



Ongar Neighbourhood Plan 2020-2033 *draft*

Regulation 14 Consultation Version December 2020



Chipping Ongar Town Centre

photo by J Merrett

Prepared on behalf of Ongar Town Council by Ongar Neighbourhood Plan Community Group

Contents

- Contents 2
- Forewords..... 5
- From the Ongar Town Council 5
- From the Ongar Neighbourhood Plan Community Group 6
- Introduction..... 7
- 1.1 Ongar Neighbourhood Plan..... 7
- 1.2 Time Period 7
- 1.3 Actions..... 7
- 1.4 Review 7
- Overview of Ongar 9
- 2.1 Location and Context 9
- 2.2 Nature of the Area..... 9
- 2.3 Population 10
- 2.4 Other Evidence 10
- Engagement..... 12
- 3.1 Engagement Activities 12
- 3.2 Outcomes of Engagement..... 12
- 3.3 Vision for Ongar in 2033..... 13
- 4.1 Neighbourhood Plan Aims..... 14
- 4.2 Achieving the Aims 14
- Policies..... 15
- 5.1 The Basic Conditions 15
- 5.2 National Policy..... 15
- 5.3 Sustainable Development 15
- 5.4 Local Strategic Policies 16
- 5.5 EU Obligations and Human Rights..... 16
- 5.6 Policies for the Neighbourhood Area 16
- Rural Regeneration..... 17
- 6.1 Purposes 17

6.2	Rationale: Employment and Rural Diversification	18
	Policy ONG-RR1: Employment and Rural Diversification	19
	Policy ONG-RR1: Employment and Rural Diversification	19
	Interpretation of ONG-RR1	19
6.3	Rationale: Chipping Ongar High Street.....	20
	Policy ONG-RR2: Chipping Ongar High Street	23
	Interpretation of ONG-RR2	23
6.4	Rationale: New Housing Mix and Standards	24
	Policy ONG-RR3: New Housing Mix and Standards.....	28
	Interpretation of ONG-RR3	29
6.5	Rationale: Broadband.....	30
	Policy ONG-RR4: Broadband	30
	Interpretation of ONG-RR4	30
	Environment and Design	31
7.1	Purposes	31
7.2	Rationale: Local Character.....	32
	Policy ONG-ED1: Local Character	35
	Interpretation of ONG-ED1	35
7.3	Rationale: Design and Character in the High Street.....	37
	Policy ONG-ED2: Design and character in the Chipping Ongar Conservation Area	40
	Interpretation of ONG-ED2	40
7.4	Rationale: Historic Buildings.....	41
	Policy ONG-ED3: Historic Buildings	44
	Interpretation of ONG-ED3	45
7.5	Rationale: Sustainable Design	46
	Policy ONG-ED4: Sustainable Design.....	49
	Interpretation of ONG-ED4	50
7.6	Rationale: Natural Environment.....	51
	Policy ONG-ED5: Environment	53
	Interpretation of ONG-ED5	53
7.7	Rationale: Landscape Buffers	54
	Policy ONG-ED6: Landscape Buffers.....	55
	Interpretation of ONG-ED6	56
	Community and Transport Infrastructure.....	57
8.1	Purpose.....	57
8.2	Rationale: Local Green Space	57

Policy ONG-CT1: Local Green Space	61
Interpretation of ONG-CT1.....	61
8.3 Rationale: Community, Cultural, Leisure and Sports Facilities.....	61
Policy ONG-CT2: Community, Cultural, Leisure and Sports Facilities	64
Interpretation of ONG-CT2.....	64
8.4 Rationale: Transport and Movement	64
Policy ONG-CT3: Transport and Movement.....	70
Interpretation of ONG-CT3.....	70
8.5 Rationale: Infrastructure priorities.....	71
Policy ONG-CT4: Infrastructure Priorities.....	73
Interpretation of ONG-CT4.....	73
8.6 Rationale: Footpath and Cycle Routes	73
Policy ONG-CT5: Footpaths and Cycle Route	76
Interpretation of ONG-CT5.....	77
Policy Map	78
Acknowledgments	79

Forewords

From the Ongar Town Council

Ongar has faced many challenges over the years, but further changes are ahead.

Due to the national housing shortage, Ongar is required to absorb a significant number of new dwellings in the coming years.

A Neighbourhood Plan enables the local community to influence these changes and play a much stronger role in shaping the area in which we live and work.

Neighbourhood planning provides the opportunity for communities to set out a positive vision for how they would like their community to develop over the next ten, fifteen or twenty years, in ways that meet identified local need and make sense for local people.

The Key Benefits are:

- It can help protect areas from specific types of change, (such as too many of one category of business)
- It can include policies to influence new building design or alterations to existing buildings
- It can protect or propose the creation of open spaces, (such as green gaps, nature reserves/wildlife corridors, allotments, sports pitches, play areas, parks and gardens, and important historic assets)
- It enables the local community to retain more of the money collected from development to spend on local projects
- It gives us, the residents of Ongar, the opportunity to have more influence and control over our community
- It enables us to ensure that we can protect the things we value the most
- It enables changes to be managed effectively and ensures they benefit our community
- It allows us to encourage developers to build what we believe our community needs and requires, (such as greater numbers of affordable houses and developments more suited to elderly residents)
- It can influence where and what kind of development should take place, (such as for new housing or for businesses)

Ongar Town Council has been working in partnership with the Ongar Neighbourhood Plan Community Group to produce a plan for Ongar and would like to thank all those involved for their dedicated work to produce it.

Derek Birch
Chairman
Ongar Town Council

From the Ongar Neighbourhood Plan Community Group

Ongar Neighbourhood Plan Community Group would like to thank residents and businesses for their huge input over several years, to enable us to produce Ongar Neighbourhood Development Plan on behalf of Ongar Town Council.

Although a Neighbourhood Plan is essentially only Planning Policies, our engagement with the community work has also brought considerable local consensus about the need for other areas of enhancement that cannot become a planning 'Policy'. These have been included as a separate Appendix document of Projects/Actions and includes as Regeneration of Chipping Ongar Town centre, enhancement of footpaths, development of Visitor economy etc. which will build on and enforce the aims of Ongar Neighbourhood Plan and the community's aspirations for the future

Following a Public Meeting in July 2017, Ongar Neighbourhood Plan Community Group was set up to be able to steer the detail and nature of Epping Forest District's intended development in the Civil Parish of Ongar.

By late 2016, Epping Forest District Council's Draft Local Plan was already well-advanced including detailed strategic policies for the whole District. EFDC had also allocated numbers of new housing and selected actual housing sites, including for Ongar.

Ongar residents value their small distinctive rural town of historic Chipping Ongar with outlying settlements and surrounding countryside. Whilst acknowledging the need for more homes in the locality, residents wanted to shape its future development positively to be able to

- retain and enhance the core of Chipping Ongar medieval town enclosure as a community activity hub for 21st century with sustainable development within close walking distance
- ensure development did not detract from the character and design of the neighbourhood's built or natural environments and to enhance those environments where possible.

Local opinion was also that some development over the last few decades had resulted in harm to the character of parts of the civil Parish, and that the street scene has become dominated by motor vehicles. Ongar Neighbourhood Plan aims to redress that balance for future developments

Mary Dadd
Chairman
Ongar Neighbourhood Plan Community Group

Introduction

1.1 Ongar Neighbourhood Plan

This document is a neighbourhood plan for Ongar. The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan policies is to guide development within the parish. When a Neighbourhood Plan is made, it forms part of the statutory development plan for the area, together with the adopted Local Plan. Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the policies of both the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The process of producing Ongar Neighbourhood Plan has sought to involve the community as widely as possible, in addition to putting together a robust evidence base. The topic areas reflect matters of considerable importance to Ongar, its residents, businesses, and community groups.



The Ongar Neighbourhood Area was designated in 2017 and covers the Civil Parish of Ongar. A map of the area is on the following page.

1.2 Time Period

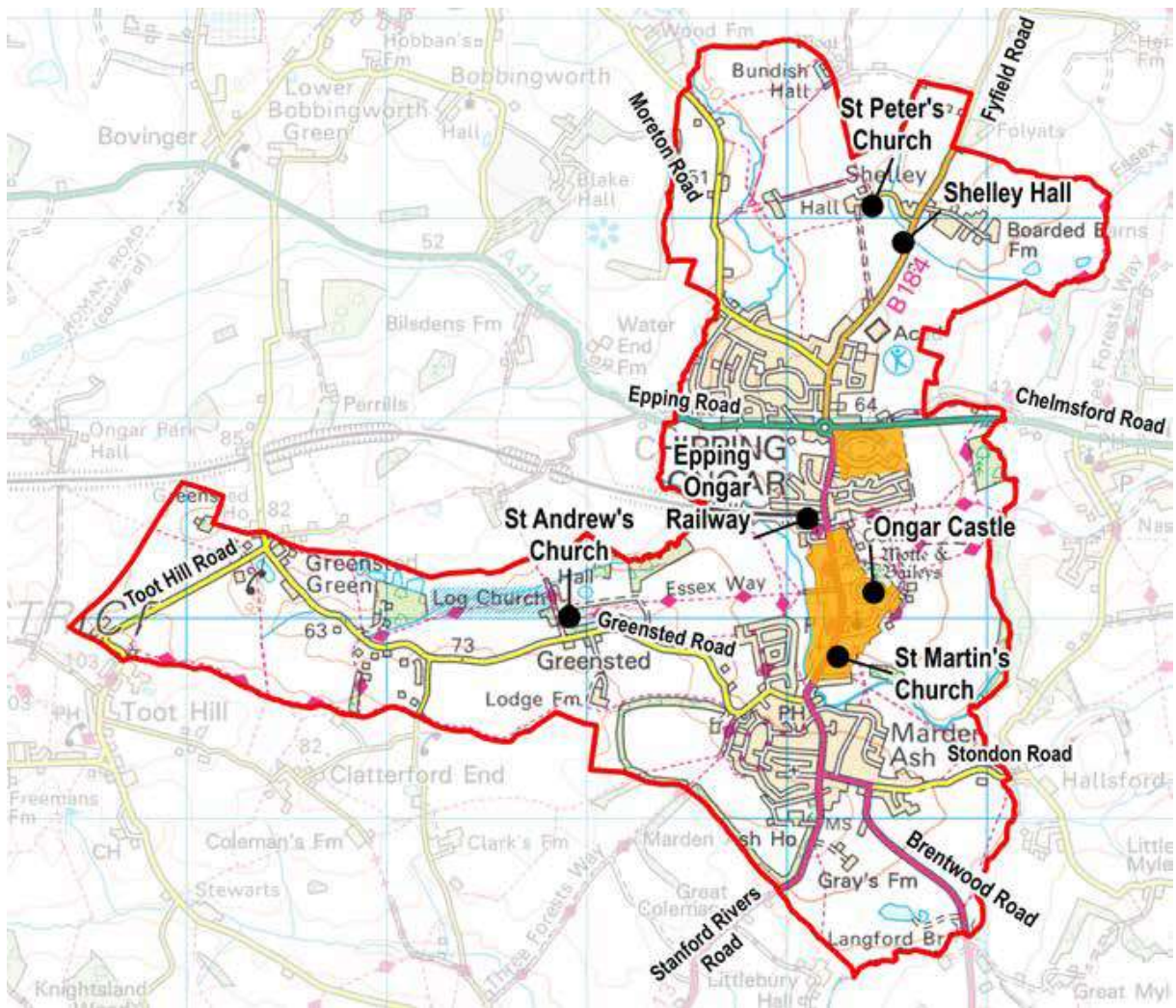
This Neighbourhood Plan covers the period from the date it is 'made' (being the date it has passed local referendum) to the end of 2033.

1.3 Actions

Whilst preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, a number of actions have been identified which are not specifically related to land use matters and therefore outside the scope of Neighbourhood Plan policies. These actions and projects are included in an accompanying Action Plan for Ongar. The Action Plan is not part of the statutory neighbourhood plan and the actions will be addressed by Ongar Town Council and/or other organisations.

1.4 Review

Ongar Town Council, as the Neighbourhood Plan body, will be responsible for monitoring and periodically reviewing the Plan, to respond to changing circumstances.



The Civil Parish Boundaries of Ongar with the conservation areas in yellow.

Overview of Ongar

2.1 Location and Context

The Ongar Neighbourhood Area covers 12 km² (902 hectares) and mirrors the Civil Parish of Ongar, in Epping Forest District. It is located 5km (3 miles) east of North Weald Bassett, 9km (6 miles) east of Epping, 11km (7 miles) south east of Harlow, 12km (8miles) north west of Brentwood, 15km (11 miles) west of Chelmsford. It is 33km (21 miles) north-east of Central London and 32km (20 miles) away from Stansted Airport.



An arial view of the historic centre of Chipping Ongar

The Civil Parish consists of the central historic town of Chipping Ongar located on a tongue of higher ground between two river valleys – The River Roding to the east and its tributary Cripsey Brook to the west. The surrounding smaller settlements of Greensted, Greensted Green, Marden Ash and Shelley lie within 2km of the town centre, each with a distinct character. These settlements are surrounded by inhabited countryside.

2.2 Nature of the Area



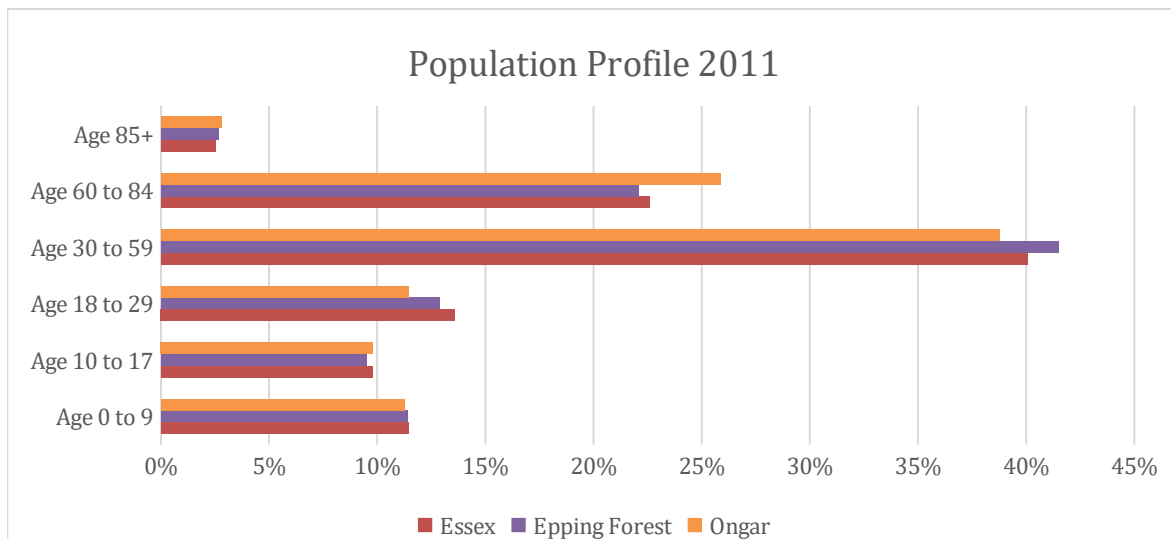
Of its 902 hectares (2229 acres) is developed with the remaining 92% Metropolitan Green Belt, 86% of which is farmed with the remaining made up of 6% woodland and ponds and water courses. This substantial amount of surrounding countryside provides a tranquil backdrop for residents and a range of ecological services including food production, carbon capture and opportunities for flood control. The responses to the Residents Survey revealed that 86% felt that Ongar is a friendly place in which to live with a strong sense of community. The historic centre of Chipping Ongar has retained much of its charm with a significant number of listed buildings

and two Conservation Areas. In the residents' survey, 94% either agreed or strongly agreed that it is Chipping Ongar as an historic town centre which adds character to the area.¹

2.3 Population

Forty percent of Ongar residents are aged 30-59 and over 55% are 18-59. Thus, Ongar's housing and amenities will be expected to continue to focus on young families attracted to the rural town and surrounding countryside with good local schools. However, in a nation with an ageing population 27% Ongar residents were over 60² and have lived in Ongar for many years and indicates a stable community.³

In 2011, the population of Ongar was 6,251. The age distribution is broadly similar to the district and county, however there are slightly more older residents (aged 60+). The average age in the parish is approximately 43 years, which is lower than the Epping Forest district average age of 46 years, but higher than the county level of 41 years.



*Between 2001 and 2011 the population grew by 182 people (2.9%) but did not change significantly in terms of the overall age profile.*⁴

2.4 Other Evidence

More detailed evidence on a range of subjects is included in the policy rationales, later in this document.

¹ Residents Survey Feb 2018

² <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/ks102ew>

³ Residents Survey Feb 2018

⁴ State of the Parish by Navigus

Engagement

3.1 Engagement Activities

The Ongar Neighbourhood Plan Community Group (steering group), acting on behalf of Ongar Town Council, has undertaken a range of community and stakeholder engagement activities⁵. More details are in the Schedule of Evidence files. These have targeted residents of all ages and businesses and other stakeholders and include:

- A web site was established for the neighbourhood plan;
- A Facebook page was created;
- A Residents Survey⁶ was delivered to all households in February 2018 to gain the views of those living in the area; Additional surveys were undertaken to look at some issues in more detail, such as Town Centre, Sports and Recreational Facilities;
- A Youth Survey involved all pupils in the local secondary school;
- There have been frequent meetings, workshops, and attendance at local events such as the school fete, Town Festival and a two day exhibition at Budworth Hall;
- Some events have included SWOT analysis⁷;
- Regular articles have appeared in Ongar News;
- A range of local groups and societies were approached for opinions and evidence;
- The meetings of the steering groups have been open, well-attended and with opportunities for people to ask questions;
- There has been ongoing Interaction with the county council departments e.g. Education and Highways, and local district council officers at EFDC, the local planning authority, as well as national bodies such as Historic England and Environmental bodies and Sport England.



Many local residents attended the 2 day event in June 2019

3.2 Outcomes of Engagement

There has been a high degree of consistency in responses from the various events and questionnaires. Detailed analysis of these was made available on the neighbourhood plan web site and is now with evidence documents.

A summary of key issues identified through engagement and Surveys include:

- Although there is a good range of community facilities and amenities in the area, including shopping, sports and recreation there are some deficiencies e.g. a Town Park, Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP), playing pitches and other open spaces.
- Additional community facilities will be needed as the local population increases through new housebuilding which will also create a demand for additional car parking in the town centre and health and leisure centre
- More local employment is required.

⁵ Document of Engagement is in the evidence file

⁶ Residents Survey 2018

⁷ SWOT analysis results are in the evidence file

- People use a range of modes of transport. However, those relying more on cars especially for commuting refer to public transport facilities being too infrequent
- Domination of motor vehicles in the public realm and residential areas, detracts from the distinctive local character and ambience.
- The local natural environment and green spaces area is valued. More green spaces are required.
- The local network of footpaths is valued and well-used.
- A mix of house types are required, in particular family accommodation; new homes need to be able to accommodate home working; and some affordable housing is required locally

These are general themes, and a range of more detailed issues were identified through engagement.

The issues identified, together with others from analysis of the evidence base, have informed the themes and content of the policies.

The steering group used the outcomes of engagement to inform its representations on the emerging Local Plan.

Further references to outcomes of engagement are made in the policy rationales, later in this plan.

From the engagement outcomes a Vision for the future to 2033 was formed and is the basis for the Aims of the Neighbourhood Plan and Appendix-Actions and Projects

3.3 Vision for Ongar in 2033

“Ongar will be a vibrant small rural town, with good access to the surrounding countryside. It is proud of its historic heritage and friendly atmosphere

New developments do not detract from Ongar’s distinctive character, but have respected its historic form and design. New green corridors have been included to protect our varied wildlife.

Chipping Ongar Town Centre Conservation Area has been enhanced as an attractive pedestrian friendly location with additional services and community facilities to ensure that our larger population still has its day to day needs met within the town.

Our leisure and sports facilities and amenities have been improved with additional facilities to cater for our active residents. Ongar Schools have enough places for our children; and good health resources are local.“

Aims

4.1 Neighbourhood Plan Aims

From analysis of evidence, and also the outcomes of community engagement, the following aims have been identified:

1. **Enabling rural and urban regeneration of the Parish.**
2. **Creating a more vibrant historic High Street in Chipping Ongar.**
3. **Ensuring development is sustainable, well-designed and creates a distinctive local identity.**
4. **Protecting or enhancing the historic, natural and rural environments of Ongar.**
5. **Creating more sustainable live/work patterns.**
6. **Maintaining and expanding the range of local community facilities and amenities.**

4.2 Achieving the Aims

These aims are translated into a set of policies grouped under three headings, as follows:

Rural Regeneration

- Policy ONG-RR1: Employment and Rural Diversification**
- Policy ONG-RR2: Chipping Ongar High Street**
- Policy ONG-RR3: New Housing Mix and Standards**
- Policy ONG-RR4: Broadband**

Environment and Design

- Policy ONG-ED1: Local Character**
- Policy ONG-ED2: Design and Character in the Chipping Ongar Conservation Area**
- Policy ONG-ED3: Historic Buildings**
- Policy ONG-ED4: Sustainable Design**
- Policy ONG-ED5: Environment**
- Policy ONG-ED6: Landscape Buffers**

Community and Transport Infrastructure

- Policy ONG-CT1: Local Green Space**
- Policy ONG-CT2: Community, Cultural, Leisure and Sports Facilities**
- Policy ONG-CT3: Transport and Movement**
- Policy ONG-CT4: Infrastructure Priorities**
- Policy ONG-CT5: Footpaths and Cycle Route**

These policies are contained in chapters 6-8 of this document.

Policies

5.1 The Basic Conditions

Neighbourhood Plans must meet the “basic conditions”, set out in planning legislation. This is tested through the independent examination.

The Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans are that:

- They must have appropriate regard to national policy;
- They must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- They must be in general conformity with strategic local policy;
- They must be compatible with EU obligations;

In addition, Neighbourhood Plans must be compatible with human rights legislation.

5.2 National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁸ requires Neighbourhood Plans to set out a positive vision for the future of the local area and planning policies to guide decisions on planning applications. This Neighbourhood Plan has been written, having regard to national planning policy and guidance on a range of issues.

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF identifies three overarching objectives to achieving sustainable development. The Neighbourhood Plan positively addresses the economic, social and environmental objectives of the NPPF, taking account of the character, needs and opportunities of the area.

5.3 Sustainable Development

A key principle of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which is defined clearly in its Paragraph 11. In response, the Neighbourhood Plan contributes positively by identifying opportunities to meet development needs of the neighbourhood area. The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan seek to ensure the viability and sustainability of our diverse rural town.

Growth across the Neighbourhood Area of Ongar should not be to the detriment or loss of Green Belt, although there are some changes to the boundaries proposed in EFDC Local Plan 2011-2033⁹ and will be concentrated around the potential development of strategic sites, the Town Centre and appropriate infill. The Neighbourhood Plan strongly promotes the re-use of existing buildings, particularly those in Chipping Ongar Town Centre. This will be augmented by the usual smaller-scale incremental development that is typical of rural market towns.

⁸National Policy Planning Framework, February 2019

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

⁹ Sites in EFDC Local Plan 2011-2033 will rely on changes to the Green Belt boundaries

5.4 Local Strategic Policies

Epping Forest District Council as the Local Planning Authority defines which policies are to be considered 'strategic' in its Local Plan, for the purpose of neighbourhood planning. The District Council considers that all of the policies set out in the current adopted Combined Policies of Epping Forest District Local Plan 1998 and Alterations 2006 (published 2008) to be strategic for the purpose of neighbourhood planning. The Neighbourhood Plan helps to achieve the spatial strategy in the Local Plan.

Whilst the basic conditions relate to adopted strategic local policies, it is advisable to take account of the emerging Epping Forest Local Plan 2011 to 2033. The evidence behind the emerging local plan is part of the evidence base for the neighbourhood plan (where relevant). Following the period when representations were invited on the soundness of the submission version of the Local Plan, the Epping Forest District Council Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination in public on 21 September 2018. This stage of EFDC Local Plan remains ongoing (at the time of this Regulation 14 Consultation Version of Ongar Neighbourhood Plan).

The Ongar Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (Ongar Neighbourhood Plan Community Group ONPCG) has worked in liaison with Epping Forest District Council throughout the preparation of the plan to reduce the risk of disparities between the emerging Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan.

5.5 EU Obligations and Human Rights

This Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with EU obligations and has been subject to ongoing engagement and an Equalities Assessment. The policies within this plan have been prepared with due care and consideration to ensure they are compatible with EU obligations and the Neighbourhood Plan has been screened for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA).

5.6 Policies for the Neighbourhood Area

The policies in the Ongar Neighbourhood Plan are led by public opinion and based on evidence gathered from official statistics and existing publications as well as reports commissioned for the Plan. Key evidence is listed in the Schedule of Evidence at the end of this plan. In addition, local surveys, views, comments and ideas expressed by the local community have been taken into account.

The policies in this Neighbourhood Plan seek to deliver the aspirations and needs of the local community, within the framework of meeting the basic conditions and other legal requirements.

Rural Regeneration

6.1 Purposes

The purposes of the policies in this section are:

- Enabling rural and urban regeneration of the Parish;
- Creating a more vibrant historic High Street in Chipping Ongar;
- Ensuring a mix of housing to meet local need;
- Creating more sustainable live/work patterns and accommodating broadband.

The policies in this Chapter enable growth, whilst also helping to ensure that such growth meets local need and is sustainable. They need to read in conjunction with those policies on Community and Transport Infrastructure and Environment and Design.

The Neighbourhood Plan aims to enable housing and a balanced mix of employment opportunities for the existing and future community, whilst also regenerating Chipping Ongar High Street.

6.2 Rationale: Employment and Rural Diversification

Ongar has little local employment within the Civil Parish, outside of the town centre, and employment has diminished further in the last 10 years. The top types of employment in Ongar match those living in Epping Forest and Essex. These are Public Administration, Health and Education, Wholesale and Retail trade and Construction. More than half of workers commute outside the area, including to London¹⁰.

Ongar parish includes a high proportion of micro and small as well as medium enterprises; many are run from residents' own homes. Other places of employment are a number of farms and agricultural-related businesses, commercial services such as pubs, and the Ongar Business Centre, formerly known as the Essex Technology and Innovation Centre. Since 2012 the Epping Ongar Heritage Railway has operated a very popular resource that brings 46,000 (2019) visitors to Chipping Ongar.¹¹

In addition to the Epping Ongar Railway there are other opportunities to link Ongar's tourism attractions to those in Epping Forest and nearby Secret Nuclear Bunker and Mud Races. These will be encouraged as further Action Projects. Bringing in more visitors will help to make the Town Centre and other businesses more viable.



The Epping Ongar Railway (above), St Andrew's Church at Greensted (right) and Essex Way (top right) attract thousands of visitors to the area every year.



New employment sites in Ongar or just outside will help to make a more sustainable settlement. Consultation with local businesses and residents has identified support for rural diversification, home based businesses, agriculture, tourism, light industrial and other businesses that can operate in the rural environment.

¹⁰ State of the Parish by Navigus see Evidence files

¹¹Epping Ongar Railway Press Release January 2020

Paragraph 83 of the NPPF 2019 demonstrates support for a prosperous rural economy through policies and decisions which enable rural business growth in new and converted buildings, agricultural diversification, tourism and leisure, local services and community facilities.

The emerging Local Plan identifies within the economic profile for the District (Paragraph 1.31) that:

“Economic activity rates in the District are high for both men and women, with 78.5% of 16-64 year olds in employment which is similar to the average for England (78%) and slightly lower than the East of England average (80.2%). Within this, male employment (81%) is higher than female employment (76.1%). At 17%, self-employment makes up a significant proportion of overall employment and is higher than the East of England and England averages.

Policy ONG-RR1: Employment and Rural Diversification

Policy ONG-RR1: Employment and Rural Diversification

- 1. Development that creates local employment and/or diversifies the rural economy will be supported. This includes new facilities to support the visitor economy, new community facilities, serviced offices, co-working or enterprise space.**
- 2. This support is subject to there being no significant adverse impact on:**
 - The amenities of residential properties through noise, disturbance, vibration, privacy or overlooking matters;**
 - The open and rural character of the area;**
 - The vitality of Chipping Ongar High Street**

Interpretation of ONG-RR1

The policy enables development that provides local employment, subject to consideration of impacts. More specific requirements for the High Street are contained in Policy ONG-RR2.

Policy ONG-CT3 (Transport and Movement) sets out transport requirements for employment development, including car park spaces and more sustainable forms of transport.

6.3 Rationale: Chipping Ongar High Street

Like many communities, residents feel the heart of Ongar is the town centre at Chipping Ongar and this is what provides its sense of place and local identity. With the decline of retail in High Streets nationally, it is important that other services and activities are located in the town centre to ensure it remains a central community hub for people to meet and socialise.



The Budworth Hall is a valuable meeting place which brings people to Chipping Ongar Town Centre.

The decline in Chipping Ongar's retail and historic Market occurred over the last few decades. By the end of 2019, the footfall was low, and the centre had lost its banks and doctors' surgeries, with many independent retailers also gone. There are more empty shops in the primary retail frontage and empty offices than ever before, including during the last recession¹², but even more concerning has been the frequency that its small independent shops have changed tenancy and the shorter opening hours offered. The Coronavirus pandemic of 2020 added to the uncertainty of the economic viability of further businesses and accelerated the need for a change of focus in the town centre.

With existing low overall footfall, the viability for small businesses is difficult. Ongar Neighbourhood Plan policies will enable regeneration of Chipping Ongar town centre as a vibrant destination place with a new purpose, in an attractive historic setting, close by recreational and leisure amenities and accessible countryside. This would also increase community cohesion and reduce reliance on cars for local journeys as well as improving visitor potential. Alongside the planning policies there are a number of specific Actions¹³ that would strengthen and complement planning policies. These include improving the public realm of the historic centre, which has had no investment for over 20 years, so now needs to be addressed. In addition, maintenance of the highway and pavements has been poor, and the large volume of through traffic, especially 44 tonne HGVs, is detracting from the ambience¹⁴.

To enable diversification and regeneration, there are opportunities with some of the town's car parks to consolidate and improve parking provision¹⁵, whilst also enabling complementary uses including recreational, cultural, youth and community facilities to be positioned in the centre of the historic town, thus attract more people into Chipping Ongar Town Centre itself. Multi-storey or underground parking could be a way of increasing provision, providing its high standards of design are appropriate to the Historic Town. EFDC Local Plan 2011-2033 has recognised the need to diversify the range of uses in town centres¹⁶

¹² See Arup Town Centres Review 2016 and EFDC Town Centres Study Roger Tym & Partners 2010 |

¹³ See accompanying Appendix -Actions and Projects

¹⁴ Supported by Residents Survey Q 5.2

¹⁵ Supported by Residents Survey Q 1.2.6

¹⁶ EFDC emerging Local Plan Policy E2 part D

Paragraph 85 of the NPPF deals with the vitality of town centres and state that policies and decisions should make a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation by allowing a responsive mix of uses reflecting their distinctive characters, supporting markets and looking to allocate sites over a period looking at least 10 years ahead.



Map 5.9 Small District Centre Boundary, Primary Shopping Area, and Primary and Secondary Frontages in Ongar

Epping Forest District Local Plan
 Submission Version
 December 2017

 Epping Forest District Council

Drawing No
 EPDC-CP-00101-Rev2

Date: December 2017

Scale: 1:5,000 @A4

Map 5.9
 Small District Centre Boundary,
 Primary Shopping Area,
 and Primary and Secondary
 Frontages in Ongar

Copyright © Epping Forest District Council 2017
 All Rights Reserved

The Local Plan should be read as a whole
 Proposals will be judged against all strategic
 policies.

Legend	
	Town / Small District Centre Boundary
	Primary Shopping Area
	Primary Frontage
	Secondary Frontage
	Green Belt Boundary
	Proposed Secondary Frontage

Policy ONG-RR2: Chipping Ongar High Street

Policy ONG-RR2: Chipping Ongar High Street

- 1. Within the defined Small District Centre Boundary, changes of use or reuse of vacant ground floor frontage units will be encouraged within the Class Use E where it involves uses that complement or enhance the vitality and viability of the High Street.**
- 2. Change of use from Class Use E to residential Class Use C3 will be resisted in ground floor frontage units.**
- 3. Use of upper floors will be supported, where such uses would complement and have no adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the High Street. Suitable uses include commercial, business and service, Class Use E and residential, Class Use C3.**
- 4. Redevelopment of surface car parks for uses that support the vitality of the High Street will be supported, providing equivalent or better parking provision is made either within the development or nearby.**

Interpretation of ONG-RR2

The policy creates a flexible approach to new uses in the High Street, recognising the importance of a mix of town centre functions, in addition to retail. Joint use of buildings such as the library, for a range of services will be supported. The policy seeks to prevent change of use from shop to residential on Frontage ground floors particularly within the historic medieval town enclosure, to ensure there are a critical number of town centre function premises to serve the community.

The policy enables development of car parks in the town centre, to make more efficient use of the land, potentially increasing parking and introducing other High Street uses. This is likely to require a partnership approach.

Policy ONG-ED2 also relates specifically to the historic High Street.

6.4 Rationale: New Housing Mix and Standards

The nature and location of the civil parish of Ongar attracts families to live and enjoy the small country town surrounded by protected countryside. The coronavirus pandemic of 2020 and change in working patterns has reinforced such rural small town appeal. Ongar has a stable cohesive community

The Housing Mix in the civil parish of Ongar reflects its existing balanced community. IN 2011 the census recorded approximately 70% 3 or more bedrooms, 20% 2 bedrooms and 10% 1 bedroomed. Furthermore, its residents want to continue to attract families to the proposed new developments as seen in the Resident’s Survey results¹⁷. The Office of National Statistics (ONS) 2011 population indicate that approximately a fifth of Ongar’s population is under 20 and a similar amount over 65¹⁸.

EFDC has a greater life expectancy at 65 than national and Essex averages (para 1.20 of EFDC Local Plan Submission Version 2011-2033). Predicted types of household for 2033 in EFDC show an increase in the proportion of households with dependent children, a reduction of couples and an increase in single households.

Figure 1.2 Projected household breakdown by type to 2033

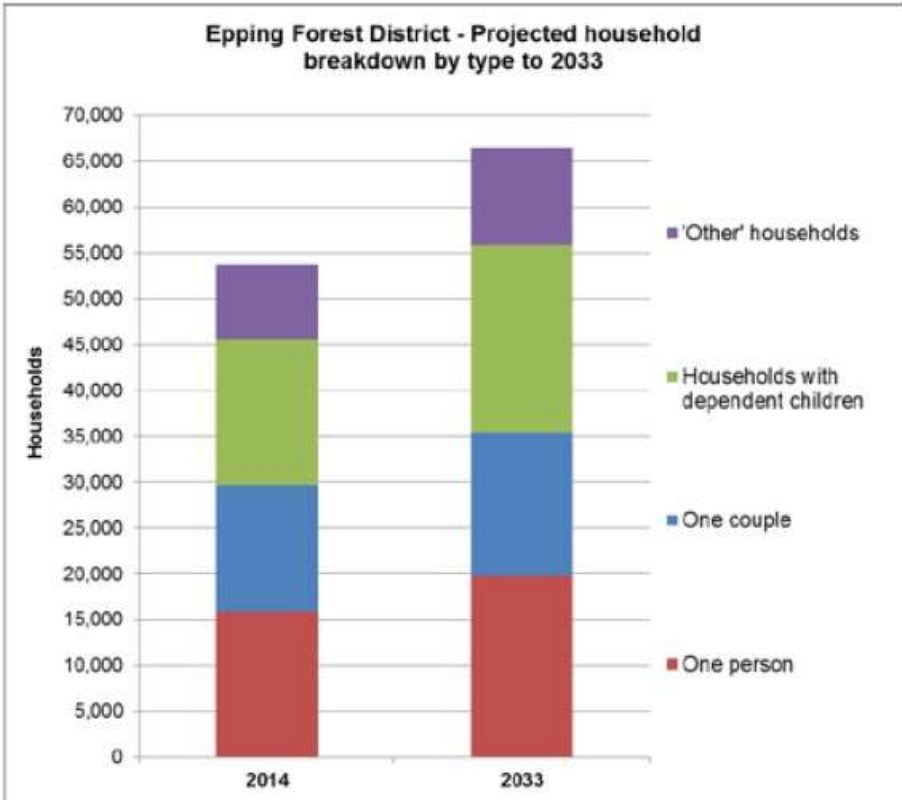


Fig 1.2 from EFDC Local Plan Submission Version 2011-2033

¹⁷ Residents Survey 2018 in evidence file

¹⁸ See evidence file for ONS statistics

Maintaining the present housing mix meets the predicted needs of the community and would retain its balance. Present housing mix in Ongar civil parish equates well with EFDC Local Plan 2011-2033 proposals in SHMA.



Table- Navigus State of the Parish with ONS data showing 46% Ongar homes have 3 bedrooms

The civil area of Ongar has been allocated approximately 590 new homes in EFDC Local Plan 2011-2033¹⁹. This is a large increase in the number of homes from 2,626 in 2011. Existing housing is predominantly semi-detached (44%) and 3-bed homes (46%).

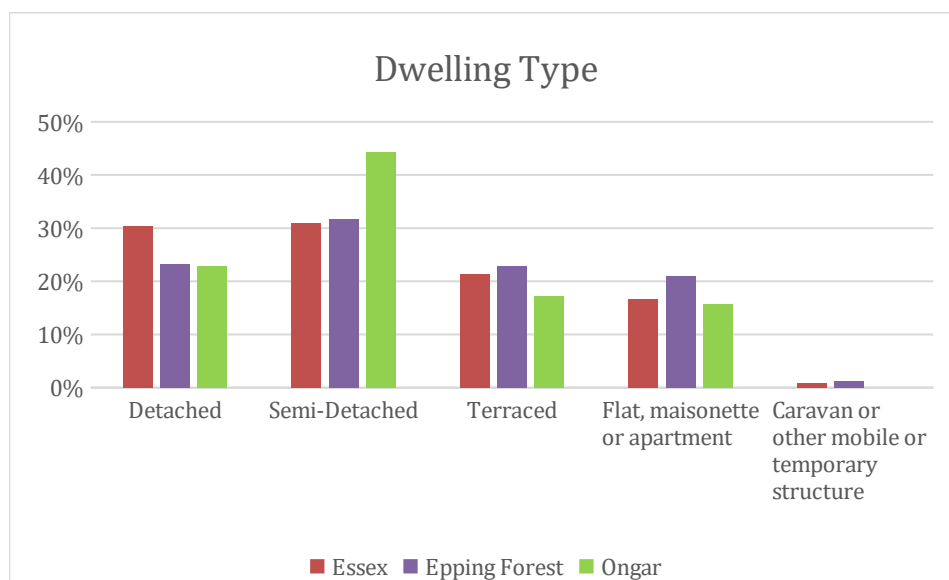


Table-Navigus State of the Parish²⁰ with ONS data showing 44% of Ongar homes are semi-detached

¹⁹ Approx. 590 are in EFDC Local Plan Submission version 2017. In addition, approx. 200 homes in small developments were built or had planning permission from 2011-2017

²⁰ Navigus State of the Parish see evidence file

Current projections from ONS are consistent with these calculations.²¹ Estate agents²² in Ongar confirm that demand is greatest for 3 bed semi and detached properties with parking and gardens. There is less demand for flats.

All the proposed Ongar sites in EFDC Local Plan, except ONG R3 and ONG6-8, are large enough to deliver the prescribed percentages of family homes in the 'Housing Mix and Accommodation Types' EFDC Local Plan Policy H1. Ongar Neighbourhood Plan Policy ONG-RR3 below also stipulates that with the exception of the small ONG R3, and ONG 6-8, these sites *must* each comply with this mix to provide sufficient family homes.

All Ongar civil parish sites in EFDC Local Plan ONG R 1-8 are expected to be completed between 2022 and 2026 and were in advanced pre planning stages and discussions with EFDC planning officers by the end of 2020. Thus, the SHMA housing mix figures 2015 (EB405) *must* apply. There is no evidence for this mix to change and no justification for the mix for Ongar to be different from the overall EFDC requirement.

The mix relates to approximately 70% family homes of 3+ bedrooms and less than 10% 1 bed flats. There is no further evidential indication that this mix should change. Already, the majority of the identified need²³ for 1 bed flats is already being supplied by conversions of the upper parts of Chipping Ongar High Street premises and brownfield infill sites in the town centre.

All sites ONG R1-8 are at edge of the rural settlements, well suited for family sized homes and downsizers, with good outside gardens and open space within the developments. Design and character are dealt with in section 7 but are intrinsically related to housing mix and space standards.

The fulfilment of the EFDC housing mix in Ongar by using brownfield sites and conversions close to the town centre for the majority of the smaller houses and flats and utilising greenfield sites at the edge of settlement for larger family homes will deliver the most efficient use of land in compliance with national guidelines. It must also be taken into consideration that all sites ONGR 1-8 are classed²⁴ as having a High or Very High Sensitivity to Change and High Performance relating to the Green Belt purposes. This will be covered in Section 7 in Design policies

The small rural historic town of Chipping Ongar has less community facilities than can be found in larger urban towns and cities. Despite having right of ways across surrounding countryside, Chipping Ongar has no town park. An existing deficit of semi natural open space and other recreational facilities was defined in 4 Global reports for EFDC. It is partly addressed for additional deficit due to

²¹<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/adhocs/009305populationestimatesforparishesinenglandandwalesmid2002tomid2017>

²² John Sear

²³ by Opinion Research Services (ORS) for EFDC in Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015 EB405 and updates EB406

²⁴ Land Character and Green Belt Review papers for EFDC for site selection

new developments in EFDC's Infrastructure Delivery Programme²⁵. Thus, space standards for new housing and private gardens needs to be generous, as should open space within a development.

Ongar Neighbourhood Plan includes requirement for internal housing space standards to be at least those in compliance with the National Standards²⁶ but expects developers to build more spacious living. Such small sizes range from only 61 sq.m for a 2 bed roomed 1 storey (3 person) accommodation to 84 sqm for a 3bed 2 storey (4 person) and 97 sq.m for 4 bed 2 storey homes (5 person). Clearly these standards are not appropriate or intended for a rural parish such as Ongar. Minimum Space standards must also to apply to outside private amenity space, in accordance with Essex Design Guide²⁷ and in addition to the space required for two or more vehicles for off street parking. (parking space standards are dealt with in CT3). Garden space in Essex Design Guide is a mere 100sq.m for a 3 bed roomed home. Once again this would be inappropriate for the rural parish of Ongar, which despite being set in countryside, most of this land inaccessible productive farmland. There is a deficit of open space withing the settlement envelopes, as confirmed in EFDC reports by 4Global²⁸.

Development must also "relate well to and enhance the existing character and context" (para 64 of National Design Guide 2019). Edge of settlement for Ongar is of openness, green verges and views to surrounding countryside. Character and Design are covered in Section 7 of Ongar Neighbourhood Plan, which include Place Shaping, layouts, materials etc.

With an aging population, Ongar residents wish to remain living independently or in sheltered accommodation, within the parish²⁹. In the last 10 years there has been an increase in sheltered accommodation in Ongar. However, there is still a need for older local residents to downsize without having cramped accommodation or too little outdoor space. DWELL (2016)³⁰ reports that downsizers require more flexible use of space in bungalows or single floor accommodation. Essex Design Guide includes DWELL reports within its guidance for design and layout of developments to include downsizers. Developers are expected to refer to this DWELL report³¹ and to use its guidance to meet the local demand when considering new developments for Ongar. This would ensure that requirements of elderly and disabled, is part of the mix.

²⁵ See evidence file

²⁶ ***'Technical housing standards – nationally prescribed space standards, March 2015'***

²⁷ See evidence file

²⁸ 4 Global open space report EB/////

²⁹ Residents survey 2018 see evidence file

³⁰ DWELL (Designing with downsizers University of Sheffield 2016 see evidence file

³¹ See evidence file

Policy ONG-RR3: New Housing Mix and Standards

Policy ONG-RR3: New Housing Mix and Standards

1. The mix of accommodation in newbuild residential development must reflect the latest evidence of local need and must include housing for a range of local needs including:
 - Larger properties (3-4 bedrooms) suitable for families;
 - Smaller accommodation (1-2 bedrooms) suitable for first time buyers or those seeking to downsize;
 - Housing suitable for the elderly or people of limited mobility.
2. To deliver the EFDC Housing Mix based on SHMA 2015, each of ONG R1/2, ONG- R4, and ONG R5 sites must provide a minimum of two thirds of the total as 3 and 4 or more bedroomed homes.
3. The internal space within each housing unit in Ongar civil parish should be greater than the national space standard *‘Technical housing standards – nationally prescribed space standards, March 2015’* or any new standard revoking and replacing this standard, whichever is the greater to reflect the character of the neighbourhood.
4. Homes allocated for downsizers must comply with the more generous space standards in DWELL as a minimum, to permit flexible use of space on one level
5. Outdoor space must be no less than minimum garden space in Essex Design Guide and other private amenity space, in addition to the communal open space within a development and car parking spaces. Homes at edge of settlement will be expected to have more generous sized gardens.
6. Any affordable housing requirement should be provided as an integral part of development and be tenure blind.
7. Community-led, self-build and high environmental performance housing are encouraged.

Interpretation of ONG-RR3

The policy emphasises the importance of new housing being in character with the rural parish and maintaining a balanced community. The housing mix, based on evidence, both in EFDC generally and Ongar civil parish in particular, includes the need to provide a range of properties to enable growing families to stay in the Civil Parish as their housing needs change over time, taking an active part of a cohesive community over a number of years.

The policy goes further in applying the housing mix policies in EFDC Local Plan to each designated site except the smaller ONG R3 and ONG R6-8. This is feasible, because sites R1-8 are being planned and delivered within the same short time span. To demonstrate compliance with the policy, developers should explain how the mix reflects evidence of need locally in the parish in respect of family homes and downsizers in particular. National Design Guide 2019 guidelines relating to local context and character must be applied when considering any National Standards. Windfall sites and brownfield development and conversions will be more suitable for smaller accommodation and flats enabling a balance to be reset elsewhere in the parish in favour of family homes.

Car parking Standards must comply with Essex Design Guide and Essex Parking Standards based on national standards, but more generous provision would be expected due to the lack of employment locally and reliance on cars. Car park spaces and more sustainable forms of transport availability is dealt with in ONG-CT3.

Tenure blind means that the affordable housing is indistinguishable from the market housing.

6.5 Rationale: Broadband

With the growth in home working, a fast and reliable internet connection will be vital. Most of Ongar is on existing plans for broadband development

NPPF at Paragraph 112 requires advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure for economic growth and social well-being. Planning applications should include full fibre connections to existing and new developments.

Policy ONG-RR4: Broadband

Policy ONG-RR4: Broadband

All new-build development must incorporate high-speed broadband connections within the site, so as to be ready as and when local services are upgraded.

Interpretation of ONG-RR4

The policy requires high-speed infrastructure to be provided within development sites, so as to be ready as local service provision is improved, including 4G, and 5G and any future upgrades.

Environment and Design

7.1 Purposes

The purposes of the policies in this section are:

- Ensuring a place-making approach to development, to ensure that it is sustainable, well-designed and creates a distinctive local identity.
- Protecting or enhancing the historic, natural and rural environments of the civil parish of Ongar.
- Protecting the existing unique character of the built form including overall layout and design, vernacular style, local materials, architectural details etc. as defined in Ongar Design Guide 2019 (AECOM)

The policies in this chapter and in conjunction with all the policies on Rural Regeneration and Community and Transport Infrastructure need to be read and applied collectively.

7.2 Rationale: Local Character

The character of the civil parish of Ongar is defined by its historic core of Chipping Ongar High Street. Of medieval origin, the town enclosure is situated on a ridge with glimpses to the surrounding open, sparsely populated countryside. Mostly unchanged, Chipping Ongar and its neighbouring settlements of Marden Ash and Shelley experienced some 20th century development which largely respected the rural nature of the parish with low rise homes, wide grass verges, many being tree lined and open views to the countryside.



Local character is determined by the overall layout and design, vernacular style and materials as well as architectural details used over the centuries. Protecting that unique character as a small historic town in an open rural setting is particularly important to the community. Any new development must apply the guidelines in Ongar Design Guide 2019³² together with the National Design Guide 2019 in its detailed planning. This is especially important because EFDC Local Plan includes an increase in housing stock for Ongar, by up to a third in a short space of time.

The Civil Parish of Ongar consists of the main settlement of the historic small town of Chipping Ongar and includes the adjacent villages of Shelley and Marden Ash, with Greensted and Greensted Green hamlets to the west. The Character of today's Civil Parish is rural in nature and defined by low rise, low density, with an openness, green verges and views of the surrounding countryside in all residential parts of the civil parish. The town centre of Chipping Ongar has a more enclosed built-up character³³, although still only 2 or 3 storey buildings, depending largely on their historic importance. It retains glimpses to open countryside emphasising its rural location. Chipping Ongar was an important market town as long ago as the Medieval era, at the centre of the Saxon Ongar Hundred, and has the remains of a Norman castle surrounded by countryside

These historic buildings are an essential part of the character of Ongar and were mentioned in the Conservation Area Appraisal in 1998.



The varied architectural styles in the civil parish of Ongar reflects its gradual development since Medieval times to the present day and includes Georgian and Queen Anne Mansions, thatched cottages, typical 18th century workers' cottages and more ornate artisan, timber framed and brick-built dwellings. The railway service to London opened in 1865 and brought a variety of public of Victorian buildings, including a police station (now demolished), and Budworth Hall.

³² AECOM Ongar Design Guide 2019 see evidence file

³³ EFDC Chipping Ongar Conservation Area leaflet 1998 see evidence file

Ongar Design Guide (AECOM 2019) sets out the positive aspects of character for different parts of the parish and gives clear guidelines for a general approach to layout and other built elements that apply to all character areas. It also sets out the design and detail that is typical of each part of the Civil Parish, including its two Conservation Areas and other Heritage Assets. All these factors contribute to the local unique character of the area and is valued by the local community.

This includes: Townscape structure; Green spaces; Public realm and streetscape; Pattern and layout of buildings; Building line and boundary treatments; Views and landmarks; Building heights and roofline; Building modifications, extension and plot infill; Architectural details; and Materials. The National Design Guide 2019 emphasises the need to relate local vernacular, including the type of layout according to rural and edge of settlement design. (Ongar falls into the “edge” and “town centre” designs p19) Essex Design Guide reiterates this.

The elements in the National Design Guide 2019³⁴ will be expected to be followed aswell, which quotes “Good design involves careful attention to other important components of places [in addition to buildings]. These includes:

- The context for places and buildings
- Hard and soft landscape
- Technical infrastructures, transport, utilities, services such as drainage; and
- Social infrastructure-social, commercial, leisure uses and activities.”

Those important components include: layout, form and scale, appearance, landscape, materials and detailing. Ongar Design Guide specifies the local context and particular characteristics and design requirements for each geographical area within the civil parish of Ongar and must be followed.

The local context of Ongar must be respected. “ When considering the layout, grain and scale of the buildings and spaces in different locations, traditional street patterns help create new developments that fit well into the surrounding context” National Design Guide p19 diagrams including ‘centre’ and ‘edge’ which apply to Ongar and should be used. In addition, the local context and good design should lead to the best use of land. Paragraphs 64,65, and 66 of National Design Guide state:

“64 Well-designed new development makes efficient use of land with an amount and mix of development and open space that optimises density. It also relates well to and enhances the existing character and context.

65 Built form is determined by good urban design principles that combine layout, form and scale in a way that responds positively to the context. The appropriate density will result from the context, accessibility, the proposed building types, form and character of the development.

66 Well-designed places also use the right mix of building types, forms and scale of buildings and public spaces to create a coherent form of development that people enjoy. They also adopt strategies for parking and amenity that support the overall quality of the place. “

³⁴ National Design Guide 2019 MHCLG see evidence file

During community engagement it was evident that local people feel ‘connected’ to the rural landscape. Over 90% of the Residents Survey respondents³⁵ agreed and thought that Ongar should maintain its rural setting, provide additional trees and green corridors and protect the natural environment. The latter is covered in Section 7.6 The Natural Environment to achieve these aspirations.

Good design, which complies with Government thinking, Frameworks, Guidance and Reports³⁶ will lead to “Neighbourhoods create places not just houses”. Living with Beauty 2020 recognises that change the model of development from ‘building units’ needs to change to ‘making places’. This will ensure that place shaping within developments will lead from good layouts in appropriate design, open spaces, private amenity space, natural surveillance, recreational areas etc. and neighbourhoods with street scenes not dominated by cars. This leads to efficient use of land.

In designing particular sites for development, it is expected that the place shaping principles will be the starting point. Considerations of the constraints of the site, the character of the location (e.g. open rural edge of settlement or town centre enclosed), housing mix requirements will determine the eventual numbers of homes and appropriate density. Although EFDC Local Plan does give approximate housing numbers for the Strategic Sites ONG R1-ONG R8, the result must be justified with appropriate good design suitable for the particular location. Rigidity on numbers is not acceptable because it would predetermine the design of the site and could lead to inappropriate development in the wrong place. Mistakes of the past must be avoided.

³⁵ Residents Survey 2018 *see* evidence file

³⁶Including NPPF, National Design Guide 2019, Planning for the Future 2020, Living with Beauty 2020 in the evidence file and <https://indd.adobe.com/view/23366ae1-8f97-455d-896a-1a9934689cd8> Housing Design Audit for England 2020

Policy ONG-ED1: Local Character

Policy ONG-ED1: Local Character

1. New-build development, including extensions, must complement the rural character of the Ongar Parish and the specific character of the immediate context, creating a locally distinctive sense of place. This includes:
 - Complementing the existing rural 'townscape' character in terms of height, scale, massing, and degree of set-back of building frontages from the road in accordance as to whether the development is in the town centre of Chipping Ongar or in the surrounding rural villages and hamlets of Shelley, Marden Ash and Greensted ;
 - Using high quality and durable materials, with a high standard of finish, with locally indigenous materials, in particular, being welcomed;
 - Retaining existing trees and hedges, as well as including new planting, including in the street scene, using indigenous local species;
 - Using hedges or low-level (1 metre or less) masonry walls constructed of local materials for front boundary treatments;
 - Using landscape buffers with open glimpses to the surrounding countryside, to create a soft transition for development on the edge of the rural area;
 - Incorporating views and glimpses to surrounding countryside in layout and form of development.
2. Innovative and creative design solutions designed for the specific site and context will be welcomed, especially where they incorporate superior environmental performance.

Interpretation of ONG-ED1

The policy aims to promote high quality buildings that complement the existing townscape characteristics of the area. The policy should be applied together with the other design and environment policies in this Chapter and the National Design Guide 2019³⁷ And Ongar Design Guide³⁸.

³⁷ National Design Guide 2019 See evidence file

³⁸ Ongar Design Guide (AECOM) 2019 See evidence file

The policy is not intended to suppress creativity or to require stylistic imitation. The design of new buildings should reflect the design trends and principles of their time, so that the rich diversity of local character continues and is extended into the future. Indeed, the new buildings most likely to be perceived as heritage in the future would be likely to be the more creative and innovative examples.

To allow for proper consideration of development proposals, new buildings and extensions should be shown on plans relative to existing buildings, including 3D visuals. The design and access statement and, where applicable, heritage statement provide opportunities to explain how the requirements of the policy have been complied with including from Ongar Design Guide and the National Design Guide.

7.3 Rationale: Design and Character in the High Street

The definition of streets and spaces, public and private realm, are very distinct in the central part of Chipping Ongar High Street with a clear sense of enclosure along a widened main street of a type found in many English market towns originating during the Saxon period. The character of the High Street derives from strong building lines, the gentle curvature of the street offering a series of attractive vistas, 'pinch point' buildings marking entry and exit points to the former town enclosure, views into the surrounding countryside and prominent public buildings which form local landmarks.

The form and layout of the historic core of Chipping Ongar has changed little since the medieval period. A weekly market started in the 12th century and the marketplace is still apparent at the widest part of the High Street between the Kings Head and Wren House.

Ongar Neighbourhood Plan aims to deliver enhancements to the character of the settlement through policies in this section, in conjunction with an understanding of the localised area. The Essex Design Guide³⁹ is a widely adopted approach and should be considered, bearing in mind there are design guides within it for a variety of types of community such as town centre, urban, suburban and rural edge of settlement locations.

Chipping Ongar High Street is also the centre of the Conservation Area. Chipping Ongar was one of the first Conservation Areas to be designated by Essex County Council in January 1969 and contains over 100 listed buildings and other structures. 94% of respondents to the Residents Survey⁴⁰ considered that the historic town centre adds character and 80% wanted a policy to protect listed buildings and their settings from inappropriate development. Ongar Design Guide 2019 complements Chipping Ongar Conservation Area Appraisal⁴¹. The latter gives details of the character and design that is typical of each part of the High Street. Ongar Design Guide covers all of the Civil Parish, including its conservation areas and other heritage assets. Ongar Design Guide provides additional guidance on architectural details, materials, boundary treatment, roofscapes etc. for any development and extensions on Listed buildings, and also all buildings within Conservation Areas of Ongar.

Even if a building is not itself listed as a Designated Heritage Asset, as defined in the NPPF, it may be within the 'Setting' of a Listed Building or group of Listed buildings. Particular attention will therefore need to be made to any change that requires planning approval or certificate, in order not to harm a Listed Building directly or to harm the Setting as well as to protect the provenance. Whilst it is important to ensure that listed buildings can provide a function suitable for today's needs, it is also important to retain the features for future generations. Thus, only sympathetic materials will be expected to be used in alterations and extensions. In addition, should partitions of rooms for example, be required to suit today's purposes, such building works must not harm features such as covings, architraves.

³⁹ The Essex Design Guide is an on line guide <https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk> [Home | Essex Design Guide](#)

⁴⁰ Residents Survey 2018 see evidence file

⁴¹ EFDC Chipping Ongar Conservation Area Appraisal 1998 by Maria Medlycott see evidence file

There is strong support in Ongar, as confirmed in the Residents Survey 2018, for enhancement of the historic High Street, including with changes to shop windows and upper parts fenestration or other detail to revert to the character of the original building. Shop signage should also reflect the High Street being a Conservation area with traditional fascias, signage and external lighting. Neon lighting and external metal roller shutters are out of character and will be refused permission. Ongar Design Guide 2019 (AECOM) should be used.

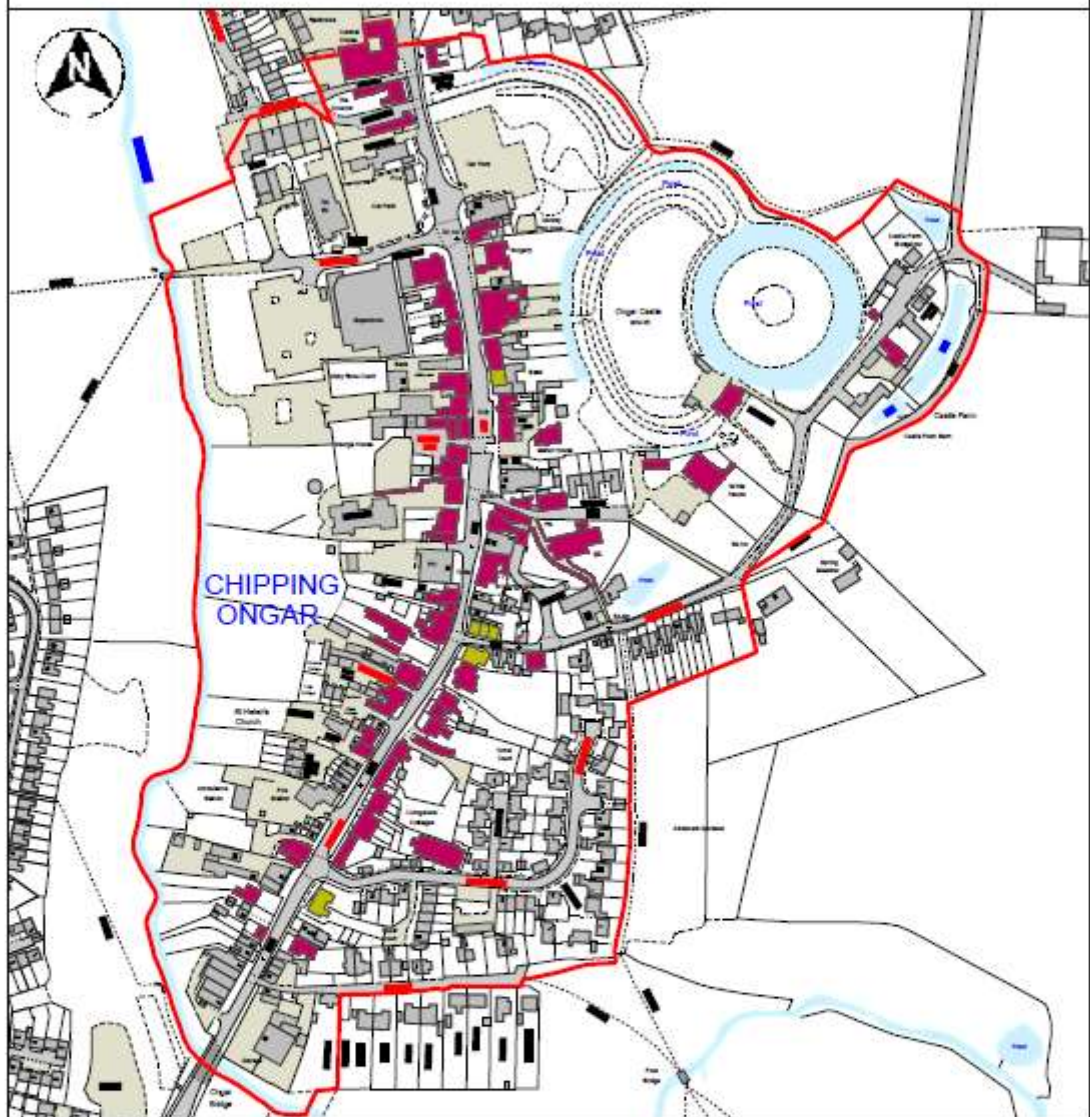
There is also detail within the Actions and Projects Appendix⁴² of ideas for Regeneration of the High Street, including appearance to reflect its historic heritage, as well as enabling a more diverse usage to re-establish the community hub and vibrant local economy, linking with tourism and the visitor economy.

In the early 1960s, some old buildings were replaced with modern buildings. Any future demolitions and redevelopment must respect the status of the High Street as a Conservation Area with mainly 17th and 18th century architecture. The mixed heights of roofs and number of storeys reflects the relative importance of the building. Narrow low rise buildings should not be able to have additional storeys where their relative importance in the High Street will then conflict with its new height. The trend for basement development must include stringent conditions to ensure that the integrity of the building and nearby buildings is not compromised, and that this is not being requested in any location subject to underground springs.

Any changes must also ensure that refuse bins can be hidden from the view in the public realm.

⁴² Actions and Projects is an Appendix to the Ongar Neighbourhood Plan

CHIPPING ONGAR CONSERVATION AREA



LEGEND

- Conservation Area Boundary
- Statutory Listed Buildings
- Locally Listed Buildings

Contains Ordnance Survey & Royal Mail Data
 © Crown Copyright & Database Right 2014
 EFDC Licence No: 100018534 2014
 © Royal Mail Copyright & Database Right 2014
 © Environment Agency, © Copyright
 Geo Perspectives, © Natural England 2014
 Reproduced with the permission of Natural England

Civic Offices
 High Street
 Epping, Essex,
 CM16 4BZ
 Tel: 01992 564000



Date: 15/04/2015

Scale: 1: 4925
 @ A4

Drawn By: EFDC
 Conservation Team

Policy ONG-ED2: Design and character in the Chipping Ongar Conservation Area

Policy ONG-ED2: Design and Character in the Chipping Ongar Conservation Area

1. In addition to meeting the requirements of Policy ONG-ED1, within the High Street of the Chipping Ongar Conservation Area, development must complement the following historic characteristics:
 - Frontages directly onto the rear of pavement, or set back behind shallow front courts;
 - The predominant 2-3 storey height of properties;
 - The architectural diversity of the area;
 - Uncluttered public realm with discrete positions for Refuse Bins out of public view,

2. The reinstatement of historic shopfronts will be supported. New shopfronts must complement the historic character of the building and area, including:
 - Using authentic traditional materials, including timber, render, glass, painted metal. Use of plastics and other synthetic materials would not normally preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.
 - Incorporating traditional features, including fascia, pilasters, raised windows above stall risers and recessed or flush doorways.
 - Incorporating space for signage within the fascia, so that signage does not obscure the features of the shopfront or building frontage.
 - Ensuring that any shutters or other security features are integrated into the design, behind the shop window.

3. Contemporary shopfronts will be considered where they demonstrate exceptional standards of design and utilise very high-quality materials, so as to add to the architectural interest of the building and area.

Interpretation of ONG-ED2

The Policy focuses on the specific character of the High Street and should be applied together with other design policies and Ongar Design Guide. As with Policy ONG-ED1, the aim of ONG-ED2 is not to suppress creativity or to require stylistic imitation. Indeed, this would be at

odds with understanding the character of the Conservation Area, with its architecturally diverse character.

To allow for proper consideration of development proposals, new buildings and extensions should be shown on plans relative to existing buildings, including 3D visuals. The design and access statement and, where applicable, heritage statement provide opportunities to explain how the requirements of the policy have been complied with including from Ongar Design Guide and the National Design Guide.

7.4 Rationale: Historic Buildings

The strong historic character is arguably the Ongar Civil Parish's most important asset. Historic character is mainly concentrated in the Chipping Ongar Conservation Area.

The types of historic asset to which this Section applies are 'Designated Historic Assets': i.e. national and locally Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Conservation Areas as described in the NPPF

The civil Parish of Ongar has a rich heritage. There are two Conservation Areas, an Ancient Monument, several Grade I and Grade II* buildings and over 100 Grade II Listed buildings. The railway is now a Heritage Railway.



An attractive row of traditional buildings in the High Street

Chipping Ongar includes the Ancient Monument of Ongar Motte and Bailey Castle and Medieval Town Enclosure. Most of the Listed buildings lie within Chipping Ongar Conservation Area centred round the Medieval town enclosure and High Street with the remainder in the outlying settlements of Greensted, Marden Ash and Shelley. The oldest wooden church in the world is St Andrews at Greensted and is part of the Church and Manorial Hall complex at Greensted with a Group Listing.

Great Stony Conservation Area conserves the architectural layout of previous school and residential buildings round a circular green. The major feature is the symmetry of adjacent buildings and care must be taken when considering extensions to individual homes and how this may unbalance the symmetry. An article 4 direction to prevent Permitted Development Rights is recommended of the local planning authority.



Greensted Church



The inner bailey (top right) and moat and motte (top left) of Ongar Castle are three of Ongar's hidden historic monuments.

Work in the Action Plan aims to open these up to more visitors.

A number of newer 20th century buildings, especially 1960s builds in the town, just prior to the conservation status, have had a detrimental effect on the quality and setting of Designated Heritage Assets and the Chipping Ongar Conservation Areas generally, as noted in the Chipping Ongar Conservation Area Appraisal 1998⁴³. Ongar Neighbourhood Plan policies aim to ensure that further infill development is in keeping with the character of the surroundings and does not detract from the Setting or function of Listed Buildings. This is supported by a number of national initiatives, Planning Policy frameworks and reports including:

- Paragraph 185 of the NPPF endeavours to sustain and enhance the historic environment to bring social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits and improvements to local character and distinctiveness.
- Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission Interim Report July 2019⁴⁴ – Section 9.3 Access to Nature, and BBB Report January 2020.
- National Design Guide, MHCLG, October 2019
- Planning practice guidance, MHCLG, 2016

Designated Heritage Assets are protected through the NPPF and in EFDC emerging Local Plan Policy DM7.

EFDC emerging Local Plan's Approach to Heritage Assets Paragraphs 4.58 to 4.64 supports the NPPF and requires in: -

4.59 that the "Council will take periodic reviews of its designated and non-designated heritage assets and introduce additional levels of protection, such as through the use of Article 4 Directions"" where justified."

4.60 "A heritage statement is required" to cover several aspects.

Extract from appraisal of CO Cos area 1998 e.g., map

Ongar Neighbourhood Plan policies go further by appreciating that the historic character of a place is the group of qualities derived from its past uses that make it distinctive. Thus, in considering any new developments, extensions or changes to exterior of buildings, it must ensure that heritage assets and their settings are protected or enhanced. This may include: visual aspects; architectural features, materials, and spaces associated with its history, including its original configuration and subsequent losses and changes.

'Setting' is separate from the concepts of curtilage, character and context and frequently misunderstood. The NPPF makes it clear that the extent of the setting of a heritage asset "is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve" In a townscape, 'setting' will include space in the vicinity of the heritage asset and its purpose. In the context of Chipping Ongar, careful consideration of 'setting' must be including in any proposal to change the space, such as developing within old coaching inns' stable yards or workshop areas. In the Great Stony Park Conservation Area, that includes extensions and conversions that destroy the symmetry.

Even if a building is not itself listed as a Designated Heritage Asset, as defined in the NPPF, it may be *within* the 'Setting' of a Listed Building or group of Listed buildings. Particular attention will therefore need to be made to any change that requires planning approval or certificate, in order not to harm a Listed Building directly or to harm the Setting, as well as to

⁴³ EFDC Chipping Ongar Conservation Area Appraisal 1998 see evidence file

⁴⁴ Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission Interim Report July 2019 see evidence file

protect the provenance. Whilst it is important to ensure that listed buildings can provide a function suitable for today's needs, it is also important to retain the features for future generations. Thus, only sympathetic materials will be expected to be used in alterations and extensions. In addition, should partitions of rooms for example, be required to suit today's purposes, such building works must not harm features such as covings or architraves. This can be achieved by ensuring partitions etc butt up to and go round such features, instead of cutting into them.

Policy ONG-ED3: Historic Buildings

Policy ONG-ED3: Historic Buildings

- 1. The reinstatement of historic buildings (listed buildings or buildings in conservation areas) to a more original state, based on evidence, will be supported, unless the previous alterations contribute to the special architectural or historic interest of the building or area.**
- 2. Extensions to listed buildings must be subservient in scale, height and positioning and avoid obliterating features which contribute to the special architectural or historic interest of the building or harming its Setting.**
- 3. Alterations to listed buildings, including sub-division, should be reversible and be designed and positioned to minimise impact on historic fabric.**
- 4. Development affecting the setting of listed buildings must preserve or enhance that setting, including complementing the existing townscape character, in accordance with Policies ONG-ED1 and ONG-ED2. Development will not be supported where it would compromise historic spaces within the setting of a listed building, including historic enclosed yard spaces.**
- 5. Development in conservation areas must preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area, including complementing the existing townscape character, in accordance with Policies ONG-ED1 and ONG-ED2.**
- 6. New buildings and extensions involving listed buildings and their Setting or Conservation Areas must demonstrate a high standard of detail and finish, including constructional detail and degree of recession of openings. Where plans contain insufficient detail to demonstrate a high standard of detail and finish, more detail must be requested and received before a decision is made.**

Interpretation of ONG-ED3

The policy adds some detail to national and Local Plan policies to guide the alteration and extension of historic buildings. It also guides the application of the special statutory duties for Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

In the case of extensions, use of light-weight construction with extensive use of glass can be a way of minimising the impact on historic fabric.

The requirement for alterations to be reversible means that new insertions should avoid cutting into historic fabric. For example, a new wall to sub-divide a room should be contoured to fit around moulding, rather than cutting through those mouldings.

7.5 Rationale: Sustainable Design

‘Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities’ NPPF 2019⁴⁵ The main objective of Ongar Design Guide 2019 (AECOM) is to ensure that any new development is designed and planned with regard to the existing character and ‘context’ of the Ongar Neighbourhood Plan area. It provides context to the design guidelines including strategic issues and details for each sub area within the civil parish.

As indicated in that Guide ⁴⁶, there should be an emphasis on place shaping principles, as also preferred in the EFDC emerging Local Plan.⁴⁷ The ‘Creating Space for Beauty’⁴⁸ and January 2020 ‘Living with Beauty’⁴⁹ recognises the link with well-being and good planning. Building for Life 12⁵⁰ has also informed this policy. Ongar Neighbourhood Plan focusses on imaginative design where the car does not dominate the street scene and there are adequate off-street car park spaces appropriate for the local community’s needs. Ongar has little local employment and poor commuter public transport, so its residents have and need a high car ownership.⁵¹

Ongar households rely on private transport for work. According to ONS statistics from 2011 census, only 14.2% of households have no car, compared to 25.8% for all of England. However, 49.2% have 2,3, 4 or more cars or vans. This is nearly 20% higher than the households in England generally which is 32.1%⁵². Over the past 20 years some developments have been atypical (see Ongar Design Guide for details) with narrow streets and short front gardens. These, and older homes before car ownership was widespread, have insufficient off-street car park spaces for Ongar residents’ needs. This has resulted in a street scene dominated by the car in parts of the civil parish. Imaginative urban design and layout for the 21st century is able to avoid these issues. Places for cars must therefore be realistically considered early in the sustainable design process, so as not to repeat mistakes of the past and mar future designs. Car park spaces must be included in layout designs. Ongar Neighbourhood Plan requirements and justification is dealt with in the Transport Section 8 and Policy CT3

Ongar needs mainly homes for families. This is supported by the local estate agents⁵³ knowledge of the market. Since the 2020 post lock down for Coronavirus, this demand has risen further with particular demand for 3 bed (spacious) family semi-detached and detached homes with gardens and off-street car park spaces. Using these principles above, and

⁴⁵ NPPF 2019 See evidence file

⁴⁶ Design Guide for Ongar AECOM 2019

⁴⁷ EFDC Local Plan 2011-33 on Design para 4.69

⁴⁸ BBBB Interim Report ‘Creating Space for Beauty’ July 2019 see evidence file

⁴⁹ BBBB Report ‘Living with Beauty’ Jan 2020 see evidence file

⁵⁰ Building for Life 12 see evidence file <http://www.builtforlifehomes.org/go/about>

⁵¹ State of the Parish Report Navigus (in evidence file) and ONS statistics.

⁵² Rural Community Profile for Ongar (civil parish) 2013 RCCE & ACRE see evidence file

⁵³ John Sear has had an estate agent business for over 40 years and knows the civil parish of Ongar well

understanding the local character and context will determine layout of housing sites. In the rural Ongar, the character and pattern are single and two storey homes in tree and grass verge lined looping streets, low boundary treatment, open green spaces with natural surveillance and views to the countryside beyond. A few 3 storey blocks of flats have also been built in the town centre or by shopping parades. Ongar attracts growing families for the rural location with good primary and secondary schools in the parish. The cost of housing in Ongar is lower than the urban parts of EFDC on the outskirts of London. There is opportunity to build beautifully designed homes with sufficient internal space for comfortable family living. There is no justification to provide homes with only minimum internal space standards, which would also lead to cramped housing estates out of character for our rural location like Ongar. Furthermore, generous internal living space and outside good sized gardens compensates for the lack of variety of public and community amenities as well as cultural and recreation facilities found in more urban settlements. Cramped living conditions are likely to lead to future deprivation and problem areas.

Applying the local Housing Mix⁵⁴ is important in order to retain a cohesive community. With good schools in the civil parish, but little local employment or commuter public transport, the home and local recreational amenities will determine how stable the community remains. Ongar has a very stable community with residents only moving away from the civil parish to live with family when too infirm to live on their own⁵⁵ Any change of housing mix will change the needs of the community. If it is changed to a lower proportion of family homes to a higher proportion of starter homes, this is likely to destabilise the community cohesion because growing families will need to move out of the area to find suitable family homes. Starter homes are generally needed more in places where there are good employment prospects and also a good night-time economy. Neither is available in Ongar and furthermore, the commuter and late night public transport is poor.

Density and eventual housing numbers for a particular site will follow after applying character, place shaping, layout and housing mix, leading to sustainable development with the right home in the right place. Attempts to start with an unrealistic number of homes on a site could lead to a cramped design, unable to supply the right housing mix for the parish. This is also contrary to national policies and guidelines.

The context and character of adjoining housing estates must influence final design and density. The average density for the civil parish of Ongar is around 24dph. With imaginative design and place making principles, that density could increase to the range of 30-50dph providing that perceived cramming does not occur and that the Housing Mix and generous space standards are still met. Within the 'town' centre of rural Chipping Ongar considerations not to harm the Settings of Designated and Locally Listed Heritage Assets will determine the design and the capacity of any conversion, extension or infill. See Section 7.3 Design and Character in the High Street and Policy ONG-ED2: Design and Character in the Chipping Ongar Conservation Area.

Good design will also ensure that new housing and outside space will respect neighbours' privacy and not lead to undue overlooking of private amenity space⁵⁶. This is important for wellbeing and a good quality of life. Parts of the civil parish of Ongar are already considered

⁵⁴ See SHMA Housing mix details and Rural Community Profile for Ongar RCCE 2013 and Navigus State of the Parish 2018

⁵⁵ Supported by Residents Survey and state of the Parish in the evidence files

⁵⁶ See various national standards for proximity of residential housing in the evidence file

to be deprived⁵⁷. It is therefore important that new housing, including infill and conversions does not replicate any issues in environment that have caused deprivation and, in some cases, anti-social behaviour. Sufficient internal and outside private space in housing is achievable as is accessible open space near new homes.

The Landscape Characterisation reports for EFDC indicate that Ongar has a high sensitivity to change and the functions of the Green Belt are also strong⁵⁸so this must be taken into account, to ensure any development is rural in character and does as little harm as possible including to the natural environment.

‘High Quality and Design’ must be used to complement and reflect the local character of Ongar Civil Parish. ‘all new development must achieve a high specification of design and contribute to the distinctive character and amenity of the local area’. Ongar Neighbourhood plan Policy ONG-ED3 does not repeat but reflects such key points in

- EFDC Policy DM 9 Policy DM9 *High Quality Design* - Section D. which relates design standards to contextual character.
- EFDC Policy DM3 Landscape Character, Ancient Landscapes and Geodiversity A. (ii) 4th point ‘having regard to protecting, and where possible, enhancing long views to distant landmarks and landscapes of interest

Where higher density than the existing prevailing density is proposed, good design is particularly important, as are the requirements for appropriate levels of privacy and space. The Ongar Neighbourhood Plan Policies in this chapter are supported at a national level by the NPPF 2019.

- Paragraph 124 seeks the creation of well-designed places as a key aspect of sustainable development, by being clear about design expectations, grounded in an area’s defining characteristics, particularly through Neighbourhood plans.
- Paragraph 9 supports the economic, social and environmental objectives that guide development towards sustainable solutions, taking local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.
- Paragraph 16 reinforces that plans should be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development.
- Paragraph 92 ensures that social, recreational and cultural facilities and services are provided that the community needs

In May 2019, the UK Government declared a Climate Emergency. Epping Forest District Council did so too in September 2019 thus putting an additional emphasis on sustainable design to mitigate against Climate Change effects such as flooding and higher summer temperatures with the need for shade from trees to be incorporated into Design.⁵⁹ This is supported in Ongar Neighbourhood Plan in the Natural Environment Policy ED5

⁵⁷ ONS statistics; EFDC review of Shelley; Well-being Survey 2020 EFDC

⁵⁸EFDC Land Characterisation and EFDC Green Belt Review See evidence file

Policy ONG-ED4: Sustainable Design

Policy ONG-ED4: Sustainable Design

1. **New-build development must be well-designed and sustainable. This includes:**
 - **Incorporating active frontages (doors and windows) to street frontages and spaces, so as to provide natural surveillance to the public realm;**
 - **Providing a clear separation between public and private space in the layout of development, avoiding the need for high enclosures which would create blank frontages to the road;**
 - **Incorporating sufficient spacing around properties to allow for building maintenance and to ensure privacy and overlooking;**
 - **Ensuring all hard surfaces are permeable, to allow surface water penetration;**
 - **Ensuring discrete provision is included for bin stores, which must be screened.**
 - **Ensuring car park spaces and electric charging points are included early in the design stage, in accordance with Transport Policies ONG-CT3**

2. **For development involving new layout (roads and footpaths), the following is also required:**
 - **Incorporating a high-quality public realm which is not dominated by cars and which provides an attractive, safe and convenient environment for pedestrians, social interaction and play;**
 - **Ensuring landscape design is a positive and integral part of the layout, including tree planting;**
 - **Incorporating sustainable urban drainage into the landscape design of new housing, including ponds, and taking opportunities to enhance wildlife and biodiversity.**

3. **Particular support will be given to development that Incorporates features to reduce environmental impact, such as water collection, use of local or recycled materials or high-performance buildings.**

4. **Development must not take place in flood risk areas, unless specifically designed with measures to mitigate the risk or impact of flooding.**

Interpretation of ONG-ED4

This policy should be applied together with the other design policies in this Neighbourhood Plan. The policy places a real emphasis on the pedestrian experience. Car parking space requirements are in the Transport section 8.4

The design and access statement provides opportunities to explain how the requirements of the policy have been complied.

7.6 Rationale: Natural Environment

The landscape within Ongar neighbourhood Plan has scattered settlements within an agricultural landscape which has evolved from the Bronze Age (2300-700BC). The landscape and natural environment⁶⁰ within the civil parish and Ongar's has high sensitivity to change, as detailed in several external Reports for EFDC Local Plan. As previously stated, the small town of Chipping Ongar built up round the medieval motte and bailey Castle on a ridge of land between the two river valleys of the Roding and the Cripsey, with their confluence between Chipping Ongar and Marden Ash. Sections of these water courses lie within a flood plain. The River Roding then flows to the River Thames at Barking Creek. These water courses are included in the Roding, Beam & Ingrebourne Catchment Plan⁶¹ to prevent flooding of the Capital. The underlying geological material is London Clay. This is overlain with some deposits of a mix of gravels, sand, silt and clays. Seepage lines or springs occur on sloping hillsides. The most fertile soils are ideally suited for cereal production, but waterlogging can be an issue on the heavier clays.

The change in farming methods since 1945 has led to a reduction in farmland biodiversity and 75% of the ancient hedgerows on the land to the east of Chipping Ongar have been lost. Dutch Elm disease and Ash die back have resulted in fragmented and gappy hedgerows. Many of the remaining ancient hedges are species rich and thus have high biodiversity potential.



Many footpaths pass through our rich green corridors

Together, Ongar's patches of woodland, small copses, and water courses with their respective flood plains are ideal Green Corridors within Ongar civil parish as detailed in section 8.2 and Actions and Projects Appendix⁶². However, at only 6%, the woodland cover, Ongar is below the average for England of 10%. There is a rich range of native tree species in Ongar⁶³. These offer significant support for indigenous invertebrates (including insects),

which in turn feed other animals. A programme of tree planting has been proposed nationally, which will help reduce pollution levels, increase biodiversity, mitigate against flooding and provide shade from warmer summers. Well vegetated urban areas are more attractive places. The presence of trees shrubs and hedges and other vegetation brings considerable benefits including shading, cooling on hot days, flood mitigation, an increase in biodiversity, as well as various health benefits for local residents.

⁶⁰ See EFDC Local Plan Evidence files
⁶¹ Roding, Beam & Ingrebourne Catchment Plan
⁶² see also section 8.2 and Actions document
⁶³ Ongar Tree Strategy see Evidence file

Ongar is fortunate in having several protected species, both European Protected Species⁶⁴ including all bats and Great Crested Newts, and UK protected species⁶⁵ such as Slow Worm, Grass Snake, Common Lizard and Badgers and other locally recorded amphibians. *Ongar's woods and hedges provide habitats for songbirds protected under the 1981 Act.* Mammals, including Fox, Hare, Rabbit, Mole and Fallow Deer are regularly noted within the countryside, but sightings of Hedgehogs are much reduced.



The rich range of wildlife around Ongar needs clean, green, natural spaces to thrive.

Ongar's rich biodiversity is vulnerable to climate change and also to development. However, since the UK Government and Epping Forest District Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, Ongar Town Council also set up a Working Party on Climate Change in 2020. Thus, key environmental policies in the EFDC emerging Local Plan 2011-2033⁶⁶ and this plan policies are important to support this endeavour. Long-established networks of footpaths and bridleways offer access to our attractive countryside, with 90% of the residents either agreeing or strongly agreeing that access is good⁶⁷ ⁶⁸. Furthermore, 93% thought providing Green Corridors for wildlife and maintaining the natural habitat could lessen the impact of development on the environment. 79% considered wildlife corridors in new development could maintain the rural setting and protect the natural environment and its biodiversity. NPPF Paragraph 174 aims to protect and enhance habitats and biodiversity by identifying ecological networks.

Air quality is important in the conservation of the natural environment. Having sufficient trees is one of the ways helping to address poor air quality.

Trees and hedges help to filter out damaging chemicals from the traffic fumes.⁶⁹ Such planting with appropriate species alongside busy roads can reduce pollution levels and is to be encouraged in Ongar Civil Parish.

Whilst acknowledging that all development on greenfield sites will have an adverse effect on the green environment, development plans for Ongar must indicate what measures will be taken to protect or rehome existing wildlife and their habitats, increase biodiversity and ensure future stewardship. Planting of street trees, hedges and grass verges will be expected to help mitigate against climate change and poor air quality.

⁶⁴ Habitats Directive/Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

⁶⁵ Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

⁶⁶ EFDC Local Plan policies on: Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure; Protected Species, Priority Species and Priority Habitats; Tree Protection; Protection, Enhancement, Management and Monitoring of Biodiversity; Landscape Character and Features; and Green Buffers.

⁶⁷ OS Map of area

⁶⁸ Residents Survey 2018 see evidence file

⁶⁹ See details on particle filtration in Beckett K P, Freer-Smith P and Taylor G (2000) Journal of Arboriculture 26 (1), 12-19.

Policy ONG-ED5: Environment

Policy ONG-ED5: Environment

1. **Development must enhance or have no unacceptable adverse impact on the rural and natural environment of Ongar and on local water courses, ponds, wildlife habitats, biodiversity and eco-systems. This includes:**
 - **Retention of ancient woodlands, hedgerows and veteran trees**
 - **Maintaining the open and rural setting of Chipping Ongar and other rural settlements and avoiding coalescence;**
 - **Ensuring that any external lighting avoids illumination of wildlife habitats;**
 - **Avoiding interruption of underground springs, including through the insertion of basements to existing buildings.**

2. **To meet the requirements of this policy, any adverse environmental impact of development should be offset by incorporating positive environmental features, such as:**
 - **High quality landscape design, in particular the use of trees and planting to address air quality and create gains in biodiversity;**
 - **Replacing felled trees with suitable additional trees and shrubs**
 - **High performance buildings with low energy-use requirements;**
 - **Use of green features, such as green or brown walls or roofs;**
 - **Features to support biodiversity, wildlife and ecology.**

Interpretation of ONG-ED5

New planting of trees and hedges, using indigenous local species will be encouraged. See also Policy ONG-ED1 Local Character

Features to support wildlife and ecology could include bird boxes, bat boxes, swift bricks and hedgehog gaps in fences. Providing Green Corridors for wildlife to link with open countryside is to be encouraged in developments.

Local species are listed within the Rationale of this Policy

7.7 Rationale: Landscape Buffers

Most strategic sites in EFDC Local Plan for Ongar are immediately adjacent to existing edge of settlement homes. Many of these have very short gardens, but a compensating open view to the countryside beyond, which until now was in the Metropolitan Green Belt and thus protected against building. New development adjacent to these existing properties must respect their residential amenity and lessen the effect of loss of openness and views.

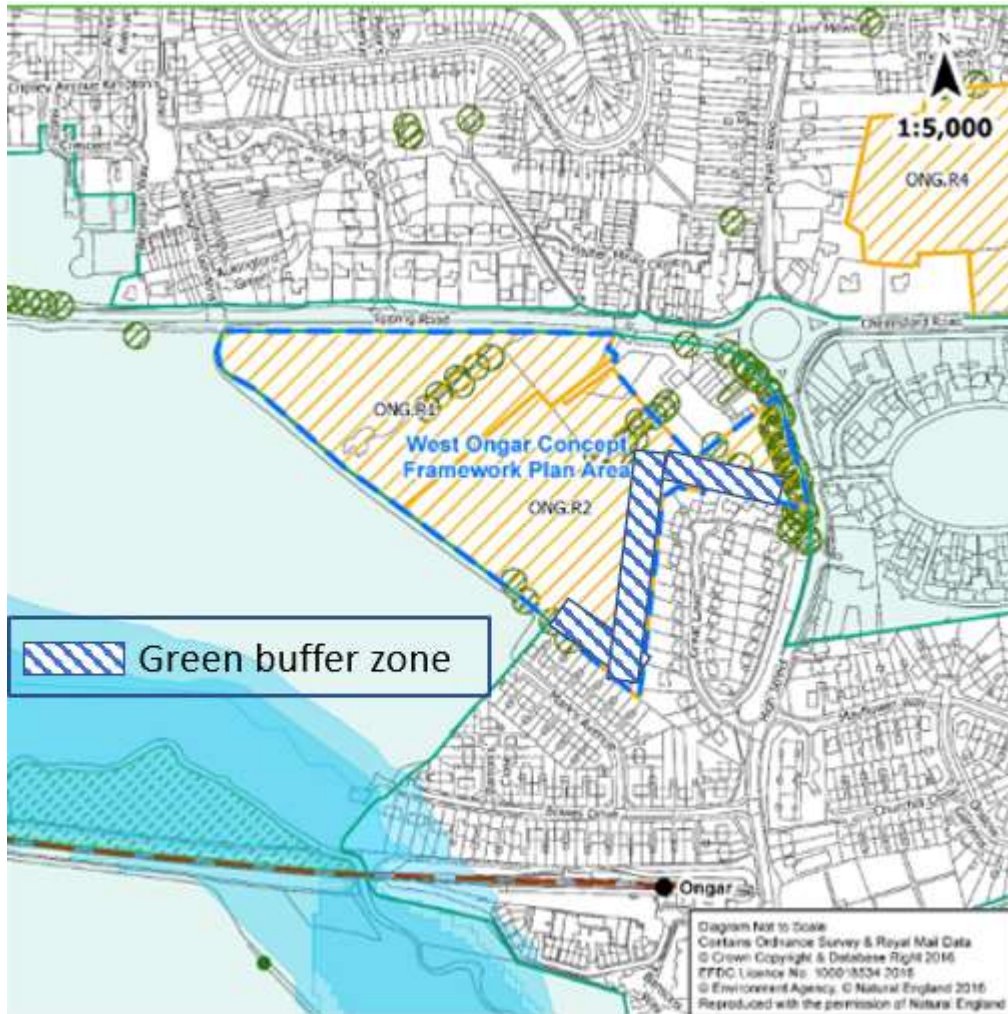
New homes overlooking these properties and gardens should be avoided within the layout and design of any new greenfield site. Some of the open space requirement within an allocated site could be situated close to existing boundaries and a mixture of trees and hedge planted. Early public consultation with affected household groups will be expected, as well as with the Statutory Consultees⁷⁰ of Ongar Town Council and its Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group ONPCG, prior to formal detailed planning application, in order to achieve the best possible solution.

West Ongar Concept Framework Plan has specific requirements. ONG.R2, is one of two sites in the west Ongar Concept Framework, allocated as part of EFDC Local Plan 2011-2033. The open space requirement for this site should include a landscape buffer to properties that were formally flanked by green belt land. Most properties in Great Lawn in particular, have very shallow rear gardens. The landscape buffer must be able to adequately protect residential amenity including light, privacy, and overlooking. It should also provide a wildlife corridor and a positive resource in terms of wildlife and biodiversity, to help offset the impacts of the development. A wildlife corridor also recognises the rural character of the area and could provide a break in the built-up area.

Access to the new site via a footpath (PROW) on the south side near Bowes Drive would act as a short cut to the High Street. A similar footpath at the north of the joint site ONGR 1/2 onto the A414 would enable a short cut to the primary school and a footpath alongside the Cripsey Brook. [The latter is under discussion for improvement by EFDC and is included in Ongar Neighbourhood Plan appendix Actions and Projects to link green corridors and footpaths round most of the civil parish.]

The approach road into the new estate from Chipping Ongar High Street along the strip, should include landscaped with trees and shrubs or hedging at the sides and adjacent to existing homes of Great Lawn. By being more vegetated and rural in nature, it would also provide a more inviting approach than usual housing estates, whilst respecting the rural character of the neighbourhood.

⁷⁰ This is a requirement in EFDC Local Plan para 2.102 for sites delivering 50 or more homes



Plan of West Ongar Concept Framework showing ONG.R2 with landscape buffer area shown (Plan 7.7 buffer area)

Policy ONG-ED6: Landscape Buffers

Policy ONG-ED6: Landscape Buffers

- 1. A landscape buffer must be provided where any new development that flanks existing homes.**
- 2. West Ongar Concept Framework Plan has specific requirements to the south and west boundary of Site R2, (allocated in EFDC submission Local Plan 2011-2033). This is indicated on the above plan 'Plan 7.7 buffer area'.**

Interpretation of ONG-ED6

The policy highlights the importance of landscape design as an integral part of site planning. To fulfil the requirement to create a buffer, the planning should include taller species, in addition to smaller planting and ground cover. Although the policy does not specify the depth of the buffer, it is envisaged that it would be around 15 metres in depth, to provide an effective buffer. This would enable effective implementation of EFDC Local Plan Submission Version 2017 DM9 High Quality Design Section, Privacy and Amenity H(ii)&(iii).

Community and Transport Infrastructure

8.1 Purpose

The purposes of the policies in this section are:

- Creating more sustainable live/work patterns.
- Maintaining or enhancing a range of local community facilities.

The policies in this Chapter seek to ensure that development is supported by both community and transport infrastructure. They need to be read in conjunction with the Rural Regeneration and Environment and Design policies.

8.2 Rationale: Local Green Space

The value of Greenspace for communities is well recognised, and EFDC Green Infrastructure (consultation version June 2020) sets out a variety of opportunities for the District and local communities to bring forward and implement.

In Ongar Neighbourhood Plan's accompanying Projects and Actions, there are proposals to act on this EFDC Strategy by linking up existing and new open spaces in and around Chipping Ongar to provide an area of green corridors, footpaths & cycleways, informal recreation and parkland, as well as a river walk with wetland possibilities, and additional tree planting. Such recreation areas could also connect to North Weald and Epping via the Epping Ongar (Heritage) Railway and the Essex Way. Thus, not only would these proposed Projects serve Ongar's community, but also attract visitors, including away from Epping Forest, and boost the local economy. The Ancient Monument of Ongar Castle with its medieval town enclosure is still visible in the historic town centre of Chipping Ongar, so that other Projects such as regenerating Chipping Ongar town centre, will add to the Visitor potential.

Protecting existing open greenspace in the Parish is an important step in establishing good connectivity and access for future generations.

Paragraph 99 of the NPPF deals with the designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

Paragraph 100 states that Local Green Space designation should "only be used where the green space is:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and

c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.”⁷¹

Analysis of the spaces designated as Local Green Space under this policy is contained in ‘Ongar Local Green Space Assessment and Proposals 2020’.⁷²

EFDC Open Space Strategy Final Report Nov 2017 (EB703), concluded for the town of Chipping Ongar, an overall additional Open Space requirement for the period of the EFDC Local Plan 2011-2033. This is broken down as:

- Amenity Greenspace deficit 1.8ha
- Public Parks & Gardens 6.4 ha
- Facilities for children and Young People (LAPS, LEAPS AND NEAPS)⁷³ of 1.9ha
- Natural and seminatural Greenspace 3.81ha
- Allotments 0.13ha

Some informal existing open space will be lost to new development, so this Policy identifies green spaces already used and valued by the community, that need protecting as valued amenity Local Green Space. These are as follows with more detail included in Ongar Local Green Space Assessment and Proposals 2020 in the evidence file: -

LGS1. Land adjacent to Ongar Castle (Castle Farm field and public footpath)

This level grassy site covering 1.94 hectares links the Pleasance Gardens adjacent to Ongar High Street with the 6.78 hectares of the Love Lane Jubilee Park. This is in the centre of the community within a short walk for residents and popular with walkers and dog walkers. The large field (cut annually for hay) with mature trees along its boundaries is in the tranquil setting of the Ancient Monument, with far reaching views to the east over the Roding river valley. A well-used footpath runs adjacent to the moat of Ongar Castle and leads the visitors towards the expansive views across the valley of the River Roding to High Ongar and southeast to the Brentwood Telecommunications Mast. A fine old horse chestnut tree near the Scout Hut is one of the 50 Favourite Trees of the District.



⁷¹ NPPF paragraph 100. Ministry of Housing and Local Government. Revised NPPF February 2019 Government Publications.

⁷² See Evidence file

⁷³ Local Areas for Play (LAP), Locally Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPS), Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPS)

LGS2. Jubilee Nature Reserve, otherwise known as Cripsey Brook Nature Reserve.

Lying to the south West of Chipping Ongar with boundary of the Cripsey Brook and easily accessible for the community, there is increasing establishment of habitats for a number of different birds, small mammals and other river wildlife as identified in local, district and countywide records. Some are protected or declining species. Ongar Cripsey Brook Jubilee Nature Reserve (SO5) was designated as a Local Nature Reserve in 2007. Protected as a Fields in Trust site since 2015, its 0.82 hectares lies within the flood plain of the Cripsey Brook. A row of tall poplars line the footpath linking Rodney Road with the High Street and the small flowery meadow alongside the Brook allows free access for walkers to spot various insects and possibly catch the occasional glimpse of a passing kingfisher. Badgers trundle through here after dark and bats swoop between the willows in search of food.



LGS3. Land East of Cripsey between Banson's Lane and Victoria Rd.

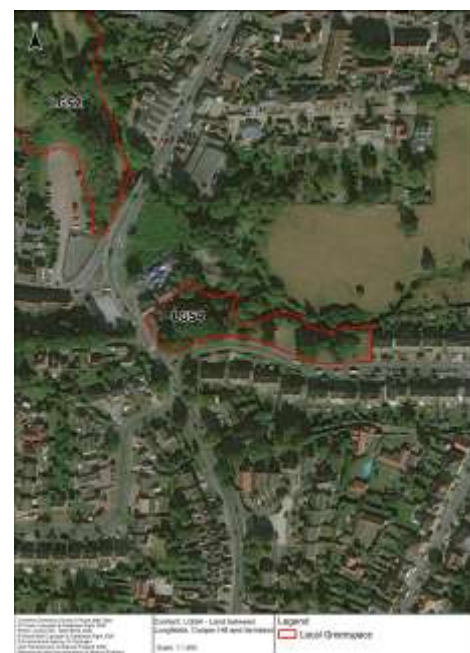
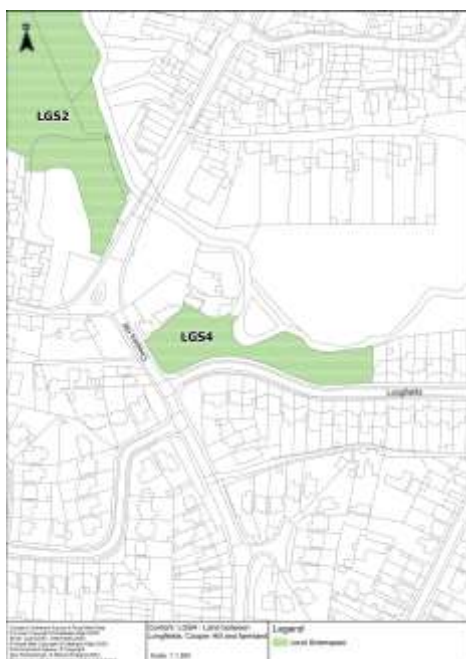
This scrubland between the Cripsey and Chipping Ongar High Street was a well-used network of footpaths, but recently partly cut-off by new development off Chipping Ongar High Street. It offers a natural Buffer to the open countryside and is tranquil. Originally called Long Meadow in the Chipping Ongar Tithe Award of 1838, this green open space is just over 0.8 Hectares of former meadowland. Today this area is covered with developing Hawthorn scrub with rank grasses, nettles and large amounts of Hemlock. Willows grow alongside the Brook. Some management would be required to prepare a useable footpath/shared cycle route to bypass a section of the High Road and link to become part of a green corridor round Chipping Ongar and the west of Shelley⁷⁴

⁷⁴ See Actions and Project Appendix



LGS4. Land between Longfields, Coopers Hill and farmland. Longfields

This site covers 0.39 Hectares and has been planted up with a mixture of deciduous trees set in grass planted up with a variety of spring bulbs. It is overlooked by the houses to east, south and west. Its northern boundary is the well vegetated corridor of the Cripsey Brook beyond which there is farmland. A welcome area near the main road filled with spring bulbs and trees, but big enough to confirm Chipping Ongar’s open character is of a rural, not urban nature. It provides a gap in the residential street with views over pastures either side of the Cripsey and footpaths over the fields.



Policy ONG-CT1: Local Green Space

Policy ONG-CT1: Local Green Space

1. The following spaces are designated as Local Green Space:

LGS1 Land adjacent to Ongar Castle
LGS2 Jubilee Nature Reserve otherwise known as Cripsey Brook Nature Reserve
LGS3 land East of Cripsey between Basons Lane and Victoria Rd
LGS4 Land between Longfields, Coopers Hill and farmland

2. New development must not encroach onto Local Green Space or have any adverse impact on the open character amenity, accessibility or special community value of the space.

Interpretation of ONG-CT1

The policy designated Local Green Space and sets out how impacts of development should be considered. This includes impacts of development near to or adjacent to the space.

National policy makes clear that Local Green Space has similar protection to Green Belts (para 101). However, it should be noted that the purpose of Local Green Space is about recognising and protecting special community value, rather than the five purposes for Green Belt.

8.3 Rationale: Community, Cultural, Leisure and Sports Facilities

Community, leisure, and cultural facilities are important for the social and economic welfare of Ongar Civil Parish community and also serve its surrounding rural settlements. Ongar is a lively active community supported by sports, cultural and social clubs for a variety of different interests and age groups. Facilities and amenities include Ongar Leisure centre, Zinc Arts Centre, Budworth Hall, several Church Halls and Ongar Public library. These are mainly located in the proximity of Chipping Ongar town centre. Nearby is Ongar Sports Community Club at Jubilee Park and the various Open Spaces are located throughout the Civil Parish and at ‘edge of settlement’.

Ongar’s thriving sporting community has been “a major part of Ongar life going back to the 19th century”⁷⁵. Today there are facilities for football, rugby, netball, badminton, tennis,

⁷⁵ Ongar Sports Club states in its 2019 Plans and Aspirations for the future “Sport has been a major part of Ongar life going back to the 19th century. Ongar cricket club was formed in 1845 and is one of the oldest clubs in the county. Ongar Football Club was one of the founding clubs of the Essex Olympian League over 120 years ago. Ongar Tennis Club was formed in the 1950’s. So, sport has a long tradition in the town.”



cricket, squash, petanque and croquet, although it lost its facilities for its hockey and bowls clubs some time ago. Although requiring refurbishment, the Leisure Centre, with 4 indoor courts, and fitness and gym facilities and a swimming pool is well-supported⁷⁶. Land was originally bequeathed, and the facility provided for the community in the late 1960s. The pool also enables the local primary schools to comply with the National Curriculum and is also valued by under 18s and older residents, many of whom do not have a car⁷⁷.

It is important for continued community well-being that sufficient new or enhanced sports and leisure facilities are provided in the civil parish at the same time as new housing. In addition, open space and playing areas for youngsters need to be provided with developments over 10 dwellings⁷⁸ such as Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) but provision for larger Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) and areas for older youngsters and adults, could be more central to support the regeneration of community hub in the town centre. Provision of LEAPs and NEAPs is covered in EFDC Local Plan policies and arrangements for developer contribution. Open Spaces are dealt with more fully in section 8.5 Infrastructure Priorities for Ongar and section 7.5 Natural Environment and 8.2 Local Greenspace.



⁷⁶ Resident survey 6.3.1 and 6.3.2 suggest many would not travel if Ongar leisure centre closed and relocated outside the parish. On average in 2016-2017 there were around 22,000 visits a month

⁷⁷ see Residents Survey 2018 and Youth Survey in evidence files and ONS statistics-14.2% households in 2011 had no access to a car

⁷⁸ Fields In Trust guidelines

An audit of existing sports related provision was carried out by 4Global for EFDC in 2016 and is included in their reports.⁷⁹ An update was carried out by ONPCG in 2018/9⁸⁰, which reflects recent loss of outdoor courts and pitches at Ongar Leisure centre and that the Jubilee Park sports provision is no longer run by Ongar Town Council but a Trust.

Conclusions of 4 Global were that further playing pitches would be required⁸¹ (football and rugby) within the 2011-2033 period including all-weather pitches and, that the provision of built facilities⁸² (health and fitness) in Ongar needed to be 'protected' [paragraph 9.4.2] and 'enhanced' [paragraph 9.4.3]. Provision of a future Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) court would provide facilities for important local sports such as netball which are currently unable to train or host competitions due to inadequate facilities. Netball court provision is not assessed in 4 Global Plying Pitch Strategy.

Some local community halls provide facilities for a limited number of fitness and sports and are also limited by the number of people that can be accommodated at a single meeting. Any loss of such facilities would be detrimental to the community cohesiveness.⁸³

NPPF paragraph 92 and paragraph 96 ensure that planning policies plan positively for the provision of the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services that the community needs, based on assessments of the need and opportunities for new provision.

Epping Forest District Local Plan 1998 and Alterations 2006 (published 2008) – Policy WLP8.23 protects Open Space, community sport and recreation facilities from development.

Emerging EFDC Local Plan Policy D 4 Community, Leisure and Cultural Facilities offers similar protection to facilities valued by the community. Epping Forest District Council compiled the Open Space, Sports Facility and Playing Pitch Strategy in 2012 (EB700) and commissioned 4 Global to update this in 2017. Citing the Essex Sports Facilities Strategy 2007-2020', EB713 recommends (among other things) investment to maintain current levels of provision of facilities and goes further with enhancement recommendations as previously stated. EB1101B Infrastructure Delivery Schedule 2017 supports some general recommendations with some potential funding to come from s106 contributions.

It is Ongar Neighbourhood Plan's aim that any new community facilities should be centrally located within Ongar Civil Parish and easily accessed from the Chipping Ongar town centre, (except for smaller children's playing areas – Local Areas for Play (LAP) and Locally Equipped Areas for Play (LEAP) which would be located within or in close proximity of development sites). This will ensure that there is an effective community hub, especially as the retail element of the town centre has declined.

The responses in the Residents Survey⁸⁴ reveal that over 70% consider additional outdoor and indoor sports pitches and fitness facilities are needed.

⁷⁹ EB703 EFDC Open Space strategy 2017 (4Global); EB 714 EFDC Playing Pitch Strategy 2018 v. 7.0 (4 Global); EB 713 EFDC Built Facility Strategy 2018 v.7.0 (4 Global) see evidence file

⁸⁰ See evidence files for more information

⁸¹ EB 714 EFDC Playing Pitch Strategy 2018 v. 7.0 (4 Global) see evidence file

⁸² EB 713 EFDC Built Facility Strategy 2018 v.7.0 (4 Global) see evidence file

⁸³ See Projects and Actions document accompanying Ongar Neighbourhood Plan

⁸⁴ Residents Survey 2018 see evidence file

Policy ONG-CT2: Community, Cultural, Leisure and Sports Facilities

Policy ONG-CT2: Community, Cultural, Leisure and Sports Facilities

1. Development involving the loss of community facilities will be supported only where new or better facilities are provided in close proximity or where there is evidence that the facility is no longer required to meet local need. This includes library provision, community halls, arts centres, youth centres, leisure and sports facilities and amenities.
2. The playing pitches and courts, Ongar Leisure Centre, Ongar Library and youth facilities and centres are of particular importance to local provision.

Interpretation of ONG-CT2

In the case of facilities in and around the defined Small District Centre, close proximity would mean within or immediately adjacent to that defined boundary. Elsewhere within the neighbourhood area, in close proximity means within the Ongar Neighbourhood Area (i.e., within Ongar Civil Parish boundaries) and preferably within walking distance of the original facility or amenity and the centre of Chipping Ongar (which is the Budworth Hall).

The policy seeks to maintain the level of community facilities and amenities in the area, including those in and around the centre. Provision of new facilities is supported by Policy ONG-RR1. Consideration will be requested to designate the named facilities as Assets of Community Value

8.4 Rationale: Transport and Movement

The rural location of Ongar civil parish has resulted in reliance on cars⁸⁵ in the 21st century and therefore needs appropriate carparking spaces at home and at destinations⁸⁶. This is partly due to employment locations now being largely outside the parish as well as public transport provision being poor⁸⁷, or perceived as such.⁸⁸ More than half of Ongar's workers

⁸⁵ Ongar State of The Parish Report (Navigus) see Evidence files

⁸⁶ Epping Local Plan Highway Impact Appraisal – charts of car ownership throughout the District <https://www.efdclocalplan.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/EB500H1.pdf>

⁸⁷ See Evidence files with public transport analysis by ONPCG in 2019

⁸⁸ Residents Survey 2018 section 4 Transport and getting around see evidence file

now commute outside the area including to London⁸⁹ and 46% of all workers travel by car, which is approximately 8% higher than Epping Forest DC as a whole.⁹⁰ Chipping Ongar developed as an important rural administrative centre and staging post for centuries and has continued to serve the needs of the surrounding settlements. Suggestions for engaging with Essex County Council relating to possible improvements to public transport is considered as an Action in the accompanying Appendix- Actions and Projects accompanying Ongar Neighbourhood Plan, but would require considerable continued subsidies due to the parish's low population.

Major routes converge on Chipping Ongar. The A414 dissects the parish with traffic from the M11 to Chelmsford and the east coast ports, and the A128 uses of historic Chipping Ongar High Street as a short cut between long distance destinations⁹¹. The heavy daily traffic flow of over 17,500 through the High Street (seasonally adjusted Annual Average Daily Traffic flow figures based on January 2017⁹²) and an average hourly rate of 20 HGVs of 4 axle or greater⁹³, in May 2019⁹⁴ makes uncomfortable reading and explains the high level of nitrogen dioxide (25% higher than the accepted level) in 3 places in Chipping Ongar High St in 2018⁹⁵. Residents overwhelmingly support a restriction of HGVs withing Chipping Ongar Town Centre⁹⁶. Particulate matter pollution (PM2.5) is also expected to be high adding to health concerns of residents.

Not only are the wealth of Designated Heritage Assets (Listed Buildings) being harmed by the effects of such traffic, but the highway has also been structurally unable to bear the weight⁹⁷ and the general ambience of the historic town centre has deteriorated causing further reduction in footfall.

Essex Highways' scheduled improvements to the A414 were announced as delayed in 2019. However, the majority of responders to the residents Survey in 2018 also wanted improvements to other junctions such as the junction of Chipping Ongar High St, The Borough (leading to Greensted Rd) and Coopers Hill. This has bus stops which are also a terminus for some routes. Several accidents over recent years have included children crossing to the school buses. Approximately 150 more car users from the proposed development in Greensted Road are expected to also disgorge onto this junction. Some of these issues raised by residents and the need for more traffic calming and safe crossing areas, are not within the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan. They are, however, addressed in the accompanying Actions document and Ongar Town Council and Ongar Neighbourhood

⁸⁹ Ongar high car ownership, as shown in the Rural Community Survey for Ongar (Parish Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) Rural evidence project October 2013 – p35; Transport and connectivity: Access to private transport and in the last Census ONS statistics 2011 in RCCE and Navigus Reports see evidence files

⁹⁰ Ongar State of The Parish Report (Navigus) see Evidence files

⁹¹ Ongar is the confluence of three major roads (A128, A113, A414- leading to A12) and is often used as a short cut between the M11 and M25.

⁹² Essex Highways traffic survey 2017 see Evidence file

⁹³ ONPCG Traffic Survey see Evidence file

⁹⁴ See evidence file 2019 LPH submission re traffic problems in Chipping Ongar High Street.

⁹⁵ See evidence file 2019 LPH submission re traffic problems in Chipping Ongar High Street.

⁹⁶ Residents survey section 4.6.6 (94%) and 5.2 (89%)

⁹⁷ There have been numerous incidents of collapsed water pipes, sewer drains and areas of Highway surface itself since 2000

plan Community Group are already lobbying other authorities (such as Essex County Council) for solutions. Additionally the 'drag' effect from HGVs is a perceived safety consideration for pedestrians especially children.

The restrictions of the old historic town of Chipping Ongar, with relatively narrow main streets and some very narrow footways, including at the southern gate to the medieval enclosure in Chipping Ongar High Street, makes it difficult to promote safe walking, cycling or other car free travel on these roads, whether for local journeys or for travel to work and regional centres, without considerable funding. Housing developments from about the 1980s with narrow streets and insufficient off-street parking have also marred the street scene generally in the civil parish.

Parking issues are one of the residents' top complaints⁹⁸. With an expected increase of approximately 1000 new cars in Ongar by the end of the 2026 and added pressure from new developments in the wider region using Ongar's roads as well, Ongar Neighbourhood Plan supports place making design to ensure that the car does not dominate the street scene, by insisting sufficient off-street car parking in new developments. This is supported in Essex Design Guide and Parking standards⁹⁹. Furthermore, new layouts, including for highways, should provide a more pedestrian friendly safe environment. The Neighbourhood Plan and accompanying Actions appendix also address the need for more car parking for the town centre visitors, employees and residents alike. This would also cater for an increased Visitor economy. Walking and cycling routes are covered in section 8.6.

49.2% of Ongar households own or have access to more than one vehicle¹⁰⁰. This has added to parking issues on some existing estates, making access difficult for emergency vehicles and a street scene dominated by cars. Good planning examples facilitate off-street parking. Essex Design Guide and Essex Parking Standards provide successful means for ensuring a street scene not marred by parking difficulties. All developments will be expected to justify residential parking spaces and their design, using the Essex Design Guide and Essex Parking standards appropriate for the rural community of Ongar.

Chipping Ongar town centre has three car parks: - Pleasance car park, Basons Lane car park adjacent to Budworth Hall and car park adjacent to Sainsbury's. In The Borough, next to Greensted Road, ECC had a 'Lorry Park,' but the land is now privately owned. The High Street area has a few time-restricted parking bays. With more first floors of shops being converted into flats, and employees travelling in to Chipping Ongar, there is a need for another long stay carpark for residents, employees of local businesses and also to encourage visitors to Chipping Ongar, for attractions such as the Heritage Railway. The populated areas within the Civil Parish have higher levels of car ownership when compared with the rest of Epping Forest District.¹⁰¹

Ongar has been identified as one of the towns with the largest existing population compared to its limited sustainable transport accessibility.¹⁰² There are several bus services and bus

⁹⁸ In all engagement events, parking problems were in the top subjects see evidence file

⁹⁹ Essex Design Guide is an online guide [/////](#)which links to Essex Parking Standards see evidence file

¹⁰⁰ Residents survey 4.2 and ONS 2011 census

¹⁰¹ <https://www.efdclocalplan.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/EB500H1.pdf> and supported by Residents Survey 1.1.8

¹⁰² Navigus State of the Parish

stops in Ongar. However, residents consider public transport services to be too infrequent.¹⁰³ There are no train connections in Ongar, but many residents use Epping Station (Central Line) is 7.7 miles distant. The residents' survey results suggested that a 'commuter' direct bus service to Epping Station would be used. This could be explored as an Action but would expect to require large subsidies.

A variety of National and EFDC planning policies and frameworks, as below, advocate promoting walking, cycling and public transport. In reality it will be difficult to make Ongar residents less reliant on their own cars. Local journeys are often by car because of narrow streets and pavements in part of the town centre, busy main roads (A414 and High St) to cross to access education and health facilities. Public commuter transport is poor and busy country roads are hazardous for cyclists.

The NPPF (section 9) deals with promoting sustainable transport. Paragraph 102 expects Transport issues to be considered from the earliest stages in planning, to promote walking, cycling and public transport use and Paragraph 104 (d) requires plans for high quality walking and cycling networks.

Epping Forest District Local Plan (1998) and Alterations (2006) Policy CP6 aims to achieve sustainable urban development patterns and Policy CP9 deals with transport infrastructure and the promotion of sustainable transport.

EFDC Local Plan submission version 2017 Policy SP3 Place Shaping paragraph (xiii) requires 'provide for sustainable movement and access to local and strategic destinations (including rail, bus and pedestrians/cycling)'.

Developers will be expected to adhere to the appropriate guidance and design in its Essex Parking Standards of The Essex Design Guide¹⁰⁴ in applying Ongar Neighbourhood Plan policy CT3, including providing safe and secure parking where cars can be seen by owners and neighbour, unobstructive access for emergency refuse collection vehicles etc. and quality in design terms to ensure parking areas have a sense of place and feels secure.

Essex Parking Standard must also be used to apply the number and size of car park spaces for Use Class C3 Dwellinghouses. As per the table below. The Context Appraisal and local character of the rural parish does not provide for exceptions to provide less provision.

¹⁰³ Residents Survey question 4.5 relates to why residents do not use public transport. The most common reason was too infrequent, followed closely by no public transport nowhere I commute see evidence file

¹⁰⁴ www.essexdesignguide.co.uk

Parking Standards for Use Class C3: Dwellinghouses

Family houses, or house occupied by up to six residents living together as a single household, including a household where care is provided for residents.

Trip Origin

Dwellings are predominantly travel origins as opposed to destinations. Previously parking standards have attempted to reduce car use by restricting parking spaces at origin and destinations. It is now recognised that providing a reduced number of parking spaces at a travel origin does not discourage people from owning a car. Therefore parking standards for origins should be used as a minimum standard. For travel destinations the standard will continue to be a maximum.

Standard:

Flats and Houses are to be treated the same.

Use	Vehicle	Cycle	PTW	Disabled
	Minimum	Minimum	Minimum	Minimum
1 bedroom	1 space per dwelling*	1 secure covered space per dwelling. None if garage or secure area is provided within curtilage of dwelling	N/A	N/A if parking is in curtilage of dwelling, otherwise as Visitor/ unallocated
2+ bedroom	2 spaces per dwelling*			
Retirement developments (e.g. warden assisted independent living accommodation)	1 space per dwelling	1 space per 8 units (visitors)	2 PTW spaces and 1 space per 2 dwellings for mobility scooters	N/A if parking is in curtilage of dwelling, otherwise as Visitor/ unallocated

Use	Vehicle	Cycle	PTW	Disabled
	Minimum	Minimum	Minimum	Minimum
Visitor/ unallocated	0.25 spaces per dwelling (unallocated) (rounded up to nearest whole number)	If no garage or secure area is provided within curtilage of dwelling then 1 covered and secure space per dwelling in a communal area for residents plus 1 space per 8 dwellings for visitors	1 space, + 1 per 20 car spaces (for 1 st 100 car spaces), then 1 space per 30 car spaces (over 100 car spaces)	200 vehicle bays or less = 3 bays or 6% of total capacity, whichever is greater, Over 200 vehicle bays = 4 bays plus 4% of total capacity

* Excluding garage if less than 7m x 3m internal dimension

Informative notes:

Standards exclude garages under 7m x 3m (internal dimensions) as a parking space but can include undercroft parking and car ports providing they have no other use.

Mobility Scooter spaces should be secure and covered with charging facilities.

Visitor/unallocated vehicle parking to be provided for all dwelling types.

Visitor/unallocated vehicle parking can, subject to appropriate design, be located on or near the road frontage.

Unallocated cycle parking for residents to be secure and covered, located in easily accessible locations throughout the development.

Reductions of the vehicle standard may be considered if there is development within an urban area (including town centre locations) that has good links to sustainable transport (See Parking Standards in Urban Areas section).

Car Clubs should be promoted in low provision/car free residential developments and car club spaces provided.

Ongar Neighbourhood Plan seeks to

- provide a street scene in the town centre and in new developments that is pedestrian friendly with sufficient off-street carparking space, cycle storage and
- encourage a move away from petrol and diesel cars with sufficient charging points (or other facilities) to minimise pollution in the worst affected areas of the A414 and Chipping Ongar High Street
- encourage local journeys by foot or cycle with improved additional short cut links for new developments and safeguard a route for future cycle and footpaths (see 8.2 Local Green Space

Policy ONG-CT3: Transport and Movement

Policy ONG-CT3: Transport and Movement

1. All residential developments must include a balanced range of transport options. This includes
 - Ensuring sites are served by adequate roads and footways with particular regard to traffic capacity and pedestrian safety
 - Providing sufficient off-street parking facilities to support the higher levels of car ownership in Ongar as a primarily rural area, including multiple car households, by using Essex Parking Standards and Essex Design Guide
 - Providing parking through a mix of covered space, garage space and driveways;
 - Providing secure and screened cycle storage in all development, including for each new house;
2. For residential developments involving the creation of new road layout, the following is also required:
 - Taking opportunities to link to surrounding footpaths (PROWs);
 - Providing good pedestrian permeability and the creation of safe and convenient pedestrian routes within the site, including for people with limited mobility or using mobility scooters;
 - Providing safe crossing facilities where necessary to link to nearby shops, bus stops, schools and other facilities;
 - Providing convenient charging points for electric vehicles.
3. When considering employment development likely to generate movements by heavy goods vehicles, particular attention must be paid to the impacts of such vehicle movements on the town centre and its historic environment in terms of noise, disturbance, pollution, congestion and attractiveness to users of the High Street.
4. Employment development should include facilities for secure storage of cycles. For parking areas of more than 10 car spaces, conveniently located charging points for electrical vehicles should be provided.

Interpretation of ONG-CT3

The policy should be applied according to the scale of development. Clearly, the parts of the policy relating to layout and permeability apply where new layout is being provided. Other

parts of the policy would apply to all scales of development, from one dwelling upwards, for example the need for secure storage space for cycles. *Continued.....*

An emphasis on providing sufficient off-street car parking space should be applied in compliance with National Standards and Essex Parking standards, whichever is the higher, in particular due to the lack of local employment in Ongar Civil Parish, poor commuter public transport connections and the resultant reliance on car transport.

‘Convenient charging points’ means adjacent to private driveway or parking space.

The Essex Design Guide and Planning Portal- Residential Parking Standards provides further guidance, in applying the policy. Ongar Design Guide provides further clarification and examples of concerns.

The policy should be used for larger extensions where it would create an additional need for off street parking.

8.5 Rationale: Infrastructure priorities

A variety of Infrastructure requirements for Ongar have been itemised to support new housing development in EFDC Local Plan 2011-2033. These cover utilities, highways, education, health, open space, community facilities and sports and leisure¹⁰⁵ and are supported by reports and evidence such as 4 Global reports etc. Many are categorised as critical or essential, whilst others are desirable. Where there is likely to be a choice of location, such as pre-school, or a choice of actual provision, Ongar Neighbourhood Plan has prioritised those that require contributions from Developers, including via s 106 contributions. These priorities are supported by surveys conducted by ONPCG in the community¹⁰⁶

In Chipping Ongar, a number of buildings such as a 1960s HSBC bank have been empty for many years and other buildings struggle to have continuity of tenancy. Ongar Neighbourhood Plan policies support diversification of use in existing or redeveloped town centre property, including for services and leisure and recreational activities for an increased visitor economy, whilst ensuring that sufficient retail is retained. The new Class Use E Commercial, Business and Services will also support this. The new User Class E includes: shops, professional and financial services, restaurants and cafes, indoor sport recreation or fitness, medical or health services and creche, day nursery or day centre.

In particular, change of use or new development to accommodate the required new pre-school (identified in EB 1101B EFDC Infrastructure Delivery Programme for Ongar) in or close to Chipping Ongar town centre would be encouraged. This would be equidistant to the two primary schools. Similarly, new or additional leisure facilities located in the centre would enhance a community hub purposed for 21st century living. A Town Park is also required and should be located centrally to benefit the whole community. Proposals have been put forward in Actions and Projects Appendix.

¹⁰⁵ EB1101B Infrastructure Delivery Schedule see Evidence file

¹⁰⁶ See Residents and other surveys in the Evidence files

EFDC Playing pitch strategy (4 Global) 2018 v 7.0 (EB714) covers football, cricket, rugby and hockey in accordance with Sport England recognised assessments. The findings of the 4 Global report conclude that there will be a need for more football and rugby pitches. This echoes Ongar Sports Clubs call for the same and the Residents Survey. Consideration for an artificial grass pitch (AGP) has been called for, partly due to the heavy clay soils in Ongar which are subject to waterlogging during the winter months.

Sports provision played on courts, such netball, tennis and basketball, were not assessed by EFDC. There are tennis courts at Ongar Sports Club in Jubilee Park, but several have been lost at Ongar Leisure Centre as have netball courts. Netball, in particular, has strong support in Ongar but current facilities are not suitable for competition or year-round use. A MUGA (Multi Use Games Area)- being a pitch or court surface which can accommodate various sports could serve the community well.

EFDC's Built Facilities Strategy (4 Global) 2018 v 7.0 (EB713) considers indoor swimming pools, sports halls (of a minimum size) and health and fitness suites. This concluded that Ongar's swimming pool is at 'the end of life and requires modernisation or replacement; the sports hall has high unmet demand and requires refurbishment; and the Health and Fitness provision is not only 'vital' but need modernising and improving. Ongar Leisure Centre serves a wide rural population, including outside EFDC boundaries. Any replacement' but must remain in the civil parish of Ongar. Recent petitions indicated the strength of feeling from local residents.

NPPF Paragraph 34 deals with infrastructure contributions requiring Plans to set out the contributions expected from each development.

EFDC Local Plan submission version 2017 Policy DM6 deals with designated and undesignated Open Spaces: 'Where appropriate development proposals will be required to provide open space, or links to open space in accordance with the guidance contained within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Open Space Strategy. Nationally adopted space standards will be used as a starting point for provision'. This accounts for the play areas (LAPS, LEAPS and NEAPS), which will be needed and also town parks. Ongar, despite surrounded by countryside, already has a deficit of 'Open Space' in the civil parish. A town park near Ongar Castle would be central for the community and link footpaths and Green Corridors, whilst also providing more attractions for Visitors to the historic town.

Policy ONG-CT4: Infrastructure Priorities

Policy ONG-CT4: Infrastructure Priorities

Priorities for the provision of infrastructure through use of Section 106 or similar developer contributions are:

- Additional sports pitches and courts (including artificial grass pitches and MUGA courts);
- A new town park in close proximity of Chipping Ongar town centre and Ongar Castle;
- Pre-school provision in close proximity of Chipping Ongar town centre.

Interpretation of ONG-CT4

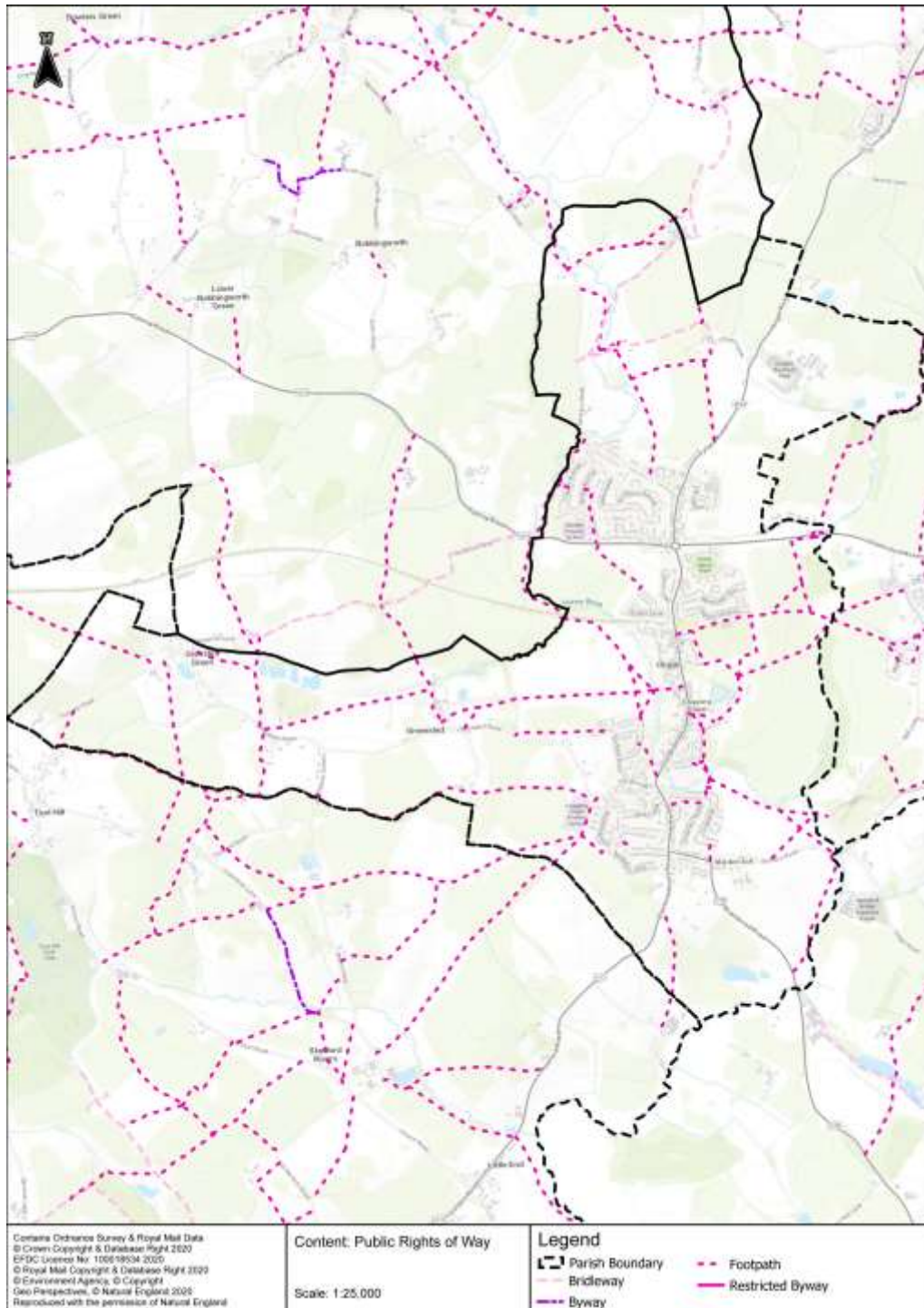
The policy is intended to guide decisions by the Local Planning Authority with regard to use of financial contributions through Section 106 or subsequent developer contributions, whilst acknowledging that such matters relating to improvements to highways, education and utilities will take precedence. This may include land acquisition costs.

In accordance with the government's policies for greater decision making at local community level, the residents survey has confirmed the priorities in ONG-CT4. Better outcomes are likely to be achieved if the design process for new infrastructure involves meaningful engagement with local stakeholders and community groups in Ongar.

8.6 Rationale: Footpath and Cycle Routes

There are a number of footpaths linking parts of the civil parish and nearby settlements, as well as several long-distance footpaths passing through Chipping Ongar. In addition, there are some short cuts or alleyways through established housing estates to Chipping Ongar town centre. (see map below).

PROWS -footpaths through Ongar civil parish



Roads through Ongar are busy, and many footways (pavements) are narrow. Therefore, to encourage more local journeys to be on foot or cycle, a more 'joined up' network of footpaths and cycle routes is needed. Furthermore, new development should ensure access onto existing footpaths, such as in the West Ongar Concept site R1 and R2, and where possible expand these routes.



There is a need for safe pedestrian crossings or refuge places along children's walking routes to school¹⁰⁷. Pedestrian and cyclist shortcuts and improvements to paths within and around Ongar must be considered in the layout of new housing sites in order to encourage local journeys by foot or cycle.

Supporting a better network of footpaths and cycling paths round Chipping Ongar and Shelley to encourage non-car local journeys could also open up the opportunity of providing an interesting selection of walks for visitors around the historic town. This could involve coordinating activities and signposting for the Heritage Railway, Greensted Church, long-distance footpaths of The Essex Way, St Peter's Way and Three Forests Way and other attractions, interactive Town trails, a Tourist

Information Point and the use of new technology for Wi-fi and 5G¹⁰⁸. This could open up a new market for the local economy.

The reopening up of footpaths between the Cripsey Brook and the town from Banson's Lane to the Heritage Railway has been proposed.¹⁰⁹ This area is also proposed as Designated Local Green Space in this Plan (See section 8.2) and would link round the west south and east of Chipping Ongar alongside the two rivers, including the Nature Reserve to form Green Corridors¹¹⁰. It would also enable school children to avoid the busy High Street if a cycle surface is provided.

Properly signed and well-designed paths can provide good car free access to the town centre from new and existing developments thus enhancing sustainability for all

A new permitted footpath along the banks of the river Roding is also being proposed.¹¹¹ The proximity of the countryside to Chipping Ongar provides a wide offering for the visitor economy. With careful planning this would also provide an alternative to mitigate overuse of nearby Epping Forest from the east of Ongar Castle along the river Roding. Proposals have been put forward to provide access for such a river walk alongside the Roding, with paths etc. linking to the town centre of Chipping Ongar 500m distant. Similar river walks along the Roding have already been funded and put in place nearer to and within Greater London.

¹⁰⁷ See Actions document and Risk Assessment for walking routes to Ongar schools including from proposed new development sites in Evidence files

¹⁰⁸ See Appendix -Actions and Projects

¹⁰⁹ See Appendix -Actions and Projects

¹¹⁰ See Appendix -Actions and Projects and map

¹¹¹ See Appendix -Actions and Projects

The NPPF and EFDC have Planning Policies and frameworks to support walking and cycling routes to support healthy lifestyles and encourage less reliance on motor vehicles. This includes:

Paragraph 84, Paragraph 91, and Section 8 of the NPPF

Epping Forest District Local Plan (1998) and Alterations (2006) Policy ST2 requires safe, pleasant and convenient access for pedestrians and cyclists, including where appropriate, integrated transport choices and practical links with adjoining public rights of way and cycleway networks

Policy RST2 seeks “the appropriate expansion and enhancement of the rights of way network” and “to secure public access onto privately-owned land for informal leisure purposes”.

In Ongar such a network (which may also need improved maintenance of surfaces and the reduction of overhanging vegetation on footpaths -PROWS and alleyways- to enable all year round use) will enable better connectivity within the civil parish, as well as better off road links to neighbouring villages.

Policy ONG-CT5: Footpaths and Cycle Route

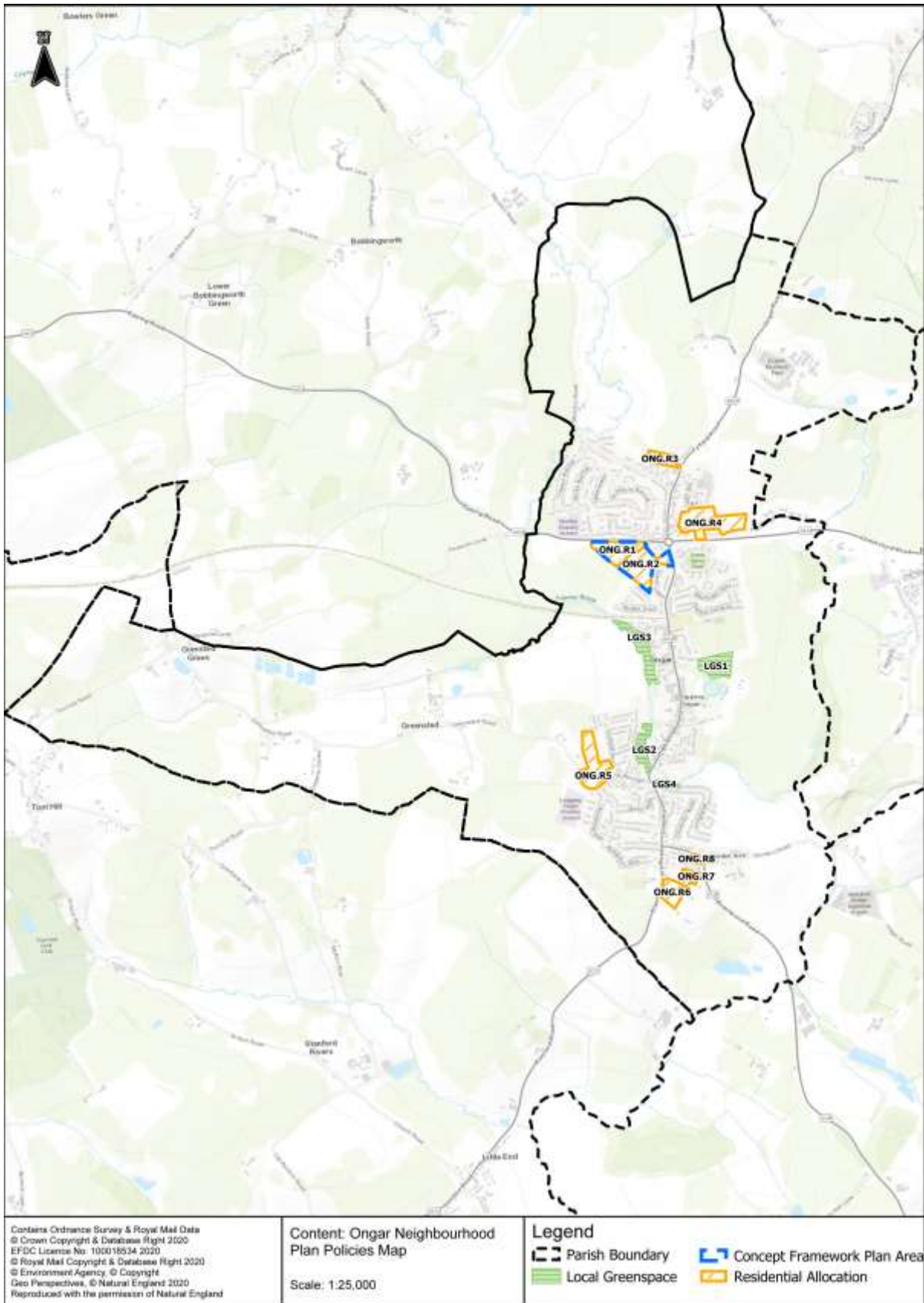
Policy ONG-CT5: Footpaths and Cycle Route

1. **New development must enhance or have no detrimental impact on the accessibility, safety and amenity of existing footpaths. This includes:**
 - **Not encroaching onto footpath routes;**
 - **Avoiding flanking footpaths with high enclosures or blank walls;**
 - **Retaining an open or partially open setting to footpaths;**
 - **Ensuring that the layout within development provides access points to adjacent footpaths;**
 - **Providing low-level landscaping adjacent to footpaths.**
2. **The west of Ongar route shown on plan ** is protected to allow the provision of a new cycleway and footpath. Development must not compromise the route of the proposed cycleway and footpath. Development flanking the route should take account of the above requirements for existing footpaths.**
3. **Access from new developments to new footpaths or PROWs will be encouraged, especially if they link into existing networks or semi natural green space.**

Interpretation of ONG-CT5

The policy requires careful consideration of impacts of all development in Ongar on footpaths (footways adjacent to roads and PROWs). Design and access statements provide an opportunity for developers to explain how compliance with the policy has been achieved, and enables new footpaths to be beneficial for Visitor economy and reducing dependency of cars for local journeys.

Policy Map



Acknowledgments

The neighbourhood plan steering group Ongar, being the committee of Neighbourhood Plan Community Group, would like to record their thanks for the considerable assistance, cooperation, encouragement and patience of

- Supporters of Ongar Neighbourhood Plan Community Group committee
- The residents, business owners, landowners, Community groups, Church groups of the civil parish of Ongar
- Ongar Health Centre
- Local School Headteachers
- Ongar sports clubs
- Ongar Town Councillors and Officers
- Epping Forest District Council Officers and Councillors
- Essex County Council Officers and Councillors
- MP for Brentwood and Ongar (Alex Burghart)

