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CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY & PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Tuesday, 28 November 2023

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

Present:

Councillor G Meadows (Vice-Chair, in the Chair)

Councillors:	R Smith J Aitman O Collins	J Robertshaw S Simpson
Officers:	Adam Clapton Derek Mackenzie Claire Green Carl Whitehead	Deputy Town Clerk Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk Administration Support - Planning & Stronger Communities Park Ranger
Others:	One member of the public.	

P634 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A Bailey.

P635 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Smith declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in Planning Application 23/02930/FUL as she was a resident of Manor Road.

Also, Councillor Collins declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in Planning Application 23/02934/HHD as he previously worked with the applicant's partner.

P636 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Councillor R Crouch spoke as a member of the public on behalf of residents who lived close to The Leys in relation to planning application 23/02731/FUL. They had raised concerns about the vehicle access to the proposed new car park; they asked that the safety of users of the park be reconsidered, and consideration given to reducing the size of the car park or establishing a separate designated footpath.

With the permission of the Chair, application 23/02731/FUL was moved up the agenda so the member of public could hear the discussion and outcome.

Councillor R Crouch left the meeting at 6:15pm

P637 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Climate Biodiversity & Planning Committee meetings held on 26 September; 17 October & 7 November 2023 were received.

P600 - A Member updated the Committee that Oxfordshire County Council had discussed the use of glyphosate during the week and its decision may help inform the options available to officers in formulation a pesticides policy. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the redraft of the policy was being prepared ready for presentation at the start of 2024.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of Climate Biodiversity & Planning Committee meetings held on 26 September, 17 October & 7 November 2023 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

P638 **WITNEY LAKE & COUNTRY PARK - MANAGEMENT PLAN SUMMARY**

With the permission of the Chair, this item was moved up the agenda to allow the Biodiversity & Green Spaces Officer (B&GSO) to leave the meeting on its completion.

The Committee received and considered a Management Plan Summary along with a verbal update from the B&GSO. This was a summary of the larger plan written by the B&GSO which would cover the Country Park and also be responsible for delivery of smaller biodiversity projects across the town.

Members offered their thanks for the results seen so far in what had been a short period since the B&GSO joined the council. His vision and pragmatic approach had inspired confidence.

The Committee were encouraged to spread the word with any individuals or groups to try and bolster the bank of volunteers; the B&GSO had a regular group of eight to ten members who assisted with the work outlined in the plan.

The B&GSO also updated members on the level of wildlife observed at the lake and on the adjoining meadow along with reassurance that he was conscious of the budget parameters and would continue to make cost savings where possible such as the re-use of three field gates rather than the purchase of new, a cost saving of approx. £1,000.

Recommended:

1. That, the Management Summary and verbal update be noted and,
2. That, the Management Plan Summary be approved as a live document and,
3. That, the plan be reviewed on an annual basis and,
4. That, the plan be published and promoted so that residents are aware of the work being carried out.

P639 **FINANCE REPORT: REVISED REVENUE BUDGET 2023/24 AND DRAFT BASE REVENUE BUDGET FOR 2024/25**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) which summarised the budgets under its remit, along with associated costs centres and codes.

Members were all in agreement with the inclusion of £11,000 for floating Biomatrix platforms as outlined in the Witney Lake & Country Park Management Plan presented by the B&GSO earlier in the meeting.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the inclusion of £11,000 for floating platforms be included in the Council's Capital Programme.

The B&GSO left the meeting at 6:48pm

P640 **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.

P641 **PLANNING DECISIONS**

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

Members also received a verbal update from the Administrative Support Assistant for Stronger Communities & Planning who relayed feedback taken from the Planning Officer's Delegated Report for application 23/01525/S73. Members were disappointed to hear that their request to visit and measure the lighting during the hours of darkness had been overlooked.

Resolved:

1. That, the list circulated advising of WODC planning decisions be noted and,
2. That, the verbal update in respect of comments made by the committee is noted.

Councillor O Collins left the meeting at 6:50pm

P642 **WITNEY TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 26 SEPTEMBER 2023**

The Committee received the minutes of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee (WTAC) meeting held on 26 September 2023.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the WTAC meeting held on 26 September 2023 be noted.

The meeting closed at: 7.59 pm

Chair

Witney Town Council

Planning Minutes - 28th November 2023

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640- 1 WTC/155/23 Plot Ref :-23/02307/FUL Type :- FULL
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 07/11/2023
 Location :- 63 ETON CLOSE Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
 ETON CLOSE
 Proposal : Change of use of land to extend domestic curtilage (retrospective)
 Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

640- 2 WTC/156/23 Plot Ref :-23/02789/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 08/11/2023
 Location :- 1 ELM CLOSE Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
 ELM CLOSE
 Proposal : Erection of single and two storey front extensions with associated works including additional hardstanding and extended dropped kerb.
 Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this application in terms of material concerns, it notes the considerable loss of permeable drainage - from both the extended footprint and the additional hardstanding for parking. Whilst the development might be deemed small, Members expressed concern that surface water is to discharge to existing drainage, with the possibility of this causing increased flood risk elsewhere. Members ask that mitigating measures, including permeable paving are considered, to help decrease the possibility of surface water flooding in this and surrounding areas, in accordance with policy EH7 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

640- 3 WTC/157/23 Plot Ref :-23/02759/ADV Type :- ADVERTISIN
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 08/11/2023
 Location :- 27 MARKET SQUARE Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
 MARKET SQUARE
 Proposal : Erection of non-illuminated fascia sign and x2 hanging signs.
 Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

640- 4 WTC/158/23 Plot Ref :-23/02629/FUL Type :- FULL
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 08/11/2023
 Location :- WITNEY SERVICE STATION Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
 WELCH WAY
 Proposal : Installation of two EV chargers along with four EV charger bays with canopy and associated works.
 Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

640- 5 WTC/159/23 Plot Ref :-23/02761/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 08/11/2023
Location :- CROFTDOWN Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
CORN STREET
Proposal : Alterations to include construction of dormers to rear roof slope and insertion of folding doors to front elevation.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

640- 6 WTC/160/23 Plot Ref :-23/02762/LBC Type :- LISTED BUI
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 08/11/2023
Location :- CROFTDOWN Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
CORN STREET
Proposal : Internal and external alterations to include changes to floor layouts, construction of dormers to rear roof, changes to conservatory French doors and installation of folding doors to front elevation, along with removal of ramps. Internal alterations to include changes to first and second floor bathrooms, removal of gas fires and reopening of fireplaces to second floor and attic. Exterior works to include re-pointing and masonry repairs to elevations.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

640- 7 WTC/161/23 Plot Ref :-23/02636/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 08/11/2023
Location :- 36 BEECH ROAD Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
BEECH ROAD
Proposal : Removal of garage and erection of single storey side extension.
Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this application in terms of material concerns, it notes the loss of permeable drainage and would ask that mitigating measures are considered to help decrease the possibility of surface water flooding in this area, in accordance with policy EH7 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

640- 8 WTC/162/23 Plot Ref :-23/02856/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 08/11/2023
Location :- KINGSMEAD Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
51 WOODLANDS ROAD
WOODLANDS ROAD
Proposal : Proposed garage conversion, erection of single storey front and side extension, proposed conservatory and internal alterations.
Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this application in terms of material concerns, it notes the loss of permeable drainage and would ask that mitigating measures are considered to help decrease the possibility of surface water flooding in this area, in accordance with policy EH7 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

640- 9 WTC/163/23 Plot Ref :-23/02819/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 08/11/2023
Location :- 65 ETON CLOSE Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
ETON CLOSE
Proposal : Change of use of land from agricultural to extend domestic garden.
(Retrospective).
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

640- 10 WTC/164/23 Plot Ref :-23/02731/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 13/11/2023
Location :- THE COFFEE SHED Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
THE LEYS
Proposal : Demolition of existing hub and erection of replacement hub and community facilities, installation of court lighting, creation of new pedestrian access, extension to existing car park, creation of changing and shower facilities from former depot facility and resurfacing of tennis courts to provide new tennis courts, MUGA and Padel courts and installation of canopies above Padel courts together with associated works.
Observations : Witney Town Council welcome this proposal and supports the application which will bring new recreational opportunities and facilities to this much used site in Witney under the Council's control. However, Members acknowledge concerns raised by residents via this planning process and ask that the applicant considers appropriate solutions to address these.

Members of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee heard a further representation from neighbouring residents, that residents support the application in principle but have concerns about the increased on-site parking and associated traffic. The increase in vehicle movements will be detrimental to the safety of users of The Leys, since access will be via the existing narrow lane. This path is used by runners, walkers and dog walkers as a circular route as well as residents of nearby 'Fernleigh' extra care home (the paved loop can be used by wheelchairs and mobility scooters), the path is regularly crossed by families and children that are visiting the park and will run across to use the WC facilities, residents from Buttercross Lane and the surrounding area (especially families and children) access The Leys from the existing gate that leads into the park area, The Leys is very well used by visitors walking dogs and dogs are commonly being exercised off-lead.

Witney Town Council ask that the applicant considers these comments raised by residents, for a reduction in the car parking spaces, that the few spaces be restricted to staff parking, plus dedicated spaces for blue badge holders. If the proposed parking is to be approved in the current form, an alternative solution put forward by nearby residents is that a new path is created to run adjacent to the current lane, to allow the continuation of a surfaced path that allows non-vehicular users to safely enjoy a circular route.

640- 11 WTC/165/23 Plot Ref :-23/02853/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 13/11/2023
Location :- 15 BIRDLIP CLOSE Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
BIRDLIP CLOSE
Proposal : Garage conversion and internal alterations to create additional living space.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

640- 12 WTC/166/23 Plot Ref :-23/02476/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 13/11/2023
Location :- 59 BARRINGTON CLOSE Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
BARRINGTON CLOSE
Proposal : Change of use of land to enlarge domestic garden together with erection of fencing and construction of single storey side extension. (Part retrospective).
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

640- 13 WTC/167/23 Plot Ref :-23/02903/S73 Type :- VARIATION
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 14/11/2023
Location :- 6 CHURCH GREEN Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
CHURCH GREEN
Proposal : Variation of conditions 2 and 4 of Planning Permission 21/02905/FUL to allow changes to the render finish.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

640- 14 WTC/168/23 Plot Ref :-23/02913/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 14/11/2023
Location :- 9 WEST END Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
WEST END
Proposal : Erection of boundary fencing, gate and trellis. (Retrospective).
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

640- 15 WTC/169/23 Plot Ref :-23/02914/LBC Type :- LISTED BUI
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 14/11/2023
Location :- 9 WEST END Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
WEST END
Proposal : Erection of boundary fencing, gate and trellis. (Retrospective).
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

640- 16 WTC/170/23 Plot Ref :-23/02730/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 14/11/2023
Location :- CAR PARK REAR OF 58 WEST Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
END
WEST END
Proposal : Redevelopment of existing vehicle dismantling yard including part demolition and part reconstruction of existing single storey building, erection of ten dwellings along with new access from Farmers Close and the provision of parking and landscaping.
Observations : Witney Town Council support the principle of redevelopment at this site. However, given the recent land use, Members have expressed concerns about land, air and water contamination during any construction works as well as when homes are occupied. These concerns are for residents of the new dwellings as well as residents in the neighbouring area, to ensure a clean and safe environment for all in Witney. Members acknowledge the documents submitted by the applicant, including the Phase I Desk Study, but, ahead of any consent being granted a Phase II Study, more investigation, more measurement, sampling and monitoring needs to be carried out at the site, and

then scrutinised by the relevant technical consultees. The Local Planning Authority must ensure that the applicant addresses and can mitigate against all and any risk from contaminants to ensure no harm to human health, the environment or Witney waterways. Members welcome additional plans and documents coming forward as part of the planning process.

640- 17 WTC/171/23 Plot Ref :-23/02930/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 20/11/2023
Location :- 111 MANOR ROAD Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
MANOR ROAD
Proposal : Erection of 1 bed dwelling with associated parking, bin and bike stores.
Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this application in terms of material concerns, it notes the loss of permeable drainage and would ask that mitigating measures are considered to help decrease the possibility of surface water flooding in this area, in accordance with policy EH7 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

640- 18 WTC/172/23 Plot Ref :-23/02850/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 20/11/2023
Location :- 31 WOODPECKER WAY Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
WOODPECKER WAY
Proposal : Proposed conservatory, raised pond, shed and summer house.
Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this application in terms of material concerns, it notes the loss of permeable drainage and would ask that mitigating measures are considered to help decrease the possibility of surface water flooding in this area, in accordance with policy EH7 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

640- 19 WTC/173/23 Plot Ref :-23/02934/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 20/11/2023
Location :- 32 CURBRIDGE ROAD Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
CURBRIDGE ROAD
Proposal : Erection of single storey side and rear extension.
Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this application in terms of material concerns, it notes the loss of permeable drainage and would ask that mitigating measures are considered to help decrease the possibility of surface water flooding in this area, in accordance with policy EH7 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

640- 20 WTC/174/23 Plot Ref :-23/02553/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 21/11/2023
Location :- GARAGES Date Returned :- 29/11/2023
GLOUCESTER COURT MEWS
Proposal : Demolish existing boundary wall and replace with close boarded fencing (part retrospective).
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

The Meeting closed at : 8:00pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council