

**PLANNING COMMITTEE held at COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES,
LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on WEDNESDAY, 11
FEBRUARY 2026 at 10.00 am**

Present: Councillors R Freeman and J Emanuel (Co-Chairs)

Councillors G Bagnall, N Church, G Driscoll, R Gooding,
R Haynes and R Pavitt

Officers in attendance: N Brown (Head of Development Management and Enforcement), C Forster (Head of Legal and Monitoring Officer), C Gibson (Democratic Services Officer), A Neale (Planning Officer) and C Tyler (Principal Planning Officer)

Public Speakers: A Evans, Dr J Johnson, V Ranger and D Rapson.

PC79 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Freeman took the Chair.

There were apologies for absence from Councillors Lemon, Loughlin and Sutton. Councillor Gooding substituted for Councillor Lemon and Councillor Driscoll substituted for Councillor Sutton.

Declarations of interest were made by:

- Councillor Bagnall (Item 5): Involved with this property some years ago but not involved with this application. Remained open-minded.
- Councillor Church (Item 4): Previous relationships with the applicant but not involved with this application, confirming that he had no tendency or inclination that could prevent impartial consideration of the application, meaning that he was able to listen to the views of all sides before deciding how to vote. Therefore, remained open-minded.

PC80 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2026 were approved as an accurate record.

PC81 QUALITY AND SPEED OF MAJOR AND NON-MAJOR APPLICATIONS

The Head of Development Management and Enforcement presented the standing Speed and Quality Report.

He corrected the data on page 17 in that the Speed of Major Decisions figure should have been shown at 100%.

The Chair said that this was an excellent result and thanked officers. The report was noted.

PC82 UTT/25/1619/FUL - LAND EAST OF BRAINTREE ROAD (B1256), GREAT DUNMOW

The Principal Planning Officer presented an application for full planning permission for employment development comprising offices, a workshop and depot (Use Classes E(g) and B8) with associated access, parking, landscaping and infrastructure. The site lies outside the defined Development Boundary and is designated countryside in the adopted development plan.

The Principal Planning Officer highlighted the re-wording of some of the Conditions as detailed in the Addendum List and recommended that the application be approved, subject to the items set out in section 17 of the report.

In response to questions from Members, officers:

- Said that the numbers of solar panels proposed were unknown, but the Conditions would cover the requirements.
- Said that access to the bridge, spanning the river, was covered by the s106 and should be delivered prior to occupation.
- Said there were around 200 car parking spaces, and these could be “softened”; this represented an increase in spaces against a reduction in the size of the buildings.
- Said that there was currently no condition for washing bays and fuel interceptors but that this could be conditioned.
- Said that a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment had not been undertaken as this was a significant reduction on the previous development.
- Said that landscaping conditions were a pre-commencement condition.

The agent returned to the table and spoke about future capacity on the site for 24/7 over the next 2/3 years.

Members discussed:

- Concerns about the need for a fuel interceptor system to be in place.
- The need to break up parking spaces; officers highlighted the views expressed by the Highways Authority in Para 14.6.12.
- Concerns about the landscape visual impact, particularly on entering Dunmow.

Councillor Church proposed approval of the application, with additional Conditions to be strengthened in respect of insisting on fuel interceptors, pre-commencement landscaping to include break-up of the car parking area and clarification in respect of parking standards.

This was seconded by Councillor Pavitt.

RESOLVED that the Strategic Director of Planning be authorised to grant permission for the development subject to those items set out in section 17 of the report-

- A) Completion of a s106 Obligation Agreement in accordance with the Heads of Terms as set out.
- B) Conditions, to include strengthened Conditions as detailed in the motion above.

And

If the freehold owner shall fail to enter into such an agreement, the Director of Planning shall be authorised to refuse permission following the expiration of a 6-month period from the date of Planning Committee.

D Rapson (Agent) spoke in support of the application.

The meeting had a short adjournment between 10.55 am and 11.05 am.

PC83 UTT/25/1854/FUL - CRANWELLIAN, THE STREET, TAKELEY

Councillor Emanuel took the Chair.

The Planning Officer presented an application for the removal of all existing structures, foundations, internal fences, poles and materials, drainage pipes, chambers and tanks, adaption of the existing site access and the erection of 6 residential dwellings with associated infrastructure. He referred Members to the additional comments made in the Addendum List and the planning history of the site, including the Local Government Ombudsman's Letter relating to a previous application at the site. He concluded that when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, the adverse impacts of the proposal would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits in respect of the Planning Balance, and that with robust conditions attached, the development would support the remediation of a historically contaminated site and improve existing drainage and surface water flooding issues present on the site.

He recommended that the application be approved, subject to those items set out in section 17 of the report.

In response to questions from Members, officers:

- Confirmed that there was contamination and debris on the site. The Geotechnical report had identified heavy metals and asbestos as being present.
- Said there had been no response to the consultation from the Essex CC SuDS Team as this was not a major application. However, the Essex CC Floods and Water Management Team had agreed to act on behalf of UDC in looking at drainage scheme proposals to ensure that conditions had been met.
- Confirmed details listed in Condition 20 in that no development would take place until a Phase 1 Desk Study report had been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Officers clarified what

Phases 1, 2 and 3 would involve and said that Condition 20 would be complex to discharge.

- Said that Environmental Health had indicated that the whole site should be studied by way of a Ground Investigation survey, rather than just particular areas of the site. They had confirmed that they had no objections subject to conditions.
- Said that the ditch at present was a blind ditch and that Condition 23 could be re-worded to strengthen controls regarding the water course scheme and appropriate licences/permits required by Essex CC's Floods Team and the Environment Agency. The intention was that the drainage outflow would initially go to a tank and be released into the ditch.
- Said that foul drainage was not a consideration and was down to Building Control to manage. The planning considerations relate to the impacts of flood risk relating to the proposed drainage systems.
- Said that Highways had considered the proposals and had no objections.

Members discussed:

- Their general nervousness towards the scheme and the need for strong checks and balances to be in place through rigorous conditions.
- The need to resolve drainage problems, particularly the situation regarding the blind, northern ditch.
- The positive role that Essex CC Water course team would play in resolving concerns prior to any possible consent.
- Foul drainage volume concerns once the development had taken place. Provision for cleaned foul water would need to be agreed by the water coursing team and the applicant.
- Contamination concerns as to how contaminated soil could be either removed or capped.
- The need for each Phase to be adequately described to ensure strict controls in place before moving on to the next phase.
- That the design in principle was basically acceptable; comments were made about noise levels and possible over-massing.
- The clear need for conditions to be strengthened with requirements for each Phase clearly outlined before there could be any further movement forward. The suggestion was made that the Head of Development Management and Enforcement re-examine the conditions particularly relating to drainage and contamination and that these be agreed with the Committee Co-Chairs prior to any further movement.
- The possibility of the item being deferred to address outstanding concerns.

Councillor Emanuel (from the Chair) proposed approval of the application, subject to revised conditions and review to be agreed by the Planning Committee Co-Chairs.

This was seconded by Councillor Gooding.

RESOLVED on the casting vote of Councillor Emanuel (in the Chair) that the Strategic Director of Planning be authorised to grant permission for the development, once agreement to revised conditions had been

reached with clearance from the Planning Committee Co-Chairs and subject to those items set out in section 17 of the report.

Dr J Johnson and A Evans spoke against the application and Dr Johnson read out a statement from M and W Fish opposed to the application. V Ranger (Agent) spoke in support.

PC84 **UTT/25/3066/OP - LAND WEST OF THE COTTAGE, SNAKES LANE, UGLEY
(ITEM WITHDRAWN)**

This item had been withdrawn ahead of the meeting.

The meeting ended at 12.50 pm.