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## **PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Tuesday, 27 January 2026**

**At 6.00 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney**

### **Present:**

Councillor G Doughty (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	R Smith
	J Doughty	D Temple
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Derek Mackenzie	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
Others:	None	

### **P54 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

### **P55 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from Members or officers.

### **P56 MINUTES**

The minutes of the Committee meetings held on 18 November and 9 December 2025 and 6 January 2026 were received.

P12 – The Committee Clerk updated the Committee on the decision of the developer to proceed with the naming as “Phoenix Row” despite the objection of a WODC Councillor.

P13 – The Committee Clerk confirmed that the submission had been made to the County Council Highways Asset Response Team (HART) however, many of the reported items had been rebuffed by HART. Members asked that the Committee Clerk follow up with HART to obtain further feedback and invite representation from HART at a future meeting.

### **Resolved:**

1. That, the minutes of the Committee meetings held on 18 November and 9 December 2025 and 6 January 2026 be approved as a correct record of the meetings and be signed by the Chair and,
2. That, Officers follow up with the HART team with an invite to attend a meeting of the Committee.

P57 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

P58 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The Committee received and considered a schedule of planning applications from West Oxfordshire District Council.

**Resolved:**

That, the comments, as per the attached schedule be forwarded to West Oxfordshire District Council.

P59 **PLANNING DECISIONS**

The Committee received and considered a schedule of planning decisions received from West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC).

The Committee Clerk summarised the reasoning for the decisions that were contrary to the Committee's submission.

**Resolved:**

That, the list circulated advising of WODC planning decisions be noted.

P60 **APPLICATION FOR A NEW PREMISES LICENCE - 52 HIGH STREET, WITNEY**

The Committee received the application from DhyeyDev Brothers, 52 High Street for a new premises licence.

**Resolved:**

That, the Council submit the following response.

Witney Town Council have no objection to the application they welcome the new business to the High Street ensuring that a shop premises does not remain empty.

P61 **WITNEY TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Deputy Town Clerk (DTC) provided a verbal update of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee held 20 January 2026. The update included details of the progression of Oxfordshire County Council's projects, a request to bring forward the bus users meeting to spring 2026, community Speedwatch. The completed minutes would be circulated at the next meeting of this Committee.

Additionally, the DTC updated members on the Stronger Communities recommendation made the previous evening to continue with their requests for the installation of Eastgate style benches in the High Street which was contrary to the proposals being put forward by both West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council.

**Resolved:**

That, the verbal update be noted.

P62 **INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING STATEMENT**

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that due to the pressure on Officers time, the draft Infrastructure Funding Statement was yet to be finalised.

**Resolved:**

That, the Infrastructure Funding Statement be added as an agenda item to the meeting of the Committee on 31 March 2026.

P63 **NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK - PROPOSED REFORMS**

The Deputy Town Clerk gave a verbal update following his attendance at a webinar on the proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

He reported that the proposals represented a significant and radical change to the current planning system. Key elements of the reforms included a presumption in favour of approving substantial developments; increased responsibility on planning authorities to produce and maintain local plans; a focus on development around train stations; the redesignation of sites delivering between 10–49 dwellings; a preference for urbanisation of developments;; exemptions for small sites from Biodiversity Net Gain requirements; changes to the role of statutory consultees; and an increased emphasis on community involvement in the planning process.

The Committee considered the relevance of the proposed reforms to Witney and expressed concern that changes to statutory consultee arrangements could result in the Town Council being removed or marginalised within the planning process. Members also raised concerns regarding the potential impact of development on flooding both upstream and downstream, and the lack of clear responsibility placed on developers to provide and fund appropriate mitigation measures.

The Committee discussed the wording of Policy F7 and agreed that it should be strengthened. Members felt that the scope and use of the term “elsewhere” should be explored further and more clearly defined, to ensure that flood risk was properly addressed and not displaced to other locations. A Member further noted that it was important to remember that the planning system should focus on “building communities, not just houses,” with appropriate infrastructure and services considered alongside housing delivery.

**Recommended:**

1. That, the proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework be noted and,
2. That, a response be submitted to expresses concern regarding any reduction in the role of parishes as statutory consultees in the planning process and,
3. That, Policy F7 be reviewed and strengthened, with particular regard to the definition and use of the term “elsewhere” and the responsibility of developers to address flood risk and mitigation and,
4. That, the Town Council favours a planning approach that prioritises the creation of sustainable communities, not solely the delivery of housing.

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The meeting closed at: 6.46 pm

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Chair



P58- 5	WTC/015/26	Plot Ref :-25/03152/S73	Type :-	VARIATION
	Applicant Name :-	.	Date Received :-	06/01/2026
	Location :-	McDonalds - Ducklington Lane	Date Returned :-	28/01/2026
	Proposal :	Non compliance of condition 1 of permission 12/0119/P/S73 to enable the the restaurant to trade 24 hours a day, seven days a week		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council raises no objection to the above application; however, they wish to make the following comments and request the consideration of conditions in order to protect residential amenity and community wellbeing.		
		<p>Lighting and Impact on Residential Amenity - WTC are concerned about the potential impact of extended opening hours on nearby residential properties arising from external and internal lighting, particularly during night-time hours. Increased illumination from signage, menu boards, internal lighting and vehicle headlights has the potential to cause light intrusion and disturbance to neighbouring dwellings, contrary to the aim of protecting residential amenity. Consideration should be given to the intensity of external lighting and illuminated signage to minimise spill and glare on the surrounding area.</p> <p>WTC also note the potential for anti-social behaviour, particularly during the spring and summer months when customers are more likely to congregate late into the evening resulting in groups gathering outside the premises and in the car park area with an increase in noise and disturbance.</p> <p>Whilst WTC acknowledges that such matters can overlap with licensing controls, they remain material considerations where they relate to the use of land and its impact on local amenity.</p> <p>WTC strongly requests that conditions be concerned to ensure that the operation of the premises actively supports a Respect Our Neighbours approach. Such as the use of clear signage requesting customers to leave the area quietly, measures to discourage customers from congregating outside the premises and management practices to minimise noise, litter and disturbance particularly during late-night hours.</p>		

P58- 7	WTC/017/26	Plot Ref :-25/02993/ADV	Type :-	ADVERTISING
	Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-	13/01/2026
	Location :-	Land East Of Isabelle Spencer	Date Returned :-	28/01/2026
	Proposal :	Installation of two fascia signs and one projecting sign, all internally illuminated.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

P58- 8 WTC/018/26

Plot Ref :-25/03016/FUL

Type :- FULL

Applicant Name :- .

Date Received :- 13/01/2026

Location :- 13 Market Square

Date Returned :- 28/01/2026

Proposal : External window and roof repairs, with rear elevation facade remedial works

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application. They welcome any work to preserve features of the Town's buildings holding a listed status.

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The Meeting closed at : 6.46pm

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman Date: \_\_\_\_\_

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council