



**Minutes of a meeting of Planning and Licensing Committee held on
Wednesday, 8 April 2026**

Members present:

Dilys Neill (Chair)	Ian Watson (Vice Chair)	
Ray Brassington	Daryl Corps	Nikki Ind
Nick Bridges	David Fowles	Michael Vann
Patrick Coleman	Joe Harris	

Officers present:

Marie Barnes, Lawyer	Justin Hobbs, Tree Officer
Harrison Bowley, Head of Planning Services	Andrew Moody, Senior Planning Officer
Julia Gibson, Democratic Services Officer	Amy Hill, Senior Planning Officer
Tyler Jardine, Trainee Democratic Services Officer	

261 Apologies

There were apologies from Councillor Julia Judd.

262 Substitute Members

There were no substitute Members.

263 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Joe Harris advised that he had previously met with the objectors to application 25/03700/FUL. Following legal advice from the Monitoring Officer, it was agreed that he would not participate in the debate or vote on the application. Councillor David Fowles referred to previous applications involving the Red Lion pub near Poulton and the Waggon and Horses pub, noting his past involvement in supporting the retention of pubs. He confirmed he had not been involved in relation to application 25/03700/FUL and approached the application with an open mind. Councillor Patrick Coleman declared he had been present at a Cirencester Town Council Planning Committee on 2 December 2025 where application 25/03700/FUL was

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discussed. Councillor Coleman was also acquainted with the Objector speaker, Mr James Brown and has a shared interest in Corinium Brewery. He declared that he made no predetermination on the application.

Councillor Nick Bridges declared that he was a Cirencester Town Council member and that he approached application 25/03700/FUL with an open mind. He confirmed he knew some objectors but had not discussed the application with them.

264 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2026 were discussed.

Councillor Joe Harris apologised that he had not submitted formal apologies ahead of the meeting on 11 March 2026.

Councillor Fowles proposed accepting the minutes and Councillor Coleman seconded the proposal which was put to the vote and accepted by the Committee.

RESOLVED: To APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2026.

To approve the minutes of a meeting 11 March 2026 (Resolution)		
For	Ray Brassington, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, David Fowles, Dilys Neill and Ian Watson	7
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	Joe Harris and Nikki Ind	2
Carried		

265 Chair's Announcements

The Chair welcomed Councillor Nikki Ind as a new member of the Planning and Licensing Committee and expressed the Committee's appreciation of their appointment and anticipated contributions.

The Chair reminded members that if they were unable to attend a site inspection briefing (SIB), they should arrange a substitute.

Harrison Bowley, Head of Planning Services advised the Committee that a government consultation on Planning Committee reform was underway. Members were invited to submit any comments by 14 April for inclusion. A further consultation on fee regulations would be considered at the May Planning Committee meeting. He reminded members of the annual Planning Committee training on 3 June 2026 which was required for committee membership and open to all Members, including prospective substitutes.

266 Public questions

There were no public questions.

267 Member questions

There were no Member questions.

268 25/03700/FUL - The Twelve Bells, 12 Lewis Lane, Cirencester.

The proposal was the Change of Use of a Public House (Sui Generis) to a Residential Dwelling (C3) with ancillary B&B outbuilding.

Case Officer: Amy Hill

Ward Member: Councillor Joe Harris

Recommendation: PERMIT.

The Chair invited the Case Officer to introduce the application who confirmed that there were no updates since the publication of the agenda and:

- Shared the location plan and accommodation layout, map of location of listed buildings and Conservation areas, photographs and floor plan.
- Shared a map of the location of pubs within 400m of the application
- Confirmed that the location was outside the defined town centre.

Speaker 1 – Objector – Mr James Brown

The speaker stated that the 12 Bells was a valued community asset, evidenced by over 150 objections, including from the Town Council, Civic Society, and the Council's Conservation Officer. They argued that there were no public benefits arising from the scheme, as the loss of the pub would outweigh any housing considerations, noting it provided a community meeting space and local employment. The speaker questioned the claim of non-viability, citing reported profitability, concerns about marketing and valuation, and a lack of independent evidence, and concluded that approval would result in harm to the community and set a negative precedent for other pubs.

Speaker 2 – Applicant – Mr Joe Seymour

The agent stated that a robust marketing exercise over 18 months failed to attract interest in continuing the pub use despite the reduced price. They argued this demonstrated lack of viability in line with policy requirements. The agent explained that planning decisions are guided by evidence and policy, and that the system supports the management of land-use change when current uses are no longer viable.

Speaker 3 – Ward Member – Councillor Joe Harris

The Ward Member stated that the application required a planning balance between the loss of a valued community asset in a sensitive historic setting and any public benefits.

They felt that no meaningful public benefits had been demonstrated, noting there was no net housing gain or wider regeneration benefit. The Ward Member argued that the policy test regarding community facilities had not been met, as neither need nor viability had been demonstrated, and questioned the evidence supporting the claim of non-viability, including reported profitability and marketing arrangements. They stated that required viability evidence, including independent valuation and trading information had not been provided. The loss of the pub would set an undesirable precedent for the erosion of community infrastructure.

Member Questions:

Members of the Committee asked a series of questions and noted that:

- The property had been marketed as going concern from January 2023 whilst with Christie & Fleurets, and subsequently with Moor Allen (from June 2024) who maintained the pub status despite placing a greater emphasis on residential potential.
- Historic England were consulted due to the potential impact on nearby scheduled ancient monuments and focused their comments on archaeological considerations rather than the impact on the Listed Building. The Conservation Officer had assessed the impact on the Listed Building and Conservation Area.
- The requirement for an independent valuation had been deemed not necessary due to the site's location just outside the town centre and its proximity to other pubs and similar facilities.
- Initial valuation details had been requested but could not be fully evidenced. During the marketing period there were approximately three expressions of interest and one viewing, with the asking price subsequently reduced. No conditional offers were made and no additional valuation information was requested.
- It was advised that, if the building remained unused as a pub, there was a risk of it being left vacant. Conversion to residential use would secure its ongoing active use and maintenance, which is generally beneficial for historic buildings.
- Available marketing information indicated net profits in excess of £100,000, although detailed supporting evidence and specific time periods for this figure were limited.
- The applicant had not operated the property as a pub. The consideration of officers focused primarily on the lack of demand for a party willing to operate the pub, rather than on financial performance.
- There would be no net increase in residential units, as the existing arrangement already included ancillary accommodation.
- The property was understood to have ceased operating as a pub approximately 18 months ago.
- Should the application be refused, the applicant could continue marketing the property and resubmit a future application, supported by additional viability evidence.

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Member Comments:

- Members commented on the loss of the Grade II listed public house, the wider decline in local pubs, and referenced comparable cases. Concerns were raised regarding the robustness of the viability case and the lack of clear public benefit, including in relation to housing. The proposal was considered to result in the unjustified loss of the pub.
- The loss of the pub could increase travel to other pubs and potentially reduce local sustainability. The pub served as a wider community facility, hosting social and community activities, and concern was raised that alternative uses such as community ownership, mixed use or leasing had not been fully explored. It was further considered that the property had been priced out of continued pub use.
- A Member commented that viability was considered to be driven by market demand, noting the property had been marketed for a number of years without any offers to continue its use as a pub. It was observed that changing social and economic trends were impacting pub use and that residential use was preferred to avoid vacancy.

Reasons for REFUSAL:

Policy INF2: Avoid loss of community assets and need to demonstrate that there was no local demand for the facility or for an appropriate alternative community use.

Insufficient information submitted to convince not viable.

Councillor David Fowles proposed and Councillor Daryl Corps seconded the proposal to REFUSE the application

RESOLVED: to REFUSE the application.

25/03700/FUL The Twelve Bells, Cirencester - To REFUSE (Resolution)		
For	Ray Brassington, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, David Fowles, Nikki Ind, Dilys Neill and Michael Vann	8
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	Joe Harris	1
Abstain	Ian Watson	1
Carried		

269 26/00072/PLP - Land at Cerney Wick, Cirencester.

The application was for Permission in Principle for up to 6 dwellings at Land at Cerney Wick.

Case Officer: Andrew Moody

Ward Member: Councillor Mike Evemy

Recommendation: PERMIT.

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The Chair invited the Case Officer to introduce the application who made the following points:

- There were no updates following agenda publication.
- Aerial photographs and site plans were shared.
- Cerney Wick was considered a non-principal settlement.

Public speaker 1 – Agent – Mr Joe Seymour

The agent stated that Officers had considered the application acceptable in terms of location, land use and scale of development. They noted that detailed design would be considered at a later stage, no highways objections had been raised, and that the proposed level of housing growth was proportionate in the context of local plan policies and comparable developments in other settlements.

Speaker 3 – Ward Member – Councillor Mike Evemy

The Ward Member advised that they were a long-standing resident of Cerney Wick and expressed concerns that the village was not a sustainable location for development, citing limited local facilities, reliance on car travel and the rural, linear character of the settlement. It was noted that the site represented an important green space with ecological value, and that development would harm the character and setting of the village.

Councillor David Fowles left the chamber at 15:44

SIB feedback

Members commented that the village was characterised by open spaces and that development of the site would harm its character, particularly given its scale in relation to the size of the settlement.

Green space within the village had already been reduced, including the loss of allotments, and concern was expressed about the cumulative impact of further development.

Members raised concerns regarding the sustainability of the location, noting the lack of public transport and reliance on private vehicles.

There was a good sized pub and beautiful views and walks.

Member Questions:

Members of the Committee asked a series of questions and noted that:

- The Council did not currently have a five-year housing land supply and that planning permission should generally be granted unless adverse impacts significantly outweighed the benefits.
- The site was not subject to heritage or landscape designations.
- Ecological matters, including surveys and biodiversity net gain, were not required at the Permission in Principle stage.
- Additional housing in smaller settlements may be considered to support nearby services and facilities in increasing sustainability of nearby settlements

Member Comments

- Members noted that the Council’s housing land supply position and the tilted balance were key material considerations. It was considered that this limited the scope to refuse the application.
- Members acknowledged the issues between policy requirements and local concerns about the site.
- The potential for appeal costs and the likelihood of an unsuccessful refusal was noted.

Councillor Ian Watson proposed and Councillor Joe Harris seconded the proposal to PERMIT the application

RESOLVED: To PERMIT the application.

26/00072/PLP Land at Cerney Wick - To PERMIT (Resolution)		
For	Ray Brassington, Patrick Coleman, Joe Harris, Nikki Ind, Dilys Neill, Michael Vann and Ian Watson	7
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	Nick Bridges and Daryl Corps	2
Carried		

270 25/00006 - Tree Preservation Order - 55 Thomas Street, Cirencester

To consider the Tree Preservation Order (TPO) made on a mature beech tree at 55 Thomas Street, Cirencester.

Case Officer: Justin Hobbs

Ward Members: Councillor Mark Harris

Recommendation: to CONFIRM the TPO.

The Chair invited the Case Officer to introduce the application who made the following points:

- There were no additional details.
- Photographs of the tree from various directions were shared along with background information of the TPO application.

Speaker 1 – Ward Member – Councillor Mark Harris

The Ward Member noted that the tree was a healthy and valued specimen, supported by the Council’s Tree Officer and local Civic Society. Whilst acknowledging concerns regarding maintenance issues, such as leaf fall and shading, these were considered

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insufficient to justify removal. The tree had been established for many decades and ongoing management and pruning could address associated issues.

Member Questions:

Members of the Committee asked a series of questions and noted that:

- Potential damage from tree roots was difficult to predict and usually evidenced through monitoring reports and insurance claims where issues arise. No evidence had been submitted to indicate that the tree had caused structural damage.

Member Comments:

- The tree was a mature, healthy and valued feature of the area pre-dating the dwelling.
- Members noted its contribution to local character and amenity.
- It was acknowledged that any maintenance issues could be managed through pruning rather than removal.
- A Tree Preservation Order would ensure any future works were controlled and assessed and if felled a replacement specimen could be insisted on.

Councillor Daryl Corps proposed and Councillor Ray Brassington seconded the proposal to PERMIT the application.

RESOLVED: To CONFIRM the TPO.

25/000006/TPO 55 Thomas Street, Cirencester - To CONFIRM (Resolution)		
For	Ray Brassington, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Joe Harris, Nikki Ind, Dilys Neill, Michael Vann and Ian Watson	9
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

271 Sites Inspection Briefing

The Chair advised members to keep the 6 May 2026 free for a possible Site Inspection Briefing.

Councillors Dilys Neill (Chair), Ian Watson, David Fowles, Patrick Coleman, Nick Bridges.

272 Licensing Sub-Committee

There were no licensing sub-committees planned.

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The Meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and closed at 4.20 pm

Chair