

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the
Development Management Sub-Committee

Held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB
at 2.00 pm on **Monday, 10 August 2026**

PRESENT

Councillors: Mark Walker, Andrew Beaney, Genny Early, Roger Faulkner, Andrew Lyon, Sarah Veasey, Jan Lund, Hannah Massie, David Melvin and Liam Walker

Officers: Abby Fettes (Development Manager), Stephanie Eldridge (Principal Planner), James Nelson (Principal Planner), Leonie Woodward (Assistant Director of Legal Services), Sophie Drew, Ana Prelici (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and Anne Learmonth (Democratic Services Officer)

Other Councillors in attendance:

35 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from the following councillors:

Andy Goodwin, Tammy Abarno, Steve Cosier, Elizabeth Poskitt, Phil Godfrey and Dave Jackson.

Councillor Hannah Massie substituted for Councillor Elizabeth Poskitt

Councillor David Melvin substituted for Councillor Phil Godfrey

Councillor Jan Lund substituted for Councillor David Jackson.

Councillor Liam Walker substituted for Councillor Tammy Abarno.

The Chair noted that Councillors Liam Walker and Jan Lund were not present and advised that if they arrived after the start of the presentation, they would not be eligible to vote.

36 Declarations of Interest

24/03100/OUT, Land (E) 438356 (N) 212268 Common Road, North Leigh

Councillor Sarah Veasey stated that she was the ward member for North Leigh.

Councillor Liam Walker stated that he was the County Council ward member for Hanborough and Hailey which also covered North Leigh.

25/02688/POROW - Proposed diversion of the part of the public right of way Shipton under Wychwood - Footpath No. 343/7/10 (part) Public footpath stopping up and creation order 2026.

Councillor Jan Lund stated that she was a member of the Parish Council.

37 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Page 7 – typo “wass” mis-spelt.

Councillor Sarah Veasey proposed the approval of the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 6 July 2026. Councillor Andrew Beaney 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 6 July 2026.

38 Applications for Development

39 24/03100/OUT, Land (E) 438356 (N) 212268 Common Road, North Leigh

James Nelson, Principal Planner presented the application for an outlined planning application for a residential development for up to 80 dwellings (Use Class C3), including vehicular access and pedestrian link from Common Road, public open space, car parking, drainage, landscaping and other associated infrastructure. All matters reserved for access.

2.04pm Councillors Liam Walker and Jan Lund joined the meeting.

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

The main constraints identified on the south-western edge of North Leigh were:

- heritage designations at Grim’s Ditch scheduled ancient monument, which must be protected.
- public access routes of which several public footpaths ran close to the site which would need to be considered in any development proposals.
- and the nearby listed historic park and garden Eynsham Hall listed park and garden and any potential impacts on its setting and significance.

The details of the site were:

- The site was located off Common Road close to the Junction with the A4095.
- The site surrounded existing buildings associated with Common Farm and a residential property. Vehicular access to the development would be from Common Road at the southern part of the site.
- The site comprised of agricultural land divided and enclosed by hedgerows with mature tree planting along the western boundary which was in keeping with the site’s appearance and landscape characteristics.
- The application was for up to 80 dwellings with houses that would face southward adjacent to the site access. The Planner had sought to reduce the extent of development into the western corner of the site in response to landscape comments and not to extend the site so far into the countryside. Significant areas would be retained through a legal agreement and would include interpretation boards for the scheduled monument and provide greater public access to the historic area.

10/August2026

- It was clarified that the application had been submitted for 115 dwelling and covered both parcels of land, the application had been amended to reduce the proposed number of dwellings to 80.

The Principal Planner brought member's attention to the Additional Representation report which proposed minor changes to the conditions and ensured that the planning conditions and Section 106 obligations reflected the amended number of houses proposed.

The merits of the application:

- The site was not allocated for development and the proposal conflicted with the Local Plan 2031 spatial strategy however, officers considered that substantial weight should be given due to the Council not being able to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply.
- The development would provide up to 80 homes which included 32 affordable homes. This would contribute to both market and affordable housing needs and addressed the need for affordable housing in the area.
- Officers acknowledged that the development would extend the village into open countryside and have some harm to the rural setting of North Leigh. An independently commissioned landscape review had informed amendments to the application, including restrictions on development in the southern field and reduction in its spread westwards.
- Planting and green infrastructure would help reduce visual impacts and integrate the development into the existing settlement. It was recognised that there would be moderate harm however officers did not consider this unacceptable due to the design changes and need for housing.
- The scheme had been moved away from land closest to Grim's Ditch and preserved the open views to protect and maintain the setting of the monument. Officers concluded that the proposal would cause less than substantial harm to both Grim's Ditch and Eynsham Hall Park and Gardens. The developer would enhance public access to the land and interpretation of the scheduled monument.
- The technical consultees had raised no objections to the proposal subject to conditions and legal obligations. Concerns related to flood risk had been addressed through drainage proposals. Water supply and waste management would be managed through Grampian style conditions.
- The additional benefits of the proposal were biodiversity net gain, onsite public open space with play facilities, sustainable transport measures with significant contribution through a S106 agreement.

The Principal Planner concluded that the adverse impacts would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, in line with paragraph 11(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and therefore recommended approval of the application subject to completion of a Section 106 agreement and the proposed planning conditions.

10/August2026

Adrian Watts represented North Leigh Neighbourhood Plan Committee and spoke in objection to the application. Mr Watts expressed that the emerging Neighbourhood Plan represented the most comprehensive evidence of local opinion. The Neighbourhood Plan was currently being revised before submission, and it was anticipated that it would be adopted early 2027. Mr Watts emphasised that national planning policy allowed decision-makers to give weight to emerging neighbourhood plans, depending on their stage of preparation, unresolved objections, and consistency with national policy. They therefore urged the committee to take the emerging plan into account when determining the application. Mr Watts advised that there had been extensive community engagement and a survey had achieved a 37% response rate with residents not in support of more development.

Paul Evans, local resident, spoke in objection to the application. Mr Evans highlighted that he lived 300 yards from the proposed development. Recently built developments to the village had created more traffic, and greater pressure on the water and sewage infrastructure. There had been a lack of improvements to the road capacity, services and village amenities, school capacity and library opening hours, there was also only one pub left to serve the village. Mr Evans raised concerns that with the 122 houses that had already been approved but were yet to be built with more potential development on Common Road. Mr Evans highlighted that these additional houses would place more strain on the village's infrastructure and services.

Councillor Andy Clements from North Leigh Parish Council spoke in objection to the application. Councillor Clements highlighted that there had been over 150 objections from residents and objections from the statutory consultees, and the failure to acknowledge the draft neighbourhood plan going through the regulatory process. Since 2015 181 new houses had been built with a near 50% increase in the size of the village. Concerns were also raised regarding utilities and drainage. Thames Water reportedly advised that it could not confirm sufficient foul water capacity and indicated that upgrades to the water supply network may be required. The Parish Council's position was that the proposal conflicted with several policies in the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, including policies relating to housing, environmental protection, sustainable development and transport. Councillor Clements concluded that the application should be refused due to the housing benefits not outweighing the policies within the Local Plan 2031, lack of infrastructure and the harms to the character of the village.

Harry Ramsey of Savills and Rachel Bibby of Lioncourt Homes, the applicant, addressed the sub-committee. The speakers highlighted that the scheme had been significantly reduced to 80 houses following discussions with the council and statutory consultees. The development would reflect the existing pattern of growth in the village. A landscape-led approach had been adopted including substantial planting along the western boundary to ensure minimal impacts. A key benefit of the proposal was the protection and enhancement of Grim's Ditch which would be retained in open public space, supported by interpretation boards. The proposed drainage strategy included sustainable features such as swales and an attenuation basin. Foul drainage would be connected to the existing sewer network via a pumped connection. Further engagement planned with Thames Water would ensure sufficient network capacity before homes are occupied. This would be secured through planning conditions. Regarding transport, there would be new access to Common Road, raised table crossing with traffic calming to enforce the 20mph limit, new footpath, two new bus stops and cycle parking facilities. The speakers highlighted the delivery of much needed housing including affordable housing in on a sustainable site and asked members to support the officer recommendation.

Development Management Sub-Committee

10/August2026

The Chair clarified that Councillors Liam Walker and Jan Lund were not able to vote, due to joining the meeting late, but would be able to take part in the debate.

The Chair asked members for any questions of clarification and invited members to debate the application. The following points were raised.

- Members asked if work had already begun on the site as they had driven past the site and seen earthworks being carried out. If this was the case what action could be taken. The Principal Planner was not aware of any work being started on the site and if there was it would be a matter for the enforcement team.
- Members asked what percent of the orchard would be lost and what protection was in place for the rest of the orchard. The Principal Planner highlighted the area on the presentation slides and advised that the maintenance of the land would be secured through S106 agreement.
- Members asked when the first house would be occupied. The Principal Planner explained that, if permission were granted, a number of planning conditions would need to be complied with, including the submission of any required reserved matters applications within the prescribed timescales of 2 years and meeting all pre-commencement requirements. However, it would be a question for the applicant to answer regarding first occupants.
- Members asked for clarification on funding and how much of the developer contributions would be ring-fenced for the village. The Principal Planner explained that a review was in progress of how Section 106 contributions interact with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which has recently been introduced. The proposed development would be liable for CIL and funding could be used towards community infrastructure projects however the Council's leisure team had not requested funding for projects in North Leigh. The Principal Planner confirmed that leisure infrastructure contributions would likely be delivered through CIL rather than the Section 106 agreement. The Parish would receive 15% from the development in accordance with the CIL regulations.
- Members also raised concerns about the lack of capacity at the Church Hanborough sewage treatment works. They note the Environment Agency's view that the facility has not been upgraded as required and cannot adequately support additional development. If the application is approved, the speaker believes a stronger Grampian condition should be imposed, preventing any above-ground development until the sewage treatment works has been upgraded and sufficient capacity is available.
- Members recognised the significant housing need and the benefit of delivering 32 affordable homes, which carried substantial weight in planning considerations. They also acknowledged the risk that a refusal could be overturned on appeal. Members agreed that the sub-committee found itself caught between the current planning framework and the emerging Local Plan 2043.

Councillor Sarah Veasey proposed that the application be refused against officer recommendations due to 1. Conflict with OS2, 2. Impact on landscape and historic

10/August2026

landscape character, 3. impact on heritage and 4. No clear S106 agreement. This was seconded by Councillor Roger Faulkner and put to the vote.

Voting Record: For 5 Against 0 Abstention 2.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

Refused the application as contrary to the following policies.

1. Conflict with OS2

The proposed development, by reason of its scale, form and siting on unallocated greenfield land adjoining the built-up area of North Leigh, would not constitute 'limited' development appropriate to a village within the settlement hierarchy of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031. The proposal for up to 80 dwellings, when considered in combination with recent completed, permitted and committed development within North Leigh, would result in a level of growth that is not proportionate or appropriate to its context having regard to the cumulative impact of development in the locality. Furthermore, the proposal would not form a logical complement to the existing scale and pattern of development, resulting in a backland extension into open countryside that would erode the historic linear form and character of the settlement. The development would fail to protect or enhance the local landscape and setting of the village, would involve the loss of open land that makes an important contribution to the character and appearance of the area, and would fail to conserve and enhance the natural, historic and built environment. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies OS2, OS4, H2 and EW10 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.

2. Impact on Landscape and Historic Landscape Character.

The proposed development would, by reason of its scale, extent, siting and encroachment into open countryside on the south-western edge of North Leigh, result in unacceptable harm to the landscape and visual characteristics of the area. The development would result in the loss of agricultural land that currently contributes positively to the rural setting of the village, would extend built form beyond the established settlement edge and into the surrounding countryside, and would materially increase the prominence and perceived extent of the settlement in views from the surrounding landscape and public rights of way. The proposal would fail to conserve or enhance the landscape character of the area and would harm the distinctive historic landscape character of North Leigh through the erosion of its traditional linear settlement pattern and the introduction of an overly urban form of development in a rural landscape. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies OS2, OS4, EH2 and EH13 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, the West Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.

3. Impact on Heritage.

The proposed development would, by reason of its scale, siting and urbanising effect within a currently open agricultural landscape, cause harm to the significance and setting of the Scheduled Monument known as the North Oxfordshire Grim's Ditch

10/August2026

west of Common Farm and to the significance and setting of the Eynsham Hall Registered Park and Garden and associated listed buildings. The development would diminish the ability to appreciate Grim's Ditch within its historic rural context and would erode the agricultural and rural landscape setting that contributes to the significance and appreciation of the Eynsham Hall estate. The proposal would therefore fail to conserve or enhance the significance, setting and appreciation of these designated heritage assets and the Local Planning Authority considers that the public benefits arising from the development would be insufficient to outweigh the identified heritage harm. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies EH9, EH14 and EH15 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.

4. No clear S106 agreement.

In the absence of a completed planning obligation pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Local Planning Authority has not secured the provision of policy-compliant affordable housing nor the infrastructure, mitigation and community benefits necessary to offset the impacts of the development, including measures relating to transport, education, healthcare, public open space, recreation, biodiversity management and other supporting infrastructure. As such, the Local Planning Authority cannot be satisfied that the development would provide the necessary mitigation to make it acceptable in planning terms. Consequently, the proposal conflicts with West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 Policies OS2, OS5 and H3 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.

40

26/00946/FUL, Hillside, Station Road, Kingham

Stephanie Elderidge, Principal Planner presented the application for the erection of two detached self-build dwellings to replace an existing dwelling, including landscaping and associated infrastructure.

The Principal Planner brought Members attention to the Additional Representations report which included updated planning conditions. The self-build plots were expected to be sold separately and developed by different parties. The revised conditions therefore provided flexibility for the necessary details and approvals to be submitted and considered for each plot at the appropriate stage of development, rather than requiring all details to be dealt with collectively from the outset.

- The site was located on Station Road in Kingham, directly opposite the Mill House Pub which was undergoing redevelopment with the construction of 10 two-storey thatched holiday cottages.
- The application was before the Sub-Committee due to the Parish Council's objections and an objection that the site fell outside the settlement boundary. Whilst it formed a somewhat dispersed pocket of development, it remained sufficiently connected to Kingham to be treated as within the settlement. The site was within the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) however was just outside the Kingham Conservation Area.

10/August2026

- The existing dwelling and outbuilding would be demolished. The first dwelling would be positioned where the existing dwelling stood, and the second dwelling would be built at the rear of the property. The access would remain from Station Road with the first dwelling positioned to allow for a new driveway and access to the rear of the site. One tree would be removed to allow for access to the driveway with a further 5 trees removed. The remaining trees would be retained as part of the development.
- Materials to be used included Cotswold stone, slate for the roofing and for the second property would be more contemporary using seam cladding and natural stone. Both proposed dwellings would be of a similar height and followed the natural gradient of the surrounding properties. Whilst the dwellings would be larger than the current dwelling on the site it was thought that the increased scale was in proportion to the size of the plot.

Councillor Liam Walker proposed that the application be approved in line with the officer recommendations to include the updated conditions in the additional representations report and the condition for construction management plan. This was seconded by Councillor Sarah Veasey and put to the vote.

The Voting Record: For 9 Against 0 Abstention 0

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

- I. Approve the application in line with the officer recommendations to include the updated conditions in the additional representations report and the condition for construction management plan.

41 **26/01276/HHD The Coach House, Asthall**

42 **26/01277/LBC, The Coach House, Asthall**

The applications for 26/01276/HHD The Coach House, Asthall and 26/01277/LBC, The Coach House, Asthall were heard together but voted on separately.

The Principal Planner presented the applications 26/01276/HHD (household) and 26/01277/LBC (listed building consent), The Coach House for alterations and extensions to the Grade II listed Coach House and Stables, including internal and external alterations, a modest extension to the former stables and a lightweight open sided link structure.

- The property was in the CNL and Asthall Conservation area, was surrounded by listed buildings. The applications were before the sub-committee due to objections from the Parish Council.
- The proposals included internal and external alterations to the coach house and stables. A small single-storey extension to the rear of the stables. A lightweight covered link structure between the two buildings. Minor alterations to the former kennels building, including a slight roof increase, a new chimney, and a flue.

10/August2026

- A key element of the scheme concerned the original loose-box stable partitions within the stables building. These historic features would be retained and reused but relocated to the opposite side of the building to allow bedrooms to benefit from existing natural light, avoiding the need to create new openings in the listed structure. Glazing would be added behind the original bars to improve sound insulation while preserving their appearance. A more extensive scheme was approved in 2018. The earlier proposal included a larger extension and would have concealed the historic stable partitions behind new stud walls.
- It was acknowledged that relocating the stable partitions and making minor alterations to the kennels roof would cause a low level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the listed buildings. The harm was outweighed by the public benefits which included long term use by the residents, improving the building's functionality, supported the ongoing conservation and maintenance, retaining the historic features.
- Officers also conclude that the development would not harm the character or appearance of the conservation area, would preserve the scenic beauty of the National Landscape, and would not create unacceptable impacts on neighbours.

The officer's recommendation was to approve the applications.

There were no speakers. The Chair invited the members to debate the applications, and the following points were raised.

- Members asked for clarification on the differences between the 2 applications. The Principal Planner explained that the householder planning application related to the external works, including the proposed extensions, link structure, and any changes to the exterior appearance of the buildings. The listed building consent application related to all works including also the internal works affecting the Grade II listed buildings, such as alterations to historic features within the coach house and stables.
- Together, the two applications covered all aspects of the proposed development. Both were required because the site involved listed buildings and works affecting a listed building's character required separate listed building consent in addition to any planning permission that may be needed. The officer further explained that planning applications and listed building consent applications were considered under different legislation and policy tests, meaning the sub-committee must determine each application separately, even though they related to the same overall project.
- Members asked for clarification regarding comments from the Parish Council and the proposed link between the Coach House and Stables, did this provide access between the two buildings. The Principal Planner explained that the proposed link was a covered external walkway and decking area. There was no doorway connecting the former kennels to the main coach house. The link was to give the impression of a cohesive family home whilst preserving the buildings history and features.

10/August2026

- Members asked if the change from an open see-through gate to a closed gate was part of the application as it affected the appearance of the property from the road. The Principal Planner advised that the gate was not part of the application.

26/01276/HHD The Coach House, Asthall

The Chair, Councillor Mark Walker proposed that the application be approved in line with the officer recommendations. This was seconded by Councillor Liam Walker and put to the vote.

Voting Record – For Unanimous.

26/01277/LBC, The Coach House, Asthall

The Chair, Councillor Mark Walker proposed that the application be approved in line with the officer recommendations. This was seconded by Councillor Liam Walker and put to the vote.

Voting Record – For Unanimous.

43 25/02688/POROW - Proposed diversion of the part of the public right of way Shipton under Wychwood - Footpath No. 343/7/10 (part) Public footpath stopping up and creation order 2026.

Stephanie Eldridge presented the report for the proposed diversion of part of the public right of way in Shipton under Wychwood. The report asked members to authorise officers to make and advertise a Public Footpath Diversion Order under Section 257 of the Town and Country Planning Act. Members were not being asked to decide on whether the footpath diversion should go ahead. It was to allow the formal statutory process to start.

An informal consultation had already taken place to gather initial views. The diversion had been requested due to it being necessary to enable development that had already received planning permission.

If authorised, the Council would formally advertise the proposed diversion and undertake a statutory consultation allowing members of the public, consultees and other groups who use the public right of way to submit comments or objections. If there are no objections received the Council would be able to confirm the order. If objections were received and remained unresolved the matter would be referred to the Planning Inspectorate for a decision. Members were advised that approving the recommendation did not predetermine the final outcome, it simply allowed the statutory consultation and decision-making process to proceed.

The Principal Planner showed the Sub-Committee slides of the site and the where on the location the planning permission had been approved. The members were advised that there were on-going enforcement investigations relating to the wider Dash Grange site however these were separate from the matter before the sub-committee and should not influence the member's decisions on the proposed public footpath diversion order. During the informal

10/August2026

consultation, some objectors had raised concerns over the use of the proposed agricultural building. The members were advised that these concerns were speculative and related to possible future planning breaches and enforcement issues. Members were asked to determine the footpath diversion recommendation based solely on the planning permission already granted and the statutory test under section 257 of the Town and Planning Act.

Members asked for clarification on what grounds the report had been brought to the Sub-Committee when other changes to footpaths in the area had not been before the Sub-Committee. The Principal Planner explained that if planning permission had been granted and a diversion was needed to be able to implement that consent then the applicant could apply to the local planning authority under Section 257. Other diversions could be submitted under the Highways Act and that would be done through the County Council. If this application was not authorised, then the applicant would be able to apply under a separate act through the County Council to be considered under different legislation.

The proposal was put to the vote and was agreed unanimously.

44 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.

45 Appeal Decisions

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

46 Site Visits

Stephanie Eldridge, Principal Planner, proposed a site visit before the consideration of an upcoming planning application.

The planning application was for an outlined proposal of up to 100 dwelling on the land at the edge of Enstone, accessed from Lidstone Road. The site visit would be beneficial to members and help with understanding the site and the surrounding area before the application came to the sub-committee for determination.

The site visit on Thursday 3 September 2026 at 9.30am was agreed. Democratic Services would sent the invite and relevant information to members.

The Meeting closed at 4.28 pm.

CHAIR