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PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Tuesday, 10 March 2026

At 6.30 pm in the Virtual Meeting via MS Teams - Virtual Meeting

Present:

Councillor G Doughty (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman J Doughty	G Meadows R Smith
Officers:	Sharon Groth Derek Mackenzie Cara Murray	Town Clerk Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk Admin Support Assistant - Communities & Planning
Others:	None	

P126 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor D Temple, Councillor J Treloar attended as a substitute.

P127 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers.

P128 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

P129 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.

P130 WITNEY TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee held on 20 January 2026, a verbal update of which had been provided at the meeting held on 27 January 2026. Members present at that meeting confirmed that the minutes were a true representation.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee held on 20 January 2026 be noted.

During the discussion of the following Agenda item.

Councillor R Smith left the meeting at 7:23pm

P131 **MHCLG CONSULTATION - REDUCING THE PREVALENCE OF PRIVATE ESTATE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

Following their initial discussions at the meeting of 17 February, Members further discussed the consultation regarding the reduction of private estate management arrangements. It was noted that the consultation was detailed and covered a wide range of subject areas, with a lengthy questionnaire and varying viewpoints to consider.

It was therefore unanimously agreed that details of the consultation be once again circulated, as they had been following the 17 February meeting, to all Members of the Council to allow them to submit individual responses by the closing date of 12 March 2026.

Resolved:

That, Officers issue a request to all Members asking that individual responses be submitted.

P132 **WEST OXFORDSHIRE LOWLANDS MOVEMENT AND PLACE (MAP) PLAN**

Following a briefing received earlier in the evening from Oxfordshire County Council officers, Members considered the West Oxfordshire Lowlands Movement and Place (MAP) Plan.

It was noted that the Plan was detailed and complex, covering a range of transport and place-based matters.

It was therefore unanimously agreed that details of the Plan be circulated to all Members of the Council to allow them to submit individual responses, should they be minded to do so.

Resolved:

That, Officers issue a request to all Members asking that individual responses be submitted.

The meeting closed at: 7.36 pm

Chair

Witney Town Council

Planning Minutes - 10th March 2026

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129- 1 WTC/023/26 Plot Ref :-26/00133/FUL Type :- FULL
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 19/02/2026
 Location :- 140 THORNEY LEYS Date Returned :- 11/03/2026
 THORNEY LEYS

Proposal : Erection of a detached dwelling and associated works.

Observations : Witney Town Council objects to this application on the following grounds:

Overdevelopment - The Council considers that the proposal represents an overdevelopment of the site. The scale, layout and intensity of development would appear cramped and out of keeping with the established pattern, spacing and character of development in the surrounding area. The proposal would therefore fail to respect the prevailing townscape and would result in a form of development that is incongruous within its setting. This is considered to be contrary to Policies OS2 and OS4 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and the design principles set out in Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Neighbour Amenity - Members raise concerns regarding the impact of the proposal on neighbouring residential properties, including potential loss of privacy and an increased sense of enclosure. The development is therefore considered to be contrary to Policies OS2 and OS4 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and Paragraph 135(f) of the National Planning Policy Framework, which seeks to secure a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupants.

Drainage - Members note and support the comments of the Flood Risk Management Officer. Should officers be minded to approve the application, a condition should be imposed requiring the submission and approval of a full surface water drainage scheme, including soakage testing in accordance with BRE 365, prior to the commencement of development, in accordance with Policy OS3 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

129- 2 WTC/024/26 Plot Ref :-26/00245/ADV Type :- ADVERTISED
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 19/02/2026
 Location :- UNIT 4-5 WELCH WAY Date Returned :- 11/03/2026
 WELCH WAY

Proposal : Erection of internally illuminated fascia signage to shop front and western elevation.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

129- 3 WTC/025/26 Plot Ref :-26/00244/FUL Type :- FULL
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 19/02/2026
 Location :- UNIT 4-5 WELCH WAY Date Returned :- 11/03/2026
 WELCH WAY

Proposal : Alterations to shop units 4 and 5 to create one single unit, alterations to include

the installation of an air conditioning unit to rear elevation and a extract grille to west elevation, new shopfront doors and the removal of one entrance.

Observations : Witney Town Council supports and welcomes this application.

Members are pleased to see a vacant unit brought back into active use, which will contribute positively to the vitality and viability of the area and provide local employment opportunities. This is consistent with the objectives of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, particularly policies that support the reuse of existing premises and the strengthening of the local economy, including Policy E6 (Town Centres).

The Committee also notes that national policy within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports the effective use of previously developed land and buildings, and encourages developments that promote the vitality of town centres (see NPPF paragraphs 86-90).

However, Members ask that the applicant is mindful of the existing parking and highway safety issues on Welch Way. There are ongoing concerns regarding vehicles parking on double yellow lines and causing obstruction to traffic when customers briefly stop to purchase food and drink. In accordance with NPPF paragraph 115, which seeks to ensure that development provides safe and suitable access for all users, the Committee encourages the applicant to ensure that clear signage is provided advising customers of local parking restrictions and directing them to appropriate nearby parking facilities.

While the Committee commends the reuse of a vacant unit, it considers that careful consideration should be given to the potential for the proposal to exacerbate existing parking and obstruction issues in the immediate vicinity.

129- 4	WTC/026/26	Plot Ref :-26/00355/CLP	Type :-	CERT LAWFU
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	19/02/2026
	Location :- 11 CHEDWORTH DRIVE CHEDWORTH DRIVE		Date Returned :-	11/03/2026
	Proposal :	Certificate of Lawfulness (erection of a single storey rear extension).		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

129- 5	WTC/027/26	Plot Ref :-26/00374/FUL	Type :-	FULL
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	23/02/2026
	Location :- 5A WEST END WEST END		Date Returned :-	11/03/2026
	Proposal :	Demolition of a timber workshop and erection of a replacement building comprising 2 x 1-bedroom apartments and associated works.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council does not object to this application in terms of material planning considerations.		

Members welcome the provision of one-bedroom accommodation close to the town centre, which contributes to housing choice within the town and supports sustainable patterns of development. This aligns with the objectives of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, including Policy H2 (Delivery of New Homes) and Policy OS2 (Locating Development in the Right Places), which encourage the provision of housing within accessible and sustainable locations.

Members note that national policy within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports the efficient use of land and encourages developments that make effective use of previously developed land, particularly in accessible locations (see NPPF paragraphs 124-125).

However, Members raise some concern that the proposed bedroom size appears relatively compact, and request that officers consider whether the internal layout provides an adequate standard of accommodation, having regard to the principles set out within the NPPF relating to the creation of high-quality, well-designed places (see NPPF Section 12, Achieving well-designed places) and any relevant internal space standards.

Members also ask that the comments from Environmental Health are taken into account and support the inclusion of a land contamination condition, requiring investigation, risk assessment and remediation should contamination be identified during development. This would be consistent with Policy EH8 (Environmental Protection) of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and national policy within NPPF Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment).

In addition, Members note the comments of the Flood Risk Management Officer regarding the site's susceptibility to groundwater flooding notes at 50-75% and request that appropriate drainage and mitigation measures are secured as part of the development in accordance with Policy EH7 (Flood Risk) of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and the principles set out in NPPF Section 14 (Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change).

129- 6	WTC/028/26	Plot Ref :-25/02880/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	24/02/2026
	Location :- 6 AERODROME LANE		Date Returned :-	11/03/2026
	AERODROME LANE			
	Proposal :	Conversion of loft with front dormer and rear velux rooflights including erection of detached pergola and outbuilding (part retrospective) (amended description)		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

129- 7	WTC/029/26	Plot Ref :-26/00350/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	24/02/2026
	Location :- 37 WOODSTOCK ROAD		Date Returned :-	11/03/2026
	WOODSTOCK ROAD			
	Proposal :	Erection of single and two storey extensions.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council objects to this application on the following grounds:		

Overdevelopment - The Council considers that the proposed two-storey side extension would represent an overdevelopment of the site. The scale, siting and proximity of the extension would significantly reduce the separation distance between No. 37 and 37A Woodstock Road (to approximately 1.2-1.3 metres), resulting in a cramped and visually intrusive relationship between the properties that would appear out of keeping with the established spacing and pattern of development in the area.

The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policies OS2 and OS4 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and the design principles set out in Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which require development to respond positively to local character and maintain appropriate spacing between buildings.

Neighbour Amenity - Members also raise concerns regarding the impact of the proposed extension on neighbouring residential amenity, including potential loss of natural light and outlook and the overbearing scale and massing of the development given the limited separation between the properties.

Concerns have also been noted regarding the potential impact on the existing right of way and drainage infrastructure located between the properties.

The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policies OS2 and OS4 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and Paragraph 135(f) of the National Planning Policy Framework, which seeks to ensure development provides a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupants.

129- 8	WTC/030/26	Plot Ref :-26/00373/FUL	Type :-	FULL
	Applicant Name :-	.	Date Received :-	26/02/2026
	Location :-	10 HANGAR CLOSE HANGAR CLOSE	Date Returned :-	11/03/2026
	Proposal :	Change of use of amenity space to enlarge domestic garden, and erection of 1.8 metre fence (retrospective)		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council objects to this retrospective application due to the loss of publicly accessible amenity land and the associated environmental and planning concerns.		

Members consider that the enclosure and incorporation of this land into a private residential garden represents an unacceptable encroachment of private curtilage onto land that currently functions as communal amenity space. The proposal would result in the permanent loss of land that contributes to the openness, character and environmental quality of the area and which is available for the informal enjoyment of the wider community.

The Council considers the proposal to be contrary to Policies OS2 and EH3 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, which seek to protect valued green and amenity spaces and ensure that development respects and protects the character, landscape setting and environmental value of its surroundings. The loss of this area of open land would erode the planned layout of the estate and diminish the contribution that the space makes to the visual and environmental character of the locality.

In addition, the proposal conflicts with the principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, which emphasises that planning decisions should protect and enhance public open spaces and should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. The Framework also highlights the importance of maintaining accessible green spaces for the health and wellbeing of communities.

Members are also concerned that approval of this application would set an undesirable precedent for the incremental loss of communal amenity land within the area through similar encroachments. Such piecemeal erosion of open space would cumulatively harm the character of the development and reduce the availability of shared green space intended for the benefit of all residents.

Furthermore, amenity grassland and open green areas can provide ecological and environmental benefits, including supporting urban biodiversity, surface water absorption, and contributing to local green infrastructure. The enclosure of this land into private curtilage reduces its communal environmental function and removes it from shared public benefit.

For these reasons, Witney Town Council considers the proposal to represent an unjustified loss of communal amenity land and an unacceptable encroachment into open space. The Council therefore strongly objects to the application and requests that the Local Planning Authority refuse planning permission.

Applicant Name :- .

Date Received :- 03/03/2026

Location :- 63 BARRINGTON CLOSE
BARRINGTON CLOSE

Date Returned :- 11/03/2026

Proposal : Change of use of parcel of land from amenity to residential and erection of a boundary fence to enclose garden.

Observations : Witney Town Council objects to this application due to the loss of publicly accessible amenity land and the associated environmental and planning concerns.

Members consider that the enclosure of this land into a private residential garden represents an unjustified encroachment of private curtilage onto land which currently forms part of the wider communal amenity space within the development. The proposal would result in the permanent loss of land intended for the benefit and enjoyment of the wider community and would erode the openness and character of the area.

The Council considers the proposal to be contrary to Policies OS2 and EH3 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, which seek to protect valued green infrastructure, amenity land and the character of the built and natural environment. The loss of this area of communal land would diminish the contribution it makes to the environmental quality and visual amenity of the locality.

The proposal is also inconsistent with the principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, which emphasises that planning decisions should protect and enhance public open spaces and support healthy, inclusive communities through the provision and protection of accessible green infrastructure.

Members also wish to highlight that, although similar applications may have previously been approved in the locality, Witney Town Council strongly considers that the continued incremental loss of communal amenity land through such proposals is harmful to the overall character and function of these spaces. The approval of further applications of this nature would risk establishing or reinforcing an undesirable precedent that could lead to the progressive erosion of shared green space intended for the benefit of all residents.

For these reasons, Witney Town Council objects to the application.

However, should West Oxfordshire District Council be minded to approve the proposal, the Town Council requests that a planning condition be imposed to ensure the land remains as green space, ancillary to the dwelling and that permitted development rights are restricted to prevent the erection of buildings, structures or further development on the land in the future.

The Meeting closed at : 07:36pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council