

Public Document Pack

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

Held on Tuesday, 21 July 2020

At 6.00 pm in the VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM - Virtual Meeting

Present:

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	M Jones
	L Ashbourne	A McMahon
	V Gwatkin	A Prosser
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Office Manager
Others:	None.	

P207 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Cllr R Bolger.

P208 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared at the meeting.

P209 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of public present for this item.

P210 MINUTES

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Climate, Biodiversity and Planning meetings held on 16 and 30 June 2020.

MATTERS ARISING:

- P138 – 16 Jun The Leader advised that she had been in contact with Cllr James Mills regarding communication and had been encouraged by the response and hoped this would be better in the future.
- P141 – 16 Jun Members were advised that a letter had been written to residents in Corn Street concerning a bus shelter outside of their property
- P143 – 16 Jun The Chair advised that she had written to the West Oxfordshire District Council portfolio for the Environment.
- P144 – 16 Jun The Chair advised that discussion had taken place on the possibility of employing a Park Ranger, but this had been deferred until Land Management options had been agreed. Meetings with interested stakeholders would be taking place imminently on this subject.

RESOLVED: that the above minutes be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

P211 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The Committee received and considered a list of planning applications for consultation as forwarded by West Oxfordshire District Council.

RESOLVED: that the comments, as per the attached schedule, be forwarded to West Oxfordshire District Council.

P212 **PLANNING DECISIONS**

The Committee received and considered the schedule of planning decisions as circulated with the agenda.

RESOLVED: that the schedule as circulated, be noted.

P213 **OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CYCLE STRATEGY FOR EAST WITNEY AREA**

Members received and considered the Oxfordshire County Council Cycle Strategy for the East Witney Area.

The Committee was pleased to see that cycling connectivity was being considered and the plans had taken into account the views of local groups and the Town Council. The strategy was well-thought but there were some specific queries which would formulate the response.

RESOLVED: that the Cycling Strategy for the East Witney Area be noted, and the following consultation response be submitted to Oxfordshire County Council.

Witney Town Council welcomes this report, and although principally addressing East Witney, it is pleased links to North Witney and the town centre are alluded to. This is a good, well thought-out start towards greater town-wide connectivity and a Witney plan.

The report also displays the benefit of collaborative working with those who have a high level of expert local knowledge, including, Windrush Bike Project, BUG, Witney Traffic Advisory Committee and the Town Council.

There are some specific points which the Town Council would like to draw attention to:

1. The Town Council is expecting a 2nd entrance to the Windrush Cemetery to be included in the SDA road layouts. Cycle routes from the town should link to this.
2. The information contained is occasionally out of date (although it is noted there will be an audit for each development). In particular, the photograph of Woodbank off Woodstock Road is very old as a housing development is now situated here
3. Could removal of barriers be considered at Blakes Avenue and Old Stanton Harcourt Road? (not shown in Figure 11 as Hazards).
4. Could a crossing be considered across Cogges Hill Road leading to Blake Church of England Primary School?
5. Could the crossing exiting Church Lane across to the Old Dairy side be improved? This is a crossing heavily used by cyclists which leads to Madley Park Estate and Wood Green School which could be made safer. It is also the route into Witney from the whole

residential area beyond. The alignment of the crossing and a push-button crossing would be welcomed.

6. The fatality figures included in the appendix on page 26 seem a little confusing, further clarity would be beneficial.
7. Alongside parallel crossings to cross Cogges Hill Rd and Stanton Harcourt Road, could priority for cyclists at side roads along Cogges Hill Rd and Stanton Harcourt Road on the 'future adjacent to road' and 'traffic calming' sections be considered, so that cyclists travelling to Hanborough Station, Eynsham and Oxford can ride straight along? This would make the routes out of Witney more attractive for those crossing town, too.

P214 **WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL : CIL - CONSULTATION ON DRAFT CHARGING SCHEDULE 2020**

The Committee received and considered the consultation on the West Oxfordshire District Council Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule 2020.

Members were concerned that the schedule had laid out plans for zero-rated CIL in the strategic areas of the Local Plan 2031, of which Witney was included. This would result in North and East Witney Developers not having to pay towards town-wide infrastructure in the future. While the Committee noted that other areas had also favoured this approach to not hamper site viability, members agreed that Witney was an attractive place to develop so were confident that a CIL charge would not have an adverse effect.

RESOLVED: that the CIL Charging Schedule be noted, and the following consultation response be submitted to West Oxfordshire District Council.

Witney Town Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the CIL charging schedule for future developments and recognises that Witney is an attractive place to live and therefore develop. Further housing is already agreed in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 within and just outside Witney, but this should not be to the detriment of the town's already stretched infrastructure. Due to its geographical location, transport links and other welcoming factors, the Town Council has confidence that if CIL was to be agreed for larger as well as smaller strategic developments, developers would still be interested so therefore the Town Council objects to the proposed charging schedule.

Clear, understandable data and models of various non-zero-rated CIL rates for larger sites as part of this consultation would have provided more insight. The marginal negative calculations, which seem to be in contrast to and diverge from the conclusions of the Local Plan, are questionable inasmuch as they have inflexible land prices and do not anticipate how the market will react to CIL rates. The effects of Brexit and Covid-19 have had on prices is unknown, but could be significant, so a second independent valuation should be sought as soon as possible.

CIL benefits the whole community and Witney is already significantly underfunded in terms of sports, arts and youth provision for instance and these funds would contribute to those needed areas. While Section 106 funds have been greatly welcomed in previous years, there are projects which have fallen through (Cogges Link Road) where allocated funds have been lost due to their specific nature. CIL would offer more protection and value for money against this happening. In the Town Council's opinion, CIL as a proportion of contributions collected from developers would also make the transparency and transfer of developer contributions more efficient than the current Section 106 process.

Overall, Witney Town Council is concerned that these proposals in their current form appear to be favouring the interests of landowners, developers and their profits over the infrastructure of the town. While these may help deliver the long-term interests of the District Council, they result in the avoidance of developers paying CIL and a denial of discretionary funds to town and parish councils from the large developments that will impact them the most.

The meeting closed at: 8.44 pm

Chair

Witney Town Council

Planning Minutes - 21 July 2020

P175 Planning Applications

P175- 1 WTC/095/20 Plot Ref :-20/01444/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- MOHAMMED, MR Date Received :- 01/07/20
Location :- RAZZI HOUSE, 31 MOORLAND Date Returned :- 22/07/20
CLOSE
MOORLAND CLOSE
WITNEY
Proposal : Resubmission of Landscaping Plans originally submitted as part of Application 19/02591/HHD.
Observations : Witney Town Council does not believe these plans have addressed previous grounds for objection.

P175- 2 WTC/096/20 Plot Ref :-20/01499/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- GARTON-LEWIS, MR O Date Received :- 07/07/20
Location :- 5 BIRDLIP CLOSE Date Returned :- 22/07/20
BIRDLIP CLOSE
WITNEY
Proposal : Erection of single storey front and rear extensions.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

P175- 3 WTC/097/20 Plot Ref :-20/01319/LBC Type :- LISTED BUI
Applicant Name :- SHONE, MR COLIN Date Received :- 14/07/20
Location :- COGGES MANOR FARM Date Returned :- 22/07/20
CHURCH LANE
WITNEY
Proposal : Internal and external alterations to carry out remedial works to the roof of two existing barns (Wheat Barn and Barley Barn) and attached store including replacement of roof tiles.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

The Meeting closed at : 8.44pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

This page is intentionally left blank