developed land included in the NPPF (2024), the site is considered to be undeveloped land. Policy H2 of the WOLP states that new dwellings will be permitted at the main service centres, rural service centres and villages on undeveloped land within the built up area provided that the proposal is in accordance with the other policies in the plan and in particular the general principles in Policy OS2.

Policy OS2 of the WOLP states that all development should (inter alia):

- Be of a proportionate and appropriate scale to its context having regard to the potential cumulative impact of development in the locality;
- Form a logical complement to the existing scale and pattern of development and/or the character of the area;
- Avoid the coalescence and loss of identity of separate settlements;
- Be compatible with adjoining uses and not have a harmful impact on the amenity of existing occupants;
- As far as is reasonably possible protect or enhance the local landscape and the setting of the settlement/s;
- Not involve the loss of an area of open space or any other feature that makes an important contribution to the character or appearance of the area;
- Be provided with safe vehicular access and safe and convenient pedestrian access to supporting services and facilities;
- Not be at risk of flooding or increase flood risk elsewhere;
- Conserve and enhance the natural, historic and built environment;
- Be supported by all necessary infrastructure including that which is needed to enable access to superfast broadband.

National Policy

5.5 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and how these are expected to be applied.

The NPPF advises that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and sets out that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. In essence, the economic role should contribute to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy; the social role should support strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and the environmental role should contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment. These roles should not be undertaken in isolation, because they are mutually dependant.

5.6 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and paragraph 11 advises that for decision-making this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay, or where policies that are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless:

- I. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- II. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

5.7 Policies H1 and H2 of the WOLP identify an overall housing requirement of 15,950 homes to be delivered in the period 2011 - 2031. Ordinarily, this would be used to calculate the Council's five-year housing land supply. However, the Council has undertaken a formal review of the WOLP in accordance with Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and in doing so has determined that the housing trajectory of Policies H1 and H2 are out of date and need to be reviewed. In accordance with national policy, because those policies are now more than 5 years' old, until such time as a new housing requirement is determined through the new Local Plan, the District Council will calculate its five-year housing land supply position on the basis of local housing need using the Government's standard method. An updated HLS position statement has not been published by the LPA since the December 2024 revisions to the NPPF. Nevertheless, officers consider it relevant to note that the recent changes to the NPPF are likely to increase the housing requirement for the following reasons:

- Paragraph 61 sets the overall aim of policy as meeting an area's identified housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community (removing previous reference to 'meeting as much of an area's identified housing need as possible').
- Paragraph 62 confirms that housing requirements will be based on local housing need ('LHN'), as calculated using the standard method, which officers understand will result in the LHN figure for West Oxfordshire increasing from 570 dpa to 905 dpa, which is likely to have a significant impact on its deliverable HLS position.
- Paragraph 78 inter alia re-introduces a buffer that is likely to be 5% for West Oxfordshire, as its Housing Delivery Test figures have to date never been below 85% (Nonetheless, this will increase the requirement further, again tending to worsen the deliverable HLS position).

5.8 For a combination of reasons relating to the changes identified above, officers expect the LPA's HLS position to worsen from the 4.3 years it has most recently been able to demonstrate at various

appeals that were determined following public inquiries. As such, officers anticipate that the LPA's HLS shortfall is likely to rise when its next HLS position statement is published; and for the purposes of this application, officers accept that the LPA cannot currently demonstrate a full 5-year deliverable HLS and accordingly under the operation of footnote 8, paragraph 11(d) is engaged.

Conclusions on the principle of residential development

5.9 In view of the above, it is clear that the decision-making process for the determination of this application is therefore to assess whether:

- I. the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- II. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

5.10 In terms of the first arm of paragraph 11d of the NPPF, Officers do not consider that the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a strong reason for refusing the development. Notwithstanding this, paragraph 11dii) of the NPPF is considered below.

Siting, Design and Scale

5.11 In terms of design, the proposed dwelling is circa 8m long, 6m wide and 4.17m high. It is positioned slightly forward of the neighbouring property and separated from the adjacent property by a circa 1m footway, 1m high fence to the front and 1.8m fence to the rear. It has a pitched roof form to match the neighbouring property and is to be constructed of brick and render with upvc windows and doors, a tile roof and gravel forecourt. Two windows are positioned on the front elevation with glazing on the southern elevation and two windows on the west elevation. The dwelling is to be accessed from the east elevation. Two roof lights are proposed in the east elevation. Given the siting of the dwelling, its form, scale and proposed materials, the proposed design is considered to be acceptable subject to a condition requiring the submission and approval of samples of materials, a render specification, and window and door details.

5.12 The proposed development would be visible in the street scene. However, due to its design, scale and siting within a residential area and subject to a condition requiring the submission and approval of details of planting along the front boundary of the site (except for where the access is proposed), it is considered that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the visual amenity of the area or the existing character or appearance of the area.

Impact on amenity

5.13 In terms of amenity, the proposed rear external amenity space of the new dwelling would be circa 50 sqm with a maximum depth of around 8.2m. The neighbouring dwelling would have a rear external amenity space of circa 72 sqm. It is considered that, based on the number of potential occupants, this is sufficient in size and arrangement for sitting out, informal recreation, clothes drying etc. The proposed dwelling has an internal amenity space of circa 41.6sqm which meets the

minimum gross internal floor areas for a 1 bedroom (1 person), 1 storey dwelling set out in national government's technical housing standards 2015.

- 5.14 The site is located adjacent to a busy road and a Noise Impact Assessment has been submitted which assesses the impact of the location of the development on the amenity of future occupants by way of noise. The Council's Environmental Health Officer considers that the desirable noise level in the outdoor amenity space with a 2m high fence would be exceeded. However, whilst Officers consider that occupants are likely to experience some noise disturbance, this is unlikely to have a significant effect on amenity. In terms of overshadowing, whilst the proposed development may lead to some overshadowing, due to the separation distance with neighbouring properties and that there are other windows serving principal rooms, Officers consider that the impact on amenity by way of overshadowing would be limited.
- 5.15 Due to the size of the plot, positioning of windows and to safeguard amenity, conditions removing some permitted development rights (Class E - outbuildings and Class A - enlargement, improvement or other alterations) and the insertion of obscure glazing for the proposed bathroom window are recommended.

Impact on highway safety and parking

- 5.16 1 car parking space is proposed within the development site which meets OCC's Parking Standards for New Developments. A new access is proposed into the site. The Highways Officer has no objection to the proposed development on highway safety grounds, subject to conditions. Therefore, subject to conditions, the proposal is considered to be acceptable on highway safety and parking grounds and accord with policies T2 and T4 of the WOLP and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF (2024).

Impact on ecology and biodiversity

- 5.17 In terms of impact on ecology and biodiversity, the Council's biodiversity officer has raised a holding objection due to amended biodiversity net gain information being required. These matters could be delegated back to officers for resolution with the applicant, subject to the approval of members.

Impact on flood risk

- 5.18 In terms of impact on flood risk, the site lies in flood zone 1 and surface water drainage is to be via a soakaway with foul drainage to be via mains sewer. The Council's Flood Risk Management Officer has no objection, subject to all comments in their response being taken on board and subject to a pre-commencement condition requiring the submission and approval of a full surface water drainage strategy. In terms of foul water drainage, Thames Water have been consulted and they consider that the scale of the proposed development doesn't materially affect the sewer network and so have no objections. Therefore, subject to a surface water drainage condition, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable on flood risk grounds.

Paragraph 11(dii) Planning Balance

- 5.19 One, 1-bedroom bungalow is proposed in a sustainable location. There is a need for smaller, 1-bedroom dwellings within the district, as highlighted in the adopted WOLP. Smaller dwellings can also help to improve housing affordability. The proposal is considered to make effective use of land.

There would also be some economic benefits associated with the proposed development as a result of construction and increased spending in the local area.

- 5.20 In terms of adverse impacts, for the reasons outlined above, it is considered that the future occupants are likely to experience some noise disturbance from the adjacent road, in particular in the outdoor amenity area, and there may be some overshadowing to neighbouring properties, but in this case, these harms are not considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposed development.

Recommendation

- 5.21 In conclusion, taking into account planning policy, other material considerations and the comments of interested parties, the adverse impacts of the proposed development are not considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the national planning policy framework as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination. Therefore, the application is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions set out in section 6 of the report and the resolution of matters relating to biodiversity net gain.

6 CONDITIONS

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004.

2. That the development be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed below. The Proposed Site Plan Amended Drawing Number 2A dated September 2024 is permitted in so far as it shows the red line site boundary and blue ownership area.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt as to what is permitted.

3. Before above ground building work commences, a schedule of materials (including samples) to be used in the elevations of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be constructed in the approved materials.

REASON: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

4. Notwithstanding details contained in the application, detailed specifications and drawings of all external windows and doors to include elevations of each complete assembly at a minimum 1:20 scale and sections of each component at a minimum 1:5 scale and including details of all materials, finishes and colours shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before that architectural feature is commissioned/erected on site. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To ensure the architectural detailing of the buildings reflects the established character of the area.

5. The external walls of the proposed to be rendered shall be rendered, in accordance with a specification which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any rendering commences.

REASON: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

6. The means of access between the land and the highway shall be constructed, laid out, surfaced, lit and drained in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and all ancillary works therein specified shall be undertaken in accordance with the said specification before first occupation of the dwellings hereby approved.

REASON: To ensure a safe and adequate access.

7. The car parking areas (including where appropriate the marking out of parking spaces) shown on the approved plans shall be constructed before occupation of the development and thereafter retained and used for no other purpose.

REASON: To ensure that adequate car parking facilities are provided in the interests of road safety.

8. Prior to any development above slab level, a scheme for the landscaping of the site, including the retention of any existing trees and shrubs and planting of additional trees and hedge enhancements, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented as approved within 12 months of the commencement of the approved development or as otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter be maintained in accordance with the approved scheme. In the event of any of the trees or shrubs so planted dying or being seriously damaged or destroyed within 5 years of the completion of the development, a new tree or shrub of equivalent number and species, shall be planted as a replacement and thereafter properly maintained.

REASON: To ensure the safeguarding of the character and landscape of the area during and post development.

9. Before first occupation of the building/extension hereby permitted the window(s) serving the bathroom shall be fitted with obscure glazing and shall be retained in that condition thereafter.

REASON: To safeguard privacy in the adjacent property.

10. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no development permitted under Schedule 2, Part 1, Class A and Class E shall be carried out other than that expressly authorised by this permission.

REASON: Control is needed to protect the amenity of residents.

11. That, prior to the commencement of development, a full surface water drainage strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy shall include details of the size, position and construction of the drainage scheme and results of soakage tests

carried out at the site to demonstrate the infiltration rate. Three tests should be carried out for each soakage pit as per BRE 365 with the lowest infiltration rate (expressed in m/s) used for design. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved. Development shall not take place until an exceedance flow routing plan for flows above the 1 in 100 year + 40% CC event has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure the proper provision for surface water drainage and/ or to ensure flooding is not exacerbated in the locality (The West Oxfordshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance). If the surface water design is not agreed before works commence, it could result in abortive works being carried out on site or alterations to the approved site layout being required to ensure flooding does not occur.

12. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use unless and until the acoustic mitigation scheme (noise barrier) has been installed (and maintained thereafter), in full accordance with the submitted Noise Impact Assessment dated March 2025. Any necessary changes to the mitigation scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in advance of first occupation.

REASON: To safeguard the amenity of future occupants.

13. In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development, it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Environment Agency's Land Contamination: Risk Management (LCRM), and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared, to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risks to human health, buildings and other property, and which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To safeguard the amenity of residents.

INFORMATIVES :-

- I. The Surface Water Drainage scheme should, where possible, incorporate Sustainable Drainage Techniques in order to ensure compliance with;
 - Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (Part 1 - Clause 27 (1))
 - Oxfordshire County Council's Local standards and guidance for surface water drainage on major development in Oxfordshire (V1.2 December 2021)
 - The local flood risk management strategy published by Oxfordshire County Council 2015 - 2020 as per the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (Part 1 - Clause 9 (1))
 - CIRIA C753 SuDS Manual 2015
 - The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England, produced by the Environment Agency in July 2020, pursuant to paragraph 9 of Section 7 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.
 - Updated Planning Practice Guidance on Flood Risk and Coastal Change, published on 25th August 2022 by the Environment Agency -<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change>.
 - Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems (March 2015))

2. Applicants are strongly encouraged to minimise energy demand, and take climate action, through fitting:
 - Electricity-fed heating systems and renewable energy, for example solar panels and heat pumps; thus avoiding fossil fuel based systems, for example gas boilers;
 - Wall, ceiling, roof, and floor insulation, and ventilation;
 - High performing triple glazed windows and airtight frames
 - Energy and water efficient appliances and fittings
 - Water recycling measures
 - Sustainably and locally sourced materials

For further guidance, please visit:

<https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-permission/make-a-planning-application/planning-application-supporting-information/sustainability-standards-checklist/>

<https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/environment/climate-action/how-to-achieve-net-zero-carbon-homes/>

3. Thames Water will aim to provide customers with a minimum pressure of 10m head (approx. 1 bar) and a flow rate of 9 litres/minute at the point where it leaves Thames Waters pipes. The developer should take account of this minimum pressure in the design of the proposed development.
4. Please note works are required to be carried out within the public highway, the applicant shall not commence such work before formal approval has been granted by Oxfordshire County Council by way of legal agreement between the applicant and Oxfordshire County Council see Dropped kerbs | Oxfordshire County Council

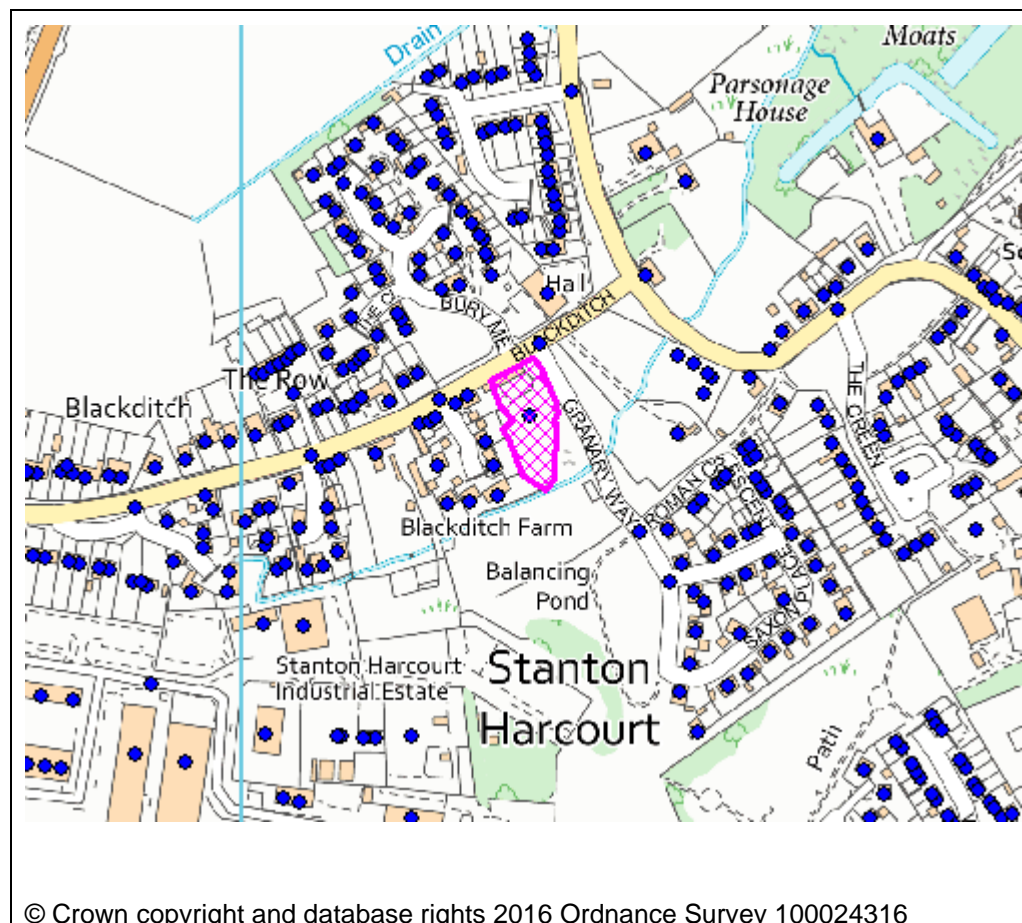
Contact Officer: Clare Anscombe

Telephone Number: 01993 861672

Date: 2nd July 2025

Application Number	24/03277/FUL
Site Address	Land (E) 441191 (N) 205720 Blackditch Stanton Harcourt Oxfordshire
Date	2nd July 2025
Officer	James Nelson
Officer Recommendations	Provisional Approval
Parish	Stanton Harcourt Parish Council
Grid Reference	441191 E 205720 N
Committee Date	14th July 2025

Location Map



Application Details:

Demolition of majority of existing stable building. Erection of seven dwellings with associated works to include new access road, carports, parking bays and soft and hard landscaping (amended plans)

Applicant Details:

Bury
Care Of Agent

I CONSULTATIONS

Conservation And Design Officer	No objection.
OCC Highways	No objection subject to conditions.
WODC Drainage	No objection subject to condition.
District Ecologist	Holding objection.
Env Health Contamination	No objection subject to conditions.
Env Health Noise And Amenity	No objection subject to condition.
Thames Water	No Comment Received.
Environment Agency	No comment.
Parish Council	Objection on following grounds: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Impact on the Environment2. Impact on Traffic and Transportation3. Impact on Noise Levels and Pollution4. Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area (Policy OS2 and OS4)5. Impact on Sustainability6. Impact on Neighbouring Properties and Privacy7. Impact on Local Amenities and Services Reconsultation- reiteration of above comments.
OCC Archaeological Services	No objection subject to conditions.
WODC Drainage	See above.
Parish Council	See above.
OCC Highways	See above.
District Ecologist	See above.

2 REPRESENTATIONS

2.1 A total of 29 objection comments were received to the original consultation. These are available to view in full on the Council's website but are summarised as covering the following matters:

- Poor design and harm to the Conservation Area and nearby Listed Buildings
- Overdevelopment of the site
- Loss of important area of green space and stable building
- No provision for previously planned village shop/impact on local facilities
- Lack of parking/highways concerns
- Noise levels and pollution
- Sustainability impact/reliance on private car
- Adverse neighbourliness impact on 4 Farmhouse Close resulting from Plot 6
- Impact on surface water drainage and sewerage system
- Impact on local ecology and landscape

2.2 Your officers also note that various comments mention issues with the public consultation process. In this regard, the LPA has complied with its statutory requirements for this type of application.

2.3 A further 13 comments in objection have been received in response to the reconsultation on amended plans. These are also available to view in full on the Council's website but generally reiterate previous concerns and state that the changes made are minor in nature and previous concerns remain applicable.

3 APPLICANT'S CASE

3.1 An amended Design and Access Statement has been submitted by the Applicant (March 2025). Along with all relevant planning documents, this is available in full on the Council's website, but the key points are summarised below.

3.2 "The existing site consist of a row of dilapidated 19th century stables that back onto Blackditch, with an associated hardstanding & paddock stretching south away from the stables alongside Granary Way towards the small waterway that runs through the village. The roughly triangular site covers an area of approximately 2538 square metres, 0.6 Acres.

3.3 The site was included within the development boundary of application 16/03627/OUT that granted permission for the 40 house Deanfield's development to the southeast of the site. As part of this application the development site was earmarked for the construction of a shop and was retained by the current landowner when the Deanfield's development was sold. Unfortunately, upon further assessment it was concluded that a shop would not be a viable option.

3.4 The Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies the stable, the adjoining small barn and boundary wall, as being 'Locally Listed' and as such worthy of retention. The stables are however in a heavily dilapidated condition and unsuitable for redevelopment. John Moore HERITAGE SERVICES were instructed to produce a Historic building impact assessment for the site, which assessed the stables to be a heritage asset of "low significance". The full heritage report is attached as part of this application.

- 3.5 It is proposed that 7 new dwellings are to be built on the site, consisting of five 3-bed dwellings and two 4-bed dwellings. Development of this scheme has involved the careful discussion of ideas and visions with the client, heritage experts and planners to create a proposal that best suites the site and its surroundings.
- 3.6 Whilst the proposal involves demolishing much of existing stable, the small barn at the stables western end, has been kept outside of the development boundary and will be retained, whilst a portion of the stables rear wall will be preserved as a garden wall, as mentioned. Both actions we believe help mitigate the removal of the stable and helps minimise any impact of surrounding heritage assets as it helps preserve elements of the existing views and street scene of Blackditch, which acts as the main link between the development site and the listed Smithey's cottage and Blackditch farmhouse.
- 3.7 The Proposed scheme has digested the feedback from the pre-application, and we feel that the full application suitable responds to the feedback and referenced planning policies."

4 PLANNING POLICIES

OS1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development

OS2 Locating development in the right places

OS3 Prudent use of natural resources

OS4 High quality design

H1 Amount and distribution of housing

H2 Delivery of new homes

H4 Type and mix of new homes

T1 Sustainable transport

T2 Highway improvement schemes

T3 Public transport, walking and cycling

T4 Parking provision

EH2 Landscape character

EH3 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

EH7 Flood risk

EH8 Environmental protection

EH9 Historic environment

EH10 Conservation Areas

EH11 Listed Buildings

EH12 Traditional Buildings

EH16 Non designated heritage assets

WIT6NE Witney sub-area strategy

DESGUI West Oxfordshire Design Guide

NPPF 2024

The National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) is also a material planning consideration.

5 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Background

- 5.1 This application seeks consent for the demolition of majority of existing stable building and the erection of seven dwellings with associated works to include new access road, carports, parking bays and soft and hard landscaping at Land (E) 441191 (N) 205720, Blackditch, Stanton Harcourt.
- 5.2 The application has been amended since submission, and necessary re-consultation with neighbours and the Parish Council has taken place.
- 5.3 The site is located within the village of Stanton Harcourt to the southern side of Blackditch and west of Granary Way within the Stanton Harcourt and Sutton Conservation Area ('CA'). At present, the site hosts a locally listed single storey stable building, associated hardstanding, boundary treatments and pasture. The closest listed buildings to the site are Blackditch Farmhouse approximately 65m west (Grade II) and Smithy's Cottage circa 90m east (Grade II).
- 5.4 The application is brought before Members due to the objections of the Parish Council on the grounds set out above.

Development Plan

- 5.5 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides that the local planning authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. In this case, the development plan is the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 ('WOLP').

5-Year Housing Land Supply and the NPPF

- 5.6 The Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of housing land. The it is clear that the decision-making process for the determination of this application is therefore to assess whether the adverse impacts of granting planning permission for the proposed development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits or whether there are specific policies in the framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance providing strong reason to refuse the development in accordance with NPPF para. 11.
- 5.7 Taking into account planning policy, other material considerations and the representations of interested parties, officers are of the opinion that the key considerations for the application are:
- Principle
 - Layout, Scale and Appearance
 - Impact upon Heritage Assets
 - Neighbourly Amenity
 - Highways/Transport
 - Drainage/Flood Risk/Water Supply
 - Ecology/Trees
- 5.8 Each will be considered in the following sections of this report.

Principle

5.9 WOLP Policy OS2 sets out the general spatial strategy in the District and identifies a hierarchy of settlements for new development, which seeks to steer a significant proportion of future development in the 'main service centres' of Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton. It takes a hierarchical approach as set out in table 4b, which characterises Stanton Harcourt as a 'village', where limited development which respects the village character and local distinctiveness may be acceptable.

5.10 Policy OS2 also contains a set of general principles with which new development should comply including all development should:

- 'Be of a proportionate and appropriate scale to its context having regard to the potential cumulative impact of development in the locality;
- Form a logical complement to the existing scale and pattern of development and/or the character of the area;
- Be compatible with adjoining uses and not have a harmful impact on the amenity of existing occupants;
- As far as is reasonably possible protect or enhance the local landscape and the setting of the settlement/s;
- Be provided with safe vehicular access and safe and convenient pedestrian access to supporting services and facilities; and
- Conserve and enhance the natural, historic and built environment'

5.11 Policy OS2 goes on to outline that proposals for residential development will be considered in accordance with the locational housing strategy contained in WOLP Policy H2. Policy H2 states that new dwellings may be permitted in villages in the following circumstances:

- 'On sites that have been allocated for housing development within a Local Plan or relevant neighbourhood plan;
- On previously developed land within or adjoining the built up area provided the loss of any existing use would not conflict with other plan policies and the proposal complies with the general principles set out in Policy OS2 and any other relevant policies in this plan;
- On undeveloped land within the built up area provided that the proposal is in accordance with the other policies in the plan and in particular the general principles in Policy OS2; and
- On undeveloped land adjoining the built up area where convincing evidence is presented to demonstrate that it is necessary to meet identified housing needs, it is in accordance with the distribution of housing set out in Policy H1 and is in accordance with other policies in the plan in particular the general principles in Policy OS2.'

5.12 The existing site comprises stable building, associated hardstanding and boundary treatments and appears to have been historically used for horse grazing. In the absence of any planning history on

the land, your officers consider that the lawful use of the land should be considered agricultural and therefore does not fall within the definition of 'previously developed land' as set out in Annex 2 of the NPPF and should therefore be considered 'undeveloped land' for the purposes of H2.

- 5.13 The site lies within the built-up area of the village, owing to the presence of residential development along Blackditch to the west, Bury Mead to the north, recently constructed residential scheme at Granary Way to the south and historic village centre to the east. As such, regardless of whether the site should be considered previously developed, the proposal is acceptable in principle under Policy H2, as the loss of the existing use would not contravene any local plan policies. The site was indicated as a shop under application 16/03627/OUT, however, this was not secured via legal agreement nor came forward with the associated reserved matters application. Therefore, this is not considered a constraint to the proposed development. This is qualified under H2 so that the application should also comply with other plan policies, in particular the general principles in Policy OS2, which will be assessed below.

Layout, Scale and Appearance

- 5.14 WOLP Policy OS4 states that new development should respect the historic, architectural and landscape character of the locality. Section 12 of the NPPF reinforces the fundamental nature of good design to sustainable development and states that 'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development' (Para. 131) and 'development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies' (Para. 139). WOLP Policy OS2 also requires that development should form a logical complement to the existing scale and pattern of development and/or character of the area and as far as is reasonably possible, protect or enhance the local landscape and setting of settlements.
- 5.15 The West Oxfordshire Design Guide (Section 11) sets out supplementary design guidance in the District and states that:
- 'In the case of a site within or immediately adjoining a settlement with a distinctive established character, it may be most appropriate to develop a scheme that echoes and builds sympathetically upon distinctive aspects and features of that settlement, in order to create a place whose character meaningfully relates to that of its context.'
- 5.16 In terms of layout, the proposal would involve the partial demolition of the stable building such that only the road-facing wall would be retained up to 1.2m in height to form the boundary treatment fronting Blackditch. A terrace of five three-bed dwellings would be formed in its place and set over a split-level plan with rear projecting gables. The terrace continues the strong building line along Blackditch with parking to the rear.
- 5.17 Set back in the site would be two four-bed detached dwellings fronting the internal site access road. The layout has been amended to pull Plot 6 away from neighbouring dwellings on Farmhouse Close and reorientate Plot 7 to address Granary Way. These plots would be served by on-site parking for two cars. Officers consider that the layout reflects the linear pattern of development along Blackditch and acknowledge that set back detached properties are characteristic of the evolution of the settlement in this area as evidenced by Farmhouse Close and more recently the 40-home Deanfield development to the southeast.
- 5.18 The dwellings would be two-storey in height ranging from 9.1m-8.6m in height with secondary projections. The forms are considered vernacular in terms of scale, massing and proportion, and

could be accommodate within the site given its size. With regard to appearance, the design has been amended to simplify the elevational treatment, better deal with the levels change and address the corner on Granary Way. Overall, the dwellings are of modest vernacular appearance, using clean and simple forms with high-quality, local materials and details, such as natural stone, reconstituted stone slate and red-brick chimneys. Therefore, the proposed design is considered to accord with WOLP Policies OS2 and OS4 as well as the West Oxfordshire Design Guide and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Impact upon Heritage Assets

- 5.19 Given the application site within the CA, officers are required to take account of Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended, which states that, with respect to buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.
- 5.20 Your officers are required to take account of section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended, due to the proximity of listed buildings as set out above, which states that considering development which affects a listed building, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or of any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 5.21 Section 16 of the NPPF states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining or enhancing the significance of heritage assets. Paragraph 207 requires the applicant to describe the significance of affected heritage assets. Paragraph 212 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, such as a conservation area, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification (paragraph 213). Paragraph 215 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. WOLP Policies EH9 and EH10 are directly relevant to the application with regard to the impact of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the CA.
- 5.22 Officers also note that the proposal would result in the partial loss of a building identified as locally listed within the Stanton Harcourt and Sutton Conservation Area Character Appraisal and as such, WOLP Policies EH12 and EH16 are relevant as well as paragraph 216 of the NPPF which outlines that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application requiring a balanced judgement to be made having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. Paragraph 217 also states that where partial loss of a heritage asset is permitted, LPAs should take all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

Main elements contributing to the significance of heritage assets

- 5.23 Before turning to assess the impacts of the proposal upon the significance of the CA, it is first necessary for officers to identify the existing character and appearance of the area, which is charted in the Stanton Harcourt and Sutton Conservation Area Appraisal ('CAA') and Proposals for Preservation and Enhancement document ('PPE'). The special character of the CA is derived from a range of factors, most significantly from the built environment and its interaction with the natural and

agricultural landscape that surrounds the villages. The villages have a long history with evidence of activity in the parish dating particularly to the Bronze Age, Iron Age and Romano-British era with settlement at Stanton Harcourt and Sutton by about the 9th century. Agriculture played a major part in the establishment and development of the villages, due to the geology being well suited to meadow or pasture use. In 1940, a military airfield was built to the south- west of the village.

5.24 The CAA describes the character of the village as:

'An attractive village of loose-knit form. It features an abundance of Listed buildings, including a memorable and highly significant cluster of structures at its core with development activity historically centred on the church and Harcourt House. Winding around this core are lanes lined with short terraces and distinctive thatched cottages. These lanes, together with small parcels of open land, serve to create a series of attractive internal vistas, and both components represent enriching and distinctive features of the character area. Moving out from this core the density of the settlement drops off, eventually giving way to scattered farmsteads and labourers' cottages'.

5.25 Officers therefore consider that the significance of the CA is primarily derived from its high concentration of listed and vernacular buildings, settlement pattern (including its development over time). Officers also consider that the link between the village and its airfield, constructed during WW2 to serve as a bomber base from which Churchill departed for the Casablanca Conference in 1943, also forms part of its historic significance.

5.26 With regard to listed buildings, the significance of Blackditch Farmhouse and Smithy's Cottage are derived primarily from their architectural value in relation to historic vernacular architecture, construction techniques, design, the origins and ongoing development of the building.

Contribution of the site to the significance of heritage assets

5.27 The application site comprises an area of undeveloped agricultural land within the core of the settlement and vernacular historic stable building. Officers note that these features form a positive contribution to the historic significance of the CA through its contribution to the legibility to the historic character of the settlement and demonstration of the historical connection of the settlement with agriculture and adjacent locally listed buildings to the west.

5.28 However, officers consider that the site must be viewed in the context of recently constructed residential development along Granary Way, which has resulted in a partial erosion and suburbanisation of the former agricultural character and appearance of the area. Further, the site is contextualised by cul-de-sac style development at Farmhouse Close and Bury Mead, which ensure that the site reads as an isolated parcel of land forming a limited contribution to the character and appearance of the area and given the intervening distances and built form to listed buildings, a negligible contribution to the setting of listed buildings.

Impact of the scheme upon the significance of heritage assets

5.29 The proposed development would result in the partial loss of the locally listed stable and a significant erosion of its significance, as well as a lesser degree of harm to the setting of locally listed building to the west through erosion of their historical link. This therefore amounts to harm non-designated heritage assets which is considered further below. Further, it would introduce built form across the currently undeveloped site within the CA. Whilst small in scale, the existing open, undeveloped character of the site will largely be lost and the loss of the stable building will result in a

weakened historical association between the site and the surrounding locally listed farm buildings. Further, views from Blackditch will be partially suburbanised albeit in the context of existing modern residential development. Your officers note that the proposed design would be of high quality, fronting the highway in a manner characteristic in the locality and using vernacular materials and having been amended during the course of the application to simplify the layout, elevational treatment and better address the streetscene. In this context, the application is considered to result in a low level of less than substantial harm in the terms of the NPPF, which must be awarded great weight in an initial heritage balance.

Heritage balance

5.30 Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states:

"Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."

5.31 As set out, this duty is enshrined in the WOLP Policy EH9, effectively granting Paragraph 215 statutory weight.

5.32 Officers also have regard to the 'balanced judgement' as required by the NPPF and EH16 in relation to impact upon the locally listed stable.

5.33 Having identified less than substantial harm to the significance of the CA, to which great weight must be applied, the balancing exercise set out under Paragraph 215 of the NPPF must be undertaken whereby the public benefits of the scheme are weighed against the heritage harms. In this case, the harm identified is considered to fall towards the lower end of less than substantial in the terms of the NPPF. In terms of the public benefits arising from the application, the scheme would provide seven dwellings at a time when the LPA is unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply. Further, officers recognise para. 73 of the revised NPPF which acknowledges that small sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area. Your officers consider that the socio-economic benefits arising from the provision of dwellings are by nature proportional to the size of the scheme. Nonetheless, officers consider that the socio-economic benefits related to the provision of seven dwellings should be awarded moderate weight given the LPA's housing land supply position.

5.34 Conversely, there would be less than substantial harm to the CA, which would fall towards the lower end of less than substantial. When applying great weight to this level of 'less than substantial' heritage harm to the significance of the CA, as required by NPPF Paragraph 212, officers consider that this heritage balance falls in favour of the application.

5.35 Officers consider that with regard to the locally listed stable and associated buildings to the west, officers note that the stable building contains some historic fabric that holds interest in relation to historic vernacular architecture but has been substantially altered in the 20th century with little historic fabric surviving other than the northern wall, which (whilst altered) would remain a feature in the streetscene. Therefore, given the public benefits as listed above, a balanced judgment must fall in favour of granting consent.

5.36 The application therefore complies with WOLP Policies EH9, EH10, EH11, EH12 and EH16, as well as the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF and the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Neighbourly Amenity

5.37 WOLP Policy OS2 states that new development should be compatible with adjoining uses and not have a harmful impact on the amenity of existing occupants. The importance of minimising adverse impacts upon the amenity of future and neighbouring occupiers is reiterated in WOLP Policy OS4, the NPPF and the West Oxfordshire Design Guide.

5.38 With regard to neighbourliness, your officers consider that Plots 1-5 give rise to minimal concerns by virtue of their siting fronting Blackditch, fenestration and resultant relationship with neighbouring dwellings to the west and along Farmhouse Close.

5.39 Your officers also consider that Plot 7 is sited such that it would be set approximately 30m from closest residential dwelling and therefore not giving rise to any overbearing or loss of light concerns. Further, due to its orientation and fenestration arrangement, it would not give rise to any overlooking concerns.

5.40 With regard to Plot 6, your officers note objection comments regarding potential impacts upon dwellings at Farmhouse Close, particularly No. 4. In this regard, Plot 6 would be located approximately 16.5m-18m from the rear elevation of No.4 and set to the north east. Changes made during the course of the application ensure that Plot 6 has been shifted east by approximately 1.5m, the rear projecting gable moved further eastward, away from No. 4, and shortened by 2m. There remain no upper floor side windows that would give rise to any overlooking concerns. Taking all of these factors into account including the orientation of the properties in relation to one-another, it is officer opinion that the proposed amended design would result in an acceptable impact on neighbouring properties by way of overlooking, loss of light and outlook and overbearing impacts.

Highways/Transport

5.41 WOLP Policy OS2 states that new development should be provided with safe vehicular access and safe and convenient pedestrian access to supporting services and facilities. WOLP Policy T1 seeks to steer development into areas with 'convenient access to a good range of services and facilities and where the need to travel by private car can be minimised'. WOLP Policy T2 states that all new development 'will be required to demonstrate safe access and an acceptable degree of impact on the local highway network'. Policy T3 seeks 'to maximise opportunities for walking, cycling and the use of public transport'. Policy T4 states that: 'parking in new developments will be provided in accordance with the County Council's adopted parking standards and should be sufficient to meet increasing levels of car ownership'.

5.42 In terms of accessibility, the site is located adjacent to the built-up area of the village, with pedestrian access to the centre of the village, where a limited number of services are concentrated. Whilst officers note sustainability concerns, Stanton Harcourt is listed as a village in the WOLP which is suitable to limited housing development.

5.43 In terms of safety, the proposed arrangement, including new access, has not drawn objection from the Highways Authority on the grounds of access and is considered to meet with the Highways

Authority's guidance on vehicular parking in this location. Officers are therefore satisfied that the application is acceptable in highways safety terms.

Drainage/Flood Risk/Water Supply

5.44 WOLP Policy EH7 relates to flood risk and states that:

"Flood risk will be managed using the sequential, risk-based approach, set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, of avoiding flood risk to people and property where possible and managing any residual risk".

5.45 The LPA's drainage engineers have reviewed the scheme, which is located on land within Flood Risk Zone 1, and raised no objection subject to the imposition of a pre-commencement surface water condition. A very small portion of the site is categorised by the Environment Agency as having a 'low chance' of surface water flooding but given its very limited extent and location, this is not considered to trigger the 'sequential test' as set out in the NPPF.

5.46 In terms of foul water and water supply, your officers have consulted with Thames Water and have not received a response. On this basis and given the limited scale of the scheme, your officers do not consider that it would be reasonable to withhold consent on this basis.

Ecology/Trees

5.47 WOLP Policy EH3 states that the biodiversity of West Oxfordshire shall be protected and enhanced to achieve an overall net gain in biodiversity.

5.48 The application is subject to statutory Biodiversity Net Gain ('BNG').

5.49 Amended ecological information has been submitted and is under consideration by the Council's Biodiversity Officer. On the basis of the initial comments of the Biodiversity Officer, these comments are likely considered surmountable, and therefore, your officers seek delegated authority to determine the application (with appropriate conditions) at such time as the ecology matters are resolved to the satisfaction of the Biodiversity Officer.

5.50 Your officers note that the application site is dominated by buildings/hardstanding as well as paddock grassland with limited trees. The proposal would lead to the removal on one specimen on the northern site boundary, however this would result in no material impact on the character and appearance of the area.

Other Matters

5.51 With regard to sustainability, this is covered in Section 6 of the applicant's Design and Access Statement, which sets out that EV charging will be installed, ASHPs will be used and solar PVs installed.

5.52 There is no need to impose conditions regarding construction working hours or requiring the provision of electric vehicle charging points. This is because there are separate powers to prevent harm resulting from noise and activity related to construction works, and building regulations now require electric vehicle charging points to be provided for all new dwellings with associated parking spaces.

5.53 Land contamination has been considered and officers recommend imposition of planning conditions to safeguard health of future occupiers as recommended by the Council's Environmental Health Officer.

Planning Balance and Recommendation

5.54 This assessment has found that the application would accord with the spatial strategy of the WOLP with regard to the location of new residential development and following revisions made during the course of the application, would represent a sensitive and well-designed scheme reflecting local character in its layout, form and vernacular appearance. Whilst the proposal would lead to the removal of much of the historic fabric of a locally listed building within the CA, for the reasons set out above, your officers consider that it's contribution to the significance of the CA is limited, and that the moderate public benefits resulting from a comprehensive redevelopment of the site and the provision of seven dwellings in a sustainable location in the context of the LPA's 5YHLS position would outweigh the low level of less than substantial harm identified, noting that the scheme has not drawn objection from the Conservation and Design Officer.

5.55 Officers note that the amended design would result in an acceptable impact upon the amenity of third parties and the OCC Highways, although these as well as drainage matters should be considered neutral impacts and do not weigh in favour of the application.

5.56 Whilst the biodiversity impact of the scheme is yet to be quantified, officers anticipate a moderate positive impact resulting from the provision of BNG of at least 10% and enhancement features to be secured via condition.

5.57 In light of this assessment, the application is considered to accord with the provisions of WOLP Policies OS1, OS2, OS3, OS4, WIT6, H1, H2, H4, T1, T2, T3, T4, EH2, EH3, EH7, EH8, EH9, EH10, EH11, EH12 and EH16, the West Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016 the NPPF 2024. The adverse impacts of the scheme therefore would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits and the application is therefore recommended for provisional approval with officers granted delegated authority to resolve biodiversity matters and impose additional conditions/informatives as appropriate.

6 CONDITIONS

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the plan(s) accompanying the application as modified by the revised plan(s) deposited on 26th March and 10th April 2025.

REASON: The application details have been amended by the submission of revised details.

3. The external walls of the dwellings hereby approved shall be constructed with natural Cotswold stone, a sample of which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before development commences.

REASON: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

4. The roof(s) shall be covered with reconstituted stone slates a sample of which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any roofing commences.

REASON: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

5. Notwithstanding details contained in the application, detailed specifications and drawings of all external windows and doors to include elevations of each complete assembly at a minimum 1:20 scale and sections of each component at a minimum 1:5 scale and including details of all materials, finishes and colours shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before that architectural feature is commissioned/erected on site. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To ensure the architectural detailing of the buildings reflects the established character of the area.

6. No dwelling hereby approved shall be occupied until the means to ensure a maximum water consumption of 110 litres use per person per day, in accordance with policy OS3, has been complied with for that dwelling and retained in perpetuity thereafter.

REASON: To improve the sustainability of the dwellings in accordance with policy OS3 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

7. Prior to first occupation of the dwellings hereby approved, boundary treatments serving the site shall be erected in full accordance with the details shown on Plan Reference: I34-B (Site Plan Proposed Boundary Treatment Materials) and retained in that condition thereafter. Notwithstanding the provisions of the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) no fences, gates or walls shall be erected within the application site other than those expressly authorised by this permission.

REASON: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

8. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no development permitted under Schedule 2, Part 1, Classes A (all plots), or D (Plots 1-5 only), shall be carried out other than that expressly authorised by this permission.

REASON: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area and prevent overdevelopment of the plots.

9. No development shall take place until a site investigation of the nature and extent of contamination has been carried out in accordance with a methodology which has previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The results of the site investigation shall be made available to the local planning authority before any development begins. If any significant contamination is found during the site investigation, a report specifying the measures to be taken to remediate the site to render it suitable for the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before any development begins.

REASON: To ensure any contamination of the site is identified and appropriately remediated.

10. The Remediation Scheme, as agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved timetable of works and before the development hereby permitted is first occupied. Any variation to the scheme shall be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority in advance of works being undertaken. On completion of the works the developer shall submit to the Local Planning Authority written confirmation that all works were completed in accordance with the agreed details.

If, during the course of development, any contamination is found which has not been identified in the site investigation, additional measures for the remediation of this contamination shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The remediation of the site shall incorporate the approved additional measures.

REASON: To ensure any contamination of the site is identified and appropriately remediated.

11. Prior to any demolition and the commencement of the development a professional archaeological organisation acceptable to the Local Planning Authority shall prepare an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation, relating to the application site area, which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To safeguard the recording of archaeological matters within the site in accordance with the NPPF (2024).

12. Following the approval of the Written Scheme of Investigation referred to in condition 11, and prior to any demolition on the site and the commencement of the development (other than in accordance with the agreed Written Scheme of Investigation), a staged programme of archaeological evaluation and mitigation shall be carried out by the commissioned archaeological organisation in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation. The programme of work shall include all processing, research and analysis necessary to produce an accessible and useable archive and a full report for publication which shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority within two years of the completion of the archaeological fieldwork.

REASON: To safeguard the identification, recording, analysis and archiving of heritage assets before they are lost and to advance understanding of the heritage assets in their wider context through publication and dissemination of the evidence in accordance with the NPPF (2024).

13. That, prior to the commencement of development, a full surface water drainage scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include results of soakage tests carried out at the site to demonstrate the infiltration rate. Three tests should be carried out for each soakage pit as per BRE 365, with the lowest infiltration rate (expressed in m/s) used for design. The details shall include a management plan setting out the maintenance of the drainage asset. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved and shall be maintained in accordance with the management plan thereafter. Development shall not take place until an exceedance flow routing plan for flows above the 1 in 100 year + 40% CC event has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure the proper provision for surface water drainage and/ or to ensure flooding is not exacerbated in the locality (The West Oxfordshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance). If the scope of surface water drainage is not agreed before works commence, it could affect either the approved layout or completed works.

14. The car parking areas (including where appropriate the marking out of parking spaces) shown on the approved plans shall be constructed before occupation of the development and thereafter retained and used for no other purpose.

REASON: To ensure that adequate car parking facilities are provided in the interests of road safety.

15. The means of access between the land and the highway shall be constructed, laid out, surfaced, lit and drained in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and all ancillary works therein specified shall be undertaken in accordance with the said specification before first occupation of the dwellings hereby approved.

REASON: To ensure a safe and adequate access.

16. No highway work shall begin until details of the junction between the proposed road and the highway have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and no building shall be occupied until that junction has been constructed in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: In the interests of road safety.

17. Prior to first occupation of the dwellings hereby approved, cycle parking facilities shall be installed in accordance with a scheme that has been first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle parking facilities shall be retained in accordance with the approved details thereafter.

REASON: In order to ensure the provision of cycle parking facilities to allow for active travel.

INFORMATIVES :-

- I. The Surface Water Drainage scheme should, where possible, incorporate Sustainable Drainage Techniques in order to ensure compliance with:
 - Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (Part 1 - Clause 27 (1))
 - Oxfordshire County Council's Local standards and guidance for surface water drainage on major development in Oxfordshire (V1.2 December 2021)
 - The local flood risk management strategy published by Oxfordshire County Council 2015 - 2020 as per the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (Part 1 - Clause 9 (1))
 - CIRIA C753 SuDS Manual 2015
 - The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England, produced by the Environment Agency in July 2020, pursuant to paragraph 9 of Section 7 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

- Updated Planning Practice Guidance on Flood Risk and Coastal Change, published on 25th August 2022 by the Environment Agency - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change>.
 - Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems (March 2015))
2. Please note the Advance Payments Code (APC), Sections 219 -225 of the Highways Act, is in force in the county to ensure financial security from the developer to off-set the frontage owners' liability for private street works, typically in the form of a cash deposit or bond. Should a developer wish for a street or estate to remain private then to secure exemption from the APC procedure a 'Private Road Agreement' must be entered into with the County Council to protect the interests of prospective frontage owners. For guidance and information on road adoptions etc. please contact the County's Road Agreements Team by email roadagreements@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Please note If works are required to be carried out within the public highway, the applicant shall not commence such work before formal approval has been granted by Oxfordshire County Council by way of legal agreement between the applicant and Oxfordshire County Council see Dropped kerbs | Oxfordshire County Council

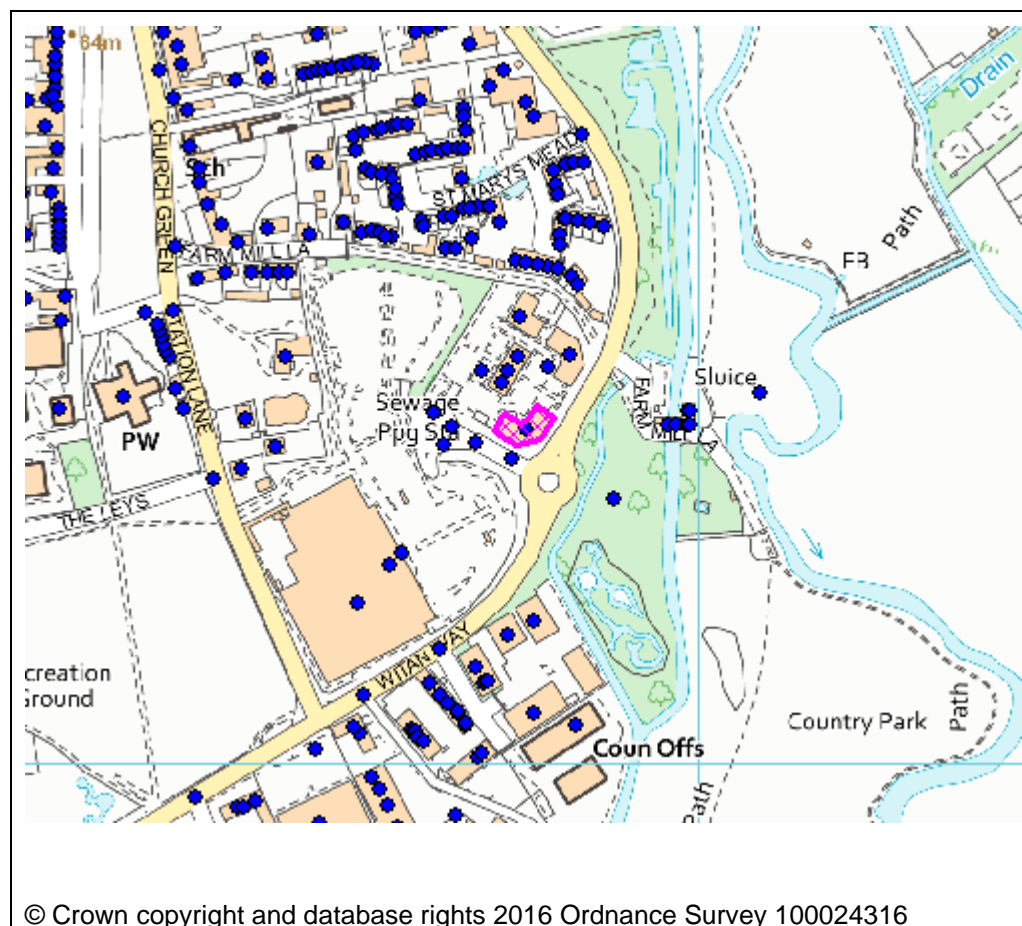
Contact Officer: James Nelson

Telephone Number: 01993 861712

Date: 2nd July 2025

Application Number	25/01071/ADV
Site Address	First Floor Unit 1 Des Roches Square Witney Oxfordshire OX28 4BE
Date	2nd July 2025
Officer	George Matthews
Officer Recommendations	Approve
Parish	Witney Town Council
Grid Reference	435885 E 209222 N
Committee Date	14th July 2025

Location Map



Application Details:

Erection of two fascia signs and window graphics (amended description)

Applicant Details:

Nick Longford
First Floor
Unit 1
Des Roches Square
Witney
Oxfordshire
OX28 4BE

I CONSULTATIONS

OCC Highways

Oxfordshire County Council, as the Local Highways Authority, hereby notify the District Planning Authority that they do not object to the granting of planning permission.

The proposal, if permitted, will not have a significant detrimental impact (in terms of highway safety) on the adjacent highway network.

Conservation And Design
Officer

No objections.

Parish Council

Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

2 REPRESENTATIONS

2.1 No comments received.

3 APPLICANT'S CASE

3.1 The Design and Access Statement submitted in support of the application is summarised as follows:

Gresham House occupy the ground floor and DSA Prospect occupy the first floor. Owners of both companies and landlords have given the consent for the signage to be installed.

Des Roches Square is a prominent two storey modern building fronting Witan Way on the edge of Witney town. Built in 1992 as a two storey office with 6,670 SF floor space and 31 surface parking spaces.

All signage for DSA Prospect is to be internally illuminated and all signage Gresham House will be non-illuminated. Logo/text to be illuminated or non-illuminated only. All manufacture and installation will be done in such a way that there is longevity to all the signs.

The signage scheme has been proposed to help a local business. Signage offers a cost-effective way to attract new customers, establish brand identity, gain a competitive edge, promote sales, and enhance the customer experience. Signage is important to be seen and visible from the street.

No signage faces any residential housing so impact will be minimum.

4 PLANNING POLICIES

OS2 Locating development in the right places
OS4 High quality design
EH10 Conservation Areas
T4 Parking provision

NPPF 2024

DESGUI West Oxfordshire Design Guide

The National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) is also a material planning consideration.

5 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

5.1 The application seeks advertisement consent for the erection of two fascia signs and window graphics at Unit 1, Des Roches Square, Witney. The application site relates to a business unit located adjacent to Witan Way in south Witney. The site lies within the Witney and Cogges Conservation Area.

5.2 The application falls under The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Part 1 Regulation 3 which states: A local planning authority shall exercise its powers under these Regulations in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account A) the provisions of the development plan, so far, they are material and B) any other relevant factors. Therefore, the main considerations of this application are the impact of the proposed development on public amenity and impact on the Conservation Area.

5.3 The application is before Members of the sub-committee as the site is on Council owned land.

5.4 Proposed is the erection of two fascia signs and window graphics on the highway facing elevations of Unit 1, Des Roches Square. The central elevation of which is proposed to house the two fascia signs, both being 2500 millimetres in length and 600 millimetres in height to be installed above the ground floor windows at 3080 millimetres above ground level. It was originally proposed to have six fascia signs in total covering all three elevations, but this has since been reduced to two within the central elevation in order to minimise impact on the Conservation Area. One fascia sign is proposed to be internally illuminated at 500 candelas per square metre, which is a level in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council guidance. The second fascia sign will not be illuminated. The remaining proposed signage is made up of window graphics covering windows on both the ground and first floors across all three elevations.

Impact on Public Amenity

5.5 It is important to consider that Section 12 paragraph 141 of the NPPF (2024) states: "The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed". Linking to this, officers therefore consider Policy OS4 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 relevant as it states that new development should respect the historic, architectural and landscape character of the locality, contribute to local distinctiveness and where possible, enhance the character and quality of the soundings. Section 12(135 b) of the NPPF also states that development should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping to which the proposed complies with.

5.6 The proposed signage would be visible on the street scene, however officers consider that the signage is in keeping with the local vicinity, as it is of modest scale and does not contain any contrastingly striking elements. It has therefore been considered that the proposed signage would not give rise to any adverse impacts in regard to visual amenity.

Impact on the Conservation Area

5.7 Within a Conservation Area, it is also important to take regard of Policy EH10 in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 which states that any proposals for development in a Conservation Area or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area will be permitted where it can be shown to conserve or enhance the special interest, character, appearance and setting. The proposed signage in the proposed location would not affect the public's perception or detrimentally harm the experience of the Conservation Area in this location given its modest nature. In this regard the proposed signage would respect the special qualities and historic context of the Conservation Area and would maintain the appearance of the heritage asset given the nature of what is proposed and its location.

Impact on Highway Safety

5.8 Officers consider that the proposed new signage would not compromise highway safety due to its scale and location. On this basis, the scheme is considered acceptable and complies with policy T4 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan.

Conclusion

5.9 The proposed signage is acceptable in design terms, maintaining levels of amenity within the locality and will not generate any public safety concerns. The proposal accords with the provisions of the NPPF and Policies OS2, OS4, EH10 and T4 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, and the Advertisements Consent regime.

6 CONDITIONS

1. This consent shall operate for a period of five years from the date of this notice.

REASON: By virtue of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

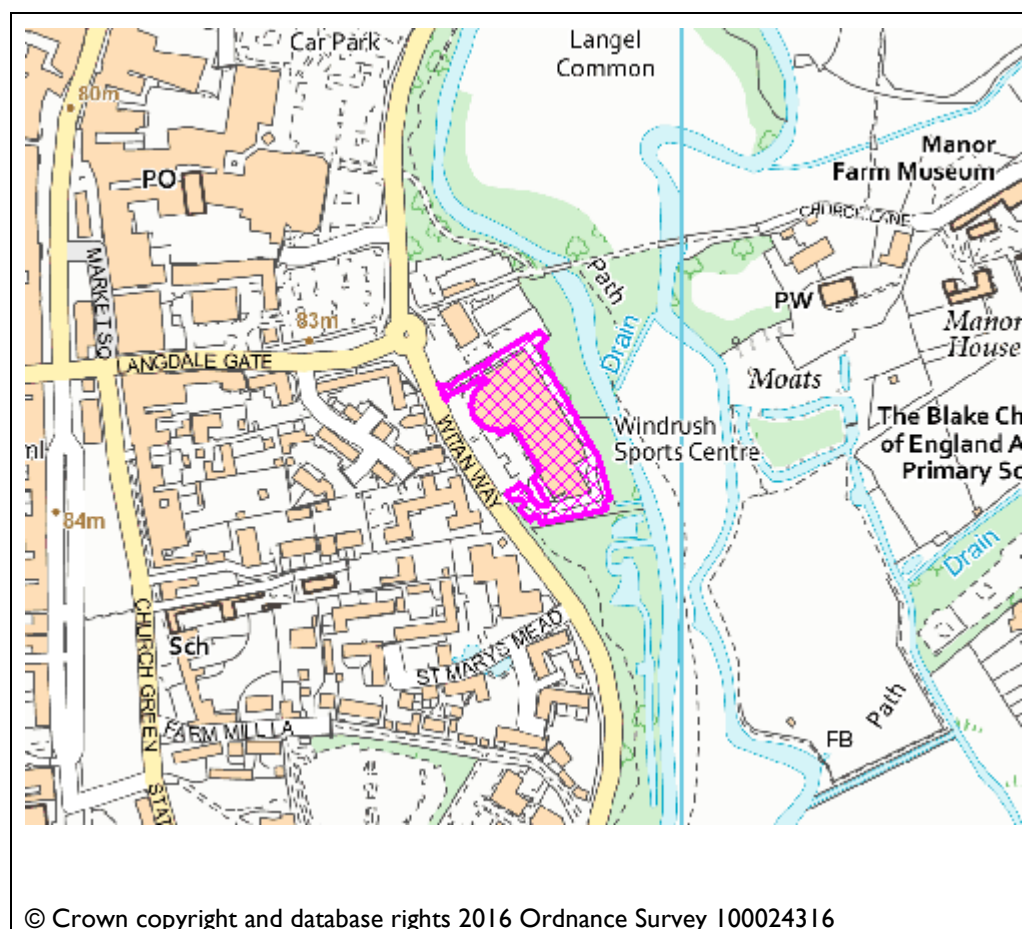
2. Express consent is granted subject to the standard conditions set out in Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

REASON: To comply with the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007. Advertisements must be maintained in a clean, tidy and safe condition and must not obscure road signs or railway.

Contact Officer: George Matthews
Telephone Number: 01993 861709
Date: 2nd July 2025

Application Number	25/00800/FUL
Site Address	Windrush Leisure Centre Witan Way Witney Oxfordshire OX28 4YA
Date	2nd July 2025
Officer	James Nelson
Officer Recommendations	Approve
Parish	Witney Town Council
Grid Reference	435891 E 209557 N
Committee Date	14th July 2025

Location Map



Application Details:

Decarbonisation scheme with plant on the existing roof and erection of timber clad enclosure around the air source heat pumps.

Applicant Details:

West Oxfordshire District Council
West Oxfordshire District Council
Woodgreen
Witney
Oxfordshire
OX28 1NB

I CONSULTATIONS

Parish Council	Supportive.
WODC Drainage	No objection subject to condition.
District Ecologist	No objection subject to informative.
Conservation And Design Officer	No Comment Received.
WODC Tree Officer	No objection subject to condition.
Env Health Noise And Amenity	No objection subject to conditions.

2 REPRESENTATIONS

2.1 No third party comments received.

3 APPLICANT'S CASE

- 3.1 A Design and Access Statement has been submitted in support of the application, the main points of which are summarised below:
- 3.2 "Alternative Heat Ltd have been appointed by West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) to operate as the principal contractor on the design and installation of an Air Source Heat Pump system on the site of Windrush Leisure Centre in the heart of Witney.
- 3.3 This project is to be delivered as part of WODC's carbon action plan in their commitment to become a carbon neutral council by 2030. A pledge to be carbon neutral means that the Council needs to balance the carbon dioxide emissions produced because of its everyday activities with the amount of carbon dioxide emissions that are removed from the atmosphere. Therefore, their first objective is to minimise the amount of carbon dioxide emissions being released because of council activities, bringing these as close to zero as possible.
- 3.4 This application seeks consent as part of the WODC's decarbonisation commitment for the installation of Air Source Heat Pumps to reduce the current site gas usage and greenhouse gases generated from the existing gas boiler systems.
- 3.5 The new ASHP installation is designed to provide 100% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the current building plant heating system, providing a self-sufficient and sustainable solution.

- 3.6 Due to the proximity to local private residential dwellings and the adjacent Witney Children and Family Centre, a detailed Acoustic Survey has been commissioned by Parker JonesAcoustics (PJA) in accordance with BS 4142:2014+A1:2019. The survey monitored existing background noise levels 24/7 due to the new heating plant required to run 24/7. The details of this assessment are outlined further below in this report.
- 3.7 As the acoustic report shows, mitigation measures are required to reduce the noise impact from the new ASHP's on the lower ground area to a responsible level. This will consist of a close boarded fence installed around three sides of the compound to a height of 4.0m above finished concrete slab level. This fence will be constructed of 20mm thick solid timber boards on bolted down galvanized steel posts with a mass of at least 10kg/m2. The remaining side of the ASHP compound will be fenced off with security mesh fencing."

4 PLANNING POLICIES

OS1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development
OS2 Locating development in the right places
OS3 Prudent use of natural resources
OS4 High quality design
EH2 Landscape character
EH3 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
EH7 Flood risk
EH8 Environmental protection
EH9 Historic environment
EH10 Conservation Areas

NPPF 2024

DESGUI West Oxfordshire Design Guide

The National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) is also a material planning consideration.

5 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Background Information

- 5.1 This application seeks consent for the installation of Air Source Heat Pumps ('ASHPs'), associated timber clad enclosure and roof-mounted plant equipment at Windrush Leisure, Centre, Witan Way, Witney in order to facilitate a 'decarbonisation' scheme.
- 5.2 The application site is located within the Witney and Cogges Conservation Area ('CA') and is bounded to the east by Flood Zones 2 and 3 associated with the River Windrush. The proposed development itself however would be located within Flood Zone 1.
- 5.3 The application is submitted on behalf of WODC and relates to Council-owned premises and is therefore brought before the Committee for determination.

Relevant Planning History

W2000/0646- Construction of heating and ventilation plant on roof. Approved June 2000.

W2003/1337- Demolition of existing painted timber, single glazed screen to entrance, erection of single storey front extension to provide changing facilities and modification to the entrance, formation of road to the rear to link modified car parking spaces, provision of new coach layby to frontage. Approved Dec 2003.

Development Plan

5.4 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides that the local planning authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. In this case, the development plan is comprised of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 ('WOLP').

5.5 Taking into account planning policy, other material considerations and the representations of interested parties, officers are of the opinion that the key considerations of the application are:

- Principle;
- Impact on the character and appearance of the area;
- Residential amenity; and
- Ecology/trees

Principle

5.6 In light of Policy OS3 in particular, Officers are minded to support proposals to reduce the use of non-renewable energy sources in principle and recognise the importance that such schemes will play in addressing the climate and ecological emergency. Policy OS3 states that minimising use of non-renewable resources, including land and energy, and maximising opportunities for travel by sustainable means should be considered and the proposed development would comply with this policy.

5.7 Section 14 of the revised NPPF sets out that the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change should also be considered in preparing and assessing planning applications, taking into account the full range of potential climate change impacts (para. 163). Paragraphs 167-168 of the updated NPPF states:

'Local planning authorities should also give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights). Where the proposals would affect conservation areas, listed buildings or other relevant designated heritage assets, local planning authorities should also apply the policies set out in chapter 16 of this Framework.

5.8 When determining planning applications for all forms of renewable and low carbon energy developments and their associated infrastructure, local planning authorities should:

- a) not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and the proposal's contribution to a net zero future;

- b) recognise that small-scale and community-led projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions'.

5.9 Given the above policy context, the principle of development is considered acceptable subject to consideration of the remaining matters above against the development plan and relevant material considerations.

Impact on the character and appearance of the area

5.10 WOLP Policies OS2 and OS4 require new development to respect the historic, architectural and landscape character of the locality. Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') reinforces the fundamental nature of good design to sustainable development and states that 'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development' (Para. 131).

5.11 Given the application site lies within the CA, officers are required to take account of Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended, which states that, with respect to buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. WOLP Policies EH9 and EH10 and Section 16 of the NPPF are directly relevant to the application with regard to the impact of the proposal upon designated heritage assets.

5.12 In order to assess the impact of the application on the character and appearance of the CA, it is first necessary to describe the contribution of the existing site to the wider CA. The site itself is comprised of a large modern building with circular internal access loop and parking set behind a well vegetated buffer along Witan Way with dense, mature planting along the western bank of the River, partially screening the site from Public Right of Way ('PROW') (ref. 410/13/10). The site therefore does not form a significant positive contribution to heritage significance of the CA, but is effectively landscaped such that the prominence of the building and associated parking/access is reduced significantly, both in the street scene and from PROWs to the north and east.

5.13 With regard to the impact of the proposal, officers note that the roof-mounted plant would be located adjacent to that approved previously, and in this context would read as a negligible change to the character and appearance of the CA. The proposed ASHPs and enclosure would be set in a recessive location to the rear of the building, partly in place of existing hardstanding resulting and would be read in the context of existing parked vehicles, bin store, leisure centre building and hardstanding/fencing associated with the Community Centre to the north. Your officers note that the proposed ASHPs would be located in close proximity to a large Ash tree which is protected by virtue of its size and location within the CA. The application states that this tree will be retained, the Council's Tree Officer has reviewed the application and deems the application acceptable subject to submission of a tree survey by condition to ensure the tree is retained. As a result, the scheme would not lead to a significant adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the CA by way of impact on protected trees or its wider character and appearance. As a result, your officers consider that the proposed development would result in a neutral impact upon the character and appearance of the area and thus complies with the policy and legislative context set out above.

Residential Amenity

5.14 WOLP Policy OS2 states that new development should be compatible with adjoining uses and not have a harmful impact on the amenity of existing occupants. The importance of minimising adverse

impacts upon the amenity of future and neighbouring occupiers is reiterated in Policy OS4, the West Oxfordshire Design Guide and the NPPF.

- 5.15 The proposed roof-mounted equipment would be sited over 45m from the nearest residential dwelling and separated by Witan Way. The ASHPs would be further still, at circa 85m. Officers also note the proximity of the proposals to the Witney Children and Family Centre to the north. The application is supported by a Noise Impact Assessment ('NIA'), which has been subject to review by the Council's Environmental Health Team. The NIA recommends mitigation measures including fencing and sound-reducing equipment to be fitted to units. The Environmental Health Officer considers that these measures would be sufficient to mitigate any adverse impact and therefore, the application is acceptable in this regard, subject to conditions as set out in Section 6 of this report.

Ecology

- 5.16 WOLP Policy EH3 seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity in line with Chapter 15 of the NPPF which outlines that the planning system should aim to deliver overall net gains for biodiversity.
- 5.17 The application is also subject to statutory Biodiversity Net Gain ('BNG') and would result in the loss of 32sqm of 'poor' condition modified grassland resulting in a marginal loss of 0.01 BNG units. To compensate, off-site units will be purchased with evidence of this purchase to be subject to the general condition of biodiversity gain.
- 5.18 With regard to protected species, no ecological information has been submitted with this application. However, given the very limited scale and urban setting of the proposals, The Council's Biodiversity Officer considers that this is appropriate. Your officers note that the application site falls within a great crested newt 'red zone', but the scheme will only affect a small area of short-sward grassland in a busy car park, so impacts to GCN are deemed highly unlikely. Your officers consider therefore that the application is acceptable in ecology terms.

Other Matters

- 5.19 The Council's Drainage Officer is satisfied that matters of surface water drainage can be adequately dealt with through pre-commencement condition, as recommended in Section 6.
- 5.20 No material impact with regard to highways or parking is identified.

Recommendation

- 5.21 In light of this assessment, the application is considered to accord with adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 Policies OS1, OS2, OS3, OS4, EH2, EH3, EH7, EH8, EH9 and EH10, NPPF 2024, the West Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016 and to all the relevant material considerations set out. The application is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

6 CONDITIONS

- I. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004.

2. That the development be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed below.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt as to what is permitted.

3. Prior to commencement of the permitted use, a barrier shall be erected in the location as specified in the ParkerJones Noise Impact Assessment dated 25th February 2025 section 5.4.1 figure 5.1, of minimum height of 4 metres, measured from the adjacent ground level, and minimum surface density of 10 kg/m². The barrier shall be closeboarded/imperforated with no air gaps either within the fence panel, underneath the fence, or between panel and post. All works which form part of the approved scheme shall be completed before the approved use commences. The barrier shall be maintained and retained at all times thereafter in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: In the interests of the amenity of nearby properties.

4. Sound Reducing Jackets shall be applied to the internal compressors of all the Rhoss units as specified in the ParkerJones Noise Impact Assessment dated 25th February 2025 section 5.4.2 prior to those units first coming into use. The Sound Reducing Jackets shall be retained in that condition thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of the amenity of nearby properties.

5. That, prior to the commencement of development, a full surface water drainage scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of the size, position and construction of the drainage scheme. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved. Development shall not take place until an exceedance flow routing plan for flows above the 1 in 100 year + 40% CC event has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure the proper provision for surface water drainage and/ or to ensure flooding is not exacerbated in the locality (The West Oxfordshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance). If the surface water design is not agreed before works commence, it could result in abortive works being carried out on site or alterations to the approved site layout being required to ensure flooding does not occur.

6. No development (including site works and demolition) shall commence until all existing trees which are shown to be retained have been protected in accordance with a scheme which complies with BS 5837:2012: 'Trees in Relation to design, demolition and construction' has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The approved measures shall be kept in place during the entire course of development. No work, including the excavation of service trenches, or the storage of any materials, or the lighting of bonfires shall be carried out within any tree protection area.

REASON: To assess the impact on trees during the construction phase of development and to ensure the safeguard of features that contribute to the character and landscape of the area.

INFORMATIVES :-

1. Important: the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain objective of 10% applies to this planning permission and development cannot commence until a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted (as a condition compliance application) to and approved by West Oxfordshire District Council. The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and (b) the planning authority has approved the plan. Advice about how to prepare a Biodiversity Gain Plan and a template can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/submit-a-biodiversity-gainplan>.
2. The Surface Water Drainage scheme should, where possible, incorporate Sustainable Drainage Techniques in order to ensure compliance with:
 - Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (Part 1 - Clause 27 (1))
 - Oxfordshire County Council's Local standards and guidance for surface water drainage on major development in Oxfordshire (VI.2 December 2021)
 - The local flood risk management strategy published by Oxfordshire County Council 2015 - 2020 as per the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (Part 1 - Clause 9 (1))
 - CIRIA C753 SuDS Manual 2015
 - The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England, produced by the Environment Agency in July 2020, pursuant to paragraph 9 of Section 7 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.
 - Updated Planning Practice Guidance on Flood Risk and Coastal Change, published on 25th August 2022 by the Environment Agency - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change>.
 - Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems (March 2015)

Contact Officer: James Nelson

Telephone Number: 01993 861712

Date: 2nd July 2025