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Witney

Investment and Regeneration Information

A strategic overview of Didcot's rapid transformation growth, housing expansion and future investment opportunities across Witney



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Witney

Witney's 5-year town improvement plan centers on transforming the High Street, reaching net-zero council operations, and expanding infrastructure for the region's growing population. The major projects detailed below are backed by Oxfordshire County Council and Witney Town Council.

Housing Developments

Witney's housing and employment plans are driven by West Oxfordshire District Council's updated draft Local Plan, which extends strategic targets through 2043. As a Tier 1 Principal Town, Witney is designated to absorb a significant share of the district's proposed 18,000 new homes. The core strategy links housing directly with the local economy to prevent the town from becoming a commuter suburb.

Affordable Housing Focus: Witney accounts for nearly half of the council's housing waiting list. Priority is given to genuinely affordable, social-rented housing.

Town Center Urban Living: The council is repurposing its own assets for housing. A prime example is the Woodford Way car park development, which is progressing to build up to 70 social-rented flats aimed at keeping young people and key workers in the town.

Edge-of-Town Expansions: Strategic extensions in nearby areas—such as Ducklington, Curbridge, and Minster Lovell—are earmarked for larger master-planned housing communities that integrate green space and energy-efficient building standards.

Specialist Needs: Future housing briefs emphasize accessible, adaptable homes designed specifically for adults with care and support needs and an ageing population.

Employment

Balanced Portfolios for Small Businesses: The updated economic objectives mandate that employment land allocations provide flexible, smaller incubator spaces to help local startups and scale-ups stay in Witney.

High Street Footfall Boost: By integrating residential spaces right into the town center, the council intends to create built-in customer bases for retail and leisure businesses to boost out-of-hours trade.

Infrastructure-Led Growth: To prevent commercial bottlenecks, future employment sites must prove they support traffic and transport connections, utilizing the upcoming A40 Shores Green junction expansion to ensure smooth freight and commuting routes

Major Leisure and Tourism Investments

Major leisure and tourism investments in Witney focus on modernising community sports facilities, enhancing historic spaces to capture "evening economy" spend, and boosting eco-tourism around the town's natural assets.

Windrush Leisure Centre Upgrade: West Oxfordshire District Council has committed to a £3.5 million public investment programme to overhaul its major facilities. The Windrush Leisure Centre in Witney is getting targeted upgrades, including brand-new swimming pool plant equipment, full roof replacements, and modernised changing facilities.

The West Witney Sports Project: The town council is currently executing a strategy to upgrade local sports pavilions and pitches. The goal is to modernise the facilities to win back historic local social clubs and boost space for inclusive youth and female sports.

The High Street Reallocation: Now that non-exempt daytime traffic is restricted on the High Street, the council is investing heavily in the "public realm". This creates wider pathways, seating zones, and heritage wayfinding to entice tourists visiting nearby attractions (like Blenheim Palace) to stop, walk, and spend money in Witney.

The Leys Recreation Ground Transformation: Backed by nearly £700,000 in funding, a major project has expanded The Leys community hub. It features a large community café, brand-new padel tennis courts, an indoor activity space, and a redesigned skate park to act as a cross-regional hub.

Witney Lake and Country Park: Positioned as a major wellness and outdoor tourism asset, funding from nearby planning obligations is earmarked for biodiversity enhancements. This will include better trails, outdoor exercise equipment, and nature access initiatives to promote low-carbon, year-round eco-tourism.

Town Centre and Infrastructure Revamp

Witney's town centre and infrastructure revamp is aimed at easing chronic traffic bottlenecks, improving public spaces, and updating utilities to handle regional growth.

The High Street & Market Square Scheme: A major transformation project is reshaping the central retail corridor. Contractors are actively resurfacing 2,000 square metres of existing footways and constructing over 1,000 square metres of entirely new pedestrian space to make the high street fully accessible.

Greening the Market Square: The plan integrates functional landscaping into the historic center. This includes planting sustainable urban trees, creating new public seating areas, and installing sustainable drainage to mitigate climate impacts.

Witney 5 Year Investment Plan

Investment Sector	Key Strategic Projects	Funding Type	Financial Scope	Target Outcomes
Housing & Community	Woodford Way central site repurposing, edge-of-town urban expansions	Homes England, West Oxfordshire Council, Developer contributions	£450M+	4,000 new homes, with adaptive healthcare hubs & local school capacity
Leisure & Tourism	Windrush Leisure Centre modernization, The Leys community sport hub transformation, Corn Exchange arts venue funding.	West Oxfordshire Council & Lawn Tennis Association	£5.5M+	Upgraded public pools, new padel tennis courts & enhanced community hubs
Town Centre & Transport	High Street & Market Square public realm redesign, A40 Shores Green slip roads, West End Link road infrastructure	Government Active Travel Fund, Oxfordshire County Council strategic transport capital	£120M+	ANPR camera restriction zones, 3,000m ² of expanded walking paths, and major cross-town freight decongestion.

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