

Friends of the West Oxfordshire Cotswolds

Press Release

Date: 21 February 2026

WODC concedes latest planning consent at Rushy Bank, Charlbury was unlawful and needs to be quashed

Following our pre-action letter to West Oxfordshire District Council, the Council has conceded that its consent was unlawful and has agreed to its quashing by the High Court. The planning application will now have to be reconsidered. This is the fourth time a WODC planning decision at this site has been overturned.

James Whitehead from FOWOC said “While we are pleased with this result, we now call on the planners and the town and district’s elected representatives who have stood by or supported this application to give it an honest reassessment which can only conclude with its refusal. The Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan adopted by the town in 2021 with 97% approval explicitly identifies this site as open countryside beyond the developable edge of the town in its protected landscape setting. To give this consent without acknowledging or respecting this was grossly undemocratic and opened the door for development up the west side of the Evenlode Valley, connected to the town only by an inadequate hazardous footpath. The development would damage the town’s finest Cotswolds views, the setting of its Conservation Area and a protected ancient woodland habitat, which has already been harmed by indiscriminate felling. This must be the most inappropriate housing site ever to come forward in West Oxfordshire. It is time for the Council to acknowledge that there are much less harmful sites for development both in Charlbury and the wider district.”

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