



Westbourne

Parish Council

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Minutes of Westbourne Parish Council's Planning Committee which took place on Thursday 12 March 2026 at 6.15pm at The Meeting Place, North Street, Westbourne.

Present: Cllr Lade Barker, Cllr Nigel Ricketts, Cllr Peter Watterson and co-opted non-council member Kevan Pegley.

In attendance: Clare Kennett, Clerk to the Council

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Ricketts. One member of the public and no members of the press were present.

03/26/74. Apologies for absence: Frank Campbell

03/26/75. Declaration of members interest:

- a. There were no declarations of interest.
- b. There were no requests for a dispensation.

03/26/76. Minutes of the meeting of 11 December 2025: The minutes were **AGREED** to be a correct record which were signed by the Chairman.

03/26/77. Planning decisions made since the last meeting: Members **NOTED** the following local planning authority decisions.

25/03984/FUL: Change of use of a former agricultural silage clamp into a self-service compound (B8 use), comprising 32 storage containers, associated car parking and landscaping. Sindles Farm, Sheepwash Lane, Aldsworth. **APPROVED.**

26/00115/PA6ABE: New agricultural barn. Sawmills Farm, Monks Hill, Westbourne. New agricultural barn. **REFUSE**

25/02596/FUL: Retrospective (Section 73a) use of land for the storage of touring caravans and motor homes and retention of associated hardstanding. Woodlands Rest, Hambrook Hill North, Hambrook. **WITHDRAWN**

25/02366/DOM: Change of use of first floor of garage to incidental accommodation (home office) and installation of 2 no. rooflights on the east garage roof slope. 4 Brook Cottages, Mill Lane, Westbourne. **PERMIT**

25/02374/FUL: S73a retrospective 1 no. Showmans facilities and workshop. Rownberts, Woodmancote Lane, Woodmancote. **REFUSE**

25/02666/TCA: Notification of intention to fell 1 no. Liquidambar tree (T1) and 1 no. Yew tree (T2). Lazy Meadow, North Street, Westbourne. **NOT TO PREPARE A TREE PRESERVATION ORDER**

25/02665/TCA: Notification of intention to fell 1 no. Fig tree. Smugglers Cottage Church Road Westbourne. NOT TO PREPARE A TREE PRESERVATION ORDER

03/26/78. Planning applications: Members **RESOLVED** to make the following decisions.

25/02308/FUL: S73a application for use of land for the stationing of 22 no. caravans for residential purposes, 7 no. utility buildings, 1 no. store building, 22 no. bin/cycle storages and associated landscape works. The Old Army Camp, Cemetery Lane, Woodmancote. Members **AGREED** to **OBJECT** to the planning application. See *Appendix 1*.

25/03043/FUL: Material change of use for storage of movie props, vehicles and supplies. The Old Army Camp, Cemetery Lane, Woodmancote. Members **AGREED** to **OBJECT** to the planning application. See *Appendix 2*.

26/00378/TCA: Notification of intention to reduce lateral branches on Southern sector by 1m on 1 no. Yew Tree (T1). Remove 3 no. branches on Southern sector on 1 no. Cherry Tree (T2) and 1 no. Hornbeam tree (T3). The Rectory, Westbourne Road, Westbourne. Members had **NO OBJECTION** to the planning application.

03/26/79. Planning appeals: To discuss appeals relevant to the Parish.

DCLG ref: 6003759

Application no: 25/00571/FUL

S73a retrospective change of use of land to civil engineering contractors yard. The Old Army Camp, Cemetery Lane, Woodmancote. Written representation deadline 13 March 2026. Members **AGREED** to restate the Council's objection. See *Appendix 3*.

DCLG ref: 6003760

Application no: 25/01757/FUL

S73a retrospective change of use of land for mixed use storage plots. Land south of Unit 1, Cemetery Lane, Woodmancote. Written representation deadline 13 March 2026. Members **AGREED** to restate the Council's objection. See *Appendix 3*.

DCLG ref: 6003762

Application no: 25/00580/FUL

S73a retrospective change of use to steel fabrications. The Old Army Camp, Cemetery Lane, Woodmancote. Written representation deadline 13 March 2026. Members **AGREED** to restate the Council's objection. See *Appendix 3*.

DCLG ref: 6003763

Application no: 25/01754/FUL

S73a retrospective change of use to a small vehicle haulage company and ancillary repairs. Unit 1, Cemetery Lane, Woodmancote. Written representation deadline 13 March 2026. Members **AGREED** to restate the Council's objection. See *Appendix 3*.

03/26/80. Neighbourhood Plan review: It was **AGREED** to hold a meeting with Dave Chapman on Tuesday 17 March at 11am on Zoom.

03/26/81. Chichester District Council enforcement reporting: Members **NOTED** the list of enforcement issues.

03/26/82. Items to be included on the next agenda

03/26/83. Date of next meeting: It was **AGREED** to hold an extraordinary meeting to discuss a planning application on Thursday 26 March 2026 at 7pm. The next Planning Committee would be held on Thursday 9 April 2026 at 6.15pm.

Planning application comments

Appendix 1:

25/02308/FUL: S73a application for use of land for the stationing of 22 no. caravans for residential purposes, 7 no. utility buildings, 1 no. store building, 22 no. bin/cycle storages and associated landscape works. The Old Army Camp, Cemetery Lane, Woodmancote.

Members **AGREED** to **OBJECT** to the planning application on the grounds that it conflicted with Westbourne's Neighbourhood Plan, the Chichester Local Plan 2021–2039, and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The proposal represents excessive and inappropriate development in open countryside, fails to demonstrate need or sustainability, and would have harmful cumulative and visual impacts on the local community, contrary to adopted planning policy.

The site is immediately adjacent to ongoing unauthorised industrial use. Both the land to the south of the site (Funnel and Howard) and the land to the east (mixed open storage and industrial use) have been subject to enforcement action and rejected appeals. Yet the uses continue onsite and no action to prosecute has been taken to ensure removal and deal with the ongoing offence. As long as these uses continue to operate, their impact is harmful to the amenity of residential use located immediately alongside.

1. Conflict with Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan – Policy OA3 (Community Balance)

Policy OA3 of the Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan (Community Balance) sets clear criteria for any proposal for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. This application fails to meet multiple requirements:

a) Local connection: No evidence has been provided that the proposed occupants have a demonstrable local connection to Westbourne Parish, as required by Policy OA3(a).

b) Alternative pitches: There are five vacant authorised pitches immediately adjacent. Accordingly, the claim that no alternative sites are available is incorrect, contrary to Policy OA3(b).

c) Over concentration and scale: Westbourne already accommodates around 52–65 Gypsy and Traveller pitches plus six Travelling Showman sites - one of the highest concentrations in the district. Adding a further 22 would create an over-concentration disproportionate to the nearby settled community and creates a barrier for residents traveling to Westbourne from Woodmancote on foot or cycle, directly breaching Policy OA3(c).

e) Amenity space: The site layout is cramped and fails to provide sufficient amenity space per pitch, breaching Policy OA3(e).

f) Impact on neighbouring uses: The site lies almost opposite Westbourne Cemetery which forms part of a designated conservation area. Increased use of the narrow and unadopted Cemetery Lane would cause unacceptable disturbance and harm to the tranquillity and setting of this sensitive site, contrary to Policy OA3(f).

Overall, the proposal is inconsistent with the spatial vision of the Neighbourhood Plan which seeks to maintain a balanced, inclusive community and to protect the village's rural setting.

g) Local distinctiveness: The proposal fails to respect the rural nature of the parish and has not demonstrated sustainable means of travel to access the services and amenities of Westbourne village, contrary to policy LD1.

h) Heritage: The site lies adjacent to Westbourne Cemetery, now a designated Local Green Space and recently included in the Westbourne Conservation Area. The application fails to indicate the proposal's impact on the historic significance of this heritage site, contrary to policy LD2.

2. Conflict with Chichester Local Plan 2021–2039

Policy H13: Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- Given existing provision in Westbourne, the development would dominate the settled community (Woodmancote) and fail the Policy H13 test that new sites be “appropriate in scale to the nearest settled community.”

Policy H14: Site design

- The proposed 22 pitches greatly exceed the Local Plan's own best-practice maximum of 15 pitches per site (paragraph 5.80).
- The submitted layout provides insufficient private amenity space, poor internal circulation, and inadequate drainage information.
- The design does not promote well-being or privacy and fails to integrate with the rural landscape, contrary to H14 criteria.

Policy NE11: Development in the countryside

Paragraph 1

- The proposal fails to demonstrate that any of the following criteria have been met:
 - a) That sustainability is "enhanced by improving or creating any opportunities to access the site by walking, cycling and public transport". In fact the site is a considerable distance from local services.
 - b) That the proposals are "appropriate to their countryside location and will not cause unacceptable harm to their rural setting." On the contrary they constitute a major intensification of development in a rural area
 - c) That the proposals "conserve and enhance the key features and qualities of the rural and landscape character of the countryside setting including biodiversity".
 - d) That the proposal is "well related to an existing farmstead or group of buildings or located close to an established settlement". The only buildings this proposal is related to are those involved in the ongoing unauthorised industrial use referred to above.
 - e) That the proposal is "complementary to or compatible with its countryside location".

3. Conflict with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- **Paragraph 116:** Safe and suitable access has not been demonstrated; Cemetery Lane remains an unadopted, narrow track unsuitable for intensified use.
- **Paragraph 135:** Development must provide a high standard of amenity – the layout fails this requirement.

4. Conflict with the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2024

The PPTS gives clear guidance as to why this application should be refused, as follows:

a) **Open countryside / away from settlement**

- The site is 400m outside the defined settlement boundary (per the application). Under PPTS, sites in open countryside away from allocations should be *very strictly limited*.
- The argument: the location is not allocated for this purpose; it is away from the core of the settlement and existing services. Services to Westbourne are substandard, no public transport, and no Medical facilities, only one small primary school

b) **Scale and cumulative impact (domination)**

- PPTS says scale must not dominate the nearest settled community. This is Woodmancote and residents must pass this site to get to Westbourne; many residents have stopped using this route and in fact have moved away from the Hamlet. A 22-pitch site is likely to dominate, especially given existing number of authorised pitches and their location next to this site in Westbourne and Woodmancote.
- The cumulative number of pitches, with scale of occupancy and site density are disproportionate, we believe it is a strong reason to refuse under PPTS.

c) **Availability of alternatives**

- PPTS requires considering whether there are alternative accommodation options. The existence of five vacant pitches on the adjacent site can be used to argue that the need can be met elsewhere without this new development. The new Chichester Local Plan has a Policy to allocate new pitches to cover any shortfall.
- The applicants have not shown that all other available options are exhausted.

d) **Amenity / environmental harm**

- Lack of demonstrable mitigation of negative impacts: e.g. drainage (flood risk, surface water); nitrogen deposition; harm to biodiversity / impact on conservation area; and visual harm to the landscape.
- This cannot be reasonably mitigated, the policy indicates refusal is appropriate.

e) **Design, layout, amenity for occupants**

- The proposal needs to provide “sufficient amenity” for future residents (privacy, space, layout, infrastructure). The layout is cramped, poor passive surveillance or lack of private outdoor space, or inadequate infrastructure (sewage, drainage, turning for vehicles etc.), this is a solid ground for refusal under PPTS criteria for well-planned sites.

f) **Highway access / transport / access to services**

- PPTS expects sites to enable access to health, education, welfare, work, etc; that means proximity or connectivity to facilities and safe access. The facilities are not all accessible in Westbourne access is unsafe along narrow unadopted roads, substandard visibility or turning out from Cemetery Lane as accepted in the appeal by the Inspector in the case against Funnel and Howard.

5. Cumulative and Landscape Impact

The proposed expansion would create a continuous block of caravan development from the WSCC site eastwards, transforming the character of Cemetery Lane from a rural fringe to a dense residential enclave.

Such intensification conflicts with Local Plan Policies H13 and NE11 and with the Neighbourhood Plan's objective to protect the village's landscape setting.

6. Conclusion

The application is in direct conflict with:

Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan Policy OA3 (Community Balance)

Chichester Local Plan Policies H13, H14 and NE11

NPPF Paragraphs 84, 116, 135 and 193

PPTS Policy H

Given the scale, cumulative impact, failure to demonstrate local connection or need, and the unacceptable effect on landscape, heritage, and community balance, Westbourne Parish Council respectfully requests that Chichester District Council REFUSE planning permission for application 25/02308/FUL.

Appendix 2

25/03043/FUL: Material change of use for storage of movie props, vehicles and supplies. The Old Army Camp, Cemetery Lane, Woodmancote.

Members **AGREED** to **OBJECT** to the planning application. Members considered that there was insufficient information in the application to fully understand the type of props, vehicles and supplies that would be stored at the site. Members discussed that a large low-loader vehicle had, within the last week, delivered a large tank to the site which travelled through the narrow roads of Westbourne village to get to Cemetery Lane. Members were concerned about the impact on the village as well as Cemetery Lane as large, heavy vehicles could damage the surface of the road and also impact on the peaceful amenity of the Cemetery.

Members considered that the application conflicted with Westbourne's Neighbourhood Plan, the Chichester Local Plan 2021–2039, and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The proposal represents excessive and inappropriate development in open countryside, fails to demonstrate need or sustainability, and would have harmful cumulative and visual impacts on the local community, contrary to adopted planning policy.

There is no authorised industrial or commercial use on the site apart from a very limited use that was accepted in the enforcement appeal as being continuous for more than 10 years prior to the original service of the enforcement notice. This particular use was active on the site at the time but was not the use that was accepted as being 'established' for planning purposes. This use and the industrial complex which has been unlawfully created is seriously detrimental to the countryside setting and as such is contrary to the range of policies identified which

have been approved to protect the rural character of the area. The NPPF, section 15, Conserving and enhancing the natural environment states: 'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, (*and*) sites of biodiversity ...
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services ...
- d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks ... and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs.

The Parish Council respectfully urges the Planning Authority to refuse planning application 25/03043/FUL in full.

Appendix 3

Westbourne Parish Council comments on four planning appeals relating to The Old Army Camp and Unit 1, Cemetery Lane:

25/00571/FUL S73a retrospective change of use of land to civil engineering contractors yard;
25/01757/FUL S73a retrospective change of use of land for mixed use storage plots;
25/00580/FUL S73a retrospective change of use to steel fabrications; and
25/01754/FUL S73a retrospective change of use to a small vehicle haulage company and ancillary repairs.

1. Appeal history

These sites have a long and well-documented history of unauthorised and inappropriate development, including:

Appeals APP/L3815/C/19/3203215, 3203219, 3203222 – dismissed in January 2023.

The Planning Inspector found the use of the site as a civil engineering yard, with storage of skips, HGVs, plant and containers, to be unacceptable due to landscape harm, proximity to sensitive uses, and lack of policy justification.

Appeal APP/L3815/W/20/3255114 (2022) – dismissed for a similar use on a nearby plot (Unit 2, Ten Acres).

The Inspector concluded that such uses were unsuitable outside the settlement boundary, did not meet rural diversification criteria, and harmed the character of the area.

It is wholly inappropriate for the same applicant to reapply for virtually identical uses in the same location under a piecemeal strategy of applications. The Parish Council can only reiterate our previous objections, as follows:

1. Summary of objection

The Parish Council strongly object to the proposed change of use at the Old Army Camp for the following reasons:

- It **contravenes national policy in the NPPF**, particularly regarding sustainability, noise, landscape, and heritage impact. It is well outside of the settlement boundary
- It **conflicts with the Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan**, especially policies relating to heritage, landscape character, biodiversity, and local distinctiveness.
- It poses an unacceptable **impact on the adjacent Westbourne Conservation Area and Cemetery**, designated for its historic, visual, and spiritual significance and space for quiet contemplation.
- It ignores **binding appeal decisions** which have upheld enforcement action against similar uses on the site.

2. Incompatibility with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024)

The proposal fails to comply with several key parts of the NPPF:

- **Section 2. Achieving sustainable development:** The proposal does not achieve the balance between economic, social, and environmental objectives. It creates unacceptable harm to amenity, local character, and heritage assets. It is outside any designated settlement boundary in an unsustainable location.
- **Section 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment:** The development would intensify industrial uses within a countryside setting, causing harm to local biodiversity and the rural landscape. Moreover the activities associated with steel fabrication and contractor yards are inherently noisy. The supporting noise assessments rely on mitigation that may not be fully deliverable and conflict with guidance under BS 4142, particularly in relation to nearby traveller and travelling showman sites.
- **Section 16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment:** The site lies adjacent to Westbourne Cemetery, now included in the extended Westbourne Conservation Area. As such, the development would adversely affect the setting and character of a heritage asset.

3. Conflict with the Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan (WNP, 2021)

As a **made Neighbourhood Plan**, the WNP forms part of the statutory development plan and must be respected per NPPF paras 12 and 14.

Relevant policies breached:

- **LD1 (Local Distinctiveness):** The proposal conflicts with the plan's objective to preserve the rural and historic character of the parish.
- **LD2 (Heritage):** The site lies adjacent to Westbourne Cemetery, now a **designated Local Green Space (LGS1)** and recently included in the **Westbourne Conservation Area**. Industrial development on its boundary is wholly inappropriate.

- **OA1 (Sustainable Development):** The proposals fail to demonstrate sustainable integration with the local community or its infrastructure.
- **BD2 (Natural Environment):** There is no demonstrable net biodiversity gain, and the industrial use increases pollution and disturbance in a **tranquil landscape**. Black smoky fires have been seen regularly rising from the site but CDC Environmental Protection are unable to prosecute any individual as the persons all nearby at the time say they didn't light the fire or have anything to do with them.

4. Westbourne Conservation Area – Landscape and Setting Impact

The 2022 **Westbourne Conservation Area Character Appraisal (CACA)** explicitly states:

- The **Cemetery and its landscape gap** are now part of the conservation area due to their visual and historical importance.
- The document emphasises the need to "**preserve the open farmland and countryside that form the setting of the historic settlement**".
- Industrial uses at the Old Army Camp are **visually intrusive**, involve large vehicle movements, metal stockpiles, skips and storage, and are **fundamentally out of character** with the surrounding environment.
- The CACA recommends **no intensification** of development in this sensitive setting.

5. Noise and Amenity Impact

While the applicant's noise assessment claims that impacts are "insignificant", the methodology assumes:

- Use of a fully enclosed building or a **2.4m acoustic barrier** that is **not yet installed**. Loud noises from the site have been heard as far away as a mile as the crow flies
- Assumes worst-case mitigation that has **not been secured by condition or design**.
- Does not account for cumulative noise impact across multiple plots (5 concurrent applications), contrary to best practice.

Nearby receptors include:

- **Residential dwellings**
- **Showmen and Traveller pitches**
- **Westbourne Cemetery**, a place of quiet reflection and mourning

These are all **highly sensitive** to industrial noise, particularly from **metalworking, grinders, forklift trucks and HGV traffic and toxic fires**.

6. Conclusion

The Parish Council respectfully urges the Planning Authority to reject the appeals on these applications on the following grounds:

- **Conflict with the NPPF**, sections 2, 15, and 16.
- **Contrary to the Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan**, especially LD1, LD2, OA1 and BD2.
- **Detrimental impact on the Westbourne Conservation Area**, as highlighted in the 2022 Character Appraisal.
- **Contrary to previous appeal decisions**, which have clearly established the site as unsuitable for such industrial uses.
- **Harm to residential amenity**, tranquility of the Cemetery, and rural setting.