



Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 22nd January 2026 at 7.00pm at the Council Offices, Bansons Way, Ongar, CM5 9AS.

These minutes are subject to ratification at the next meeting.

PLN16/26 Those present and apologies for absence

Members present: Cllrs Walton (Chairman), Feetham, Gunn, Hollingum, Reay.

Also present: Lorraine Ellis (Planning Clerk), Debra Murray (Town Clerk), Adriana Jones (Planning Consultant), District Cllr Dadd, 1 member of the press, 8 members of the public.

Apologies: Cllrs Barrell, Cole, Eydmann, Mendoza, Parr, Roberts.

Not present: Cllrs O'Neill, Regan, Vaz.

Proposed Cllr Reay Seconded Cllr Hollingum Carried unanimously.

PLN17/26 Declaration of Interests

None received.

PLN18/26 Public participation

It was agreed to cover public participation before each planning application.

In addition, District Cllr Dadd gave the following report on recent planning matters:

i) 16 and 18 Castle Street (EPF/2176/24)

Approved at EFDC Planning Committee meeting 21/01/26 despite being contrary to

- a. ONP mandatory minimum parking policy, ONG-CT3 requires 2 spaces not 1, for the 'new' 3 bed proposal at No. 18 Castle St. There will also be a loss of 2 existing spaces on site which is in an existing area of high parking stress.
- b. DM 9 with loss of private amenity to 18A Castle St-- a new first floor window only 9m away in new No 16 will look directly down on their only small outdoor space.
- c. ONG-ED2 Conservation area --characteristics are typically short front gardens or frontages directly onto the street. Proposed parking on the short frontage will further dominate the already compromised street scene.

Disappointingly neither EFDC Planning Officer who recommended approval, nor Committee Members seemed to appreciate they were acting against EFDC's own planning policies, ONP is part of EFDC Local Plan. I have already taken this further and requested training on Neighbourhood Planning for Officers and Councillors.

ii) Land East of Tawney Common - Solar Farm. (EPF/1216/25)

There was strong feeling against this use in this location. It was refused as contrary to several Local Plan policies. I am sure EFDC and objectors will be prepared should the developer go to Appeal.

iii) Shelley Regeneration (EPF/0040/25)

Disappointingly, I, OTC and residents have literally just heard that the long proposed - but more recently reduced redevelopment of Shelley - has been put into abeyance due

to Local Government Reform. I have asked for a meeting with the Housing Director to learn more and will report back in due course.

Cllr Walton thanked Cllr Reay for speaking on behalf of OTC at the District Planning Committee B meeting on 21/01/26.

PLN19/26 To approve the minutes of Planning Committee meeting of the 15th January 2026
Proposed Cllr Reay **Seconded** Cllr Hollingum **Carried unanimously.**

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 15th January 2026 were approved with no amendments and were signed by the Chairman.

PLN20/26 The following planning applications were considered:

Public participation

A resident asked that OTC strongly object to EPF/2446/25 as the application covers twice the area of the site included in the EFDC Local Plan and now includes farmland and is in the Green Belt. Secondly, it shows extensive use of three storey buildings and in close proximity to the listed buildings. Also concern regarding the taller buildings on the site. Thirdly, it refers to the bus stop moving but reason is unclear and concern that the right turn lane to Walter Mead Close is being removed. Lastly, concern about the number of errors and misleading information in the reports of the application.

It was noted that correspondence has only been received from one resident on application EPF/2446/25 and that same resident has covered his points.

Application Number	Location	Type and Proposal
EPF/2446/25	Land to the West of Ongar, Ongar, CM5	Outline Planning Permission Outline Planning Application with all matters reserved except for access for up to 85 dwellings, parking, landscaping, drainage and associated infrastructure. (ONG.R1 - Allocated Site in Ongar)
Adriana Jones covered her presentation on this application. Following discussion and the areas of concern, it was proposed to object to the application. Proposed Cllr Reay Seconded Cllr Gunn Carried unanimously. It was proposed to object to the application for the following reasons: i) Highways and Access ii) Housing Types / Housing Mix / Density / Design / Character iii) Heritage and Conservation iv) Ecology, Landscaping, Trees and BNG v) Section 106 Agreement Please refer to the letter appended to the minutes for full details.		

It was agreed to have a short break before considering the remaining applications.

Public participation

A resident has received written clarification that the scheme does propose conversion of the stable block, which is a listed building, to residential use. Concern with the increase of use of the road and the loss of businesses, as the proposal is to remove the nursery as well as other businesses including a takeaway. Fyfield football academy is well attended and the proposal is to remove all parking, which will impact neighbouring properties / roads. The developers appear to have very little local knowledge.

District Cllr Dadd advised that a number of residents and herself are forming an action group.

It was noted that no correspondence has been received from residents or the developer on applications EPF/2427/25 or EPF/2429/25.

EPF/2427/25	Site 1, Fyfield Business and Research Park, Fyfield Rd, Ongar, CM5 0FQ	Outline Planning Permission Outline planning application for mixed use redevelopment of Site 1 (Phase 1) comprising retention of the listed stable block, the demolition of all other buildings on site, the erection of up to 47 no. residential dwellings and up to 275 sqm of commercial floorspace for retail (Class E(a), or surgery Class E (e) or public house (sui generis) use together with associated provision of car parking, hard and soft landscaping, and green space, with all matters reserved apart from access.
Adriana Jones covered her presentation on this application. Following discussion and the areas of concern, it was proposed to object to the application. Proposed Cllr Reay Seconded Cllr Gunn Carried unanimously . It was proposed to object to the application for the following reasons: i) Speculative Application based on 5-year land supply argument ii) Green Belt / Previously Developed Land iii) Loss of Employment / Commercial iv) Community Facilities v) Access / Traffic vi) Heritage vii) Affordable Housing / Housing Mix / Design viii) Parking ix) Biodiversity Net Gain x) Section 106 Agreement Please refer to the letter appended to the minutes for full details.		
EPF/2429/25	Site 2, Fyfield Business and Research Park, Fyfield Rd, Ongar, CM5 0FQ	Outline Planning Permission Outline planning application for mixed use redevelopment of Site 2 (Phase 2) comprising the erection of up to 31 no. residential dwellings together with associated provision of car parking, hard and soft landscaping, and green space, with all matters reserved apart from access.
Adriana Jones covered her presentation on this application. Following discussion and the areas of concern, it was proposed to object to the application. Proposed Cllr Reay Seconded Cllr Gunn Carried unanimously . It was proposed to object to the application for the following reasons: i) Speculative Application based on 5-year land supply argument ii) Green Belt / Grey Belt iii) Access / Traffic iv) Affordable Housing / Housing Mix / Design v) Parking vi) Biodiversity Net Gain vii) Contamination viii) Section 106 Agreement Please refer to the letter appended to the minutes for full details.		

PLN21/26 **Items for next agenda**
 a) Shelley Regeneration EPF/0040/25.

PLN22/26 **Date of next meetings**
 5th February and 19th February.

PLN23/26 **To formally close the meeting:** Cllr Walton closed the meeting.
 Meeting closed 8:48pm.

Signed by the Chairman: **Date:**.....