

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

Present: Councillors J Emanuel and R Freeman (Co-Chairs)  
Councillors N Church, R Haynes, M Lemon, R Silcock and  
M Sutton

Officers in attendance: N Brown (Head of Development Management and  
Enforcement), T Aregbesola (Planning Officer), C Forster (Head  
of Legal and Monitoring Officer), C Gibson (Democratic Services  
Officer), M Sawyers (Senior Planning Officer), M Shoemith  
(Strategic Applications Team Leader), L Trevillian (District Wide  
Team Leader), C Tyler (Principal Planning Officer) and  
A Vlachos (Principal Planning Officer)

Public Speakers: C Attmere, Councillor G Bagnall, Councillor M Bissell, T  
Cannon, L Chalk, G Clark, N Dolan, R Freeman, M Gordon, D  
Higginson, L Hodge, J Jossaume, L Kendrick, C Leach,  
Councillor Dr G Mott, A Peasey, B Plowman and M Wood.

**PC85 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Emanuel took the Chair for the start of the meeting.

There were apologies for absence from Councillors Pavitt and Loughlin.  
Councillor Silcock substituted for Councillor Loughlin.

Declarations of interest were made by:

- Councillor Lemon- Ward Councillor for Hatfield Heath (Item 8), the Applicant being known to him and to obviate the appearance of bias and would recuse.
- Councillor Emanuel- Parish Councillor for Newport, had previous involvement with the application (Item 10) and would recuse.
- Councillor Haynes- Ward Councillor for Thaxted & the Eastons (Item 11)- had already submitted an objection and would recuse.
- Councillor Sutton- Ward Councillor for Takeley (Items 6 and 7) and remained open-minded.
- Councillor Church (Item 11): Previous business relationships with the agent but not involved with this application. Remained open-minded.

**PC86 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2026 were approved as an accurate record.

**PC87 QUALITY AND SPEED OF MAJOR AND NON-MAJOR APPLICATIONS**

The Head of Development Management and Enforcement presented the standing Speed and Quality Report. He said that the data returns for decisions continued to be excellent.

The report was noted.

## **PC88 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT LOCAL VALIDATION CHECK LISTS**

The Head of Development Management and Enforcement presented the report. He outlined new requirements for officers and recommended that the amended Development Management Local Validation Checklists and associated document be adopted for Development Management validation purposes. Members supported the report.

RESOLVED that the amended Development Management Local Validation Checklist and association document be adopted for Development Management validation purposes.

## **PC89 UTT/25/2490/FUL - LAND EAST OF OLD MEAD ROAD, HENHAM**

The Principal Planning Officer presented an application for 130 residential dwellings (use Class C3) including affordable housing, access, car parking, new areas of open space, landscaping, infrastructure, along with the safeguarding of future primary school expansion land (use class F1) and associated works.

He highlighted the revisions to Conditions 17, 18, 34 and 43 shown on the Addendum List and concluded that the benefits outweighed the harms. 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:

- Said that Highways had been satisfied with the proposed access arrangements and that Primary School considerations had been taken into account.
- Said that they recognised the impacts on Elsenham and that financial contributions could be negotiated within the s106 Agreement between the Parish Councils, the developer and Ward Councillors.
- Said that garden sizes were consistent with the Essex Design Guide, rather than the UDC Design Code.
- Said there would be no triple tandem parking.
- Said that affordable housing was spread out throughout the eastern side of the development and was not clustered.

Members discussed:

- The size of the gardens.
- Their concerns that Elsenham Parish would gain 130 new dwellings as against the proposed 110 in the Emerging Local Plan. Officers explained

that the Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply and therefore NPPF 11 (d)(ii) is engaged.

Councillor Emanuel (from the Chair) proposed approval of the application, subject to s106 Agreement being agreed. This was seconded by Councillor Lemon.

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; and
- B) Conditions

And

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

*Councillor Dr G Mott (Elsenham PC) spoke against the application. C Attmere (Applicant) spoke in support.*

#### PC90 **UTT/25/2991/DFO - LAND EAST OF PARSONAGE ROAD, TAKELEY**

The Strategic Applications Team Leader presented a Reserved Matters pursuant to outline approval UTT/21/2488/OP application for the erection of 88 dwellings with details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale, together with the provision of open space, children's play area, landscape infrastructure including a buffer to Priors Wood Ancient Woodland, and all other associated works.

She corrected paragraph 13.1.1 of the report to read "2024" instead of "2023", highlighted the revised Conditions in the Addendum List and recommended that the application be approved, subject to the conditions set out in section 17 of the report.

In response to questions from Members, officers:

- Confirmed that Thames Water were obliged to resolve all foul water issues. It was their absolute duty to undertake all necessary works.
- Said that green spaces issues had been covered as part of the Outline stage.
- Said that a buffer for Priors Wood had been part of the landscaping issues picked up at Outline stage.
- Explained the sustainable transport route.

Members discussed:

- The foul water issues and this not being a planning consideration.
- The fact that the scheme already had Outline permission and there were no planning reasons for refusing the application.

- Whether an informative could be added asking for Thames Water to work with the developer.

Councillor Silcock proposed approval of the application, with an added informative and this was seconded by Councillor Church.

RESOLVED that the Strategic Director of Planning be authorised to grant permission for the development subject to an informative being added and those items set out in section 17 of the report-  
Conditions.

*Councillor G Bagnall spoke against the application. L Kendrick (Applicant) spoke in support.*

PC91 **UTT/25/2992/FUL - LAND EAST OF PARSONAGE ROAD, TAKELEY**

The Strategic Applications Team Leader presented an application for the proposed erection of 20 dwellings with associated auxiliary buildings, garages, access, parking, landscaping, drainage and infrastructure.

She highlighted the revised Conditions as shown in the Addendum List and recommended that the application be approved, subject to the conditions set out in section 17 of the report.

In response to questions from Members, officers:

- Said that any landscaping issues in respect of matters such as sufficient plants and mature trees could be picked up within a landscaping condition to cover a period of maintenance for 10 years rather than 5 years.
- Said that Thames Water had been notified of the proposed development.

Members discussed:

- The development being much better looking than previous.
- A stronger landscaping condition to be put in place.

Councillor Sutton proposed approval of the application, with a stronger landscape condition put in place. This was seconded by Councillor Church.

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, together with an additional condition safeguarding planting and maintenance for 10 years-  
Conditions.

*Councillor G Bagnall spoke against the application. L Kendrick (Applicant) spoke in support.*

*There was a brief adjournment between 11.35am and 11.45am.*

Councillor Lemon recused himself from the meeting.

The Principal Planning Officer presented an Outline planning application with all matters of detail reserved (except the means of vehicular access to the site) for residential development of up to 58 dwellings and associated development.

He said that that the area had been classified as Grey Belt Land and that the Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply and therefore NPPF 11 (d)(ii) is engaged. He summarised the harms against the benefits and recommended that the application be approved, subject to the conditions set out in section 17 of the report.

The Chair outlined the recent policy changes and how the Emerging Local Plan and current lack of a 5-year housing land supply influenced the application. She said that UDC was in a difficult situation.

In response to questions from Members, officers:

- Re-iterated the difficulties posed by UDC only having an Emerging Local Plan and the Government's failure to confirm that the Council had a 5-year housing land supply in place.
- Confirmed that the proposed development sits within a site identified as an opportunity for habitat creation within the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy but that this was not a designated area. Work could be carried out to move the BNG baseline assessment from 10% towards 20% and include a condition that required a 25% Nature Recovery Strategy
- Confirmed that a condition could be included that ensure the development could evolve from the submitted parameter plan.
- Said that some weight could be given to the development being contrary to Core Policy 39 of the Emerging Local Plan.
- Said that although being developed for several years, a Neighbourhood Plan for Hatfield Heath had not yet been published.

Members discussed:

- The site being classified as Grey Belt and sustainable.
- There being no published Neighbourhood Plan for Hatfield Heath.
- There being no objections from Statutory Consultees.
- The need to protect the central TPO tree (T1).
- The application being contrary to the Emerging Local Plan.
- The difficulties caused by the Government's failure to confirm that UDC had a 5-year housing land supply.
- Access concerns (GEN1), although no objections received from Highways.
- The valued landscape concerns.
- The need to ensure parameter plans around trees.
- Ecology concerns: this could enhance BNG moving forward. Such issues could be picked up within the emerging s106. BNG could move towards 20% provision on site or other benefits.

- Emotionally sympathising with the residents of Hatfield Heath but having to consider purely on legal planning grounds. It could be seen as an opportunity to create an exemplar development.
- Generally balancing harms against benefits.

The Chair proposed approval of the application, together with ensuring a revised parameter plan was in place (to ensure sufficient buffer zones for the TPO trees and veteran tree) and moving BNG targets towards 20% or finding something tangible to benefit the community. The corresponding condition regarding the parameter plan will also need to be in place in the permission.

This was seconded by Councillor Freeman.

RESOLVED that the Strategic Director of Planning be authorised to grant permission for the development subject to the conditions set out in section 17 of the report, together with additional items in the proposal above-

A) Completion of a s106 Obligation Agreement in accordance with the Heads of Terms as set out.

B) Conditions

And

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

*B Plowman, C Leach, N Dolan, L Chalk, A Peasey and Councillor M Bissell (Hatfield Heath PC) spoke against the application. M Wood (Agent) spoke in support.*

*The meeting briefly adjourned between 1.15pm and 1.20pm. The Chair then brought forward Agenda items 12 and 13 prior to breaking for lunch.*

*Councillor Lemon returned to the meeting.*

**PC93 UTT/26/0006/FUL - COUNCIL OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN**

The District Wide Team Leader presented a Section 73 application to vary condition 2 (approved plans) of application UTT/25/1957/FUL (Proposed alterations to ground floor (part) including addition of air conditioning units to external wall) – amendments to approved plans in line with recommendations made by a building control officer.

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

There were no questions or debate on the application.

Councillor Feeman proposed approval of the application, and this was seconded by Councillor Sutton.

RESOLVED that the Strategic Director of Planning be authorised to grant permission for the development subject to the conditions set out in section 17 of the report-  
A) Conditions

PC94 **UTT/26/0014/LB - COUNCIL OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN**

The District Wide Team Leader presented a variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of application UTT/25/1958/LB (Proposed alterations to ground floor (part) including addition of air conditioning units to external wall) – amendments to approved plans in line with recommendations made by a building control officer.

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

There were no questions or debate on the application.

Councillor Feeman proposed approval of the application, and this was seconded by Councillor Lemon.

RESOLVED that the Strategic Director of Planning be authorised to grant permission for the development subject to the conditions set out in section 17 of the report-  
A) Conditions

*The meeting adjourned for lunch between 1.25 pm and 2.00 pm. Councillor Freeman took the Chair for the afternoon session.*

PC95 **UTT/25/2838/FUL - FORMER COUNCIL DEPOT, NEW STREET, GREAT DUNMOW**

The Senior Planning Officer presented an application for demolition of former council depot building and erection of 9 dwelling houses with existing vehicular and pedestrian access maintained from New Street.

He recommended that the application be refused for the reasons stated in section 17 of the report.

In response to questions from Members, officers:

- Said that the Council had been in regular contact with the applicant.

Members discussed:

- The principle of development being good but not for this scheme.
- There being too many houses being proposed.

Councillor Church proposed refusal of the application, and this was seconded by Councillor Emanuel.

RESOLVED that the Strategic Director of Planning be authorised to refuse for the reasons set out in section 17 of the report.

PC96 **UTT/25/0866/FUL - LAND TO THE NORTH EAST OF CHALK FARM LANE, NEWPORT**

Councillor Emanuel recused herself after she had spoken as a public speaker.

The Principal Planning Officer presented a Section 73A retrospective application for change of use to accommodate 4 traveller pitches (including 1 static caravan and 1 mobile caravan each) together with associated development, parking and access road (including engineering operations to reprofile the earth bunds).

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

In response to questions from Members, officers:

- Confirmed the sewage treatment arrangements that would be in place, including a sealed cesspit. All covered by Condition 10.
- Said there was still a shortfall of allocated traveller sites.
- Said the location was sustainable.
- Said that the Neighbourhood Plan was “silent” on traveller sites and therefore defaulted to the Emerging Local Plan.
- Confirmed that BNG metric had been cleared by Place Services Ecology.
- Said that a caveat could be added to the landscaping condition to cover the bin areas.

Members discussed:

- The views expressed by Newport PC
- The sealed cesspit.
- Landscape issues.
- Condition 3 which ensured that there were no more than 4 pitches on the site at any time.

Councillor Silcock said that there was clearly a need for this development and proposed approval of the application, together with ensuring that a condition covered bin areas. This was seconded by Councillor Sutton.

RESOLVED that the Strategic Director of Planning be authorised to grant permission for the development subject to the conditions set out in section 17 of the report together with a condition covering provision of bin areas.

*D Higginson and Councillor J Emanuel (as Vice-Chair for Newport PC) both spoke about ensuring that robust conditions were in place. G Clark (Agent) spoke in support.*

*Councillor Emanuel returned to the meeting.*

**UTT/25/2971/FUL - THE BREW HOUSE, FUCHSIA ROW, PARK STREET, THAXTED**

Councillor Haynes recused himself after speaking as a public speaker. He had called the application in.

The Planning Officer presented an application for erection of 1 self-build dwelling with associated landscaping parking and access.

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

In response to questions from Members, officers:

- Said there had been no objections from the Conservation Officer subject to conditions.
- Said that 3 TPO trees would be protected and that there were no heritage concerns.

Members discussed:

- The building being up to the boundary with an 8m gap being sufficient.
- There being an excellent view to the Guildhall.

Councillor Freeman (from the Chair) said that he considered this to be an enchanted spot and proposed approval of the application. This was seconded by Councillor Lemon.

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

*Councillor R Haynes, L Hodge, R Freeman and M Gordon spoke against the application. J Jossaume (Applicant) and T Cannon (Agent) spoke in support.*

*The meeting ended at 3.30 pm.*