

Ongar

Town Council

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Minutes of a meeting of the Planning committee on 17th April 2025 at 7pm Held at the Council Offices, Bansons Way CM5 9AS

PLN41/25 Those present and apologies for absence

Chairman: Cllr Walton

Councillors: Cole, Vaz, Feetham, Eydmann, Barrell, Roberts, Gunn, Reay, Webb

Also present: Planning Clerk, Town Clerk, Press officer,

Apologies: Cllr Mendoza

Proposed: Cllr Feetham seconded Cllr Barrell carried unanimously

PLN42/25 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None received.

PLN43/25 Public participation

No members of the public present.

PLN44/25 Reports (maximum 5 minutes)

ONPCG – relevant planning matters and sub committee

District councillors on planning matters

Mary Dadd submitted the following written reports:

1. Update on EFDC Allocated Residential Sites

ONG.R6 Stanford Rivers Road. The developer is expecting this to go to EFDC Planning Committee in May. It was awaiting ECC comments about measures relating to mitigation for dormice (although it had been questioned as to whether it had been evidence of dormice activity rather than another small rodent). To my knowledge talks were still ongoing relating to harm to the Setting of Dyers from the heights of some of the proposed new dwellings.

ONG.R8 The Stag. No further comments but it is expected to go to Committee fairly soon.

ONG.R7 This is a little behind the others but is considering offering a few of the houses as part of a Community Land Trust (i.e. for local people in perpetuity) should they find a Trust or organisation willing. Perhaps that is something that OTC is willing to discuss with me as representing both ONPCG and as a district Cllr as it will need to have Trustees?

West Ongar Concept (ONG.R1 and ONG.R2) Bowes Field (ONG.R2) plans are ahead of ONG.R1. The main concern relating to loss of a bus stop layby on the High St is still being discussed between EFDC and ECC. Bowes Field residents' group have been active and involved in discussions.

2. Shelley shops redevelopment proposals and application EPF/0040/25

- I have had further recent face to face meetings with the Housing Development Manager, Estates Officer, Community Safety Partnership and senior Officers and Councillors.
- The planning application is still contrary to a number of planning policies and the resultant effect on the immediate existing community (especially Shelley Close and the shop tenants) is unacceptable.
- I am therefore working with Officers across departments.
- The Housing Development Manager (effectively the Applicant of the planning application) informed me that the cancelled meeting (not by her!) with OTC is to be rescheduled. I have further meetings with the planning team/applicant after Easter and will again state that there must be a proper drop-in public engagement session before it goes to committee for a decision.
- EFDC Estates department has agreed to hold an Action Day in Shelley in the next few months to gauge likes dislikes concerns etc of residents. This should provide evidence of where social deprivation needs support, parking is insufficient, ant-social behaviour etc that can be addressed
- I am also encouraging (and will support) a few residents to set up a new Residents Group for the Estate in order to have a stronger voice.
- Shelley Close bins area is subject to fly-tipping but that area and upgrading of the council owned flats such as insulation, bathrooms, kitchens was put on hold as the three blocks were expected to be demolished. As that is no longer the case, I have requested to know when those e upgrades will take place with an urgency for the refuse bin area to be secure.

3. Public Meeting on 28th May at 7.30pm at Budworth Hall

- As reported last month, EFDC Community Safety Partnership reported their year's work (p5-65 of the Agenda reports pack). (Public Pack) Agenda Document for Communities Scrutiny Committee, 04/03/2025 19:00 and

Chief Inspector Terry Fisher (District Commander for Epping Forest and Brentwood) gave a similar presentation to EFDC Scrutiny on some crime solving events in EFDC.

- I have now (independently) set up a public meeting in Ongar for residents to have the opportunity to talk to Essex PFC Commissioner and EFDC Community Safety Partnership Officers and Volunteers and hear advice on :

- o How to protect our youngsters from all kinds of crime

- o What communities can do to combat anti-social behaviour

- o How to protect us all from sophisticated methods being used to defraud us .

- Cath Honeywell (Community Champion) has agreed to work with me to organise the event. which will also include aspects of rural crime and road safety.

· I will send more details shortly, but do hope that OTC will be involved, including by having a stand at the event. Many local organisations are shortly to be contacted to contribute and attend this community event.

4. EFDC Planning Training open to Parish Councillors

There is nothing further on the calendar since those in the last few weeks. The Urban Design and Quality Review Panel (QRP) session (also attended by Cllr Reay was interesting. I did raise the situation that being in character with an urban area e.g. Loughton is different from character in our rural areas. ie higher density or 3 storey is not in character with rural areas or edge of settlement of rural towns like Chipping Ongar as this has constantly been a complaint of ONPCG and OTC when Urban Designers or QRP comment on planning applications. I hope they will take note!

5. Comments on Agenda Items

a. PLN47/25 to consider planning applications

EPF/0413/25 1 Shelley Rectory. Members should be made aware before they make a decision, that special circumstances will need to be shown for building in the Green Belt as well as not having harm to the openness of the Green Belt etc. (see new NPPF 2024 and PPG Feb 2025) The existing small holding related to agricultural use. In addition, OTC members should be aware that nearby Shelley Barn (a converted barn i.e. existing building) was in breach for building a two storey rather than one storey that was approved, and there are ongoing enforcements due to the locality in Green Belt. Shelley Barn is further down the lane past Shelley Rectory.

b. PLN52/25 Local Sewage concerns in context of proposed new residential developments

I share OTC concerns and issues are often commented on in objections to new estates etc. EFDC Drainage Officer Trevor Baker is very well informed. On 23 March I enquired about as follows:

“ I am not alone in being most concerned about the standard response from Thames Water to the major planning applications suggesting the main sewers will be able to cope with the additional new homes in Ongar. Local residents doubt this will be the case. For the last few years, I have heard complaints about the inadequacy and frequent blockages of the main sewer through Ongar High St such as at Budworth Hall and the adjoining cafe and more recently relating to a location near KG coffee and the nearby cheese shop. Thames Water, after much pressure, have just cleared that latest blockage.

I recall that you have comprehensive mapping of the drains in Ongar, and extensive knowledge of any issues. Would it please be possible to meet with you to look at those maps and discuss whether my concerns are unfounded...or whether residents or EFDC have any other course of action”.

The response from Simon Bell was:

Bearing in mind the age of the sewer network within parts of the district, localised issues are to be expected from time to time. However, we are not aware of any issues in the Ongar area that would indicate a more fundamental issue of capacity, and hence as an authority we are reliant upon Thames Water and other utility providers, to know their networks and where capacity is sufficient to accept new development proposals. From this team's knowledge of reviewing planning applications, there have been sites elsewhere in the district where Thames Water have raised concerns about capacity, but I can assure you that Ongar is not one of them.

I am happy to take this further with EFDC should OTC decide on any action in this meeting.

c. PLN53/25 to note enforcement appeals

I have raised an enforcement notice relating to the three separate works being carried out at 20 Great Lawn as below. The reference is ENF/0068/25

There appears to be 3 issues relating to 3 ongoing building works:

1 A wrap around two storey extension to the side and rear (which has walls in place to approx. first floor height and probably refers to APP/J1535/D/25/3363376 start date 07/04/2025 for side/rear two storey extension.

2. A large roof conversion, on which there is work being carried out. I could find no application on EFDC website for planning permission or PDR consents.

3. One large standard construction home office type building at the bottom of the garden EPF/0366/25. The detail cannot be seen from the road or over the fence. It also appears that there is also a smaller building near to it. (The previously reported trench has now been made good -presumably now that the walls and roof have been constructed.

Noted.

PLN45/25 To agree the minutes of Planning Committee meeting minutes of the 18th March 2025. Proposed: Cllr Roberts seconded Cllr Barrell - 7 in favour 3 abstentions. To be signed at the next meeting after minor amendments.

PLN46/25 Correspondence

PLN47/25 To consider planning applications:

[EPF/0308/25](#) – 123 High Street, Ongar

Change of use from shop to residential unit with internal alterations.

Objection

Proposed Cllr Eydmann seconded Cllr Cole – 7 in favour 3 abstentions.

[EPF/0309/25](#) - 123 High Street, Ongar

Grade II listed building application for change of use from shop to residential unit with internal alterations.

Same as above.

[EPF/0592/25](#) - 66, Cripsey Avenue, Ongar

New three-bedroom self-build dwelling with associated external works. Changes to existing dwelling facade.

No comment.

[EPF/0573/25](#) – 47 Longfields, Ongar

Single storey rear extension, conversion of garage to habitable room raising roof to garage flat roof, single storey side extension, porch enclosure and removal of chimney stack.

Proposed Cllr Roberts seconded Cllr Gunn to support this application – 8 in favour 2 abstentions

[EPF/0609/25](#) – 90 High Street, Ongar

Replacement of two windows to first floor rear elevation to match front and side elevations. - 8 in favour 2 abstentions.

[EPF/0413/25](#) – 1 Shelley Rectory, Fyfield Road, Ongar

Permission in Principle for 2 houses.

No comment as the application has been refused.

[EPF/0452/25](#) - 3, Shortlands Avenue, Ongar

Single storey flat roof wrap around extension.

Objection – Based on the lack of parking.

Proposed Cllr Gunn seconded Cllr Cole - 1 abstention.

[EPF/0477/25](#) – 82 Moreton Road, Ongar

Vehicle crossing – dropped kerb.

Permitted.

Proposed Cllr Reay seconded Cllr Barrell carried unanimously.

FOR INFORMATION

None received.

PLN48/25 [To note planning decisions](#)

Noted.

PLN49/25 Update on EFDC meeting about recent planning issues

OTC raised 4 key concerns with EFDC around planning process. EFDC and OTC agreed action points to address these concerns – OTC currently waiting for EFDC to action these. Retain on future agenda.

Thanks were extended to Cllr Walton for organising the meeting with EFDC.

PLN50/25 Reviewing governance of planning committee

This will be revisited in June when staffing allows

PLN51/25 Stewardship of Shelley rec ground

Discussions were held regarding stewardship should the enhancement of Shelley scheme plans go ahead regarding the maintenance costs of CCTV, grass areas, playground equipment, lighting etc. Concerns will be raised with EFDC housing team in upcoming meeting. The Town Clerk to produce a cost-based analysis once Shelley plans finalised.

PLN52/25 Local sewage concerns in context of proposed new residential developments

Cllr Mendoza requested that this item be discussed. Thames Water confirm that after calculations were executed for the new residential developments, they anticipate there would be no problems with regard sewage. It was suggested that the Town Clerk contact Thames Water directly and then consider sourcing consultant to carry out further investigations.

PLN53/25 To note enforcement appeals

None Received

PLN54/75 Matters for information

ONG.R1 – EFDC approved outline plan in cabinet.

ONG.R2 – EFDC approved outline plan in cabinet., awaiting imminent submission.

ONG.R3 – EFDC approved.
ONG.R4 – EFDC approved.
ONG.R5 – EFDC approved.
ONG.R6 – Coming to planning committee – expected in May 2025.
ONG.R7 – Not yet submitted.
ONG.R8 – Has been submitted – awaiting planning committee.
ONG.R9 – Submitted.

PLN55/25 Items for next agenda

EFDC planning matters
Thames Water sewage concerns
Lifespan of Ongar Neighbourhood plan (5 years)
Governance (June)

Meeting closed 7.58pm