

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **Lowlands Area Planning Sub-Committee**

Held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB
at 2.00 pm on **Monday, 14 July 2025**

PRESENT

Councillors: Andy Goodwin (Chair), Steve Cosier, Rachel Crouch, Phil Godfrey, Nick Leverton, Andrew Lyon, Michele Mead, David Melvin, Andrew Prosser, Sarah Veasey, Adrian Walsh, Alistair Wray and Joy Aitman

Officers: James Nelson (Principal Planner) and Clare Anscombe (Career Grade Planner)

22 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Michael Brooker. Councillor Joy Aitman substituted for Councillor Brooker.

23 Declarations of Interest

Declarations of Interest were received from the following councillors.

24/03154/FUL 2 Manor Road, Ducklington.

Councillor Adrian Walsh declared Manor Road was in his ward but he was not predetermined.

24/03277/FUL Land (E) 441191 (N) 205720 Blackditch, Stanton Harcourt.

Councillor Steve Cosier declared that Blackditch was in his ward but he was not predetermined.

25/01071/ADV First Floor, Unit I, Des Roches Square, Witney and 25/00800/FUL Windrush Leisure Centre, Witney.

Councillor Andrew Prosser and Councillor Rachel Crouch declared that they were both Executive Members and would not vote on the applications 25/01071/ADV First Floor, Unit I, Des Roches Square, Witney and 25/00800/FUL Windrush Leisure Centre, Witney as these were properties owned by West Oxfordshire District Council.

24 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Pages 8-9 Councillor Sarah Veasey asked that the word “to” be replaced with the word “from” in the sentence

- Charlbury to the A44 via the B4437 as an alternative to further north on the A44 at Neat Enstone.

on both pages 8 and 9 of the minutes of the previous meeting.

Councillor Michele Mead proposed that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 27 May 2025 be agreed by the Sub-Committee as a true and accurate record. This was seconded by Councillor Sarah Veasey, was put to the vote and was agreed by the Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

1. Agree the minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 27 May 2025 as a true and accurate record.

25 Applications for Development

26 24/03277/FUL Land (E)441191 (N)205720 Blackditch, Stanton Harcourt.

James Nelson, Principal Planner, presented the application for the demolition 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).

The Principal Planner's presentation addressed the following points:

- The application was before the Sub-Committee due to objections from the Parish Council and 29 objections submitted to the Council website.
- A 19th century stable within the site fronted Blackditch and was alongside Granary Way, which had a recent development of 40 dwellings. The site contained hardstanding and grassed paddock.
- Listed buildings lie in close proximity to the site but their setting would not be adversely impacted. The Conservation Area Charter Appraisal identified the stable as being locally listed. The stables were in poor condition and had been significantly altered and the Conservation Officer raised no objection to the scheme.
- The site had previously been considered for a village shop but no permission was in place and no mechanism to secure its delivery.
- The proposal included a row of five three bedroom terraced houses and two further four-bedroom houses set behind with access to an internal road off Granary Way. The northern wall of the stables would be largely retained as a boundary wall.

Mark Barnard addressed the Sub-Committee in objection to the application raising the following points: parking and road safety, the development should not compromise highway safety or the convenience of other road users. The access to the site was narrow. The site was on the route to school and was used by both pedestrians and parents driving their children to school. Over development of the site and lack of engagement from the developer and the local residents. The site for seven homes would result in over development.

14/July2025

Graham Russell addressed the Sub-Committee in objection to the application which raised the following points: road safety concerns especially at school drop off and pick up times. The junction at Granary Way would become more dangerous and hazardous. The development did not respect the local character of the village and surrounding and was of a compact design. With Granary Way housing, the site of more housing would be over development.

Clarification was requested on the concerns of road safety and visibility when cars are parked. The speaker confirmed that the junction at Granary was very tight and parked cars resulted in moving traffic having to drive on the wrong side of the road to manoeuvre around parked vehicles.

Sam Cook addressed the Sub-Committee in support of the application which raised the following points: The site had been earmarked for a shop but there had been little interest, and the project did not go ahead. The Council were unable to demonstrate a five-year land supply which put the application at an advantage due to a need for housing. Highways guidance on parking had been met and there were no objections raised by Highways. The application had been amended by working with the planning team and it was felt that concerns of the local residents had been answered.

Clarification was asked regarding if a structural survey had been done. The speaker clarified that the building was of no quality however the wall was being retained.

The Principal Planner's presentation addressed the following points:

- The application was in line with policies OS2 and H2 and in keeping with the village location.
- The design had been amended to simplify the design and elevations; this also dealt with the level changes across the site. High quality and local materials would be used in construction in accordance with Local Plan policies OS2 and OS4.
- The heritage impact would result in the partial loss of the locally listed building and an area of open space within the conservation area. There were no objections from the conservation officer.
- The design and appearance of the proposed site with simplified layout and elevations better address the street scene.
- The application complied with Local Plan policies EH9, EH10, EH11, EH12 as well as EH16 in regard to the locally listed stable.
- Addressing concerns of neighbourliness along Farmhouse Close changes had been made to ensure that plot 6 had been moved by approximately 1.5 meters.
- The application was recommended for provisional approval with officers granted delegated authority to resolve the biodiversity matters and impose additional conditions regarding biodiversity.

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

- The members raised concerns that a structural report had not been included in the report. The Principal Planner advised that a Heritage Impact report had been submitted highlighting the changes over years to the structure with only the stone wall remaining. The building was in poor condition and there was no objection from the Conservation Officer.
- On Biodiversity Net Gain there had been a lack of landscape and ecological management plan. The Principal Planner confirmed that additional information from the applicant regarding biodiversity was pending and a response was expected from the Biodiversity Officer. With a provisional approval of the application the landscaping and management could be conditioned.
- Concerns were raised regarding flooding and water management. There were no objections from the West Oxfordshire District Council Drainage Officer and no comment from Thames Water. Members raised concerns about the lack of comment from Thames Water and the pressure on sewage infrastructure when building new housing.
- Members highlighted the number of objections from local residents, concerns about highway safety and reports that had not been submitted as part of the application.
- Members raised concerns on the ownership of the adjacent part of Granary Way and the safety of the parking and access to the site, how many parking spaces each dwelling would have. It was felt a site visit would help clarify some of these concerns and enable a better understanding of the highways and parking queries.

Councillor Michele Mead proposed that the Sub-Committee resolve to

1. Attend a site visit on Monday 11 August at 12.30pm,
2. Request that updated Biodiversity Net Gain information was provided and
3. Request that Officers seek a response from Thames Water.

This was seconded by Councillor Nick Leverton and put to the vote.

Voting Record – Unanimous.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

14/July2025

1. Attend a site visit on Monday 11 August at 12.30pm.
2. Request that updated Biodiversity Net Gain information was provided.
3. Request that Officers to seek a response from Thames Water.

Councillor Steve Cosier left the meeting.

27

24/03154/FUL 2 Manor Road, Ducklington

Clare Anscombe, Planner, presented the application for the erection of a bungalow and creation of a new access (amended description and plans).

The Planner's presentation addressed the following points:

- The application had been brought before the sub-committee due to objections from the Parish Council which raised concerns of over-development and being incongruous to the street scene.
- The application was for a one-bedroom dwelling located in the garden of the site next to the existing bungalow. The application included the creation of access onto Manor Road.
- The site was situated on a corner plot on Manor Road and Curbridge Road The property backed onto the main road A415, with a no through road to the main road.
- A hedgerow was along the existing boundary and a 2m high fence along the side elevation which would make up the boundary.
- The property would be constructed from brick, render and UPVC windows and doors with a tile roof and gravel forecourt.
- The site was located in Ducklington Village. The application was in accordance with policies H2 and OS2 of the Local Plan which stated that new dwellings were permitted on undeveloped land.
- The Council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply and paragraph 11 of the NPPF framework applied to this application.
- The design was modest and would not have an adverse impact on the character of the area. The proposed external amenity space was considered to be sufficient in size and arrangement and met the minimum gross internal floor areas set out in the national

14/July2025

government's technical housing standards. There was a need for one-bedroom dwellings in the area.

- There were no objections from Highways concerning safety. Ecology required amended biodiversity net gain information was required, these matters could be delegated back to officers for a resolution with the applicant subject to approval of the Sub-Committee.
- The application was recommended for provisional approval with matters related to biodiversity net gain delegated back to officers for resolution.

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

- Clarification on the floor space and whether the property would be suitable for a couple or for a single person. The Planner advised that the application had been assessed as a one person dwelling and as such it met the standards set out.
- Clarification on boundary and any future impact on the boundary if a footpath was put in beside the main road which then cut through and joined Manor Road. The Planner confirmed that there would not be an impact on the boundary as it would not change. The application was based on the current information and there was no indication a footpath was planned.

Councillor Nick Leverton proposed that the Sub-Committee approve the application subject to the conditions set out in the report and the resolution of matters related to biodiversity net gain. This was seconded by Councillor Adrian Walsh and put to the vote.

Voting Record – unanimous.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

1. Approve the application subject to the conditions set out in the report and the resolution of matters related to biodiversity net gain.

28

25/01071/ADV First Floor, Unit 1, Des Roches Square, Witney.

Fern Lynch, Principal Planner, presented the application for the erection of two fascia signs and window graphics (amended description).

The Principal Planner's presentation addressed the following points:

- The application had come before the Sub-Committee due to the West Oxfordshire District Council owning the land the site was on.

14/July2025

- There were no objections from the Local Highways Authority, Witney Town Council or the Conservation and Design Officer.
- The property on Des Roches Square faced out onto Witan Way. The signs would not be facing residential housing and had a minimal impact on the surrounding area in accordance with the conservation area.
- One sign would be illuminated, and one non-illuminated with measurements in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council Guidance.
- The proposed sign was acceptable in design terms and would not compromise highway safety. The application was in accordance with policies OS2, OS4, EH10 and T4 of the Local Plan and the Advertisements Consent Regime.

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

- Clarification of the application coming before the sub-committee as a formality due to the Council owning the land the building is located on.

Councillor Michele Mead proposed that the Sub-Committee approve the application in line with officer recommendations. This was seconded by Councillor Nick Leverton and put to the vote

Voting Record – Unanimous

Councillor Crouch and Councillor Prosser did not take part in the vote due to their roles in the Executive.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

1. Approve the application in line with officer recommendations.

29

25/00800/FUL Windrush Leisure Centre, Witney

James Nelson, Principal Planner, presented the application for the decarbonisation scheme with plant on existing roof and erection of timber clad enclosure around the air source heat pumps.

The Principal Planner's presentation addressed the following points:

- The application was before the sub-committee as it was submitted on behalf of West Oxfordshire District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council owned the premises.

14/July2025

- The application was for the installation of Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs), associated timber clad enclosure and roof-mounted plant equipment at the Windrush Leisure Centre in order to facilitate the decarbonisation scheme.
- The site was located within the Witney and Cogges Conservation area and within flood zone 1, however near to the site the flood zones changed to 2 and 3 as they were associated with the River Windrush.
- The ground mounted plant would be at the rear of the building on hard standing land with a minimal impact to parking due to the loss of some spaces. There would be no impact on the character of the building and surrounding site.
- The application was in accordance with policies OS1, OS2, OS3, OS4, EH2, EH3, EH7, EH8, EH9 and EH10, the recommendation was for approval subject to conditions.

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

- Members asked for clarification on whether a noise assessment had been done. The Principal Planner advised that there had been consultation with the Environmental Health Team considered fencing and sound reducing equipment would mitigate any adverse impacts to the surrounding area.

Councillor Nick Leverton proposed that the Sub-Committee approve the application in line with the officer recommendations. This was seconded by Councillor Adrian Walsh and put to the vote

Voting Record – 7 for the proposal, 1 against and 1 abstention

Councillor Crouch and Councillor Prosser did not take part in the vote due to their roles in the Executive.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

1. Approve the application in line with officer recommendations.

Applications Determined under Delegated Powers

The report giving details of the applications determined under Delegated Powers was received, explained by the officers and noted by the Sub-Committee.

Lowlands Area Planning Sub-Committee

14/July2025

Page 60 Item 13: Councillor Prosser asked for feedback from the Tree Officer regarding the case. The Principal Planner agreed to arrange this for Councillor Prosser.

31 Appeal Decisions

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

The Meeting closed at 3.30 pm

CHAIR