

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the
Development Management Sub-Committee

Held in the Committee Rooms 1 & 2, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire
OX28 1NB at 2.00 pm on **Monday, 6 July 2026**

PRESENT

Councillors: Mark Walker (Vice-Chair), Tammy Abarno, Andrew Beaney, Steve Cosier, Rachel Crouch, Phil Godfrey, David Jackson, Elizabeth Poskitt, Sandra Simpson, Jack Treloar and Sarah Veasey

Officers: Abby Fettes (Development Manager), Fern Lynch (Principal Planner), James Nelson (Principal Planner), Clare Anscombe (Career Grade Planner), Lorna McShane (Planning Solicitor) Sophie Drew (Lead Lawyer), Kelly Murray (Principal Planner for Enforcement and Appeals), Andrew Brown (Head of Democratic and Electoral Services), Ana Prelici (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Mathew Taylor (Democratic Services Officer), and Anne Learmonth (Democratic Services Officer),

Other Councillors in attendance: Andrew Prosser

23 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Andy Goodwin, Genny Early, Andrew Lyon and Roger Faulkner.

Councillor Sandra Simpson substituted for Councillor Genny Early.

Councillor Rachel Crouch substituted for Councillor Andrew Lyon.

Councillor Jack Treloar substituted for Councillor Roger Faulkner.

24 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

25 Minutes of the Previous meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 8 June 2026.

Councillor Jackson asked that the following be amended.

Pg 11 Councillor Steve Ferrelly, was from West Barton Parish.

Councillor Steve Cosier proposed the approval of the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 8 June 2026. Councillor Sarah Veasey seconded the proposal which was put to the vote and agreed by the Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee resolved to:

- I. Agree the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 8 June 2026.

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15 June 2026.

Development Management Sub-Committee

06/July2026

Councillor Sarah Veasey proposed the approval of the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15 June 2026. Councillor Poskitt seconded the proposal which was put to the vote and agreed by the Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee resolved to:

1. Agree the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15 June 2026.

2.03pm Lorna McShane, Lead Property Lawyer joined the meeting.

26 Applications for Development

27 25/01897/OUT Land West of Combe Road

The Principal Planner, Fern Lynch, spoke on behalf of the case officer - Mike Cassidy, Principal Planner. Fern Lynch recommended deferring the application because a significant change to the proposal had been identified late last week. This change related to the provision of public open space and differed substantially from what officers originally assessed when weighing the planning merits. Officers required additional time to review the implications of this change and assess its impact before the application can be properly considered.

The Chair proposed the Sub-Committee defer the application in line with officer's recommendations. Councillor Steve Cosier seconded the proposal, and this was put to the vote.

Voting Record: For 11, Against 0, Abstentions 0

The Sub-Committee resolved to:

1. Defer the application in line with the officer's recommendations.

Councillor Steve Cosier asked for clarification on whether those speaking in objection and the Parish council were aware of the proposal to defer the application. Democratic Services confirmed that speakers, including the Parish Council were notified of the change last week.

28 26/00374/FUL 5A West End Witney

Clare Anscombe, Senior Planner, presented the application for the demolition of a timber workshop and the erection of a replacement building comprising of 2x one-bedroom apartments and associated works.

The Senior Planner brought Members attention to the Additional Representations report which related to a letter submitted the previous week. A minor correction was also noted to the refusal reasons: the reference to the Environment Agency's standing advice should be updated from **2024** to **2026**.

The application was before the Sub-Committee because the officer's recommendation differed from the views of the Town Council and a local ward member had concerns regarding the impact on the neighbouring properties in particular flood risk, loss of light and the enclosing effect. The local ward member had subsequently called in the application.

The Senior Planner gave an overview of the application and highlighted the following points:

- The site was located at the junction of West End and Bridge Street, just behind the old Court Public House. The building was being used as a timber workshop and would be replaced with 2 one bed apartments and associated works. The access to the site would be from the corner of Bridge street and West end.
- The site was located partly within areas at risk of flooding. According to the Environment Agency's latest flood map planning data. A small corner of the application site falls within Flood Zone 3, while part of the access route from Bridge Street was within Flood Zone 2. The site also benefits from an alternative access from West End to the north, which is located within Flood Zone 1.
- The site was within the Witney and Cogges conservation areas and was surrounded by other residential properties, the Senior Planner explained the heights of the roof in relation to neighbouring properties. The location of windows and the floor space which fell just below the national requirements.
- The Council were unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply therefore the presumption in favour of sustainable development applied under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), however the benefits of the scheme did not outweigh the harms when assessed against the NPPF.
- The site was partially within flood zones 2 and 3. National planning policy required a Sequential Test to be undertaken in such circumstances. While the NPPF allowed an exemption where a flood risk assessment showed no built development would be at risk from flooding now or in the future, planning practice guidance and Environment Agency standing advice stated that this exemption did not apply to flooding sources other than surface water. There was a history of flooding in properties including 5A West End.
- The Environment Agency's (EA) Flood Map for Planning had recently been updated and was used within the report as a legitimate source of evidence when assessing flood risk. Any challenge to the accuracy of the EA's mapping should be taken up directly with the EA.
- There was concern that the proposal would have a negative impact on living conditions of the neighbouring properties as well as the future occupants. It would cause excessive enclosure for residents of number 7 and have an overbearing effect on the residents of number 5E.

The officer acknowledged the benefits of the scheme including 2 one bed apartments, removal of a derelict workshop, redevelopment of site generating employment opportunities. The benefits were considered to be significantly outweighed by the adverse impact and the application was recommended for refusal.

Guy Plowman spoke in objection to the application and raised the following points: As a resident the proposed property would have a significant impact on his home and garden, as his property was already enclosed on three sides. Mr Plowman also raised concerns regarding

06/July2026

flooding and gave an example of the basement of his property and the property owned by the applicant flooded in 2020.

Debbie Jones, agent for the applicant raised the following points: the two proposed properties would contribute to the housing delivery on previously developed brownfield land. The proposed properties would be situated close to the town centre within walking distance of employment and services. There had been no statutory objections to the application, the orientation and internal layout of the existing buildings mean that the proposed development would not appear overbearing to neighbouring residents and the site was within flood zone 1 and a sequential test was not required.

Councillor Andrew Prosser spoke as ward member for West End and Witney and raised the following points: Councillor Prosser objected to the application due to concerns of flooding and overdevelopment by replacing a single-story barn with a two-storey building. Flood risk came from the River Windrush as well as risking ground water during periods of high-water levels. Councillor Prosser also gave a history of flooding within the area and for this reason the proposal would be unsuitable for this site.

The Chair invited the members of the sub-committee to debate the application. The following points were raised:

- The flood risk on the site when considering the history of flooding in the area, with more foundations being added to the site it could exacerbate the flood risk.
- The size of the properties being below the national requirements, with the second floor having minimal windows.
- The impact on the neighbouring residential properties with risk of loss of light.

Councillor Andrew Beaney proposed that the application be refused in line with the officer's recommendations. Councillor Jack Treloar seconded the proposal and put to the vote.

Voting Record: For 11 Against 0 Abstention 0.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

1. Refuse the application in line with the officer's recommendations.

29

26/00419/FUL 63 Barrington Close Witney

Clare Anscombe, Senior Planner, presented the application for the change of use of a parcel of land from amenity to residential and erection of a boundary fence to enclose the garden.

The Senior Planner gave an overview of the application and highlighted the following points:

- The property was within a cul-de-sac on the Deer Park Estate with an area of public open space to the left. The property was located on a corner plot.

06/July2026

- The amenity grass would be enclosed by a five-foot timber fence with a trellis top and would be in line with the footpath that runs alongside the property. The size of the land is small and the loss on balance was acceptable.
- Officers acknowledged that approval of the application may set a precedent for future development. By removing some of the permitted development rights this would prevent building or structures in the garden a sense of openness would be maintained.

The Senior Planner concluded that officers considered the proposed application was acceptable in principle subject to the conditions set out in the report.

The Chair invited the members of the sub-committee to debate the application. The following points were raised:

- Members asked for clarification on where a precedent would be set; on the property or in the surrounding area. The officer confirmed that the matter of precedence related to other similar developments elsewhere and not specifically to that property.
- Members asked for clarification on what bio-diversity information was provided by the applicants. The officer explained that the applicant had met the requirements and the site was small. The applicant had to demonstrate why the site did not meet the required biodiversity net gain and a condition was included to show that the development was carried out in accordance with enhancement features.

Councillor Jack Treloar proposed that the application be approved in line with officer's recommendations. This was seconded by Councillor Godfrey and put to the vote.

Voting Record – For 11 Against 0 Abstentions 0

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

1. Approve the application in line with the officer's recommendations.

30

26/01180/FUL 37 Wilkins Close Brize Norton

James Nelson, Principal Planner, presented the application on behalf of Chris Mitchell, Planner, for the erection of a detached outbuilding for the use of a beauty salon and relocation of an existing shed.

The Principal Planner explained that the application was before the Sub-Committee as the applicant was a spouse of an officer at West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC).

The Senior Planner gave an overview of the application and highlighted the following points:

- The application relates to a semi-detached property with a rear garden and an existing outbuilding. The proposal included a new outbuilding in the position of the existing shed which would be relocated to the southwest corner of the plot.

06/July2026

- The relocated shed would have a height of less than 2.5 metres. The proposed studio building was a small, flat-roofed structure with doors that opened onto the garden. It had a simple design and a modest footprint of just over 3 square metres, which made it comparable in scale to a typical garden shed.
- Parking provision consisted of two on-site parking spaces arranged in tandem, with additional visitor parking available nearby, although this was outside the applicant's control.
- There have been no objections from the neighbouring properties or the Parish Council. The main concern was noise, disturbance and visitor numbers and times to the property. Conditions had been included in the report for one visitor to the property at a time with a handover period between appointments.
- Officers proposed a stricter closing time than requested by the applicant, which required appointments to cease at 6.00pm rather than 7.00pm. This reflected the residential nature of the area and helped protect neighbours' amenity during the evening. Condition 3 proposed the following opening hours: 09.00-18.00 Monday to Friday, 08.00 – 13.00 Saturdays, closed Sundays and Bank Holidays.
- With the appointment times staggered and opening times proposed, onsite parking would be sufficient. There had been no objections from Oxfordshire County Council Highways. The recommendation was to approve the application.

The Chair invited the members of the sub-committee to debate the application. The following points were raised:

- Members asked if there was plumbing included in the application. Officers advised that the submitted floor plan was very simple and did not identify details of this nature. They explained that information relating to specific services or internal fittings would not normally be required as part of a planning application for a development of this scale and type, as such details are not generally material to the planning assessment.
- Members asked how enforceable the times of visitors attending appointments would be. The concern was whether the condition limiting visits to a single customer at a time could be effectively monitored and enforced in practice. Officers advised that conditions were enforceable through the Council's normal monitoring and enforcement processes. This could include investigating complaints from neighbours, reviewing records or logs, and observing evidence such as multiple vehicles attending the site at the same time. Officers also highlighted the size of the building itself which made it more unlikely that more than one visitor would be able to attend at any one time. The business would be operated by the resident of the property and prevented the possibility of a second practitioner working from the studio.
- Members asked for clarification on drainage provision. Officers advised that the site was not in an area of flood risk. The proposed site was on an already developed area and was replacing a shed, as a result, any additional surface water runoff was considered negligible and insufficient to justify a specific planning condition.

06/July2026

- Members asked if the applicant had not been a spouse of a WODC officer, would the application be before the sub-committee. The application was referred to committee because of the applicant's connection to a council officer, in line with the Council's procedures for maintaining transparency and avoiding any perception of bias. The planning merits of the proposal were assessed in the normal way, and the recommendation for approval was based solely on planning considerations.

Councillor David Jackson proposed that the application be approved in line with the officer's recommendation. The was seconded by Councillor Steve Cosier and put to the vote.

Voting Record - For 11 Against 0 Abstentions 0

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

1. Approve the application in line with Officer's recommendations.

31 Progress on Enforcement Cases

Kelly Murray, Principal Planner for Enforcement and Appeals presented the report on the progress of priority enforcement cases. The officer explained that the purpose of the enforcement update was to provide Development Management Sub-Committee members with a progress report on planning enforcement activity twice each year. The update did not cover every enforcement case; instead, it focused on selected priority cases.

Priority cases typically were those of greater significance, had attracted the attention of councillors, or were of particular public or political interest. Rather than delivering a detailed, case-by-case review of the full enforcement schedule included in the agenda papers, officers intended to provide members with an overview of the key developments and highlights.

Members were invited to raise questions on any specific cases listed in the report, and officers indicated they would provide further information where possible.

Members expressed support for the new planning enforcement reporting system, and thanked officers for the improved approach to providing updates on enforcement cases. They commented that the regular communication and clearer information on the status of cases had been very effective, and helped members stay informed about ongoing enforcement matters.

Members noted that the improved reporting process has reduced the need for members to make separate enquiries to officers for updates, thereby reducing workload for both members and staff. Overall, they considered the new system to be working well and welcomed its continued use. Members thanked officers for all their hard work on enforcement cases.

32 Applications Determined under Delegated Powers

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

33 Appeal Decisions:

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

34 Site Visits

Officers confirmed that there were no planned site visits.

The Meeting closed at 3.42 pm

CHAIR