



Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 19th March 2026 at 7.00pm at the Council Offices, Bansons Way, Ongar, CM5 9AS.

PLN38/26 Those present and apologies for absence

Members present: Cllrs Walton (Chairman), Barrell, Cole (part), Eydmann (part), Hollingum, Mendoza, Parr, Reay, Roberts, Vaz, Wingfield.

Also present: Lorraine Ellis (Planning Clerk), Debra Murray (Town Clerk), District Cllrs Dadd, Keska (part), no members of the press, 21 members of the public.

Apologies: Cllrs Feetham, Gunn, O'Neill, Regan.

Proposed Cllr Reay **Seconded** Cllr Mendoza **Carried unanimously.**

PLN39/26 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest on any items being discussed.

It was agreed to proceed with item PLN41/26, then item PLN40/26 covering representations associated with New Homes on land south of Chelmsford Road in Ongar & item PLN49/26 and then item PLN40/26 covering representations associated with the appeal & item PLN45/26.

PLN41/26 Reports (maximum 5 minutes)

a) Chairs Report – meetings, issues and updates relevant to planning.

i) 24-Mar-26 EFDC Shelley workaround with Shelley Ward Cllrs.

ii) 2-Apr-26 Ongar Town Council Planning Meeting (cancelled).

iii) 19-May-26 RCCE Essex CLH Networking Event –There is a CLH (Community Led Housing).

iv) Update on Allocated Site and large Developments:

R1: Bowes Field (A414) Outline, waiting to come before EFDC Planning Committee

R2: Bowes Field (High St) waiting to come before EFDC Planning Committee (*developers planning to update plans, bus layby not possible*)

R3: Fyfield Rd, construction well under way

R4: High Ongar Rd, started without conditions. (*drainage issues and damage to trees/hedges*)

R5: Greensted Rd, construction started

R6: Standford Rivers Rd, (*application for approval of details reserved by condition*)

R7: Brentwood Rd, pending an application

R8: Stagg, refused and an appeal in progress

Shelley Regeneration: postponed due to devolution, *walk with EFDC 24-Mar-26*

Fyfield Business Park: Outline, refused by EFDC

Bloor Homes: 250 homes east Great Stoney Park & south of A414: *public consultation & petition.*

b) ONPCG – relevant planning matters and subcommittee.

Report from Cllr Mary Dadd (as Joint ONPCG Chair and as EFDC Cllr):

i) Refusal of planning applications at Fyfield Research and Development Park was announced this week. ONPCG and OTC both gave very strong objections and as Cllr, I talked to the Case Officer and Kelly Stone and Chris Jones (of the junior football club) and the pre-School and a number of businesses, who provided further compelling material planning reasons. Main site 9 planning refusals and the scrubland and car park 4 reasons. We will be prepared for additional evidence should it go to Appeal.

ii) Bloor speculative proposal in Green Belt. This is Not an allocated site. ONPCG has knowledge of the original submission in call for sites (and why it was deemed unsuitable then). As Cllr and Chair of ONPCG, I have met with Bloor and agents to find out more. There are indeed strong reasons to refuse when it is submitted, including Green Belt etc. Like the Fyfield Research and Development Park and Greensted Rd site we need to concentrate on material planning concerns and include all reasons to refuse. As Cllr and as ONPCG, I have had numerous residents stating their concerns. There is a now a residents group set up with WhatsApp Group and a petition. ONPCG has booked Budworth Hall for 10th April from 7.30pm to inform residents and give advice on submitting effective objections and other actions ready for when it is a formal application. As Cllr, I will then talk to the assigned case officer and also find more supporting evidence against this site being developed.

c) District Councillors – planning matters.

Report from Cllr Mary Dadd (as EFDC Cllr):

i) Info as your Councillor. It has been agreed that I can put to Overview and Scrutiny of EFDC a request for a Task and Finish Group to enable better protection of our BMV food producing land against Solar Farms and housing etc. I have cross party support for this action. I expect it to be on Overview and Scrutiny Agenda on 14 April.

ii) Request for OTC to consider at its next Agenda to support my request for Chipping Ongar Conservation Area to have Article 4 directions to prevent more loss of business sites - to residences under PDR. We need more businesses, not less local businesses as we are growing. In addition, recent conversions have had no parking and nowhere to store refuse bins out of sight.

iii) Loss of free car park at Ongar Bridge. Although related to Planning, it is on Full Council Agenda. I will therefore address a few things then. But thanks need to be made publicly to the owners for providing this facility free to local residents and businesses for so many years.

iv) Planning Committee review was discussed at EFDC Scrutiny committee this week. There is the intention for more training including on Neighbourhood Plans and a few other aspects. However, some residents misguidedly think ward Councillors should be able to vote on planning applications in their wards. This previous system put them at a disadvantage because one must go in to committee without being predetermined on how to vote (or could be subject to judicial review). Any ward councillor who has done their homework on the application and listened to residents will almost certainly have a strong opinion on how to vote before the meeting starts particularly on contentious matters. In addition, a Cllr cannot talk to a developer without an officer being present before plans are voted on for the same reason. Now, we can do both of those and ask developers to tweak plans -even when proposals are policy compliant- to satisfy neighbours' concerns more thoroughly, question aspects with case officer before a meeting and strongly represent residents' views at committee. Most Cllrs agree this is now working much better. Listen to the Scrutiny Committee debate on 24/03/26 for more information if you are interested.

Regarding the request for an agenda item (Article 4 Direction regarding unscreened rubbish bins in conservation areas), Cllr Walton confirmed that OTC have previously agreed to support Cllr Dadd in her endeavours to pressure EFDC to create a policy {Planning committee meeting 18/12/25}.

PLN40/26

Public participation / 1

a) Ref: PLN49/26 New Homes on land south of Chelmsford Road in Ongar

A resident spoke on behalf of many local residents to oppose the Bloor Home development south of Chelmsford Road. 1300 people have signed a petition. Following a resident meeting, a committee has been formed. Strongly object to the development on the Green Belt land. With development for 500 homes recently approved, the combined impact on roads, schools, healthcare and drainage is already being felt & cannot be ignored. Concerned with impact on a local business. Urges the Council to object to this development proposal.

Cllr Walton clarified that the Council is not considering the application at the meeting as no planning application has been submitted. Also, the Council do not have the power to object to an application but are a consultee.

A resident spoke about concerns that if the development is allowed to proceed, the villages of Ongar & High Ongar will be virtually joined. Ongar residents have a high dependency on cars and with the proposed development, there is concern that there could be in excess of 500 more vehicles on Ongar roads, which are already congested. Concern with flooding and impact on local treatment plants. Also concern with the development affecting the numerous wildlife who use this land. Also, further impact on local schools which are already over scribed.

A resident also spoke on behalf of Great Stony Park Residents Association, who will be affected by the proposed development. Believes there are more suitable non-Green Belt sites elsewhere & in the Epping Forest district and that this is a large developer just interested in profit and not interested in the damage that the development may do to the community. Asking the Council to come to a view which supports the views of the Ongar residents and to put pressure on Epping Forest District Council.

Cllr Walton thanked all Ongar residents for their contributions. Cllr Walton clarified again that the Council can only consider applications that have been submitted and assured residents that any applications submitted will be thoroughly considered and an appropriate response submitted.

PLN49/26

Correspondence

a) New Homes on land south of Chelmsford Road in Ongar

i) Bloor Homes have issued a public consultation. Details have been circulated to Cllrs. It was noted that a representative of the Great Stony Park Residents Association (61 properties) has asked for an indication of whether or not OTC will support or object to this proposed development. The resident has been advised that no formal planning application has been received and consequently it has not been considered.

ii) To consider if the Council would like to meet with Bloor Homes developers to discuss the proposals in more detail and answer any questions. Details have been circulated to Cllrs.

Cllr Walton provided some background. Cllrs had an initial meeting with Bloor Homes. Then some Cllrs attended a workshop with Bloor Homes. Bloor Homes have now invited the Council to another meeting, to review their updated plans. Cllr Walton acknowledged the communication from the Great Stony Park Residents Association {as item i) above}.

It was agreed that all the Council would like to meet with Bloor Homes developers to discuss the proposals in more detail and answer any questions {as item ii) above}.

b) RAGON4

It was noted that there has been correspondence concerning issues with discharge of surface water into the ditch and not going into river Roding but coming up in a garden of a property in High Ongar Road. Also, issues with removal of retained hedges and damage to TPO Trees.

c) EPF/1782/25 Bowes Field (High St) City & Country (ONG.R2)

It was noted that there has been correspondence:

- i) Considering comments to update the planning pack
- ii) New zebra crossing outside of the site to enhance pedestrian safety
- ii) To retain a bus layby, as previously discussed, but unfortunately this is not feasible.

PLN40/26 Public participation / 2

b) Ref: PLN45/26 Planning Appeal

The resident circulated some photographs, explained that history of the site and that it should be considered as previously developed land, not as Green Belt. It aligns with the National planning guidance which encourages re-using previously developed land. He has been searching for a property without success, wants to move nearer to family members and respectively requests that the Council consider his request. Also, that in 2023 the Council supported his previous application.

Cllr Walton covered the history of the site, to ensure that all Cllrs were fully aware:

2016 - Brown field application (for three properties) & this was approved

2021 - An application for a bungalow & Ongar Town Council objected to the application

2021/22 - This planning application was re-submitted with modifications and Ongar Town Council had no objections. The District Council refused, it was appealed & then refused as Green Belt land

2025 - A further application was submitted and Ongar Town Council objected (as Green Belt)

PLN45/26 The following planning appeal was considered:

Application No	Location	Proposal
EPF/1480/25 AP-13613	Bottles Lodge, Stondon Road, Ongar	Permission in principle for one dwelling.
Reason for Appeal: Against a Refusal		Appeal Type: Written Representations
Reference: 6005287		Response no later than: 01/04/26
It was proposed no further action is required, as no changes to the comments already submitted.		
Proposed Cllr Reay Seconded Cllr Barrell Carried (one abstention).		

PLN42/26 To approve the minutes of Planning Committee meeting of the 19th February 2026
Proposed Cllr Reay **Seconded** Cllr Barrell **Carried unanimously.** The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 19th February 2026 were approved with no amendments and were signed by the Chairman.

PLN43/26 The following planning applications were considered:

It was noted that no correspondence has been received from residents on any planning applications.
It was noted that Cllr Cole joined the meeting during consideration of this item.

Application Number	Location	Type and Proposal
EPF/0347/26	Unit 4 Basons Yard, Adjacent To, High Street, Ongar, CM5 9AA	Full planning permission Demolition of existing garage and proposed two number detached houses built.
<p>OTC Comment: Object for the following reasons:</p> <p>i) loss of 16 parking spaces for commercial units without mitigation, contrary to policy E1 (Employment Sites)</p> <p>ii) overlooking property at the rear, contrary to policy DM9 (High Quality Design)</p> <p>iii) development extends into TPO group and TPO Root Protection Area, contrary to policy DM5 (Green and Blue Infrastructure)</p> <p>iv) harm to EFSAC, contrary to policy DM2 (Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation) and DM22 (Air Quality)</p> <p>v) concern with potential drainage issues, as it is proposed to extend into and fill in the ditch at the rear, contrary to policy DM15 (Managing and Reducing Flood Risk).</p>		
EPF/0361/26	Unit 4 Basons Yard, Adjacent To, High Street, Ongar, CM5 9AA	Demolition in a conservation area Demolition of existing garage in a conservation area and proposed two number detached houses built.
<p>OTC Comment: Object for the following reasons:</p> <p>i) loss of 16 parking spaces for commercial units without mitigation, contrary to policy E1 (Employment Sites)</p> <p>ii) overlooking property at the rear, contrary to policy DM9 (High Quality Design)</p> <p>iii) development extends into TPO group and TPO Root Protection Area, contrary to policy DM5 (Green and Blue Infrastructure)</p> <p>iv) harm to EFSAC, contrary to policy DM2 (Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation) and DM22 (Air Quality)</p> <p>v) concern with potential drainage issues, as it is proposed to extend into and fill in the ditch at the rear, contrary to policy DM15 (Managing and Reducing Flood Risk).</p>		
EPF/0236/26	Oak Hall, Stondon Road, Ongar, CM5 9BU	Householder planning permission Single storey rear extension.
OTC Comment: No objection		
EPF/0341/26	4, Battle Court, Ongar, CM5 9SX	Householder planning permission Conversion of existing garage into living/gym spaces. Replacement of garage doors to new windows and new bi fold doors to garden.
<p>OTC Comment: Object to the application due to loss of parking, as it is believed that the proposed reconfigured area will be insufficient for two cars, contrary to policy T1 (Sustainable Transport Choices) and ONP.CT3 (Transport and Movement).</p>		
EPF/0415/26	Land North of Chelmsford Road, Ongar, CM5 9LX	Consent to display an advertisement Advertisement consent for various signage as well as flags in connection with approved consent EPF/2787/23.
<p>OTC Comment: Ongar Town Council conditionally object to this application. There is concern that ancient hedgerows, and other hedgerows, could be removed to facilitate this signage and the application does not provide sufficient information to reassure the Council that these will be protected. If a condition is applied protecting these hedgerows, then Ongar Town Council will be satisfied. The Council would also highlight that the applicant, during current construction, has already damaged or removed a significant number of hedgerows and TPO trees in breach of their approved plans and conditions, contrary to policy DM5 (Green and Blue Infrastructure).</p>		

EPF/0446/26	44, Rodney Road, Ongar, CM5 9HN	Householder planning permission Part two-storey rear extension to the first floor, new pitched roof to single storey with 1 No. rooflight, internal alteration and fenestration changes.
OTC Comment: No objection.		
EPF/0472/26	22, Longfields, Ongar, CM5 9BZ	Householder planning permission Proposed Ground Floor Rear Extension, Garage Conversion, Relocation of Front Entrance Door and Changes to Facade.
OTC Comment: No objection.		

Cllr Walton formally thanked Cllr Reay for his time to produce the planning presentation for each meeting.

It was agreed to extend the meeting by 20 minutes.

PLN44/26 The following planning applications were noted for information only:

Application No	Location	Proposal
EPF/0210/26	15, Churchill Close, Ongar, CM5 9BH	Certificate of Lawful Development for proposed loft conversion with rear dormer and front roof lights.
EPF/0379/26	Land Known As The Paddocks, Stanford Rivers Road, Ongar, CM5 9BT	Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 18 Ecology of EPF/1356/24 (Residential development of 36 dwellings including affordable housing, access from Stanford Rivers Road, associated estate roads, parking, open space and enhanced landscaping).
EPF/0380/26	Land Known As The Paddocks, Stanford Rivers Road, Ongar, CM5 9BT	Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 23 Archaeology of EPF/1356/24 (Residential development of 36 dwellings including affordable housing, access from Stanford Rivers Road, associated estate roads, parking, open space and enhanced landscaping).
EPF/0381/26	Land Known As The Paddocks, Stanford Rivers Road, Ongar, CM5 9BT	Approval of Details Reserved by Conditions 12 Trees and 15, 27 and 32 Construction Management and Dust Monitoring, 16 LEMP and 22 CEMP of EPF/1356/24 (Residential development of 36 dwellings including affordable housing, access from Stanford Rivers Road, associated estate roads, parking, open space and enhanced landscaping).
EPF/0391/26	Land Known As The Paddocks, Stanford Rivers Road, Ongar, CM5 9BT	Approval of Details Reserved by Conditions 4, 5 and 7 (Details and Management of Surface Water) and 11 (Land Contamination) of EPF/1356/24 (Residential development of 36 dwellings including affordable housing, access from Stanford Rivers Road, associated estate roads, parking, open space and enhanced landscaping).
EPF/0392/26	Land Known As The Paddocks, Stanford Rivers Road, Ongar, CM5 9BT	Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 13 Hard and Soft Landscaping, 26 Types and Colours of External Finishes and 35 Parking of EPF/1356/24 (Residential development of 36 dwellings including affordable housing, access from Stanford Rivers Road, associated estate roads, parking, open space and enhanced landscaping).
EPF/0513/26	Land at Greensted Road, Chipping Ongar, CM5 9LA	Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 12 (Drainage) of EPF/1404/24 (Redevelopment of the site to provide 85 dwellings including affordable housing, car and cycle parking, access arrangements, landscaping, services and associated infrastructure (ONG.R5 - Allocated Site In Ongar) (Revised scheme to EPF/2627/20 Dismissed at Appeal)).

- PLN46/26 Review of the OTC Planning Tracker**
The February planning decisions made by Epping Forest District Council were briefly discussed and noted. Most of EFDCs decisions agreed with OTCs decisions.
- PLN47/26 North Weald Bassett Draft Neighbourhood Plan Consultation**
North Weald Bassett Parish Council have issued a Draft Neighbourhood Plan and are seeking comments by 30/03/26. Details have been circulated to Cllrs.
- It was agreed to thank North Weald Bassett Parish Council for the engagement but that the Council have no comment on the Draft Neighbourhood Plan.
- PLN48/26 Application to Vary a Premises Licence - The Kings Head, 177 High Street, Ongar**
The application is to extend the licensable area to the outside patio with a horse box bar with no changes to existing licensable activities or times. Details have been circulated to Cllrs.
- Propose to support the application, as the Council support local businesses. This is in line with Policy E1.
- Proposed** Cllr Mendoza **Seconded** Cllr Reay **Carried unanimously.**
- It was noted that Cllr Eydmann joined the meeting during consideration of this item.
- PLN50/26 Resident Issues Raised with the District and County Councils**
Cllr Mendoza is concerned that residents are raising issues with the District and County Councils and they are not being resolved. He believes that OTC should be helping residents. In particular, Riparian Rights was cited.
- Cllr Mendoza covered the issues with Riparian Rights, but also grass verges being destroyed, streetlights that aren't working. He would like to propose a method that resident also report issues to OTC & then OTC can escalate the issue with the District or County Council. Cllr Eydmann stated it is the Councillors job to assist residents with any issues that they may have.
- Cllr Walton confirmed the current process - an issue is raised with a Councillor or the Clerk, it is progressed by the relevant Councillor or committee Chair or local District Councillor where possible. If necessary, the issue is brought to the Council as an agenda item and it can then be considered and potentially escalated to the District or County Council.
- Check that there are details on the website, such that residents know that they can raise matters with their ward Councillor. This can also be included at the Town Assembly meeting on 17/04/26 at 7pm at Budworth Hall, High Street, Ongar.
- PLN51/26 Any other Matters relating to Planning**
a) A developer has sent a formal request to EFDC regarding a vacant council-owned property within the district (Shelley).
b) Cllr Barrell had a walkaround at Shelley on 05/03/26 with District Cllr Keska (this was the original date for the walkaround with District Cllr Chris Whitbread).
- PLN52/26 Items for the next Planning Committee agenda**
None.
- PLN53/26 Date of next meeting**
16th April (3rd April – cancelled).

PLN54/26 **To formally close the meeting:** Cllr Walton closed the meeting.

Meeting closed 8:20pm.

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

Unapproved