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Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

WESTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2026

Councillors Present: Phil Barnett (Chairman), Clive Hooker (Vice-Chairman), Adrian Abbs, Paul Dick, Nigel Foot, Denise Gaines, Tony Vickers and Howard Woollaston

Also Present: Debra Inston, Cheyanne Kirby, Sian Cutts, Paul Goddard, Sharon Armour, Harriet Allen, Paul Bacchus, Jodie Wilson, Rebecca Hawkes-Reynolds, Thomas Radbourne, Gordon Oliver

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Antony Amirtharaj

PART I

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2026 were deferred until the next meeting on 18 March 2026.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Nigel Foot declared that he had been lobbied on Agenda Item 4(1).

Councillors Howard Woollaston, Tony Vickers, Adrian Abbs, Martin Colston, and Denise Gaines declared that they had been lobbied on Agenda Item 4(2).

Councillors Tony Vickers declared that he had been lobbied on Agenda Item 4(3)

Councillor Nigel Foot declared an interest in Agenda Item 4(1) as he was a member of Newbury Town Council's Planning and Highways Committee where the application had been discussed. As his interest was personal and not prejudicial or a disclosable pecuniary interest, he determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.

Councillor Tony Vickers declared an interest in Agenda Items 4(2) as he was a member of Newbury Town Council's Planning and Highways Committee where the application had been discussed. As his interest was personal and not prejudicial or a disclosable pecuniary interest, he determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.

Councillor Phil Barnett declared an interest in Agenda Items 4(1) and 4(2) as a member of Newbury Town Council's Planning and Highways Committee and Greenham Parish Council where these items had been discussed. He confirmed he had abstained from voting on these applications at the town/parish council level. As his interest was personal and not prejudicial or a disclosable pecuniary interest, he determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.

The Chairman stated that all three applications due to be discussed had been subject to site visits, although the visits had been "fragmented" because access on site depended on who the landowner allowed onto their land. The Chairman apologised to any individuals who had been unable to access the sites but emphasised that it was the landowners prerogative to decide who could go onto their land.

3. Schedule of Planning Applications

(1) 25/01669/FUL And 25/01670/LBC Hambridge Farm, Hambridge Road, RG14 2QG

1. The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(1)) concerning Planning Application 25/01669/FUL & 25/01670/LBC in respect of conversion of buildings to form 3 residential dwellings, extension to garage and associated works. (Reconsideration of application reference 24/02422/FUL following the High Court Consent Order dated 9th July 2025).
2. Ms Harriet Allen (Planning Officer) introduced the report to Members, which took account of all the relevant policy considerations and other material planning considerations. In conclusion the report detailed that the proposal was acceptable in planning terms and officers recommended that the Development Manager be authorised to grant planning permission and listed building consent, subject to the conditions outlined in the main and update reports.
3. The Chairman asked Mr Paul Goddard (Principal Development Control Engineer) if he had any observations relating to the application.
 - The application followed a previous one that was quashed, but there were no highway issues with either application.
 - The access onto the B3421 and the sight lines were existing. While the sight lines to the south were not up to standard due to the bridge structure, the proposal would result in a substantial reduction in vehicle movements compared to the lawful office use.
 - This significant reduction in traffic would reduce the potential for harm and personal injury accidents, making it difficult to refuse the application on traffic and access grounds.
 - The construction management plan was sufficient for the scale of the proposed conversion works.
 - The site layout, car parking standards, cycle storage, and electric vehicle charging points were all compliant and satisfactory.
 - Highway Officers raised no objection to the application.
4. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Mr Andy Moore, Town Council representative, Mr John Cole, objector, Mr Simon Pike and Ms Sharon Bovingdon, supporter, and Mr Fred Quartermain, solicitor for the Applicants, addressed the Committee on this application.

Town Council Representation

5. Mr Moore addressed the Committee. The full representation can be viewed here: [Western Area Planning Committee – Recording](#)

Member Questions to the Town Council

6. Members did not have any questions of clarification.

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Objector Representation

7. Mr John Cole addressed the Committee. The full representation can be viewed here:
[Western Area Planning Committee – Recording](#)

Member Questions to the Objector

8. Members asked questions of clarification and were given the following responses:
- The visibility splay to the south was 62m, which was below the recommended standard, whereas the northern exit was safer.
 - Mr Cole had not consulted directly with the Council's Conservation Officer.
 - Regarding a question on how the objector would prevent future residents from using his business's exit during opening hours. Mr Cole stated that if the application were approved, he would likely not police it in order to maintain good neighbourly relations.
 - He confirmed that there was water in the barn near the boiler

Supporter Representation

9. Mr Pike and Ms Bovingdon addressed the Committee. The full representation can be viewed here:
[Western Area Planning Committee – Recording](#)

Member Questions to the Supporter

10. Members did not have any questions of clarification.

Agent Representation

11. Mr Quartermain addressed the Committee. The full representation can be viewed here:
[Western Area Planning Committee - Recording](#)

Member Questions to the Applicant

12. Members asked questions of clarification and were given the following responses:
- Regarding the water seen during the site visit, Mr Quartermain stated that this was a localised issue caused by a problem with the boiler.

Member Questions to Officers

13. Members asked questions of clarification and were given the following responses:
- Officers explained that they had not given significant weight to the potential use of the northern access, as this was a private arrangement that could be withdrawn at any time. The assessment was based on the southern access being the sole access. The substantial reduction in traffic from the proposed residential use, compared to the lawful office use, made the access acceptable despite the less-than-ideal sight lines. Officers had concerns about the northern access as well, due to a nearby river bridge and a history of two personal injury accidents at that location. Regarding the gardens, officers did not consider the level of traffic to the neighbouring clothing warehouse to be prohibitive for residents needing to cross the access road.
 - Planning permission would not be granted until a satisfactory Flood Risk Assessment had been submitted and approved; it was not a matter that could be dealt with by a post-decision condition.

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- The Principal Drainage Engineer highlighted the omission of the pump from the FRA, which rendered it invalid. He required the FRA to be updated to formally document the pump's purpose and the implications of its removal.
- Regarding the ownership of the access road and if access rights could be withdrawn, officers confirmed this was a civil matter between landowners and not a planning consideration.
- Listed buildings had an exemption from standard Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings. The proposal did not include roof insulation, but a condition had been added to ensure that if any insulation were installed in the future, it would be done in a way that would not harm the historic fabric of the building.

Debate

1. Councillor Vickers opened the debate, noting the unusual situation of reconsidering a previously approved application and stated he did not think there was a huge need for debate. He congratulated the officers on their very clear presentations. He felt that he did not have much to add but expressed regret that he had not been able to attend the site visit, though he was familiar with the site.
2. Councillor Dick stated that his personal concerns regarding the nature of the Grade II listed building, noise issues, potential highways issues, and flooding had been addressed. He confirmed he had listened very carefully to all that had been said and was relying on the professional reports. He indicated he was happy to propose that both applications be passed.
3. Councillor Abbs commented that he had nothing much to add, but felt the Committee was in a situation where "the normal hooks for objecting" did not exist. He stated that in reality, there was "nothing to hang a rejection on", and therefore the Committee had no choice but to approve the application. He confirmed he was happy to second Councillor Dick's proposal.
4. Councillor Hooker stated that based on the policies and submissions, he was not concerned about the external appearance of the proposal. He accepted the Highways Officer's point regarding highways, despite noting the access was "tricky". His main concern was ensuring the surface water drainage matters (SuDS) were resolved before any work could commence, expressing worry that work might begin before a conclusion on the flood risk was reached.
5. Officers clarified for Councillor Hooker that the recommendation was to delegate the granting of planning permission subject to the satisfactory resolution of the surface water drainage issue, meaning no consent would be issued until the matter was resolved.
6. Councillor Dick proposed to accept Officer's recommendation and grant planning permission subject to the conditions listed in the main report and update report for the reasons listed in the main report and update report for application 25/01669/FUL. This was seconded by Councillor Abbs.
7. The Chairman invited Members of the Committee to vote on the proposal by Councillor Dick, seconded by Councillor Abbs to grant planning permission for application 25/01669/FUL. At the vote the motion was carried
8. Councillor Dick proposed to accept Officer's recommendation and grant listed building consent subject to the conditions listed in the main report and update report for the reasons listed in the main report and update report for application 25/01670/LBC. This was seconded by Councillor Abbs.

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9. The Chairman invited Members of the Committee to vote on the proposal by Councillor Dick, seconded by Councillor Abbs to grant listed building consent for application 25/01670/LBC. At the vote the motion was carried

RESOLVED that the Development Manager be authorised to grant planning permission for application 25/01669/FUL subject to the conditions outlined in the main report and update report and the following conditions:

Conditions

For application 25/01669/FUL, the Development Manager be delegated to grant planning permission, subject to the satisfactory resolution of surface water drainage matters within six months (or a longer period as agreed) and the conditions listed in Section 8 of the agenda report, and any additional conditions required by the Lead Local Flood Authority. If these matters are not addressed within the agreed timescale, the Development Manager be delegated to refuse planning permission for the reason listed on the update sheet.

RESOLVED that the Development Manager be authorised to grant listed building consent for application 25/01670/LBC subject to the conditions listed in Section 9 of the agenda report and the additional condition listed in the update report.

(2) 25/01630/FUL Pound Street, RG14 6AA

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(2)) concerning Planning Application 25/01630/FUL in respect of change of use of 2 Pound Court from commercial (Use Class E) to a Place of Worship (Use Class F1), Pound Court, Pound Street, Newbury, RG14 6AA.

1. Ms Sian Cutts (Senior Planning Officer) introduced the report to Members, which took account of all the relevant policy considerations and other material planning considerations. In conclusion the report detailed that the proposal was acceptable in planning terms and officers recommended that the Development Manager be authorised to grant planning permission, subject to the conditions outlined in the main and update reports.
2. The Chairman asked Mr Paul Goddard (Principal Development Control Engineer) if he had any observations relating to the application.
 - The site was observed during Friday lunchtime prayers. There was a steady arrival of worshippers, with on-street parking on Pound Street becoming full. Some vehicles circled to find parking and some drop-offs occurred on the carriageway. The number of worshippers observed was around 50, which aligned with the applicant's data.
 - The existing traffic and parking issues would continue even if the application was refused, as the current mosque had been in the street for 25 years.
 - The introduction of Use Class E meant that the building could be used for other intensive purposes like a convenience store, restaurant, or nursery without needing planning permission. This made it very difficult to object to the proposed use on traffic generation grounds.
 - To mitigate concerns, he had worked with the applicant on a Parking and Allocation Management Plan. This would utilise the on-site car park for staff (two spaces) and for the drop-off and collection of worshippers, which should be sufficient based on his

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observations. The plan would be enforced by on-site stewards, with CCTV and clear instructions provided to worshippers to use public car parks.

- On balance, the Local Highway Authority raised no objection, subject to conditions to finalise the car park layout.
- 3. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Mr Andy Moore, Town Council representative, Ms Clare Struthers-Semple, objector, Mr Mohammed Hussain, supporter, Mr Alban Henderson, agent, addressed the Committee on this application.

Town Council Representation

- 4. Mr Moore addressed the Committee. The full representation can be viewed here:

[Western Area Planning Committee – Recording](#)

Member Questions to the Town Council

- 5. Members did not have any questions of clarification.

Objector Representation

- 6. Ms Struthers-Semple addressed the Committee. The full representation can be viewed here:

[Western Area Planning Committee - Recording](#)

Member Questions to the Objector

- 7. Members asked questions of clarification and were given the following responses:
 - Observations had been conducted on two separate occasions, counting 258 and 273 attendees respectively.
 - The pre-application advice had asked the applicant to demonstrate that vehicles could enter and exit in forward gear and provide tracking plots, which had not been carried out.
 - The objector estimated that the two mosques would have a capacity of 700, based on the current mosque's stated capacity of 300 on its website, plus an assumed capacity of 400 for the new, larger site.
 - The objector had not collected data on how worshippers travelled to the mosque but noted the applicant's own transport report concluded that 32.4% would arrive by car.
 - The entrance was not wide enough for simultaneous entry and exit of modern vehicles and she highlighted that minibuses were being used to transport worshippers.

Supporter Representation

- 8. Mr Hussain addressed the Committee. The full representation can be viewed here:

[Western Area Planning Committee - Recording](#)

Member Questions to the Supporter

- 9. Members asked questions of clarification and were given the following responses:
 - The existing mosque would be closed once the lease ended. The applicant could not afford to run two mosques.
 - The new building was larger than the existing mosque as it had two floors, but the supporter deferred to the agent regarding details about its specific size and capacity.

Agent Representation

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10. Mr Henderson addressed the Committee. The full representation can be viewed here:

[Western Area Planning Committee – Recording](#)

Member Questions to the Agent

11. Members asked questions of clarification and were given the following responses:

- The agent did not have a breakdown of attendees' travel methods with him, but he reiterated that the new site was in a more sustainable location.
- As a "place of worship", the planning use class, could apply to any faith's building. He did not have the specific capacity numbers.
- The agent had not seen a traffic swept path analysis produced for the car park, but he noted that the car park operated for the existing office use.

Member Questions to Officers

12. Members asked questions of clarification and were given the following responses:

- He confirmed that the two staff car parking spaces could be relocated. This could be addressed through Condition three, which required a final parking layout plan to be submitted and approved.
- The parking management and enforcement would be secured through Condition Two. If conditions could not be discharged, the development could not take place.
- Officers advised that the "Keep Clear" road marking could not be upgraded to a yellow box junction, as they were reserved for junctions, not private accesses, but the existing marking could be repainted.
- Swept path diagrams had not been produced, but they would be required as part of the submission for Condition three.
- Officers maintained that the 4.5m width was sufficient for two cars to pass according to the Manual for Streets, the use was already in the area, and the Class E fallback was a critical consideration. The proposed application, with a managed car park, was considered to be a suitable improvement over an uncontrolled Class E use.
- Ancillary food provision for worshippers was considered to be acceptable, but commercial cooking would likely require a separate planning application.

Debate

13. Councillor Paul Dick opened the debate. He felt that the key issues were traffic and parking. Having visited the site again, he was reassured there was capacity. He was confident in the professional advice from officers that the parking could be properly managed through conditions and was keen to propose the application.
14. Councillor Nigel Foot agreed. He drew a comparison with St Nicolas's Church in Newbury, which had no dedicated car parking and whose attendees walked or parked elsewhere. He noted that he often saw worshippers walking to the current mosque. He was happy to second the proposal for approval.
15. Councillor Adrian Abbs spoke against the proposal. He stated his concerns were purely on planning matters, not the nature of the use. He argued that the new location was worse due to its proximity to the traffic lights and being on the busier side of the road. He believed the 4.5m entrance was inadequate for safe two-way traffic and pedestrian access, and that relying on a future condition did not provide

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certainty. He cited the NPPF's requirement to consider cumulative traffic effects and felt the proposal would have a negative impact on the wider area.

16. Councillor Tony Vickers indicated that he lived near to the application site, and had never noticed any traffic problems from the existing mosque in 25 years. He had observed 21 free on-street parking spaces in the vicinity of the site during Friday prayers the previous week. He referenced the Equalities Act and the need to support a growing faith community. He expressed faith in the Highways Officer's ability to secure a workable solution through the conditions and indicated that he supported the proposal.
17. Councillor Martin Colston agreed that traffic was the key issue. However, he noted the officer's point about the Class E fallback position. He argued that this application provided an opportunity to improve and control the situation with an enforceable management plan, which would not be possible with an uncontrolled Class E use. He indicated that he supported the application.
18. Councillor Dick proposed to accept Officer's recommendation and grant planning permission subject to the conditions listed in the main report and update report. This was seconded by Councillor Foot
19. The Chairman invited Members of the Committee to vote on the proposal by Councillor Dick, seconded by Councillor Foot to grant planning permission. At the vote the motion was carried.

RESOLVED that the Development Manager be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the conditions outlined in the main report and update report.

Continuation of meeting

In accordance with the Council's Constitution point 7.13.5, the Committee supported the Chairman's motion that the remaining business could be concluded by 10.30pm, and therefore continued with Agenda Item 4(3)

4. 25/01921/HOUSE Western Lodge, West Woodhay, RG20 0BH

20. The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(3)) concerning Planning Application 25/01921/HOUSE in respect of elevation adjustments, minor alterations to Western Lodge and rebuilding of the garage annex, to provide a cohesive architectural design to the whole building, now part of the broader Lake House Estate, Western Lodge, West Woodhay, RG20 0BH.
21. Ms Cheyanne Kirby (Senior Planning Officer) introduced the report to Members, which took account of all the relevant policy considerations and other material planning considerations. In conclusion the report detailed that the proposal was acceptable in planning terms and officers recommended that the Development Manager be authorised to grant planning permission, subject to the conditions outlined in the main and update reports.
22. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Mr Robert MacDonald Parish Council representative, Mr Simon Hayes, objector, and Mr Ian Blake, agent, addressed the Committee on this application.

Parish Council Representation

23. Mr MacDonald addressed the Committee. The full representation can be viewed here:

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[Western Area Planning Committee - Recording](#)

Member Questions to the Parish Council

24. Members did not have any questions of clarification.

Objector Representation

25. Mr Hayes addressed the Committee. The full representation can be viewed here:

[Western Area Planning Committee - Recording](#)

Member Questions to the Objector

26. Members did not have any questions of clarification.

Agent Representation

27. Mr Blake addressed the Committee. The full representation can be viewed here:

[Western Area Planning Committee – Recording](#)

Member Questions to the Agent

28. Members asked questions of clarification and were given the following responses:

- The Agent did not know when the Pond had been filled. Officers clarified that planning permission was not required to fill in a pond that was not protected.
- In response to a question about the annex works being described as a "modest change", Mr Blake clarified that as the garage doors were being relocated, the building had to be demolished and rebuilt on the same footprint, since it could not be physically turned.

Member Questions to Officers

29. Members asked questions of clarification and were given the following responses:

- The track to West Woodhay Road was outside the red line and subject to separate enforcement matters. Other lines on the plan were landscaping/mown tracks not requiring permission. An informative proposed on the update sheet clarified that nothing outside the red line was approved by this application. Unlike a previous case, the red line for this application was contiguous with the residential curtilage and would not validate the track's existence at a later stage.
- A construction management plan had not been requested as it was assumed the lawful access would be used, and any use of the unauthorised track would be subject to enforcement action.
- As the pond was not part of the proposal, and as it had already been removed, a condition to reinstate it would not meet the legal tests.

Debate

30. Councillor Clive Hooker opened the debate. He stated he had no objection to the alterations to the house, which he considered a great improvement. However, he was surprised at the acceptance of the annex's cladding design, which he did not feel was in character with the existing house.
31. Councillor Tony Vickers explained that he had called in the application due to the perceived harm to the national landscape from the change of agricultural land to domestic use. While noting that officers did not agree with this reason, he stated that he would not be supporting the approval.

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32. Councillor Denise Gaines stated that while she thought the plans for the house and annex were positive, she was disappointed by the applicant's lack of consideration for local people regarding lighting in a dark sky area. However, on the basis of the plans being considered, he had no problems with the application itself.
33. Councillor Howard Woollaston asked if lighting of trees and gates could be controlled. Officers confirmed that domestic lighting did not require planning permission.
34. Councillor Hooker proposed to accept Officer's recommendation and grant planning permission subject to the conditions listed in the main report and update report. This was seconded by Councillor Woollaston
35. The Chairman invited Members of the Committee to vote on the proposal by Councillor Hooker, seconded by Councillor Woollaston to grant planning permission. At the vote the motion was carried.

RESOLVED that the Development Manager be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the conditions outlined in the main report and update report.

(The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 10.27 pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature